



# News Release

Timothy Jeffries, Director

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**MEDIA CONTACT**  
**Todd Stone**  
**602-542-2553**  
[ToddStone@azdes.gov](mailto:ToddStone@azdes.gov)

## **DES Celebrates International Day of Persons with Disabilities**

*Inclusion Matters: Access and Empowerment for people of all abilities*

**PHOENIX** – DES is proud to celebrate International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This United Nation’s event today is designed to promote awareness relating to disability issues and the importance of making basic rights and services inclusive and accessible to all. The Department of Economic Security is honored to serve persons with disabilities and their families through a multitude of programs.

[According to the United Nations](#), there are approximately one billion people living with disabilities worldwide. In some countries, those with disabilities still do not have equal access to basic needs such as transportation, education and employment. The International Day of Persons with Disabilities has been commemorated since 1992 to promote awareness and mobilize support for critical issues relating to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in society and development.

“DES is proud to celebrate International Day of Persons with Disabilities,” said Director Timothy Jeffries. “Arizona is nationally recognized for its best practices in serving individuals with developmental disabilities. For the fourth year in a row, United Cerebral Palsy has named our Division of Developmental Disabilities the nation’s best performing state when it comes to key outcomes for citizens with developmental disabilities. Inclusion not only matters, but is essential in providing the best quality of life for all in need.”

The DES Divisions of Developmental Disabilities, Employment and Rehabilitation Services, and Arizona Early Intervention Program, work together to provide client-centered best practices to individuals with disabilities. The opportunity to exercise rights and responsibilities of independent decision making and engagement in the community is vital. It is imperative that those with disabilities have access to equal rights to education, employment and freedom of choice for the location in which they live.

“The services offered by the Department are designed to ensure that people can achieve their maximum level of sustainable independence as contributing, responsible, and equal participants in society,” said Dr. Laura Love, Assistant Director for the Division of Developmental Disabilities. “The Department believes that people can be best supported in integrated community settings. The majority of our services and supports are tailored to meet the needs of individuals and their families at home and in community-based settings. When we assist people with disabilities and empower them to participate in and lead the process of design and development, their involvement creates opportunities for the entire community.”

To learn more about the programs and services available to individuals with disabilities and their families, please visit <https://des.az.gov/>.

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