



Self-Advocate Traineeship

2025-26

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 Self-Advocates **to begin August 1, 2025.**

The purpose of the LEND program is to improve the health and well-being of individuals with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities. LEND prepares a group of people from different disciplines to work together as leaders in providing services, improving systems of care, and building inclusive communities.

Self-Advocate trainees will:

- complete at least 300 hours in the training program
- learn how to navigate disability systems better
- network and connect with others who have similar commitments and values
- understand the process of developing and completing a leadership project
- impact policy by learning how to interact with policymakers
- influence practice of future social workers, psychologists, teachers, and others
- explore community resources

Requirements:

- Applicants must be an individual with a developmental disability or autism
- Must be available to take coursework on Tuesdays (Sept-May) and attend the Leadership Course (daily Aug 4-8 and Aug 11-15, 2025 from 1:00-4:00 pm).
- Work well within a team.
- Have a willingness to learn and speak up to share your experiences.
- Interest in advancing their leadership skills.
- Have some past leadership experience.
- Only candidates with U.S. citizenship may be considered, based on funding agency requirement.

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 LEND is a graduate education program and the others participating are at the masters, doctoral, or post-doctoral level, Self-Advocacy trainees are not required to have post high school education.

Trainee experiences include:

- 12-hour/week program of training – Aug 2025-May 2026
- Regular mentorship
- Coursework in Leadership (daily Aug 4-8 and Aug 11-15, 2025 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 course 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. A Benefits Counselor will be available for consultation for those selected who may need flexible payment options due to SSI or other benefits they receive.

This position and funding are contingent upon JFK Partners receiving grant funding. This position is funded by a grant from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Award #2 T73MC11044-14-00, July 1, 2021-June 30, 2026.

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 Self-Advocacy Traineeship at JFK Partners interest you?
 - What would you like to learn from this experience?
 - Describe leadership training or experiences that you have had related to disability advocacy.
 - 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

JFK Partners is committed to the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty, staff, and trainees to enrich the training environment and better prepare professionals and advocates to promote health equity, wellness, social equality, and reduced disparities. While we have had challenges recruiting trainees that match Colorado's racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity, it is a priority for JFK Partners to increase workforce representation to reflect the community we serve. Bilingual Spanish-speaking applicants, in addition to those with historically underrepresented racial, ethnic, and cultural identities are encouraged to apply.

Deadline:

The deadline for materials is **March 15, 2025**. Please send materials to: Christine Cook, Training Coordinator, JFK Partners, at Christine.Cook@cuanschutz.edu.

Please contact Robin Ennis, Self-Advocacy Discipline Director or
Christine Cook, Training Coordinator, with any questions.
Robin.Ennis@cuanschutz.edu | Christine.Cook@cuanschutz.edu