

Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living (EOCIL)

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Pronouns: (He, Him)

I belong to our deaf and hard-of-hearing community with brain injury and other invisible disabilities.

Visual Self-Description:

I am a 55-year-old white man with blue eyes and short brown and gray hair. I am wearing a black suit with a white shirt without a tie.

Magic of IL – What is it?

- My words to describe the Magic of IL:
 - Local, state, national, and international family
 - Diversity, Inclusiveness, and equality
 - Individual and collective voices
 - Resistance against oppression, systemic ableism and bias, external and internal stigma
 - Resilience
 - Systems advocacy
 - Defined by US, we all have a role to play!
 - Acknowledgment of our history and the legacy of our IL family

Magic of IL – We Have History!

- We have experienced, advocated against, and survived:
 - State and federal policy: farming out, institutionalization, segregation, forced sterilization (1907: Buck v. Bell)
 - Eugenics & Euthanasia (America influenced Germany's T4, Law for Prevention of Hereditary Disease, and Law Against Dangerous Habitual Criminals and Sexual Offenders, Oregon's Death with Dignity)
 - Stigmatization, ableism, and systemic bias
 - Denial of love, marriage, sex, family (termination of parental rights of parent with disabilities)
 - Human trafficking, sexual assaults, hate crimes, trauma
 - Inaccessibility, unequal education opportunities
 - An astonishing unemployment and poverty rate
 - State and federal budget cuts and unfunded mandates
- Systems advocacy is the magic of IL and our legacy

Magic of IL – We Have History: Our Legacy!

- **Legacy** left to us by our brothers and sisters before us...Ed Roberts, Justin Dart, Linda Gonzales, Marca Bristo, Deb Cotter, Martin Naughton – Joe Mooney – Hubert McCormack – Florence Dougall (IL founders in Ireland), John Dziennik, Judy Heumann, and many more local, state, national, and international IL advocates that knew what the Magic of IL was and could be.
- **Legacy** continues to grow with ongoing IL advocacy by advocates, Local CILs, SILCs, ADAPT, NOT DEAD YET!, APRIL, Research and Training Center on Independent Living, AAPD, NCIL, USICD, DREDF, ACT UP!, European Network on Independent Living (ENIL), Institute for Disability Studies and Policy (IDSP) and many more who know what the magic of IL is and can be.
- **The Magic of IL – Honoring our history – Never giving up – Knowing what we fight for today is part of the legacy we leave for our brothers and sisters to come!**

Magic of IL – EOCIL



Magic of IL - EOCIL

- EOCIL was initially formed in 1997 and started providing direct services in January 2000. USF Advisor – Mary Lou Breslin (DREDF), Peer Mentor – Mark Dore (Area Director/Statewide Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at the Commonwealth of Massachusetts).
- EOCIL is in rural Oregon. 5 offices (in Burns, Ontario, La Grande, Pendleton, and The Dalles) and provides services in 13 counties.
- Our Demographics (47-member team)
 - 100% of board and team members are PWDs
 - 75% are members of the BIPOC community
 - 45% are members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community
 - 25% are members of the substance use community
- EOCIL adopted a funding formula. Our annual budget before the funding formula was \$700,000 – IL base funding of \$265,000. Our 2023-24 annual budget is \$6,000,000, and IL base funding is 4.4%.
- 55% (direct service) – 25% (systems advocacy) – 20% (other tasks)
Standard to guide our strategic plan and services for our local, state, regional, national, and international priorities.

Magic of IL – EOCIL: Purpose & Programs

- EOCIL has two purposes:
 - Operate the Institute for Disability Studies and Policy (IDSP). IDSP is our systems advocacy arm. It produces actionable research for independent living systems around the world.
 - EOCIL operates programs that provide direct IL core services for PWDs (since 2000, we have served 132,614 – 5,765 monthly average) in eastern Oregon.
- EOCIL Programs
 - Institute for Disability Studies and Policy Research Department
 - Independent Living
 - Crisis and Emergency (community gardens, food co-op, well water, cancer, STI, and HIV screening)
 - Sexual Health (HIV testing and prevention, linkage to care, HIV re-engagement into care and support services)
 - Harm Reduction (PEP, PrEP, Harm Reduction Tools – syringe/needle exchange, condoms and lube, etc.)
 - HIV Community Services (U=U)
 - 2SLGBTQIA (youth services, hate and bias reporting, advocacy)
 - Housing
 - Trauma-Responsive Behavioral and Mental Health Services

Magic of IL – EOCIL: 5-Year Systems Advocacy Plan

➤ EOCIL's 5-year systems advocacy plan focuses on 5 priority areas (housing, healthcare, education, employment, and accessible cultural and leisure). We focus on four areas of barrier removal for each priority. For example:

1. Housing

- Attitudinal Barriers
- Physical Barriers
- Communication Barriers
- Financial Barriers

2. Healthcare

- Attitudinal Barriers
- Physical Barriers
- Communication Barriers
- Financial Barriers

Magic of IL – EOCIL: 5-Year Priority Communities

- EOCIL's 5-year priority communities were identified through a community survey, strategic plan, PPR data, and the Oregon SPIL, and we juxtapose state, regional, national, and international plans
 - People with Disabilities
 - Gay or Bisexual men who have sex with other men or same-gender loving community
 - Transgender community
 - Sex worker community
 - People who are institutionalized in prisons and other closed settings
 - People who inject substances community
 - Migrants, minority ethnic communities, and BIPOC communities

Magic of IL – EOCIL: IDSP

- EOCIL's IDSP 5-year systems advocacy priorities
 - Assist USICD with U.S. ratification of UN Treaty: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
 - Nationwide repeal of termination of parental rights of parents with disabilities solely based on disability
 - Increase access to accessible and affordable housing
 - Increase access to behavioral and mental health services
 - Increase base funding for CILs – CILs can provide livable wages and benefits!

Magic of IL – EOCIL Example

- Growing Housing Crisis in Eastern Oregon
 - Housing inventory – \$\$\$\$
 - Regulations for improving properties – Permits for remodeling can take 1+ years and \$\$\$
 - Non-existing trauma-responsive housing property management
 - Housing costs exceeding 30% of affordable housing standard, lack of subsidized housing options, and increased interest rates discouraging property ownership
 - Increase homelessness
 - Decreases access to accessible and safe rental or ownership options
 - Increases food insecurity
 - Increase interaction with law enforcement
 - Decreased access to behavioral/mental health services (6 – 8 months for assessment)
 - Decrease access to healthcare options

Magic of IL – EOCIL Example: EOCIL's Solution

➤ EOCIL's Solution

- Systems advocacy – Governor, state legislators, Oregon Health Authority, foundations, state and local planning and zoning, law enforcement, local elected officials to make housing priority in state planning and invest \$\$\$ in housing options
- EOCIL added trauma responsive behavioral and medical health teams providing access within 24 hours
- EOCIL purchased properties and added 14 trauma-responsive free-no rent transition apartments (\$1.3 million)
- Architect plans for stacked container housing options
- IDSP joined national research project to evaluate if our trauma responsive housing interventions can be replicated – evidence base practice

Magic of IL – EOCIL: Quotes

“Hell, there are no rules here – we’re trying to accomplish something.”

Thomas A. Edison

“For we are leaders of inclusiveness and community, of love, equality, and justice.”

Judy Heumann