



Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living - APRIL's Youth Programs and Outreach

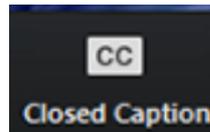
Presenters:

Elissa Ellis, Executive Director, Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL)

Michael Beers, Program Outreach & Advocacy Manager, Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL)

Using Closed Captioning

- To start using CC, click the caption button



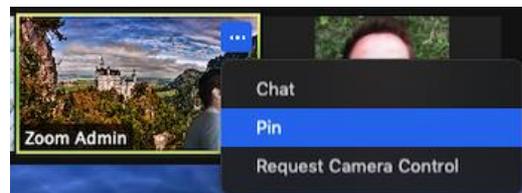
Uso de la interpretación de idiomas

- Hagan clic en el icono de interpretación
- Seleccionen "Spanish"
- Después de seleccionar "español", hagan clic "Mute Original Audio"



Using ASL

- To pin the interpreter, hover over the video of the participant you want to pin and click ...
- From the menu, click Pin.



APRIL Who We Are:

The Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL) is a national grassroots, nonprofit membership organization consisting of over 260 members from centers for independent living, their satellites and branch offices, statewide independent living councils, other organizations and individuals concerned with the independent living issues of people with disabilities living in rural America.

Our Mission:

The Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL), a national disability-led organization, advances the equity of people with disabilities in rural communities through advocacy, collaboration, shared experience, leadership development, education, and training. APRIL is the unified voice of Independent Living in rural America.

APRIL Statement on Community:

The Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL) is a membership organization dedicated to advancing the rights of people with disabilities living in rural America. We strive to cultivate a culture of inclusivity throughout our organization which reflects that of our membership. We believe that diversity is an asset to be valued and respected. APRIL recognizes the uniqueness of each individual and uplifts the characteristics and intersectionality of characteristics within the human experience.





Bringing

Youth

A brief history of
APRILS Youth Culture

On

BOARD

- **Youth Steering Committee:** second Monday of the month at 7PM EST; 4PM Pacific

Next Meeting is March 9, 2026

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUIdvqTsvHNFHzGI40Ne_RDgpBnVBe_ov#/registration



- **Youth Coordinators Connect:** first Tuesday of the month at 2PM EST; 11AM Pacific

Next Meeting is March 3, 2026

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAv-qoqjwjH9A3PV2dIJUJFHR1_ulbGz93#/registration



Partnerships

With the generous help of the [FORD FOUNDATION](#), we launched the APRIL "Lead On" Collaborative in 2022, a leadership program designed for youth and young adults with disabilities who want to take the next step in their journey. Youth complete a 6-8 week course that culminates in them being supported financially to attend the APRIL Conference to experience a National conference on disability with their peers as well as seasoned advocates from Independent Living.

For more information contact:
Elissa Ellis, Executive Director
eellis@april-rural.org



Building Community w/ Transition groups nation wide

Purpose: Create sustainable pathways for Youth w/disabilities transitioning from High School, including Youth Leadership Forum alumni to engage with their Independent Living Centers (CILs) & other organizations for ongoing community, mentorship, and access to interdependent living resources.

Primary Outcomes:

- A shared understanding of what's happening across states today (what's working / what's missing).
- Agreement on the best connection model(s) for students and young adults.

- To be innovative & responsive to the needs and barriers that youth with disabilities face today.
We can not afford to be the best youth programs 2010 had to offer.
We must always be aspiring to be more by working with each other.

APRIL MEMBERSHIP

- Join together with over 260 CILs, SILCs, other organizations and individuals who share your rural independent living concerns.
- Gain opportunities to learn about and shape how Independent Living affects Rural America.
- Participate with your colleagues at the annual National Conference on Rural Independent Living held at different locations every year.
- Receive discounts on Registrations for our Annual Conference

- Eligible to join committees.
- Access to action alerts/ list serv which give you priority access to information such as grant and contract opportunities, mentoring and training opportunities, our free IL conversation series and other upcoming events, news, job openings, and important advocacy updates.
- Access to our information dissemination portals to get out your events, job openings, and other important announcements to our other members.
- Membership certificates for members or an optional organizational plaque (at cost)

<https://portal.april-rural.org/user/login>



- **Emergency Preparedness and Response Committee:** second Monday of the month at 3PM EST; Noon Pacific

- Next Meeting is March 9, 2026

- https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUrf--qrDMoHNixJkM50_1uO18BbB6VIINx#/registration





- **Advocacy Committee:** first Wednesday of the month at 4PM EST; 1PM Pacific

Next Meeting is March 4, 2026

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMpce6vqDliGtR_zA0BFICKhj-DBXkLZX9E#/registration

Rural Transportation (2 of 4)

- **Transportation Advocacy Committee:**
Third Thursday of every OTHER month at 2PM EST; 11AM Pacific
- Next Meeting is March 19, 2026
- [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMtduCgrzorGtCHUI1vG1mP2mqD8fv.Zf4PO#/registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8125464000?pwd=Zf4PO#registration)





SAVE THE DATE!!!

Annual APRIL Conference!

This year the APRIL Conference will be in Niagara Falls, NY

Conference Dates:

October 23-25, 2026

EELLIS@APRIL-RURAL.ORG

QUESTIONS??

www.april-rural.org

RAISE