



4724 Mike Colalillo Dr.
Duluth, MN 55807

July 2022

Dear Friends of Udac,

The entire Udac team is pleased to announce that Udac has been recognized for its dedicated work to community inclusion programming through two significant grants and to share with you some exciting information on upcoming programs.

The *Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation (DSACF) Community Opportunity Fund* has provided a grant for Udac programs focused on advancing community inclusion for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Udac is honored to receive grant funding for a second year to advance employment, community inclusion, and engage businesses to employ people of all abilities. Thank you for everyone at DSACF for this impactful grant and for your support of Udac's work to advance community inclusion for everyone.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) has awarded Udac a transformative **2022 Innovative Solutions for People with Disabilities: Employment Provider Transition Funds – Advancing Excellence** grant. This grant is focused on creating a regional Center of Excellence to serve the Duluth community and NE Minnesota with a model and resources to advance Employment First - competitive, integrated employment, and community inclusion for neurodiverse adults. The Udac team is honored to be acknowledged by DHS with this grant and look forward to advancing the vision: *to create a community where opportunity is accessible to individuals of all abilities; one person, one career, one possibility at a time.*

Creating a vibrant future for people of all abilities in the community is the hallmark of our work. These grants support programs that embrace participation for differently abled individuals as contributing member of the community and not just as an observer to community life. Thank you to the DSACF and to DHS for these very generous grants.

Udac is pleased to announce three very important programs that will be happening in the next few weeks:

The *Unified Work Mobile Academy* will be held August 22-25 from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. This program is a fun & interactive class that develops and enhances the career skills an individual needs to join the workforce and/or advance career goals. If you are interested in unlocking employment opportunities by developing your skills, this program is for you. Registration is at <https://www.mdi.org/event/unified-work-mobile-academy-duluth-aug22/> or you can reach out to Chloe Tralle, Career and Life Manager at ctralle@udac.org or (320) 420-2663.

The *ACT Center for Disability Leadership SELF-ADVOCACY ACADEMY* is being offered beginning September 13, 2022. This program is a weekly program of sessions and activities that empower people to learn their rights, speak for themselves and work within a community of self-advocacy. Individuals that are interested in self-advocacy empowerment to engage the support they need to maximize their quality of life will benefit from this opportunity. For more information and to sign up for this program contact Udac Career and Life Managers Stephanie Davich, at sdavich@udac.org or Nicole Opland at nopland@udac.org or ACT Self-Advocacy - email info@selfadvocacy.org or phone 651-641-0297 or visit the Self-Advocacy Academy website: www.selfadvocacy.org

The *Udac Exploring Community and Careers Program* is a weeklong intensive camp that explores the Duluth community and provides a unique learning environment with businesses, employers, and higher education. If you have ever been curious about community employment and the types of jobs that are available in Duluth, this program opens doors and the world of employment in an interesting and informative manner. Udac would like to thank the many businesses that are supporting the 2022 program.

We are grateful to our community businesses and partners for making the *Exploring Community and Carees Program* so amazing. Thank you!!!!



Essentia Health



KRAUS-ANDERSON,

CHALLENGE disability, CREATE opportunity, CULTIVATE Success.

• www.udac.org •



Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce
Kraus-Anderson
Duluth Entertainment Convention Center
University of Minnesota – Duluth Athletics
DTA - Duluth Transit Authority
Lake Superior College

Essentia Health
Duluth International Airport
Grandma's Saloon & Grill
SCS Upholstery

We want to take this opportunity to acknowledge and give a very big thank you to the *University of Minnesota Institute on Community Integration* and our colleagues there, Danielle Mahoehney and Don Lavin, for their content expert guidance and support the past 15 months. We are grateful to their generous input and expertise as Udac has transitioned to complete community programming. The Udac team looks forward to our continued work with the *University of Minnesota Institute on Community Integration* and Don Lavin and we welcome Karen Flippo at the *Institute on Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts – Boston* as we continue our work to advance community programming and community inclusion for the people we are privileged to serve. The Udac team would also like to thank Jen Billington and **Star Services** for their contributions to our changing work. Your dedication to our work is appreciated!

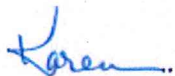
It is most important that I also acknowledge the individuals that Udac is privileged to serve and their families and support partners for their resilience. Thank you for eagerly embracing and celebrating the new opportunities that come from actively being members of the community. Your support and feedback, and your openness to new horizons and opportunities has truly demonstrate that community inclusion has many rewards in employment and community living.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge our dedicated Udac team members – the Life and Career Managers, Assistant Managers, and the Career Coaches, thank you!!! Along with our colleagues at St. Louis Co. and Vocational Rehabilitation Service, they have been equally resilient and creative in championing community inclusion and supporting individuals to thrive in finding new levels of autonomy, independence, and community living. We wish to thank each of them for their creativity and for the unwavering support of individuals that they serve. Their work is helping each person they support advance their goals and achieve in ways not thought possible in the past. This work and the belief in community-based programming is demonstrating the power of community inclusion and possibility every day. Thank you!

We hear from many clients, employers, parents, residential providers and social workers about the positive impact Udac community-based programs are making in people's lives. We welcome your feedback and encourage you to reach out to any member of the Udac team to share your story and your input. Your ongoing support of our work is deeply appreciated.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions about the upcoming programs. We will be pleased to help you find answers.

Best regards to you!



Karen Herman
Executive Director
kherman@udac.org



Ann Dahl
Director of Operations
adah@udac.org



Lola Aune
Director of Human Resources
laune@udac.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 21, 2022

*****MEDIA ADVISORY*****

Unified Work Mobile Academy coming to *Udac Inc.* in Duluth, MN

Initiative by Minneapolis-based nonprofit aims to spread career readiness across Minnesota, Wisconsin, and South Dakota

WHAT: Unified Work, a part of [MDI](#), a Minneapolis-based nonprofit corrugated packaging manufacturer, will bring its free Unified Work Mobile Academy to Duluth, MN on **August 22-25 from 9:00am-3:00pm**. The workshop, hosted at **Udac**, will provide job skills training to help improve productivity, job satisfaction, and retention. With topics ranging from self-confidence and goal setting to leadership and problem-solving, the goal of this program is to supercharge workplace vitality across the region. The workshop will also feature local business leaders who will share their stories of success with attendees.

The academy is part of MDI's goal to positively impact 2,500 lives by 2025. Today, approximately half of MDI's workforce is made up of people with disabilities.

WHEN: **August 22-25**
9:00 am – 3:00 pm

WHERE: [Udac Inc](#) 4724 Mike Colalillo Dr, Duluth, MN 55807

WHO: Interviews with MDI's trainer(s), Udac staff, and possibly some participants will be available upon request.

CONTACT: **Chloe Tralle**, Career and Life Manager at Udac
ctralle@udac.org
(320) 420-2663

###

Attention Self-Advocates

ACT CENTER for DISABILITY LEADERSHIP SELF-ADVOCACY ACADEMY

- The Self-Advocacy Academy is a weekly program of sessions and activities to support you in discovering what you want in life and thinking through what you can do to get it.

ACT CENTER for DISABILITY LEADERSHIP

on intellectual
and developmental
disabilities

As Minnesota's only stand-alone self-advocacy organization, ACT Center creates leaders through proven methods that lead to self-determination and community inclusion. We create and deliver curriculum, workshops, services and other resources designed to help people build personal power, connect with disability rights and build stronger and more inclusive communities.

Join the Self-Advocacy Academy to:

- Get better at speaking up for yourself and being in charge of your own life.
- Learn about your rights, including laws and policies that support your choices and your dreams.
- Get supports to help you get out there and enjoy life—doing the things you want with the people you choose.
- Make friends, learn about yourself, and develop advocacy skills through art, games, stories and laughter.
- Take the next step in becoming a disability rights leader.

If you're interested in any of these things, The Self-Advocacy Academy may be for you. Call the ACT Center and we can work with you to obtain approval to use your waiver, SILS or CDCS funding to join the Academy.



info@selfadvocacy.org; (651) 641-0297; selfadvocacy.org

By being part of the Academy, you are joining the self-advocacy community! It's a community of people who build friendships as we support each other and work together to make the world a better place for everyone.

Here's what happens at the Academy:

- ACT Center works with you and your people to arrange the supports you need to attend the Academy.
- You choose the day of week you want to attend the Self-Advocacy Academy: either Mondays OR Fridays—10 am to 12 pm
- You choose in-person or distance learning options.
- You attend three trimesters of classes each year. Each trimester is 13 weeks long. There are breaks between each trimester. You have a summer break and a winter break.
- You make a commitment to attending the entire year-long Academy. If you miss a class, you talk to the advisor about making it up. (It's not a drop-in, come as you can program).
- You meet with your advisor regularly to plan for upcoming trimesters to make sure the learning experience is meeting your needs and making a difference in your life.
- You meet with your Academy advisor each week for a quick check-in to review materials, apply new ideas, ask questions or solve problems.

What are the classes like?

The class size is between 8 and 12 students.

There are two advisors for each class.

Your support allies participate with you and support you in any way you need.

The classes include music, art, games, stories, and laughter. The classes are fun, interactive, and meaningful.

**contact us at info@selfadvocacy.org
call (651) 641-0297
visit the web site at selfadvocacy.org**

The Self-Advocacy Academy and other projects of the ACT Center for Disability Leadership are sponsored via contracts with the Minnesota Department of Human Services. This sponsorship does not imply endorsement of products or services developed under these contracts.

ACT
CENTER for
DISABILITY
LEADERSHIP

on intellectual
and developmental
disabilities

As Minnesota's only stand-alone self-advocacy organization, ACT Center creates leaders through proven methods that lead to self-determination and community inclusion. We create and deliver curriculum, workshops, services and other resources designed to help people build personal power, connect with disability rights and build stronger and more inclusive communities.

The Self-Advocacy Academy and other projects of the ACT Center for Disability Leadership are sponsored, in part, by contracts with the Minnesota Department of Human Services. This sponsorship does not imply endorsement of products or services developed under these contracts.

Question and Answers

What are the requirements to participate in the Self-Advocacy Academy?

A person must be age 18 or older. The person must have a funding stream such as the Waiver Program, SILS, CDCS or other resources that will pay for the participation cost. The person must have a developmental, intellectual or mental health disability. The person must be very interested in learning about their rights, how to exercise them and becoming more active in their local communities. They must make a commitment to attend all sessions (scheduled weekly) and complete assignments between meetings.

Can support staff from a day, employment, SILS or residential service attend and support a person to participate in the Academy?

Yes. The funding stream for the Self-Advocacy Academy does not include individual support services that a person may need to participate and be successful. Support staff may attend to provide assistance to the person they serve. Since ACT will be leading and facilitating the curriculum, there are two separate services being provided. ACT and the other service provider can both bill for their respective services. The services are considered non-duplicative.

Two examples are as follows:

- 1) Transportation can be authorized to get to the Self-Advocacy Academy and ACT can deliver the self-advocacy training while both parties would bill Medicaid for their services;
- 2) Individual supports can be authorized while ACT delivers the self-advocacy training and both parties would bill Medicaid for their services.

There are various other examples, based on an individual's service plan.

The person's Case Manager is responsible for approving the units for the Self-Advocacy Academy and the other support services being received. The Case Manager confirms they are not duplicative

Can a person who receives Semi-Independent Living Services (SILS) or Consumer Directed Community Supports (CDCS) participate in the Self-Advocacy Academy?

Yes, the Self-Advocacy Academy is not limited to enrolling persons are funded only by the Home and Community Based Waiver program. Those who receive SILS or CDCS may enroll. The covered supports under SILS are quite broad, and Self-Advocacy Academy could be covered under the CBMS page that reads, "Engage in activities that make it possible for an adult with developmental disabilities or related condition(s) to live in the community." There is no per person funding limit that would prevent a lead agency from adding funding self-advocacy training and support to their plan. The quarterly re-allocation process for SILS will make it possible for lead agencies to get additional SILS funding if they have used their allocation.

For CDCS participants, the service must be identified as needed and be included in the individual plan developed in collaboration with the Case Manager.

Contact us at info@selfadvocacy.org or call (651) 641-0297; see more at selfadvocacy.org

The Self-Advocacy Academy and other projects of the ACT Center for Disability Leadership are sponsored, in part, by contracts with the Minnesota Department of Human Services. This sponsorship does not imply endorsement of products or services developed under these contracts.