



Sidney Blanchard, President  
 c/o Community Access Unlimited  
 80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, New Jersey 07202  
 Phone: (908) 354-3040 ~ Fax: (908) 354-2665  
 sblanchard@caunj.org

**Region IX and New Jersey Chapter  
 Combined Newsletter**

Spring 2019



Faith Into Action: Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council members

**Faith Into Action - 2018**

**AAIDD MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**

The Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council held its annual "speed dating" event at Suburban Golf Club in Union to allow its member congregations to interact with people with disabilities and at-risk youth who are not currently associated with a religious community, telling them about their faiths and organizations and offering them the opportunity to join.

The third year of this event – called Faith into Action – allowed members of Community Access Unlimited (CAU) and people from the community who are not currently affiliated with a house of worship to meet with representatives of more than 35 churches, synagogues, mosques and temples to determine if they might be a good fit for them, according to Sid Blanchard, CAU executive director. More than 190 CAU members have attended and there were more than 100 "matches," he added.

CAU is a statewide Elizabeth-based nonprofit providing support programs and services to adults with disabilities as well as youth served under the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to enable them to live independently in the community, in areas including housing, vocational skills and life-skills training, education, advocacy and recreation.

The Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council, is an organization comprising more than 60 interfaith congregations and community-based

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**"There is a difference between saying all are welcome and welcoming people as long as they behave the way we want them to behave"**



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nonprofits, including CAU with an active list of over 2,000 community leaders. The council promotes inclusion of all people within the community, without regard to race, religion or disability, and creates a clearing house of faith-based, nonprofit and government community services available to the public, according to Blanchard.



"Some of our members have long been disconnected from any organized religion," Blanchard said. "In fact, in the past some have been bullied and shunned and made to feel unwelcome. Our mission is to enable our members to live fully integrated lives within the community and for many people an affiliation with a religion and a house of worship is an important part of community. We wanted to create an atmosphere that would facilitate that."



Carmine Pernini, pastor of the Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Rahway and coordinator of the Interfaith Council, said houses of worship often are homogeneous communities that may feel less than welcoming to newcomers, especially those who are perceived as different, which runs counter to the natural message of inclusion that should be the foundation of all religious communities.



"There is a difference between saying all are welcome and welcoming people as long as they behave the way we want them to behave," he said. "It's really about welcoming people and adapting ourselves to who they are. When you have a new person enter a religious community everything changes anyway. Each person brings their own personality and experiences and that's a good thing."



**Next meeting of AAIDD Region 9/NJ Chapter is Wednesday, May 8, 2019 at 1:00pm at Community Access Unlimited, 80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, New Jersey, (908)354-3040.**

**We look forward to seeing you there.**



**AAIDD REGION 9 AND NJ CHAPTER  
COMBINED MEETING  
Thursday, May 8, 2019**

**New Jersey Chapter Board**

Chairperson:	Sidney W. Blanchard
Vice President:	Bernadette Griswold
Secretary:	Sheila McDowell
Treasurer:	Aisha Arroyo
Member-at-Large:	Alvin Cox
Member-at-Large:	Walter Kalman
	Open
	Open

**AGENDA**

**Attendance:**

**Financial Report:**    Region IX:    \$ 4,334  
                                 NJ Chapter:    \$44,320

**Activities Report:**

- Disability Policy Seminar: April 8-10, 2019, Washington, DC
- Upcoming National AAIDD Conference: June 4-7, 2019, The Twin Cities, MN
- NJ Advocacy
- Changes in NJ DDD System
- Status of Region 9

**Call for Material for Region 9 and NJ Chapter Newsletter**

**AAIDD Committee Reports/Activities:**

- Group Dynamics
- Intellectual Disabilities:
- Nursing and Supports: HRST System in Action
- Positive Behavior Supports
- Relationships and Sexuality Committee
- Technology Supports: Chair
- Youth with DDD Committee: Chairs - Adolescent Network Newsletter
- Social Integration: Chairs - Religion Newsletter
- Employment Committee: Chairs
  - Conferences: Results/Reports

**Nominations and Selections**

- State
- Region

***President of AAIDD NJ Chapter and Region 9*****Community Access Unlimited Founder to Step Down from Executive Directorship**

***Sidney Blanchard, one of NJ's most influential nonprofit change-makers, returns to his community activist roots.***

ELIZABETH, NJ - In the 40 years since Sid Blanchard put down his state social work career to launch Community Access Unlimited (CAU), he has secured his place as a founding father of the movement to achieve civil rights for individuals with developmental disabilities. Now, with a multi-million dollar enterprise that has inspired decades of tangible social progress, Blanchard will retire as CAU's executive director and return to his grassroots origins.

He hands the keys over to Bernadette Griswold, whose 15-year tenure at CAU has prepared the agency for his transition to associate executive director of community relations. Blanchard's 70th birthday and Type 2 diabetes diagnosis were the impetus for the shift.

"I don't feel like having my fingers and toes cut off," Blanchard joked. "I would rather hand my position off to someone who will uphold the values and responsibilities I've built. The transition has been years in the making."

Blanchard, whose activism stretches back to the anti-war movement of the 1960s, has stood at the helm of the cause for disability rights since its genesis, affecting change on a state and national level. Armed with a \$90,000 grant to remove individuals from state institutions in 1979, his Volkswagen Beetle served as the command post for his mission. From these modest roots, CAU is now one of the largest human services agencies in New Jersey, boasting an operating budget of more than \$60 million, \$50 million-plus in assets and more than 1,000 employees. Across New Jersey, more than 5,000 individuals and their families benefit from the supports CAU provides.

"I get fired up inside and depend upon my sense of humor to see me through. Action is what counts. Talk is cheap," Blanchard told the Star-Ledger in 1994 when he was declared Jerseyman of the Week.

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That fire has yielded a considerable record of advocacy, innovation, and entrepreneurship within the nonprofit and human services landscapes over the years. Realizing early on the dangers of relying on a sole funding source, Blanchard has fought the byproducts of capitalism with capitalism to ensure the agency's survival.

He reinforced his operation with Community Access Institute, a multimillion-dollar independent nonprofit that provides funds to create affordable housing, avant-garde programming, and services. The Institute holds more than \$7 million in various funds that assist CAU's members and employees. Blanchard also established Creative Property Management, a real estate holding company that generates income to support CAU.

"I knew we had to carry out the mission unfettered by the bureaucratic tentacles that choke so many objectives," Blanchard said. "Creative Property Management allows us to provide more than 250 units of housing supports to about 600 people, as well as property management services to numerous condominium associations."

Blanchard's efforts have earned him high-level recognition in the form of multiple boards and gubernatorial appointments, including a national American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) fellowship. In 2010, he received acknowledgment for his work founding the Voluntary Employee Health Benefits Association (VEBA), a multimillion-dollar employer self-insurance program that continues to provide comprehensive enhanced benefits at little or no cost to CAU employees and their families.

"Sid has always led by example. There is no one who can say something is too hard, because he's done every job at this agency at some point or another," said Harold Poltrock, CAU board president. "I don't know anyone personally or professionally who has had such profound effect on so many people, whether it's the thousands of CAU's members or the untold thousands that have never met him but have benefitted from the socioeconomic changes he's implemented."

Today, guided by the same activist, community-oriented principles, CAU supports all who are disenfranchised, including youth within the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, seniors and veterans, people with affordable housing needs, and youth with disabilities. As for Blanchard, he is not so much slowing down as he is investing time in his oldest and strongest passion: hitting the pavement and organizing within the community.

"I'm looking forward to working more closely with our members and their families, getting on the ground in Trenton to advocate for our people," Blanchard said. "CAU has always been so much more than a social services organization to me — it's a movement to empower and liberate anyone who has ever been told they can't."

Source: <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/roselle-roselle-park/articles/community-access-unlimited-founder-to-step-down-from-executive-directorship-2>

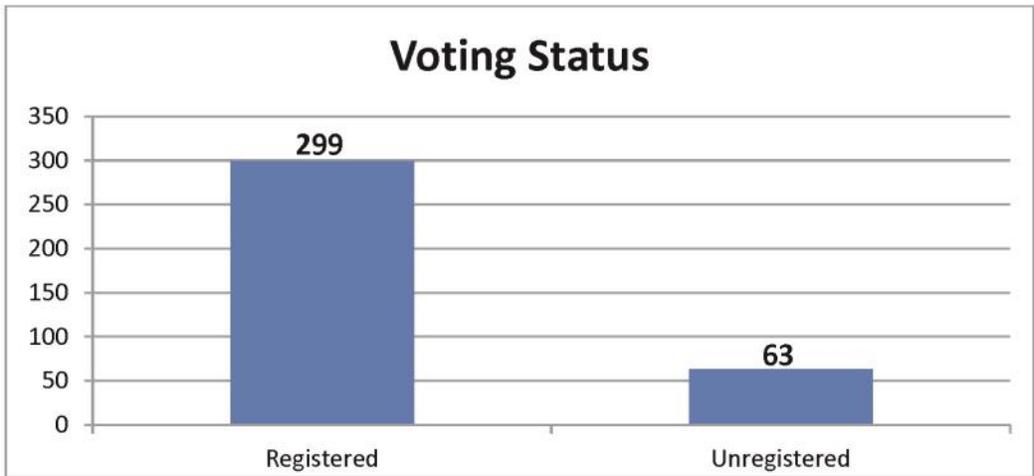


### About Community Access Unlimited

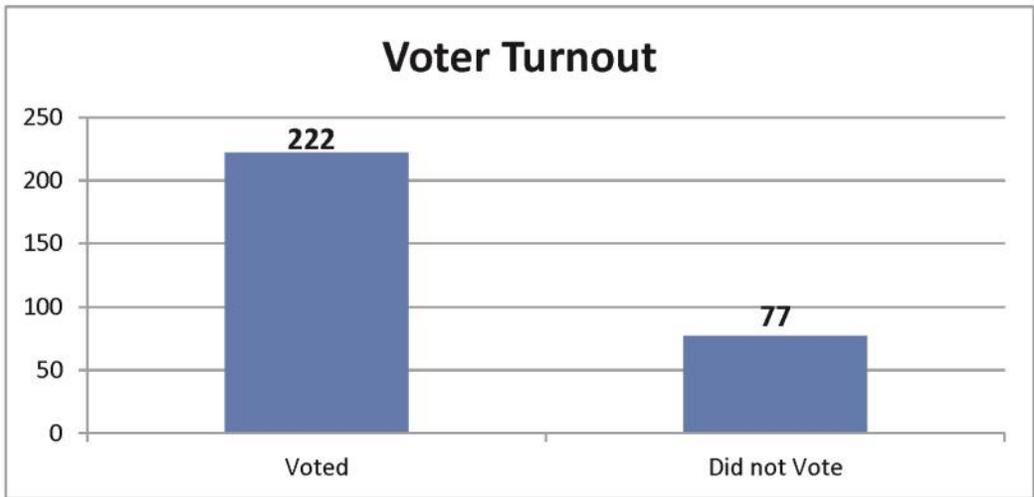
Community Access Unlimited (CAU), celebrating its 40th year in 2019, supports people with special needs in achieving real lives in the community. CAU gives a voice to adults and youth who traditionally have little power in society, assisting its members with housing, life skills, employment, money management, socialization, and civic activities. CAU also supports opportunities for advocacy through training in assertiveness, decision-making and civil rights. Currently serving more than 5,000 individuals and families, CAU continues to grow each year. For more information about CAU and its services, visit [caunj.org](http://caunj.org) or contact us at 908.354.3040, [info@caunj.org](mailto:info@caunj.org) or by mail at 80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202.

CAU Voting Results  
 Primary Election – June 5, 2018

Totals	362	Percentage
Registered	299	82.60%
Unregistered	63	17.40%



Registered Voters	299	Percentage
Voted	222	74.25%
Did Not Vote	77	25.75%



Union County voter Drive for People with Disabilities led to a greater participation in the primary and general election in New Jersey

# Bigotry in an upswing and organizing is the answer



"Kill retards" found drawn in cement on sidewalk

## Membership Types

### International Electronic

**Annual dues \$60** (open to those residing outside the US or Canada only)

*International Electronic* members receive access to electronic versions of *AJIDD*, *IDD*, and *Inclusion*, access to members-only web forums, delivery of electronic newsletters, and entitled to member discounts for meeting registration, book store purchases, and job postings. Members in this category are not eligible to hold office or vote in AAIDD elections.

### Basic

**Annual dues \$85**

*Basic* members receive access to electronic versions of *IDD* and *Inclusion*, access to members-only web forums, delivery of electronic newsletters, and are entitled to member discounts for meeting registration, book store purchases, and job postings. Members in this category are eligible to hold office and vote in AAIDD elections.

### Classic

**Annual dues \$135**

*Classic* members receive access to electronic versions of *AJIDD*, *IDD* and *Inclusion*, access to members-only web forums, delivery of electronic newsletters, and are entitled to member discounts for meeting registration, book store purchases, and job postings. Members in this category are eligible to hold office and vote in AAIDD elections.

### Standard

**Annual dues \$185**

*Standard* members receive delivery of hard copies of *AJIDD* and *IDD*, access to electronic versions of *AJIDD*, *IDD*, and *Inclusion*, access to members-only web forums, delivery of electronic newsletters, one complimentary item from the AAIDD catalog, and are entitled to member discounts for meeting registration, book store purchases, and job postings. Members in this category are eligible to hold office and vote in AAIDD elections.

### Premium

**Annual dues \$260**

*Premium* members receive delivery of hard copies of *AJIDD* and *IDD*, access to electronic versions of *AJIDD*, *IDD*, and *Inclusion*, access to members-only web forums, delivery of electronic newsletters, two complimentary items from the AAIDD catalog, and are entitled to member discounts for meeting registration, book store purchases, and job postings. Members in this category are eligible to hold office and vote in AAIDD elections.

### Corporate

**Annual dues \$600**

AAIDD offers a mechanism to enable organizations to bundle an unlimited number of their employee's individual membership fees to get discounts on those fees plus added perks for the organization. With *Corporate* membership, one Premium membership is provided to the CEO of the organization and a 20% discount on membership fees is applied (in all membership categories) for an unlimited number of employees. **In addition, Corporate members receive a free listing in the program, discounted exhibit booth fees, and 20% discount on registration fees for employees at AAIDD annual meetings.**

Corporate (Call 202-387-1968 ext 201 for assistance)

### Keeping Up With AAIDD



Like us on Facebook to connect with AAIDD and network with other disability professionals.



Twitter is a great way to stay connected to AAIDD. We regularly post information about upcoming events and publications in addition to keeping you updated on the latest in national disability news.



LinkedIn has the world's largest professional network on the Internet. Joining our group is a great way to connect with professionals in the field with whom you might not come in contact otherwise.



You will find a wide variety of videos on topics ranging from the justice system and intellectual disability to special education best practices to classification and intellectual disability.



Pinterest provides a space for users to organize and share images. We are continually building up our pinboards so you can share our images with others and spread the word about AAIDD news, events, and resources.

# Membership Application & Renewal



Mail or Fax To:  
8403 Colesville Road, Suite  
900, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Fax: 202-387-2193

## American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Name

Email address

Street address

Street address line 2

City

State

Zip code

Referred by:

Phone number

Student at:

(required for student dues discount)

### Member Categories

Basic

- \$85
- With Student Discount \$68

Classic

- \$135
- With Student Discount \$108

Standard

- \$185
- With Student Discount \$148

Premium

- \$260
- With Student Discount \$208

Corporate \$600 (Call for Details)

International Electronic \$60 (Outside US and Canada Only)

Total Annual Dues from above:

## Professional Interest Networks

Membership in each Interest Network is \$10 each except for Religion & Spirituality, (which receives an additional journal) and the Student and Early Career Professionals Network (which is free of cost.) Total the fees below.

- None
- Leadership/Management in Community Living
- Creative Arts Therapies
- Communication Disorders
- Direct Support Professionals
- Education
- Families
- Gerontology
- Health & Wellness
- International
- Legal Process & Advocacy
- Multicultural Concerns
- Psychology
- Religion & Spirituality (\$30)
- Research
- Social Work
- Sexual/Social Concerns
- Student & Early Career Professionals (No cost)
- Technology

Total interest network dues from above:

\$ 0.00

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## Donations (Optional)

Donation to Student Scholarship Fund

\$ 0.00

Donation to AAIDD

\$ 0.00

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**Total Amount Due (from all categories above)**

\$ 0.00

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Payment Information:

- Visa
- MasterCard
- AmericanExpress
- Discover
- Check (sent to AAIDD in USD)

Credit Card Information

Name on Card

Card Number

Expiration Date

Security Code

Signature

Billing Address (if different from above)

Name

Email address

Street address

Street address line 2

City

State

Zip code

Phone number

**Questions? Contact Laura Thorn at 202.387.1968 x 201 or lthorn@aaidd.org.**



80 West Grand Street  
Elizabeth, New Jersey  
07202-1447

Return Service Requested

Phone: 908.354.3040  
TTY/TTF: 908.354.4629  
Fax: 908.354.2665

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Say "Yes" to AAIDD. Join/Renew Today! [www.aaid.org](http://www.aaid.org)

*It's a powerful community, and  
that power is growing.*

