

Governor's Council on Disability

2016 Inclusion Award Winners

Winners exemplify standards of excellence in enhancing life for individuals living with disabilities

The Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) has selected the award winner and honorable mention of the **25th Annual Inclusion Award**. The Inclusion Award and one Honorable Mention are presented annually to recognize private and public employers, individuals, and organizations that have successfully included people with disabilities in education, employment, housing, and leisure activities. Individuals are also encouraged to nominate state and local government divisions or employees they truly feel excel in inclusive practices.

2016 Inclusion Award winner: UD for Yoga in Kirkwood

Natasha Baebler is a yoga teacher and special educator successfully working and running her own yoga business, UD for Yoga, as a person with disabilities. Her innovative and accessible approach to yoga makes it accessible to people with all ability levels. Baebler has been specifically trained and built her business to teach yoga to children and adults with varying support needs, including visual impairments and children who use wheelchairs. Baebler is an excellent role model for inclusion and an example of living a full life despite her disabilities.

Honorable Mention: Art Inspired Academy in Springfield

Art Inspired Academy (AIA) provides inclusive creative arts opportunities to children and adults, both with and without disabilities in the community. Through partnerships with the Springfield Boys and Girls Clubs, AIA provides art and theater classes to children with and without disabilities. For many of the students, these classes have been the first time they have had interaction with someone with a disability or a different background. AIA has also formed a partnership with Pigtails and Crewcuts, a local children's salon that accommodates children who have trouble getting their hair cut due to sensory issues. AIA music and theater classes are held at Drury University, where students and volunteers work together to write and perform two productions a year, which are open to the public.

The awards will be presented at the Power Up conference at the Holiday Inn Executive Center in Columbia on April 4, 2017.

For additional information, please contact the Council at 573-751-2600 or by email at gcd@oa.mo.gov