



# Meet your Council



J.J. Rico is the Executive Director at the Arizona Center for Disability Law, which provides free legal services to people with disabilities. Previously, he was a Litigation Director and a staff attorney. His legal work focused on the employment and access provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. J.J. has represented individuals with disabilities before both State and Federal Courts, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Arizona Attorney General's Civil Rights Division. J.J. has two sons and in his spare time, enjoys camping, U of A sports, and spending time with his family.



Dr. Laura L. Love is the Chief Executive Officer for Arizona's Division of Developmental Disabilities. She holds a Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from ASU, a Master's in Counseling and Personal Services with an emphasis on Rehabilitation Counseling and Psychology from the University of Missouri, and a Bachelor's in Psychology from the University of Missouri. She was born in Quincy, Illinois and moved to Arizona in 1983. When not working, she loves to spend time with her husband, step-daughter, rescue dog, and two rescue cats. She also loves working out and shopping for art and interior design items.



Andrew Robinson is an advocate for people with autism and intellectual disabilities. He joined the Council to see how he could help others like himself. While he is currently unemployed, he has worked for many years as a Senior Electronic Technician and a computer programmer. His hobbies are computer programming and research. He grew up in the California foster care system, and is now married with two children birds. He speaks fluent Cantonese thanks to his wife, a native of southern China. He has written two self-published books, "The Boy Who Lived" and "How the Autistic Mind Doesn't Work." Andrew is an Executive Committee member of the Council.



With 40 years of corrections experience, Charles L. Ryan has served as the Director of the Arizona Department of Corrections since 2009. He is responsible for overseeing approximately 9,500 personnel, more than 42,300 inmates, and 5,800 offenders under community supervision. Mr. Ryan holds a Master's in Public Administration from Western International University and a Bachelor's in Criminal Justice from ASU. He has been part of the Council since 2009 as a parent of a daughter with Down syndrome. He is also an active member of the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics, serving this year as Chair for Arizona.



Dr. Jamie Edgin is an Assistant Professor at the University of Arizona. Her work characterizes the specific learning profiles of individuals with Down syndrome and autism. She has won numerous awards, including the David Cox "Rising Star" Award in 2015. In 2014, she received a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to study sleep disturbance in at-risk infants, and in 2016 received National Institutes of Health funding to develop touch-screen assessments of learning and memory for children with I/DD. She has lived in Arizona for 10 years and enjoys her outdoor playground with her two children.



Jason Snead has cerebral palsy. As a Council member, he wants to share his experiences with people, as well as encourage others with disabilities to speak up for themselves. He's originally from Texas, where he received his undergraduate degree from the University of Houston. In December 2016, he graduated from Arizona Summit Law School with a Juris Doctorate, and recently completed the State Bar Exam. He's also a commissioner for the Mayor's Commission for Disability Issues in Phoenix. Jason is married, and enjoys a full range of recreational activities including waterskiing, horseback riding, snow skiing and sky diving.



Scott Lindbloom is a self-advocate. He was born and raised in Colorado, but moved to Minnesota, Wyoming, and Nebraska. In Nebraska he served on the state DD advisory Council for eight years. In the last three years he's been in Arizona, Scott began serving on the ACDL Council, the State Independent Living Council, and also became a member of the Show Low Chamber of Commerce. He enjoys generating new ideas and gaining up-to-date policy information to share with others. He also enjoys hunting elk. Scott is passionate about access to better skills training and good jobs for people with disabilities.





Traci Gruenberger is dedicated to supporting people with developmental disabilities and ensuring every person has personalized services and supports. She serves as the Executive Director of Mosaic, which provides opportunities for people with I/DD to live a full life. Prior to Mosaic, she worked at East Valley Adult Resources in Mesa, serving as the Chief Operating Officer. She also spent 16 years at Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest. Traci received her Bachelor's from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and attended Alliance Theological Seminary. She lives in Chandler with her husband Michael, two daughters and three cats.



Thomas Uno is the Associate Director for the Institute for Human Development at Northern Arizona University. He assists the Executive Director with managerial and operational functions, as well as data requirements. With more than 35 years of experience, he has worked in the Protection and Advocacy system and for a state DD Division, was Executive Director of a state Council on DD, and for the past 28 years worked with UCEDDs. He received his graduate degree from Vanderbilt University. Tom has two sons in Flagstaff - one is an engineer and the other works on wildland fires on a hotshot crew.



Angelina James is from the Hopi and Navajo Tribes, and lives on the Hopi Reservation in Second Mesa. She has a Bachelor's in Social Work from New Mexico Highlands University. As a social worker, she worked as a student development specialist, counselor, part time faculty, outreach worker, child protective services, enumerator, election poll worker, student financial planner, and in other positions. Angelina is a member of the Hopi Disability Advocacy Group, a 2014 Partners in Leadership graduate, and Council member of the Arizona Center for Disability Law. She is motivated to gain more knowledge on how to address the inadequacy of resources in remote areas.



Larry Wanger is the Executive Director of the Statewide Independent Living Council (AZSILC). The AZSILC seeks to promote the Independent Living philosophy across the state. Larry began working in the Independent Living movement in 1997 with a small center in Grand Rapids, Michigan. For nine years, Larry worked at Ability360 where he was responsible for programs to help people with disabilities return to work. He enjoys travel, reading, and watching hockey, college basketball, and baseball. He has run in four marathons, including the New York City Marathon in 2014. He and his wife live in Downtown Phoenix and enjoy the urban lifestyle.





George Garcia is Executive Director of Southwest Institute for Families and Children with Special Needs, an organization that works with people with I/DD. A firm believer that people with disabilities should live a self-determined life with supports necessary to live independently, George teaches individuals their rights and self-advocacy skills. As a person with a disability, George understands the many barriers that exist in education, employment, health, and independent living. George graduated from ASU with a Master's in Social Work. He is also a foodie who loves to try new restaurants and is an avid concert-goer.



Melissa Van Hook is an Arizona native. She graduated from ASU with a B.S. in Psychology. She is a single mother of two incredible boys, and both have high functioning autism. Kyle, 20, attends college and works part-time. Dane, 13, uses tutors through the Empowerment Scholarship Account. Melissa also co-founded the East Valley Autism Network, a support network of 600 families affected by autism. The group has successfully helped pass three bills that address autism insurance coverage and restrict the use of restraints and seclusions in schools. She looks forward to making great strides in integrated employment. Melissa serves as the Vice-Chair of the Council.



David Copins is originally from Boston; however he has lived in Arizona for the majority of his life, since 1945. David lived at the Arizona Training Center at Coolidge for 14 years. He moved out around 1970 and has been living in his own apartment ever since. He enjoys playing solitaire on the computer and his volunteer job with the post office where he has worked for about fifteen years. He joined the Council, because he wanted to get involved with others interested in improving lives of people with I/DD. He currently lives in Tucson and has a sister who lives in Phoenix.



Katharine Levandowsky serves as the Office Chief for the Office for Children with Special Health Care Needs. She has more than 25 years of experience working with the community, families, stakeholders, and providers to develop services for individuals with disabilities. She spent 7 years administering Arizona's rehabilitation and independent living and services for individuals with disabilities. She directed programs for Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living, and Services for the Blind, Visually Impaired and Deaf. She and her staff currently work to lead efforts to improve systems of care for children and youth with special health care needs. She loves fishing, travelling, and experiencing food from different regions of the world and cultures.





John Black has served on the Council for more than 12 years. He recently retired from AHCCCS as a health care administrator after 23 years. He has lived in Arizona for more than four decades, having moved here from his native state of Oklahoma. John has two children and two grandchildren. He enjoys travel, reading, and cooking. He especially enjoys week-long getaways to Mexico. He is passionate about employment for persons with developmental disabilities. John serves as the Chair of the Council.



Janna Murrell became a volunteer with Raising Special Kids in 1998, after experiencing firsthand the value of parent-to-parent support when her son was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. After working with families in the nonprofit arena for 12 years, Janna joined the staff at Raising Special Kids in 2008 as a Family Support Specialist facilitating Parent to Parent Connections. In 2011, Janna became Director of Family Support and Education. While not assisting parents and Raising Special Kids staff with problem solving, Janna enjoys working in her yard and decorating.



Ray Morris is the founder/CEO of Dads 4 Special Kids and a retired Scottsdale fireman with 31 years of service. He married his wife Kelly in 1986, and has two sons; the youngest, 27, just married last year. Ray's personal experiences with his father who was quadriplegic and raising his oldest 28-year-old son with profound disabilities motivated him to create an emergency/disaster preparedness program. The program assists individuals and their families in creating a plan around their specific needs and identifying ways to collaborate with local first responders. He is currently a Disability Integration Advisor for FEMA.



Monica Cooper describes herself as a leader. She is President of OASIS, and member at large of People First of Arizona. Speaking at the legislature is one of her greatest accomplishments because she has a passion for speaking up about what's right for people with and without disabilities. Monica enjoys cooking, crocheting, reading, and doing puzzles. Monica lives on the west side of town. She is adopted and her parents are retired, and live in Michigan. She is passionate about voting rights, and recently met Adrian Fontes, the new County Recorder. Monica serves on the Executive Committee of the Council.





John Eckhardt is married and has five kids. He and his wife are foster parents. They adopted three of their children through foster care. The foster child presently in their care is medically fragile. One of his other children has been diagnosed with autism and another has spina bifida with developmental delays. John was born and raised in Arizona. He attended and graduated from ASU with a Bachelor's degree. He has worked for the Arizona Department of Transportation for 19 years in the Right of Way Division. His hobby is family. Four of his children are involved in junior rodeo.

