

Family Member Traineeship 2026-27

JFK Partners, Colorado's University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service (UCEDD) and Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) Program is offering a part-time Traineeship for Family Members **to begin August 1, 2026**.

The purpose of the LEND program is to improve the health and well-being of individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities by preparing an interdisciplinary cadre of professionals to take leadership roles in providing services, improving systems of care, and building inclusive communities for these individuals and their families.

Inclusion of the family perspective (parent and/or sibling) is a hallmark of all LEND programs and learning alongside family members has been rated as one of the most valuable experiences of the other disciplines participating in the program.

Family Trainees will:

- complete at least 300 hours in the training program
- acquire an understanding of the roles of various disciplines that serve individuals with developmental disabilities and their families
- understand the perspectives of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families
- explore community resources
- learn about disability legislation and systems
- complete and share a scholarly project related to their career goals

Eligibility:

- Applicants must be a parent or sibling of an individual with autism or other developmental disability.
- Must be available to take coursework on Tuesdays (Sept-May) and attend the Leadership Course (daily Aug 3-7 and Aug 10-14, 2026 from 1:00-4:00 pm)
- Have a willingness and commitment to advance the philosophy of LEND principles and practice.
- Have some past leadership experience.
- A bachelor's degree or some university preparation preferred.
- A student/trainee/fellow receiving support from grant funds must be a citizen of the United States or a foreign national having in his/her possession a visa permitting permanent residence in the United States, or a non-citizen national.

All courses and clinical/community observations will be in-person to gain the most from the interdisciplinary cohort, however it may be required to complete certain classes or observations online. For this reason, applicants need to have access to a computer and a reliable internet connection. Please notify us in your application if this is a barrier to your participation.

Although this is a graduate education program and the others participating are at the masters, doctoral, or post-doctoral level, Family Trainees do not need a master's degree to participate.

Program Description: Family Trainees will engage in a 12-hour/week program of academic and practicum experiences to advance their skills in the areas of leadership, cultural competency, family centered care,

advocacy, public policy, clinical knowledge, research, and other topics associated with improving healthcare and inclusion for individuals with autism or other developmental disabilities.

Trainee experiences include:

- Complete at least 300 hours in training
- Regular mentorship
- Coursework in Leadership (daily Aug 3-7 and Aug 10-14, 2026 from 1:00-4:00 pm)
- Coursework in Key Concepts in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (Tues 8:15-10:15 Sept-Apr)
- Coursework in Policy/Advocacy (Five Tues didactic sessions 10:30-12:30 Jan-Mar and IDD Awareness Day at Colorado Capitol)
- Attendance at the Annual JFK Partners Autism Conference (Oct)
- Training experience resulting in a scholarly project with a presentation and product that is completed and presented by the trainee by the end of the training experience.
- Optional coursework in Screening & Assessment, and Intervention (Tues afternoons Sept-Apr).

Support: A stipend of approximately \$6,000 over 9.5 months for this graduate level, part-time (12 hours/week) position is available for those completing the program in 300 hours or more.

This position and funding are contingent upon JFK Partners receiving grant funding. JFK Partners is applying for a competing renewal in 2026 so letters of offer cannot be provided until the award is received.

Application: Our application requires the submission of the following documents:

1. Cover Letter Statement of Interest - Please include the answers to the following:
 - Why does a Family Traineeship at JFK Partners interest you?
 - What would you like to learn from the experience?
 - What leadership experiences have you had related to being family leader or advocate working with or on behalf of individuals with autism or other developmental disabilities and family?
 - How will you use what you learn in this training?
2. Resume - Include all previous leadership and disability advocacy training you have completed
3. References with phone numbers/emails - 2-3 people who have worked with you in a work or volunteer work setting

Deadline: The deadline for receipt of materials is **May 1, 2026**. Please send materials to: Christine Cook, Training Coordinator, JFK Partners, at Christine.Cook@cuanschutz.edu.

Please contact Kristen Kaiser, MA, MPH, Family Discipline Director or
Christine Cook, Training Coordinator, with any questions.
kristen.kaiser@cuanschutz.edu | Christine.Cook@cuanschutz.edu