MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose and mission of People First of Washington is to assist all people to realize and appreciate that we are PEOPLE FIRST and our disabilities are secondary. We are equal citizens in our communities.
2021 Annual Report Overview

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Dear Friends and Family of People First of Washington,

This is your 2022 president. Hope everyone has had an amazing summer! We are wiring down to the last four months of 2022. This letter is for the family.

For the last three years, we have been in rough times with the pandemic, and we have been fighting through everything. Most importantly, we never gave up hope. We stood together side by side, and stuck together as a team.

Now that we’re ready to continue forward, we see many new opportunities and adventures that await us all together—chapters having activities and bringing members together.

I just want to remind everyone that we are People First and our disabilities are second. This is still our life, our moment, and we have to go for the glory. Despite the ups and downs of the past few years, it’s not the end of anything. Believe in yourself in your heart and never give up on your hopes and dreams for the future.

I am looking forward to convention this year and seeing everyone playing their part, bringing their best selves and being ready to take up where we left off. What better way to do it than to be in Ellensburg, Washington!

We’re going to see our lives get better and better if we stand together! Stay safe, stay strong, stay positive. Hang in there all together! And God bless everybody –

Larry Hill
Current President

Dear People First Family,

I have been a part of the People First of Washington for 43 years.

I have a circle of close friends and advocates who share in the same things I have done with People First. I have seen a lot of changes that have affected my life in positive ways since I joined People First of Washington. I am proud of the work I’ve been a part of and would like more people to join.

Michael Raymond
Past President
Belief Statements

People with all kinds of (dis)ABILITIES have the right to be equal and respected citizens in our communities. We have the right to work, live, have fun, make friends, take risks, and learn to speak up for ourselves. People have the right to make their OWN informed choices.

“THE FREEDOM TO MAKE THE CHOICES TO LIVE BY.”
Belief Statements

Closing Institutions

We believe that appropriate funding to support enhancing community services must be provided. That is why we want institutions closed. We object to anyone controlling anyone else’s life. We will pledge our support and help to those people who move out to find friends, supports, and resources in their new homes.
We believe that all people have the right to speak up and speak out for themselves. That is why we want to speak out for ourselves and be heard in all aspects of our lives. What we say needs to be valued and respected whether we use our voices, assistive technology, sign language, or body movements.
We believe that all people have the right to have a job that provides a living wage, opportunity for advancement, and personal fulfillment. That is why we want jobs that:

- complement our abilities;
- provide equal opportunities for competitive wages,
- provide equal opportunities for competitive benefits and retirement;
- incorporate choice and change;
- focus on career advancement;
- and increase quality of life.
We believe that all people have the right to make the decisions that affect and direct their lives. To support us leading the process, we need equal access to information, resources, facts and supports. The significant people in our lives, such as family, guardians, case managers, co-workers, friends, bosses, and personal support staff should assist us in a self-directed process to form these decisions.
Inclusion

We believe it is our human right to be included equally in our community without limitations.

- Inclusion means that everyone is valued, respected, and included in their communities in ways that are meaningful to them.
- Inclusion is more than access to buildings and bathrooms and buses.
- Real inclusion means that people with disabilities have equal access to information and support to understand and use it in their own lives. We each have an important role to play to make inclusion a priority and a reality in our community.
Transportation

We believe that all people have the right to get where they need or want to go.

We deserve equal opportunities to utilize public transportation for work, medical needs, education, recreation, family and community activities. Transportation helps to make and keep us independent.
A Celebration of Life and Those Who Are Part of Our Lives
125 In-person Attendees
93 Online Attendees
The following top priorities were collaboratively chosen by Self Advocates in Leadership and People First of Washington, and also endorsed by Allies in Advocacy:

- No Budget Cuts
- Nothing About Us Without Us
- Transitioning to Housing
- End Sub Minimum Wage
- Accessible Transportation
- Increase Community Supports
- Parenting Supports for Intellectual and/or Development Disability
NO BUDGET CUTS

The proposed cuts from the Developmental Disability Administration and Department of Social and Health Services will have a serious and disproportionate impact on so many people across the state of Washington. The impact of these cuts will be deeply felt. Cutting services and reducing eligibility will affect the lives of many existing clients and those who aren’t clients but should be. Please do not make these budget cuts.

NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

People with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities want to be invited to and included around the table when decisions are made about them. People also want to be included on any issues that have a direct impact on the Intellectual and/or Developmental Disability community.

TRANSITIONING TO HOUSING

Everyone deserves safe and healthy living situations regardless of disability status. Staying in hospitals or institutions is not what people with disabilities want! We want to stay in the community with developmental disability supports in accessible and affordable housing situations. We need legislators to increase funding for State Operated Living Alternatives in the Intellectual and/or Developmental Disability community and close institutions.
We believe that all workers should be paid minimum wage or above. No person with disabilities should be denied an equal wage! We need to end sub-minimum wage in public and private businesses.

People with disabilities often find challenges with finding transportation. Even a trip to the grocery store can feel like planning a vacation as you try to find a practical way from point A to point B. We ask for funding to make all transportation options accessible for all types of disabilities.

People with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities feel a sense of empowerment when they are able to get out in their communities. Many can’t do this alone or they need assistance while being out. We are asking legislators to increase community supports so that people are not isolated or restricted.

Being a parent is one of the most rewarding things a person can do, whether or not they have a disability. For parents with disabilities, having opportunities for support, like social groups, parent’s night out programming and coaching help to address the challenges all parents face, but those with disabilities are often left out of.
Student First Program

Student trainers, people with disabilities themselves, help young leaders learn how to set up and run their own clubs.

In gaining experience with organizing and running meetings, public speaking, and electing fellow members to leadership roles, students by default engage in teamwork, self-advocacy, problem solving and self-determination.

Clubs give the young leaders/students the space to thrive and find their voices! Some, for the first time, break through ingrained habits of silence. Community and civic duty projects help students learn about issues in—and engage with—their communities. Many unique and successful projects and events have been launched as a direct result of students taking advantage of the opportunity that Student First gives them to explore their strengths and interests.
People First of Washington Board of Directors is proud to welcome Kieran Chojnowski as the very first Board of Directors Student First Representative.

Kieran will represent students across Washington State who are part of the Student First Program and People First of Washington Family.

Kieran is from the Spokane area and attended East Valley High School where he took part in our Student First Program.

We are all looking forward to working with him and his leadership abilities to connect to our youngest leaders within our organization.

Kieran Chojnowski

People First of Washington Board of Directors
Student First Representative
Melanie Baker  
*Region 1 Representative/ Board Member*

I joined the State Board at the 2021 State Convention, replacing the last Region 1 Representative. I will be working hard to bring us together to maintain the connection we all deserve. I am proud to represent the members I was selected to.

**Spokane, Chewelah, and Colville. (Have met with Pend-Oreille County to discuss new chapter formation.)**

**Have done training on zoom with chapters, trainings, and guest speakers.**

**Staying connected, basic needs of the members.**

**Meetings on zoom on a regular schedule. Hosted the 2021 State Convention without any covid cases.**

**Limited our ability to connect in person. Had to learn different ways to stay connected with help from the state office and staff. The office helped with purchasing equipment that helped members in the region so they stayed connected and did not feel as isolated and provided some additional emotional supports as well.**
Region 2 Representative/Board Member

We dealt with the Covid challenges the best we could. We had a change of representative due to Shannon Benjamin’s passing. I was elected from the floor at the 2021 Convention.

Tri-Cities, Ellensburg, relaunching Clarkston (also called Palouse in the past), and Yakima is attempting to form.

Stayed connected using zoom and some of the members joined the zoom chapter to stay connected.

By staying connected, joining in online PFOW groups.

Helped purchase equipment for members to stay connected during Covid. Also helped purchase food and paid rent cost so members had a place to live.
Region 3

Corinna Fale  
Region 3 Representative/Board Member

I’ve reached out to the members in my region using technology and by phone to create and maintain a safety network, on a weekly schedule or based upon the needs of each member. I also helped them stay connected using zoom training options. Helped the state office to identify who needs rent assistance so they kept their housing and also provided technology and supports during the Covid crisis. Also helped several members with purchasing food and the much needed personal items to be delivered with no unnecessary contact and so much more.

Chapter Locations

Island, Whatcom, Skagit and Snohomish Counties.

Educated

100% of Snohomish County members transitioned to meeting over zoom during Covid.

Advocated

Region benefited from Covid support—food delivered, rental assistance, smart phones, computers, software.

Celebrated

Attended an Everett Aquasox game with Covid restrictions.

Covid Impact

Helped membership learn how to use zoom, helped with purchasing food and tech equipment to stay connected.
I would like to see chapters grow with more members with more focus on advocacy issues that the group wants to focus on. I also want to see more chapters within King County so we can do our part for the organization.

I look forward to reconnection with the members as we move into 2022 and expand our outreach to different groups, including increasing cultural and heritage connections in the community.

King County Champions - Seattle (Zoom).

4 Educational Presenters.

7 years of advocacy together. Worked together with other groups on Zoom and within the community.

Partied on zoom, Celebrated Tony Hall’s life.

Forced us to use Zoom: check-in’s on Zoom, for the needs of the members. Purchased equipment to help stay connected during the Covid with assistance from the state office.
I am happy with what we are doing with People First of Washington in my region. We need to be more inclusive towards all people.

Pierce and Kitsap Counties.

We worked on doing online presentation and sharing information with our members.

Our chapter has participated in a virtual Pierce County Legislative Forum. Several members have joined in trainings with Transition Students and also have taken part in trainings that focus on recreational activities. Our chapter members were heavily involved with Advocacy Days (including our President testifying virtually during an advocacy day meeting on zoom).

We also have been able to continue our partnership with Pierce County.
Region 6

Sam Greatwood
Region 6 Representative/Board Member

We tried to support members as much as possible throughout the pandemic. Like many other chapters, our regular activities and meetings were disrupted by the Covid pandemic and subsequent restrictions. We are looking forward to getting back together in person.

Chapter Locations

Jefferson, Grays Harbor (Aberdeen), Mason, Thurston, Lewis, Cowlitz, Clark Counties.

Educated

We had to learn how to use Zoom so that we could have our meetings online.

Advocated

Many of our region’s self-advocates attended the 2021 Convention in Spokane.

Celebrated

We had virtual meetings, planned to attend the Convention and celebrated getting Jefferson County up and running again.

Covid Impact

During Covid, some chapters did connect virtually, while others did not want to meet unless they could meet in person.

Region 7

The state board decided to retire the Region 7 Representative board position. In the past, it represented members in Idaho with Melody Lucas most recently serving on the board in this position.
## 2022-2023 Budget - Revenue

### Counties
- Spokane / Pend Oreille Co: $38,000.00
- Thurston/Mason: $20,000.00
- Jefferson: $10,000.00
- Asotin: $13,550.00

### DDA: $187,368.68
- Marguerite Casey: $65,000.00
- Service Alternatives: $15,000.00
- Convention 2021 Grants: $7,500.00
- Convention Revenue: $53,410.00
- Donations: $600.00
- Projected Bank Balance: $60,000.00

**Total of Revenue and Cash**: $470,428.68

### Budget Breakdown
- DDA: 40%
- Marguerite Casey: 14%
- Service Alternatives: 3%
- Convention Grants & Revenue: 13%
- Donations: ~0%
- Counties:
  - Spokane / Pend Oreille Co: 8%
  - Thurston/Mason: 4%
  - Jefferson: 2%
  - Asotin: 3%
## Counties
- Thurston County: $10,000.00
- Mason County: $10,000.00
- Jefferson County: $10,000.00
- Asotin County: $13,550.00
- Spokane County: $8,000.00

## Convention
- Convention: $80,000.00

### Business Expenses
- Accounting Firms: $6,200.00
- Insurance: $6,000.00
- Utilities (internet, phone): $12,000.00
- Office (supplies, equipment, mailing, etc): $5,000.00
- Travel Expenses: $15,000.00
- Staff Training: $4,500.00

## Stipends
- Stipends: $11,600.00

## Payroll
- Payroll: $262,288.93

### Professional Support
- Website: $6,000.00
- Media and Communications: $5,000.00
- Financial Reporting: $10,800.00

## Board Expenses
- Board Expenses: $10,000.00

### Eastern WA Technical Assistance Fund
- Eastern WA Technical Assistance Fund: $7,430.00

### Total of Expenses
- Total of Expenses: $493,368.93

## Budget Deficit
- Budget Deficit: ($22,940.00)

(Chart on next page)
2022-2023 Budget, continued - Expenses Chart

- Payroll (including administrative functions, Student First, and chapter, technical training and member support) - (53%)
- Convention - (16%)
- Stipends - (2%)
- Business Expenses
  - Accounting Firms - (1%)
  - Insurance - (1%)
  - Utilities (internet, phone) - (3%)
  - Office (supplies, equipment, mailing, etc.) - (1%)
  - Travel Expenses - (3%)
  - Staff Training - (1%)
- Professional Services - (4%)
- Board Expenses - (2%)
- Eastern WA Technical Assistance Fund - (2%)
- Counties
  - Thurston County - (2%)
  - Mason County - (2%)
  - Jefferson County - (2%)
  - Asotin County - (3%)
  - Spokane County - (2%)
Highlights

Celebrated Tony Hall

Tony Hall was a Region 4 Rep. He was an amazing friend and awesome self-advocate and is sorely missed.

2021 Board Members Stepped Up

- Mike Raymond, Board President
- Tiras Javan Smith, Past President
- Cody Wells, Board Vice President
- Leigh Spruce, Secretary
- Jay Fazekas, Treasurer
- Larry Hill, Historian
- Shane Cody Fairweather, Region 1 Representative
- David Paslay, Region 2 Representative
- Corinna Fale, Region 3 Representative
- Tony Hall, Region 4 Representative
- William Elliot, Region 5 Representative
- Sam Greatwood, Region 6 Representative
- Melody Lucas, Region 7 Representative

Shut Them Down Coalition Kick-off Support

We supported the Shut Them Down Coalition kick-off in March of 2021 with a letter to Governor Jay Inslee and a press conference with local media.
Highlights

Developmental Disability Administration Client Rights Video Series

We created and posted the Developmental Disability Administration Client Rights video series to our website.

Sub-Minimum Wage Bill

Our members lobbied for people with disabilities never to be denied an equal wage. The Senate Bill 5284—Eliminating Sub-minimum Wage Certificates for Persons with Disabilities—passed!

2021 Convention

In 2021, we had a hybrid Convention in Spokane with 125 in-person attendees, and 93 online attendees.