

Utah AHEAD Newsletter



A Message from Utah AHEAD

Thank you to everyone who attended our in-person conference this past April. We enjoyed having the opportunity to network and learn together.

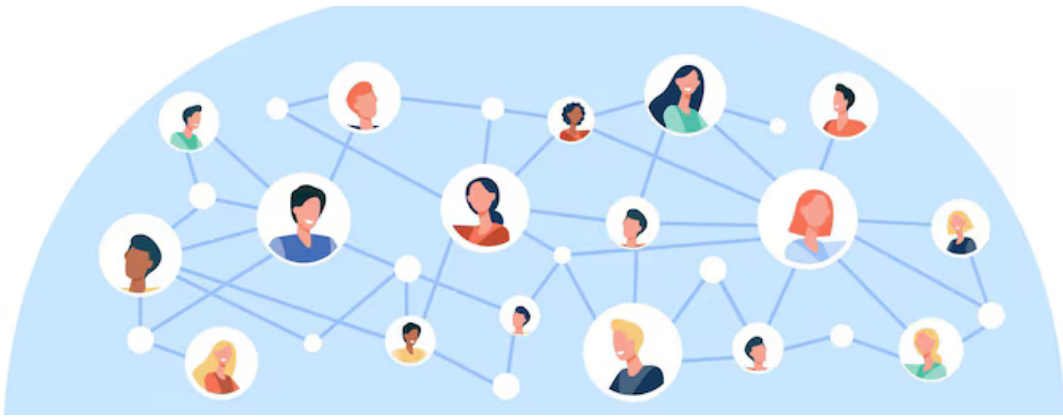
We are especially grateful to our keynote speaker, Megan Cox, who shared insights about digital accessibility and meeting the Title II Regulations. We also appreciate our hosts at Salt Lake Community College for providing such a beautiful and welcoming space

We would also like to recognize and thank the Utah AHEAD members for their patience and support as we navigated our first in-person event in six years! Your support means so much to us.

We are excited to welcome four new Utah AHEAD board members for the 2026–2027 academic year. You can find their headshots and bios in this newsletter.

**Yours in Service,
The Utah Ahead Board**

Be sure to check out our new [Utah AHEAD affiliate page!](#)



Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for the Utah AHEAD Virtual Conference Wednesday November 4th.

If you have any specific topics you would like us to cover during the conference, feel free to email us at utahahead@gmail.com.



Utah AHEAD Board 2026-2027

President Elect: Amanda King (SLCC)

President: Rachel Lyon (BYU)

Past President: Christine Anderson (UofU)

Treasurer: Sherry Page (UVU)

Secretary: Lauren Cordova (USU)

Board Member: Bart Robbins (BYU)

Board Member: Vanessa Ruelas (SLCC)

Board Member: Thomas Sorenson (SUU)

Board Member: Drew Johnson (Davis Technical College)

Utah AHEAD Board Members



Rachel Crook Lyon, President

Rachel E. Crook Lyon, PhD, Licensed Psychologist (she/her/hers) currently serves as the Student Success Center Manager for BYU Continuing Education, where she oversees accommodations for students enrolled in Independent Study University and Online High School courses. Prior to this role, she served for five years as Assistant Director of the Accessibility Center at Brigham Young University.

She received her doctorate in counseling psychology from the University of Maryland, College Park. Rachel taught at BYU for nine years as a full-time faculty member in the Counseling Psychology and Special Education (CPSE) program and later served as an adjunct faculty member at the BYU Salt Lake Center. She also maintains a private practice in Utah. Her clinical and professional interests include mentoring students with executive functioning difficulties, disability access and inclusion, and best practices in supervision. She has authored over 30 invited and peer-reviewed publications.

Goals: Increase opportunities to connect and collaborate with disability professionals across the state.



Sherry Page, Treasurer

Sherry currently serves as the Senior Director of Accessibility Services at Utah Valley University, where she oversees two departments, manages director-level staff, and ensures compliance with ADA, Title IX, Title VI, and Title XII across the institution. Sherry joined UVU in 2020 and has since launched new accommodation programs for pregnancy, English learners, and religious observances. She has secured multiple grants to support peer mentoring, disability outreach, and inclusive postsecondary education. With over 25 years of experience in K–12 and higher education, Sherry is passionate about building inclusive systems that empower all students to thrive.

She holds a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from Capella University and a Master's in Instructional Technology from Texas Tech University and is an active member of Kappa Delta Pi and the National Society of Leadership and Success. Sherry has served as treasurer for UT AHEAD since 2025 and is excited to continue collaborating with UT AHEAD to support disability professionals statewide.

Utah AHEAD Board Members



Amanda King, President Elect

Amanda grew up in Colorado but has called Utah her home since 2016. Amanda was born with a birth defect that affected her T11-L20 vertebrae which caused paralysis from the hips down. She has been a wheelchair user her entire life. As a child Amanda enjoyed performing arts and adaptive sports. These activities have propelled Amanda forward. The first sport Amanda got into was sit skiing. Amanda was able to get into competitive wheelchair basketball.

She attended the University of Illinois for 3 years and played on the women's collegiate wheelchair basketball team. Amanda returned to Colorado and did an 18-month church service mission. She moved to Utah and finished her bachelor's in music education. Once complete, she taught music in schools from 2020 to 2024. In August 2024, she began working at Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) as an accommodation advisor. She has been a board member for Wasatch Adaptive Sports (WAS) since June 2025. Amanda is excited to begin her journey as President Elect of UT AHEAD.

Amanda currently plays and coaches competitive wheelchair basketball. She plays on the Wheelin' Jazz D3 team, Angel City Sports women's team, and coaches the Utah Rush Raptors (ages 8-14). She has coached and taught adaptive sports since 2016, including: tennis, cycling, mountain biking, skiing, basketball, lacrosse, and many more. She has done adaptive training and speeches at conferences, schools, and local theaters. Amanda has music directed 2 community musicals and enjoys performing in musicals herself.

Amanda is fueled by her small dog, Faith, who goes on almost all her adventures with her.

Utah AHEAD Board Members



Lauren Linson, Secretary

Lauren (she/her) joined the Utah State University Disability Resource Center in December 2023. She holds a master's degree in Special Education Teaching and served as a full-time Teach For America corps member in New York City from 2019 to 2021. After a few years teaching in a middle school special education classroom, Lauren transitioned into higher education to pursue her long-term goal of supporting students in new and meaningful ways. She is passionate about building authentic connections and growing alongside others in the disability resources field. Outside of work, Lauren enjoys trying new craft projects, making elaborate meals and treats for her husband, walking her dog, and volunteering.

Lauren served on the UT AHEAD board last year and is excited to come back for a second year. She looks forward to helping design purposeful opportunities for disability professionals across Utah's higher education institutions to connect, learn, and support one another.



Bart Robbins, Board Member

Bart Robbins, LCSW, is an Accessibility Coordinator at the Brigham Young University Accessibility Center, where he has supported students in navigating the interactive process and receiving academic accommodations since 2019. Barton holds a Master of Social Work with a clinical emphasis from the University of Georgia and a bachelor's degree in psychology from BYU. He has been a licensed clinical social worker since 2014 and brings over a decade of experience in mental health, education, and disability services. His current work focuses on disability documentation review, ADHD assessment, and supervising graduate-level externs. Barton is honored to join the UT AHEAD board and looks forward to contributing to ongoing efforts to promote access, equity, and professional collaboration across Utah institutions.

Utah AHEAD Board Members



Christine Anderson, Past President

Christine B. Anderson (President Elect)- Christine B. Anderson, EdS, CRC, LVRC (she/her/hers) is the Director of the Center for Disability and Access at the University of Utah. She joined the University in January 2023. She was previously the Policy Coordinator for the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation, Department of Workforce Services.

Christine's research interests include culturally linguistically diverse youth with disabilities transitioning from school to adult services, counselor development, and the ethical practice of rehabilitation counselors.

Christine has an undergraduate degree in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Utah, a Master degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and she pursued doctoral work and achieved the degree of EdS (Education Specialist in Special Education) from Utah State University. She began her career in Student Affairs at the University of Utah and was an advisor in the Center for Disability and Access prior to continuing her academic studies. Christine is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC), a Licensed Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (LVRC), a Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS), and a Certified Public Manager (CPM).

She has experience working with children, youth, and adults with disabilities in private and public settings. Christine was a trainee with the Utah Regional Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (URLEND) a partnership with the University of Utah Department of Pediatrics and Utah State University Institute for Disability Research Policy and Practice. She was also a clinical instructor (10 years) for the Rehabilitation Counseling Program at Utah State University and continues to participate in advisory boards for the profession and agencies that focus on services for youth and adults with disabilities.

Utah AHEAD Board Members



Vanessa Ruelas, Board Member

Vanessa Ruelas is a passionate and committed advocate for the experiences of individuals with disabilities. As a low-income, first-generation queer Latina, Vanessa brings a unique and powerful perspective to her work and studies. Born in Hanford, California, and raised in West Valley City, Utah, she is pursuing a doctoral degree in Education Leadership and Policy at the University of Utah. In her role as the Assistant Director at Salt Lake Community College's Accessibility & Disability Services department, Vanessa is dedicated to fostering fair and accessible educational environments. Her work is driven by her passion for promoting equal opportunities in higher education.



Thomas Sorenson, Board Member

Current Manager of the Disability Resource Center at Southern Utah University. Started working in Disability Resource Center in 2014 and have moved from student worker, to administrative assistant, to disability support specialist to current head of department. As a former student who had to navigate higher education as a legally blind student, I have had personal experience coupled with my professional career which allows me to connect with the students we serve. I received my double BS in Finance and Economics and in 2023 acquired my MS in Business Data Analytics. In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my wife and eccentric pack of 2 dogs and 5 cats.



Drew Johnson, Board Member

Drew Johnson is a Career and Academic Advisor and the official ADA Coordinator for Disability Services at Davis Technical College (Davis Tech). He helps students with career planning, academic advising, and arranging disability accommodations.
