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Stacy Ellingen



Advocate, Artist, Advocate

My name is Stacy Ellingen and I'm a 35-year-old disability rights advocate. I graduated from Fond du Lac High School in 2003 and went on to college at UW- Whitewater. I graduated from Whitewater in 2009 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Journalism. I began my own business as a Graphic Artist, making print materials for organizations and companies. My business is called "Design Wheels."

I began my Advocacy work as soon as I began schooling. In elementary school, then all the way through high school, I was in all regular classes, despite being an individual with Cerebral Palsy and being non-verbal. Friends I made then, are still some of my friends today. In college, aides helped out with my daily living skills, but I was on my own for tests and assignments. Those aides have become some of my very best friends, and we get together regularly still.

I have advocated for services as long as I can remember. I have hired my own aides through IRIS and have been involved with advocating for people with disabilities with legislators for many years. Besides work, I am on four councils which provide feedback to government officials and have been on panels as well as being a keynote speaker. I have given presentations

to all sizes of groups from classrooms to conventions. I am a host of the Self Determination YouTube Channel and work to promote independence for people with disabilities.

In addition to the disability councils I'm on, I'm independently contracted with InControl Wisconsin to be their Communications Specialist. I manage the Self-Determination Network which is an online community of people who promote self-determination and self-directed supports for people with disabilities. People can post news items and events on there as well as start discussions about disability related topics. There is no charge to join and members receive a monthly newsletter with all the latest events. I encourage people to go to sdnetworkwi.org and sign up!

Advocacy has become one of my life's purposes!