

CONNECTIONS

Connections Receives 5-Star Certification

In recognition of actions taken to confirm the safety of visitors and clients from the spread of the COVID-19 virus, Connections for Independent Living has been awarded 5-Star Certification by the City of Greeley.

Sponsored by the City of Greeley, the Greeley Area Chamber of Commerce, the City of Evans, and the Town of Windsor, the April 30 certification provides confidence to visitors that safety is a priority at all recognized businesses. At Connections, face masks are mandatory and enforced, six-foot distancing is required, employees and visitors are screened for coronavirus symptoms, cleaning of high-touch surfaces is regularly undertaken, and ventilation has been improved.

Connections serves individuals who live with disabling conditions within a seven-county region of northeastern Colorado. In reopening the Greeley office for appointments, Connections recognizes it is critical that health safety is prioritized.

“Giving access to services and programs is our team’s priority, but doing it safely for consumers and staff are of utmost importance,” said Rochelle Mitchell-Miller, Executive Director.



With the 5-Star Certification, Connections is limiting capacity in the office among staff, and scheduling appointments for consumers interested in meeting staff in person. If you prefer to meet in person, rather than by telephone or by video conferencing, contact our office by telephone at **(970) 352-8682** or reach out to your Independent Living Specialist.

Connections anticipates initiating limited on-site office hours in June. As regional health conditions improve, our on-site office hours will be modified to allow additional appointments.



Rochelle Mitchell-Miller

Receiving a COVID-19 vaccination at Connections April 9, 2021.

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Our Organization

Established in 1986, Connections for Independent Living is one of nine certified Independent Living Centers (ILCs) in the State of Colorado. We serve Weld, Morgan, Logan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma Counties. All our services are free and voluntary for our valued consumers.

Connections Cares Hosts COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics

Connections hosted two Governor Jared Polis Colorado Vaccines for All clinics in Greeley April 9 and May 7. The clinics provided COVID-19 Moderna vaccinations for 96 area residents, including many who live with disabling conditions.

Some participants who received vaccinations are clients with Envision, a Weld County organization that enhances the quality of life for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. “So often, people with disabilities face isolation when there isn’t a pandemic, and this year has been even more challenging to help connect and integrate people into the

community,” said Celeste Ewert, Envision’s Executive Director. “We appreciate the efforts of Connections for Independent Living to help get the people we support vaccinated, and bringing them one step closer to reconnecting with the community!”

“Connections is forging relationships with other agencies, such as Sunrise Community Health, to ensure that all vaccine clinics and information about the vaccine is available to every community member,” said Rochelle Mitchell-Miller, Connections’ Executive Director.

Members of the Connections community who are interested in receiving a vaccine, but who are in need of transportation to and from a clinic, are invited to contact Connections for assistance. The Connections team can make arrangements for transportation, including scheduling a ride from Connections.

Our *Connections Cares* program continues to provide weekly assistance at our Greeley office. Contact us for current days and times.



Rochelle Mitchell-Miller

Erica Barraza Joins Connections’ Board of Directors

In late April, Connections welcomed a new member to the organization’s governing board of directors. The board approved Erica Barraza, a Colorado native who has a passion for helping people in all aspects of their lives.

As a member of the Weld County District Attorney’s office since 2014, Barraza works closely with first-time offenders, helping them make smart decisions in their lives to avoid additional difficulties with the legal system.

“As a first-generation student, and coming from a low-income background, I value community and unity, coming together as a team, to help people of all walks of life,” Barraza explained. “These values align with Connections’ mission. I want to broaden my horizon, and help serve more individuals, who I haven’t had the opportunity to serve.”



Courtesy Erica Barraza

Connections Opening Video Remote Interpreting Room

Technology is increasingly allowing American Sign Language interpreting remotely, using online video services. At Connections, we have invested in this new technology through creating a specific room to provide professional video remote interpreting for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.



Sarah Augenstein

The new interpreting room at Connections’ Greeley office includes two video remote interpreting stations. This allows two interpreters to work simultaneously. Top-quality video and Internet equipment provides for a quality, professional video feed to clients.

Video remote interpreting can be scheduled through Connections today. Call us at **(970) 352-8682** to learn more or to schedule.

Connections Peer Support Groups

ANXIETY SUPPORT GROUP

Participants share information about how they cope with anxiety and Post Traumatic Stress (PTSD). This group meets every third Thursday from 2–3 p.m. MDT.



📱 bit.ly/ConnectionsAnxiety passcode 549156

☎ dial 253-215-8782; using your keypad, enter 86218709472#, 0#, 549156#.

CHRONIC PAIN/ILLNESS PEER SUPPORT

A support group for those living with chronic pain and illness. Group meets every first Thursday of the month from 3–4:30 p.m. MDT.



📱 bit.ly/ConnectionsChronicPain passcode 565101

☎ dial 346-248-7799; using your keypad, enter 83030138798#, 0#, 565101#.

LOW VISION PEER SUPPORT

Learn about and share strategies for living with low vision or blindness. This group meets every fourth Tuesday from 11 a.m. –12 noon MDT.



📱 bit.ly/ConnectionsLowVision passcode 289228

☎ dial 669-900-6833; using your keypad, enter 81692498500#, 0#, 289228#.

SELF-ADVOCACY PEER SUPPORT GROUP

This is a participant lead group that teaches people how to advocate for themselves. This group meets the second Tuesday of each month from 10–11 a.m. MST.



📱 bit.ly/ConnectionsSelf-Advocacy passcode 752016

☎ dial 669-900-6833; using your keypad, enter 84949531378#, 0#, 752016#.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT GROUP

The Traumatic Brain Injury Support Group is a peer support group offering information and support to individuals who have experienced a Traumatic Brain Injury, Stroke, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, or any other type of brain injury. Caregivers are welcome. This group meets the second Monday of each month from 1–2 p.m. MDT.



📱 bit.ly/ConnectionsTraumatic (no passcode)

☎ dial 253-215-8782; using your keypad, enter 87692062801#, #.

SOCIAL GROUP

This informal group is for individuals who live with a disabling condition to socialize and discuss any topic they choose. The group meets every second Friday of the month, from 1–2 p.m. MDT.



📱 bit.ly/ConnectionsSocialGroup passcode 279168

☎ dial 669-900-6833; using your keypad, enter 8723976380#, 0#, 279168#.

WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES SUPPORT GROUP

A safe environment for women to support each other. This group meets the fourth Friday of every month from 2–3 p.m. MDT.



📱 bit.ly/ConnectionsWomenDisabilities passcode 373583

☎ dial 346-248-7799; using your keypad, enter 89197179026#, 0#, 383583#.

NEWS & NOTES

Connections offers assistance in screening for eligibility for Social Security's Supplemental Security Income, and Social Security Disability Insurance. Contact us today at (970) 352-8682 for more information, or to begin your free screening.

Connections' Computer Voucher program is nearing its conclusion. When the last computer is delivered to a Connections consumer, we will have supplied more than 50 modern, Internet-ready computers. Much thanks to the team at Greeley Computer Services, who have built each of these computers since the program launched last October.

Do you have a new computer, or are you struggling with an older model? Connections' TechMate program can offer complimentary help. Our Technology Services page online includes a form to schedule your free assistance in computer issues. Or, give us a call.

Are you a Facebook user? Follow our Connections page at facebook.com/CILgreeley/ for regular updates about our organization, and information about persons with disabilities.

Connections is published bi-monthly by Connections for Independent Living and distributed at no cost to care consumers, followers, supporters, and partners. **Rochelle Miller**—Executive Director; **Joshua Fulenwider**—Director of Independent Living Services; **Anne Yanez**—Finance Associate; **Sarah Augenstein**—Director of Interpreting. **Richard Rhinehart**—Director of Communications and Editor. Send change of address to Connections, 1331 8th Ave., Greeley, CO 80631-4601.

Explore our full program calendar online at connectionscolorado.org/!

Connections for Independent Living

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CONNECTIONS
Challenge Barriers. Build Independence.

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

About Connections for Independent Living

Our mission is to promote the full inclusion and integration of people with all types of disabilities into all levels of society. We challenge barriers, both physical and attitudinal, which restrict the rights and personal development opportunities of people with disabilities. With a staff and board of directors that consists mostly of persons with disabilities, we are effective in promoting independent living and empowerment.

Complete Your Connections Survey!

Members of the Connections Colorado community are encouraged to complete and return their 2021 Connections Consumer Survey, distributing with this newsletter, and digitally through invitation online.

Connections is a Center for Independent Living and annually asks its participants to take a few minutes to complete and submit a survey about our organization. Let us know what you like and don't like about Connections—what can we do better?

We're also asking our consumers to report on their Internet connectivity, and what sort of office hours at our Greeley office will best suit you and your needs.

The survey can be completed and mailed in its printed format, or placed in our drop box outside our Greeley office. You can also complete the survey online, or even call us at **(970) 352-8682** and ask for an Independent Living Specialist to help you by telephone with your survey.

Connections is your organization—help us better serve you in the coming year.



Jessica Standiford