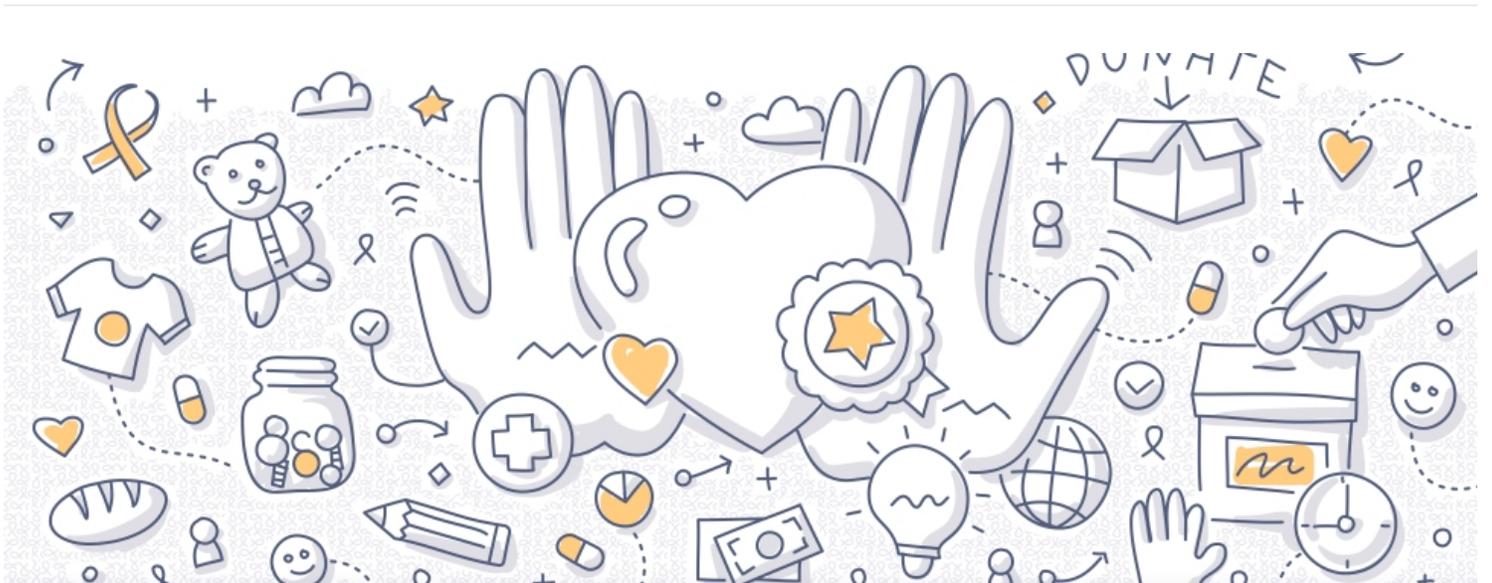


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Good Will Toward Men: Four nonprofits that inspire and empower (<http://www.utahbusiness.com/good-will-toward-men-four-nonprofits-inspire-empower/>)

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Utah is home to a thriving community of nonprofit organizations. Some are prominent, like Make-A-Wish or the Kimball Art Center, while others are smaller with a unique focus, such as the Bhutanese Community in Utah.

One thing they have in common is their desire to provide services or awareness for matters that need a platform and a voice. Here are a few of these crucial organizations that are going quietly through their days, changing lives in Utah.



(<http://www.utahbusiness.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Bear-River.jpg>)

Utah Rivers Council

As one of the driest states in the country, you'd think Utah would have a long history of water conservation efforts and legislation, but not only has the state been slow to adopt conservation laws, it has one of the highest rates of per-person water

use in the United States.

In 1995, when the Utah Rivers Council was founded, Utah didn't have an organization devoted to the networks and communities that rivers affect. With 11,000 miles of rivers in Utah, these vital corridors are a life-support system for the wildlife that live in the state.

Zach Frankel created and oversees the nonprofit as a way to protect the state's rivers to provide sustainable, clean water for residents and wildlife, and to address the way Utah residents, government agencies and businesses think about water conservation.

"When most people think about rivers, they think about fish, but people don't realize that 80 percent of Utah's wildlife species depend on rivers to exist," Frankel says. "We usually don't think about water conservation when it comes to rivers. We just turn on the tap and don't think about where the water comes from. We've tried to educate Utahns about the decisions being made about rivers and their uses."

The Utah Rivers Council crafted and passed the state's first water conservation legislation in 1998. The Water Conservation Plan Act required water suppliers to design a plan explaining how they would conserve water. When first enacted, suppliers were submitting three-page documents. Now, entities create 200-page water conservation plans to address the need for smart water use in Utah.

(<http://www.utahbusiness.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Provo-River-1.jpg>)

Protecting some of the most iconic waterways in the Intermountain West, including the Green and Colorado Rivers, the Utah Rivers Council is adamant about caring for this precious resource. Fed by rivers, the Great Salt Lake creates a habitat for millions of birds every year, but Frankel is worried that the availability of cheap water in Utah threatens this fragile ecosystem.



"One of the reasons businesses are coming to Utah is because the water is very inexpensive and there are no consequences for waste. We need to be careful as we continue to grow and have a vibrant economy that we don't destroy the reason they come here."

One of Frankel's goals is to phase out the property tax that keeps water cheap. "We don't pay property taxes to lower the cost of any other service. We've been pushing that since our inception and we didn't realize how difficult that would be."

The organization would also like universities, schools, government agencies and even city golf courses to be more efficient with water and to change the dialogue when it comes to conservation.

"We're not trying to discourage the use of water, we're trying to discourage the waste of water," says Frankel. "We all benefit when we save water. We all want to leave more water for the critters that cohabitate with us."

"And Justice For All"

Working through legal issues can be a nightmare, especially if you're unfamiliar with the legal system or you're struggling financially and don't know where to get good advice. That's where "And Justice For All" steps in.

The three nonprofits that make up the organization are dedicated to providing free legal services for veterans, seniors, people living in poverty, victims of domestic violence, minorities and individuals with disabilities.

Utah Legal Services, the Legal Aid Society of Utah and the Disability Law Center joined forces in 1998 to increase accessibility to legal services for underserved populations in the state by creating a one-stop legal service organization.

In 2002, the organizations made their partnership more convenient when they all moved into shared office space in downtown Salt Lake City. The consolidation of resources has saved the group about \$500,000 per year.

"We were the first in the state to undertake a joint legal campaign," says Kai Wilson, "And Justice For All" executive director. "We are quite unusual in the level of collaboration between partners. To actually work with people day in and day out and share resources without killing each other and giving up turf is very unusual. It's been impressive to me to watch these groups work together."

Before joining forces, the groups helped almost 16,000 people each year. Now they see more than 30,000 people come through the doors for legal help. With a collective staff of 110 employees, "And Justice For All" has become a vital legal resource.

Utah Legal Services specializes in poverty and family law, civil liberty issues, housing disputes and domestic violence cases. "For victims of domestic violence, we have a great network. We work with victim advocates throughout the state and those victims get referred to us ... You could be Ivanka Trump or the person down the street. Any person can be helped to get a protective order."

Legal Aid Services is the oldest of the three organizations, starting in 1922 with a focus on family and domestic issues in Salt Lake County. The Disability Law Center helps protect the rights of people in Utah with disabilities. "We do a lot of cross training with each other. Whenever possible, we try to tap into each other's knowledge," says Wilson.

While lawyers have an inherent understanding of how complicated the legal system can be, many people don't realize how intricate a court case can become. They often end up contacting a private attorney and incurring unnecessary expenses. Part of the challenge the organization faces is getting the word out to the community that they are available to help.

A new program being tested by “And Justice For All” will include a phone center that screens calls to identify a client’s needs and then matches them with an attorney for brief legal advice or direction. The pilot will start with family law issues but Wilson hopes to see the program expand to other legal areas.

“We are trying to continue to address unmet needs in the state and continue to increase resources,” she says. “We are only reaching about 25 percent of people in the state who need legal aid.”



<http://www.utahbusiness.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Kids-on-the-Move.jpg>**Kids on the Move**

It was 23 years ago that Scott Bean and his wife walked through the doors at Kids on the Move. Their daughter had been diagnosed with autism and they felt like their world had been rocked to the core.

“What parents really need when they walk in the door is hope. So many times they walk in and they’re devoid of hope. [Kids on the Move] blew our minds. So my heart has been in it for a long time.”

This year, the organization is celebrating its 30th anniversary, and Bean has been CEO for Kids on the Move for three years. His mission is to let parents know they don’t have to handle these difficult situations alone, that there’s a lot of valuable help.

Kids on the Move was started by two mothers, Karen Kahne and Brenda Winegar. They each had a child with Down syndrome but couldn’t find any programs that were geared toward their children. So they created their own. They started the Up With Downs Early Preschool, which evolved into a nonprofit that offers vital services to children and their families.

The Early Intervention Program works with children (from newborn to 3 years old) who have disabilities or mental delays. Trained workers go into the family’s home to do occupational therapy targeting speech and language, hearing and vision, nutrition training and physical therapy—all at little or no cost for eligible children. This in-house approach also helps parents work through a time where they can be grieving the loss of what they thought their family would be.

For older children, the Autism Center is designed for kids over 2 who have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders or other developmental delays. Each child in the program has a curriculum specifically created to address individual needs.

The Autism Center gives parents access to behavior consultants and other caring professionals to help their children develop skills that will improve their lives. “We have the best staff here,” Bean says. “People stay here for a long time because they love what they do. It’s good work and it’s necessary work. I’m lucky enough to be a part of that.”

<http://www.utahbusiness.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Kids-on-the-Move2.jpg>

Early Head Start reaches out to children in Utah County living below the poverty line. The organization works with kids usually through referrals, but is not a disability program. Offered to families at no charge, Early Head Start educates caregivers about parenting, nutrition and effective practices while providing comprehensive services geared toward keeping infants and toddlers on track for learning.

“A lot of studies show that if you’re not at a certain reading level at a certain age, you probably won’t catch up,” says Bean.

Finally, the Respite Care center is a lifesaver for parents who struggle with taking care of a child with demanding needs. The facility opens during off-hours so families can bring their children and drop them off for a few hours. Volunteers watch the children while the parents spend time together—a much needed break for parents and kids alike. Strengthening marriages is important to the program since divorce rates in these situations are sky high.

“I hear a lot of success stories,” Bean says. “We have people in the community all the time but most of the work happens in the home.”

NAMI Utah

If you told your family members you had been diagnosed with cancer, would they be embarrassed? Would they tell you going to a doctor wasn't necessary, that you had to find a way to heal yourself?

That type of response is unimaginable but it's something mentally ill people hear all the time and that's exactly why the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) was created. Jamie Justice, NAMI Utah executive director, wants that dialogue to change.

“If you have an earache you go to the pediatrician, or if you break a leg you go to the OR, but we're still frightened about getting help for mental illness,” Justice says. “There's still a great deal of stigma that if you have a mental illness you have something morally wrong with you. In a very real way, people are dying because of the way people think about mental illness in our society.”

NAMI has a network of community volunteers dedicated to helping the mentally ill and their families. The organization offers education and training to benefit people coping with mental illness by providing information, insight and non-judgmental support groups.

Suicide prevention is a big deal to NAMI. By offering school programs and mental health awareness assemblies, Justice hopes teens won't remain silent if they feel their friends are struggling with suicidal thoughts. The number one reason people don't get help is because of their feelings of shame.

Part of the outreach to teens is Youth M.O.V.E., where young people can engage in conversations about mental health and where professionals are educated in more effective ways of working with teens.

“We know our children and we know when their behavior is changing. A lot of people blow it off and think it's just teenage hormones. We don't do anything. We wait until it's almost chronic,” explains Justice.

Part of the problem is people don't know resources are available or don't how to navigate the mental health system. NAMI mentors help families find a starting point and guides them through the process. All services are free to people dealing with mental illness and their loved ones.

Justice herself has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. She understands the fear and stigma associated with a mental illness. She also understands that NAMI is a lifeboat that can literally save lives.

“Unfortunately, we're a really good secret. People don't think about NAMI until they have someone in their family with a mental illness,” she says. “When people think of mental illness they think of the homeless person on the street. When people get help, they can live normal lives. That's the message they don't hear.”



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