



Adair County SB40 Developmental Disability Board  
314 East McPherson Street  
Kirksville, MO 63501

Postage  
Information

X

You can help support activities and classes at the Community Learning Center by donating to the [Adair County DD Link](https://sb40life.org)  
Visit <https://sb40life.org> or scan this QR Code



## Come Join Us!

Melissa and Angela would love to have you to visit them at the Community Learning Center (CLC)! It's a great place to meet new people, learn new skills, learn how to be your own best advocate, and meet your sensory needs while having fun. The Center is open to the community, as space allows, for most classes and activities. You can visit the Center Tuesday - Friday from 8AM-5PM and take part in the many scheduled activities and classes available, use the Sensory Room, or just hang out. **You can also make an appointment to visit on a Monday by contacting Melissa at the CLC by calling 660-665-9400.**



In July, Miss Bre, from Adair County Public Library, will be at the Center for Open Hearts Storytime on Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. to share a story and craft. For Science Fun, our volunteer Jim, will be doing some fun, hands-on activities with us each Thursday at 10:00 a.m. The Center some special fun activities planned for July as well. On July 3rd from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. we are holding a 4th of July Dance Party at the CLC. The Center will provide hot dogs, chips and drinks. Please RSVP with a side dish or desert to share. For the 34th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act we are holding a special swim night at the Kirksville Aquatic Center on July 26th from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Admission for each swimmer is \$5 and \$3 for each non-swimmer.

*If you would prefer to receive this mailing as an email, please contact Melissa ([clc@sb40life.org](mailto:clc@sb40life.org))*



Developmental Disability Board

## Adair County SB40 Developmental Disability Board

DD Resource Center  
314 E. McPherson Street  
Kirksville, MO 63501  
(660) 665-9400  
[sb40@sb40life.org](mailto:sb40@sb40life.org)

Community Learning Center  
1107 Country Club Drive  
Kirksville, MO 63501  
(660) 660-9400  
[clc@sb40life.org](mailto:clc@sb40life.org)

Website: <https://sb40life.org>

## July 2024

### Google Releasing Bevy Of Accessibility Improvements

by: Shaun Heasley | June 21,2024 | Courtesy of Disability Scoop

Google is unveiling a slew of accessibility updates while also announcing new efforts to support people with disabilities creating content online.

The technology giant said recently that it will enhance features aimed at those with blindness or low vision, individuals with cognitive disabilities and physical accessibility needs.

The company is also launching a six-month fellowship program for influencers with disabilities and investing \$5 million in a [fund](#) backing nonprofits making coding and computer science education more accessible to students with disabilities.

“Our commitment to disability inclusion and accessibility doesn’t stop with our products,” wrote Laura Allen, Google’s head of strategy and programs, accessibility and disability inclusion, in a post about the offerings. “We believe in supporting people with disabilities across all sectors and industries.”

The Google Rising Influencer with Disabilities fellowship includes 15 participants from the U.S. and Canada who will be mentored by accomplished influencers, learn from industry leaders and be connected with Google product teams.

The new investment fund will focus on organizations using Blockly, a Google open-source library to “develop and implement inclusive tools and curricula,” Allen said. “By helping tailor experiences to students with diverse learning styles and abilities, these nonprofits can support the important work to ensure all students can participate fully in the digital world and gain foundational computing skills.”

Product updates will include a new option for Lookout, an Android function that allows people who are blind or who have low vision to use their phone’s camera to find out about what’s in front of them, Google said. The “find mode” feature, which is in beta, allows users to be notified about the direction and distance of objects that fall within seven categories including seating, tables and bathrooms.

Meanwhile, an Android app known as Look to Speak, which allows users to speak pre-written phrases that they select with their eyes, will add a text-free mode with speech activated based on personalized emojis, symbols and photos.



Google Maps is also expanding its options for screen readers so that users can hear about the names and types of places near them and how far away they are. And, detailed voice guidance offers audio prompts so users know if they’re going the right way, being rerouted or crossing a busy intersection, Google said.

In addition, Maps will now display a wheelchair icon on desktop computers to indicate if a place is wheelchair accessible. Previously, the icon was only visible on mobile devices.



## June's Spotlight Award Winner Community Volunteer Award

Adair County SB40 has selected long-time Board member, Tyson Treasure, as the Community Volunteer Spotlight Award Recipient for his service on the Adair County SB40 Board. After eleven years of volunteer services to the Board, Tyson will be leaving his role at the end of June. He was appointed as a Director to the Board of Adair County SB40 by the Adair County Commissioners in July of 2013. Previously, Tyson volunteered in collaboration with John McConnell, another current SB40 Board member, to raise funds for local non-profit organization, Northeast Association for Citizens with Disabilities (NACD), formerly the United Cerebral Palsy chapter in Kirksville. Over the course of many years, they were able to raise thousands of dollars through fundraising activities for NACD. Tyson has been a lifelong advocate for people with disabilities in the Kirksville area.

When Tyson initially applied for appointment to the SB40 Board he stated "I am primarily seeking this position because I believe that I am part of a truly under-represented group in the disabled community, that of the successful disabled professional. I have been blessed with the opportunity to obtain both a B.S. in Computer Science from Truman State University and an M.S. in Computer Information Systems from Missouri State University. I believe that SB40 has a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between success and the extra financial burdens that come with a disability."

Currently, Tyson works as Software Engineer III with SRC Logistics based in Springfield, Missouri. Tyson has been instrumental in providing direction to the SB40 management team regarding securing IT services and our IT security. He has also provided important critical review of SB40 annual budgeting, financial forecasting and financial variance analysis for several years. During his tenure on the Board, Tyson has served in the capacity of Treasurer and Chair of the Accountability and Financial Committee of the Board.



Julie Atchley, Adair SB40 Accountant stated, "Through his knowledge and expertise, Tyson's contributions to the Finance Committee and the Board of Directors has been invaluable. Tyson has both an attention to detail and the ability to see the full picture. This has been instrumental in guiding our organization through our financial management decisions." Crystal Aminirad, Executive Director added, "Tyson's experience in information systems management has also helped Adair SB40 to operate efficiently. Tyson has demonstrated that people with disabilities are able and willing to offer essential services to their community, and that our community is a better place to live because of their dedication to that vision. We are deeply grateful for the time and attention that Tyson has offered to our organization over these last eleven years. He will be deeply missed."

Tyson lives in Kirksville with his wife Erin and son Adam. He enjoys spending time with his family, including his parents, both at home and in his community.

If you would like to nominate a great candidate for a monthly Spotlight Award, Adair County SB40 accepts nominations. Anyone can make a nomination. Nominations can be made in any of the four following categories:

- Kids Inclusion Spotlight Award for children in kindergarten - 8th grade
- Youth Leadership Spotlight Award for youth in grades 9-12
- Community Volunteer Spotlight Award (any age)
- Entrepreneur or Employee Spotlight Award (any age)

In March 2025, all monthly Spotlight Award winners will be recognized at the annual awards banquet. Nominations can be made throughout the year by visiting the Adair County SB40 website or by contacting a SB40 staff member to assist you at (660) 665 - 9400. You can also find more information about the four nomination categories by visiting Adair County SB40's website, <https://www.sb40life.org>.

## Crystal's Corner

July is Disability Pride Month! The month of July was selected because the Americans with Disability Act was signed into Law by President George H.W. Bush on July 26<sup>th</sup>, 1990 – now 34 years ago! What kind of successes have Americans with Disabilities had since the famous 'Capital Climb' leading up to the passage of ADA?

Let's celebrate some important successes and milestones for disability advocates since the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed:

- Better Access to Buildings:** Before the ADA, many buildings didn't have ramps, elevators, or other ways for people with disabilities to get in. Now, most places like schools, stores, and offices are required to be accessible to everyone.
- Improved Public Transportation:** Buses, trains, and other public transportation have made big changes to help people with disabilities. For example, they now have lifts or ramps, and there are special seats for people who use wheelchairs.
- Employment Opportunities:** The ADA has helped more people with disabilities get jobs. It requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations, like special equipment or flexible work hours, so everyone can work more easily.
- Accessible Communication:** Many websites, apps, and other technology have become easier to use for people with disabilities. This includes things like screen readers for people who are blind and captions for videos for people who are deaf.
- Inclusive Education:** Schools have made changes to help students with disabilities learn alongside their classmates. This includes providing special tools, extra help, and making classrooms accessible.
- Healthcare Improvements:** Doctors' offices and hospitals have improved their facilities and services to be more accessible, like having adjustable examination tables and providing sign language interpreters.
- Community Living:** There are more options now for people with disabilities to live independently in their communities instead of institutions. This includes services like personal care assistants and accessible housing.
- Sports and Recreation:** More sports and recreation programs are now available for people with disabilities. This includes things like wheelchair basketball, adaptive skiing, and accessible playgrounds.

These milestones have helped make the world a better place for everyone, ensuring that people with disabilities have more opportunities and better access to everything they need.

However, there remain some challenges that Americans with disabilities still face in 2024, even though the ADA has helped a lot, including lack of funding or staffing to provide needed Home and Community Based Services. Other continuing challenges include:

- Employment Barriers:** Many people with disabilities still have a hard time finding jobs. Some employers are not aware of the benefits of hiring people with disabilities, and there can be a lack of support and accommodations at work.
- Accessibility Issues:** Not all places are fully accessible. Some buildings, sidewalks, and transportation systems still have barriers that make it difficult for people with disabilities to get around.
- Healthcare Access:** People with disabilities sometimes have trouble accessing healthcare services. This can include finding doctors who understand their needs or getting necessary equipment and treatments.
- Affordable Housing:** Finding affordable and accessible housing can be tough. Many homes and apartments are not designed for people with disabilities, and there may not be enough options available.
- Education Inequality:** Some students with disabilities do not receive the support they need in schools. They might lack proper accommodations, assistive technology, or specialized instruction.
- Social Inclusion:** People with disabilities can feel isolated or left out. They might face barriers in participating in community activities, making friends, or joining clubs and sports teams.
- Technology Gaps:** While technology has improved, not all devices and online services are accessible. Some websites, apps, and gadgets are still hard for people with disabilities to use.
- Transportation Limits:** Even with improvements, public transportation can still be challenging. There may be limited routes, areas without public transportation ('service desert areas') long wait times, or vehicles that are not fully accessible.
- Public Attitudes:** Negative attitudes and misunderstandings about disabilities can still be a problem. Some people may have stereotypes or make assumptions that can be hurtful and limiting.
- Legal and Policy Gaps:** Not all laws and policies fully protect the rights of people with disabilities. There can be gaps in enforcement and areas where new protections are needed.

These challenges show that there is still work to be done to make sure that people with disabilities have the same opportunities and access as everyone else. Get involved! Participate in self-advocacy groups, such as People First. Stay informed and educated on disability issues. Contact your legislators and make sure you VOTE!