

November is National Epilepsy Awareness Month

- There are different types of seizures and epilepsy.
- 1 in 10 people will have a seizure in their lifetime.
- 1 in 26 people will develop epilepsy in their lifetime.
- Epilepsy receives 10 times LESS funding than other brain disorders.
- Learn more at [Epilepsy.com](https://epilepsy.com)

Seizure First Aid Certification Training

The 90-minute Seizure Recognition and First Aid Certification is a formal training offered by the Epilepsy Foundation that teaches people:

- How to recognize signs of a seizure
- How to respond with proper seizure first aid
- When to call for help.

**ABLE New Mexico
Now Has
946
Active Accounts.
Go, New Mexico!**




Upcoming Training Dates for Live Instructor-Led Webinars

- November 23, 2021, at 2:00 pm MT ([register here](#))
- November 30, 2021, at 10:00 am MT ([register here](#))
- December 9, 2021, at 6:00 pm MT (*Certificación de Reconocimiento y Primeros Auxilios para Crisis Convulsivas: Entrenamiento – Sesión Virtual en Español; live instruction in Spanish; [registrar aquí](#)*)

When you click on the links above you will be directed to the Epilepsy Learning Portal. There you can create an account and get started on your way to becoming Seizure First Aid Certified.

Who Should be Seizure First Aid Certified?

While everyone should know basic seizure first aid, becoming Seizure First Aid Certified takes you further. You will learn how to recognize signs of a seizure and how to use the basic first aid steps in different settings and for different seizure types, and when medical help may be needed. Seizure First Aid Certification is designed for people who:

- Have a family member, loved one, or friend with seizures.
- Have a job where you provide care for people with seizures.
- Have a job where you work with the public or work with someone who has seizures.
- Coach or lead groups.
- Work, play, or live in areas or settings where seizures could occur. 

NM Commission for the Blind's Students in Transition to Employment Program

The Students in Transition to Employment Program (STEP) provides blind students with a carefully monitored and quality employment training experience. Blind students have traditionally not had an opportunity to engage in such work training, depriving them of the important benefits of student employment. STEP served 54 blind students ranging in age from 14 to 21.

Acquiring a positive attitude about blindness is essential for a blind person to achieve

the goal of becoming successfully employed. Therefore, STEP participants engaged in activities designed to reinforce blindness skills and to build self-confidence. The activities included hiking, horseback riding, going to movies, rock climbing, dining out, swimming, and trips to shopping malls. The students also participated in seminars and presentations from successful blind adult role models.



The New Mexico Commission for the Blind is seeking business owners and/or job coaches who would like to host a Student in Transition to Employment.

For more information please contact Daphne Mitchell at 505.383.2253 or Daphne.Mitchell@state.nm.us or Kelly Burma at 505.383.2277 or Kelly.Burma@state.nm.us. ✚



Champion of the Year: New Mexico is a gala event that unites and recognizes the community's most active leaders in the name of inclusion. The celebration is **Saturday, November 20, 2021, at 5:30 pm at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Albuquerque.**

Through raising funds and awareness for Best Buddies, our Champions generate countless opportunities for friendships, jobs, leadership development, and inclusive living for people with intellectual

and developmental disabilities (IDD). At the campaign's conclusion, we will join together to celebrate each other's accomplishments, honor the Champions' collective impact, and name the ultimate Champion of the Year!

Help us continue to provide these meaningful opportunities to people with IDD by supporting a Champion's campaign, purchasing tickets, becoming a corporate sponsor, or making a general donation to the cause. We hope you'll join us in this global movement.

All funds raised benefit Best Buddies, which is the world's largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical, and economic isolation of the

200 million people with IDD. Our programs empower the special abilities of people with IDD by helping them form meaningful friendships with their peers, secure successful jobs, live independently, improve public speaking, self-advocacy, and communication skills, and feel valued by society.

The IDD community that Best Buddies serves includes, but is not limited to, people with Down Syndrome, Autism, Fragile X, Williams Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, traumatic brain injury and other undiagnosed disabilities.

For more information, contact: Tessah Latson, Best Buddies International, 505.401.3242 or TessahLatson@bestbuddies.org, or visit <https://www.bestbuddieschampion.org/newmexico/>. ✚

Interview with Travis Davis, ABLE New Mexico Account Owner

By Heather Benavidez, ABLE New Mexico Coordinator

Travis Davis is a native New Mexican. He was also born with cerebral palsy. Overcoming the odds of adversity, he received two college degrees (a Bachelor of Arts in English from Azusa Pacific University and a Master's in Adapted Physical Education from the University of New Mexico) and is ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Coordinator certified. In 2015, Travis gave a TEDx Talk on social inclusion in education. The message was about the importance of having the courage to ask questions about a person's disability and strategies to appropriately do so. Over the years, Travis realized that his disability can be used for a positive purpose. He is also a local disability advocate as Chair of Albuquerque's ADA Advisory Council.

In his free time, Travis enjoys writing, volunteering, and recording his Off the Crutch podcast. In the podcast he details his experiences with cerebral palsy and interviews local and national disability advocates.

I had privilege of speaking with Travis about his brand-new ABLE New Mexico account.

Heather: Travis, thanks for talking with us today. How would you describe ABLE accounts?

Travis: In the of simplest terms, ABLE accounts give financial freedom to individuals living with disabilities; and in technical terms, they are accounts that allows us to save more money. At face value, they are a savings account that provides financial freedom.

Heather: How did you feel about the ABLE Act and ABLE accounts when you first learned of them?

Travis: I felt that it was an opportunity to save without worrying about keeping my benefits.

I felt happy and a sense of independence. I wasn't skeptical about this program because it was credible. I did a bit of research on the ABLE National Resource Center's website, and felt the information was very straightforward.

Heather: Do you have an ABLE New Mexico account?

Travis: Yes! I am a recent ABLE New Mexico account owner. I opened the account because I'm making extra cash that doesn't fit within the scope of my IRA. I consulted with my financial advisor before beginning the online application process.

Heather: The online account program is designed for easy



access and maintenance. How would you describe the application process and ongoing accessibility?

Travis: In terms of functionality, the application process is simple and straightforward; but that might be because I had all my necessary paperwork at hand. However, compared to other processes I've encountered—such as applying for benefits and recertifying—opening the ABLE New Mexico account is much easier.

Heather: How are you using your account?

Travis: I'm using it to invest and grow my money. I chose the Growth Option, which is the most aggressive of the five investment choices.

Heather: Thanks for taking the time to speak to us and offer your perspective on ABLE

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New Mexico accounts. Do you have any final words for our readers?

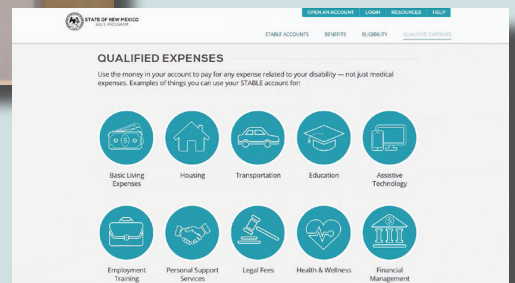
Travis: Sure. Some of your readers might not know that ABLÉ accounts are a bridge to SSDI, in terms of being able to work and gain work credits. The account program opens up the conversation for learning about financial literacy, especially in the world of disability. I think that having these tough conversations is important because our caretakers will one day be gone. The accounts offer the promise of financial independence, but without financial literacy, we're missing an important component. Overall, I am really happy with the account program, but an app would be very nice.

It's said that if you know one person living with a disability, then you know one person living with a disability. This is often said when discussing the myriad programs within the disability community and how there is never a one-size-fits-all solution to address all concerns. However, ABLÉ New Mexico accounts do offer a way for individuals to save and invest money without risking eligibility for needs-based public benefits, and the State Treasurer's Office is proud to offer this program to New Mexico's families. ✚

ABLE New Mexico YouTube Video

"Saving for the Future of Your Child with a Disability"

<https://youtu.be/5KzieaoyKSQ>



Tune in each week to the "Off the Crutch" podcast for an honest and truthful perspective from a disabled lens. This show is hosted by TEDx Speaker and Certified ADA Coordinator Travis Davis, M.S. More information at <https://www.offthecrutch.com/>

New Mexico ABLÉ Online Demo

With Ronn Jaish

<https://youtu.be/kcDx0en7khc>

You can email Ronn at info@ABLEreport.com


Do you know a person or an organization who would be interested in an **ABLE New Mexico** presentation? For more information, contact **Heather Benavidez** at (505) 639-3525 or heather.benavidez@state.nm.us

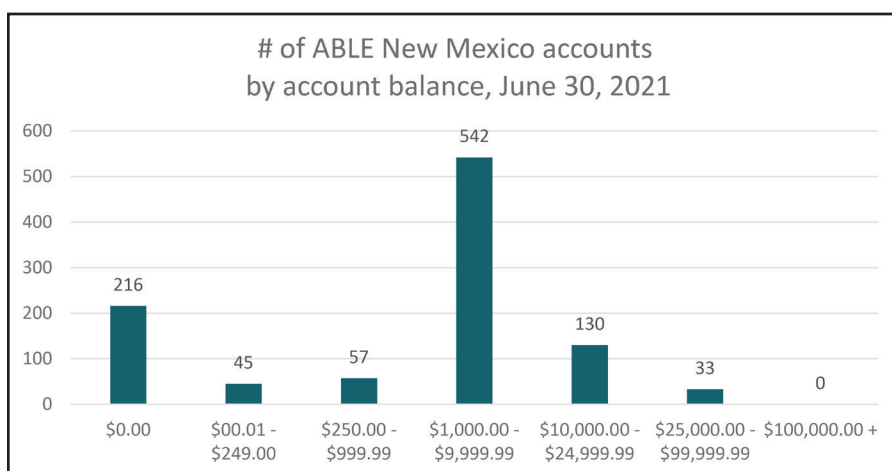
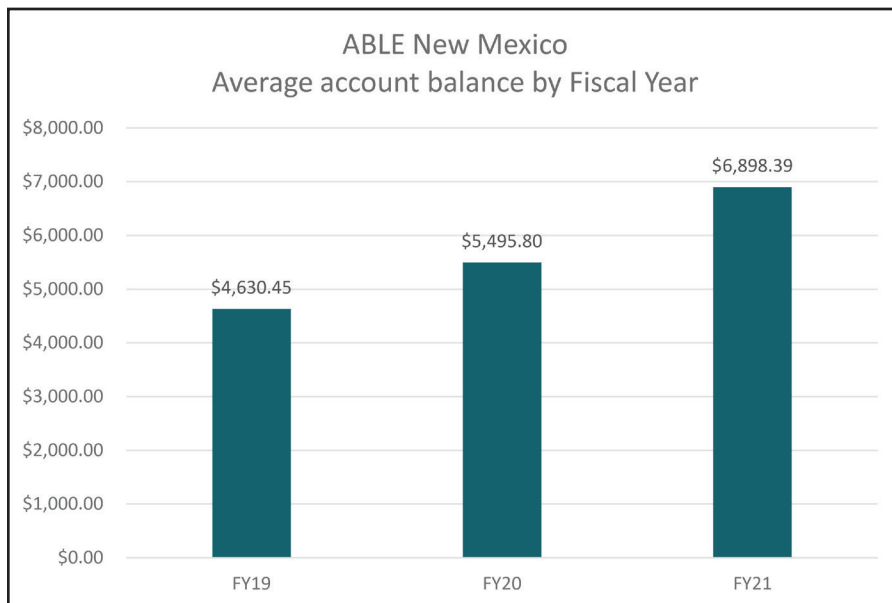
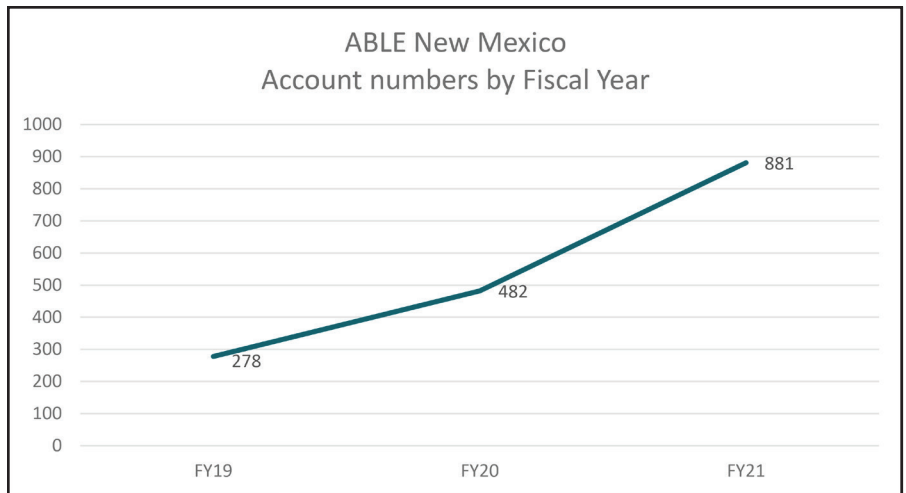
ABLE New Mexico by the Numbers

The State Treasurer's Office launched the ABLE New Mexico savings and investment account program on January 18, 2018, with 30 existing accounts.

By June 30, 2019, account numbers had increased by over 800% for a total of 278. By the end of fiscal year 2020 (FY20), account numbers increased by 73%, for a total of 482. At the end of FY21, our accounts totaled 881, for an increase of 83%.

Average balances have steadily increased by nearly 19% from FY19 to FY20, and nearly 26% from FY20 to FY21.

69% of ABLE New Mexico account owners have assets totaling from \$1,000 to \$99,999. 



People First of Abq's Wacky Wednesday

Our meetings are held on the first and third Wednesday of every month at 10:30 am.

To join, visit <https://zoom.us/j/777552491> or log into your Zoom account and enter meeting number 777552491.

Prefer to call in?
That number is
+16699006833,,777552491#.

People First of Albuquerque's mission is to educate people with disabilities that they have the rights and the power within them to speak up for themselves.

ABQ People First Officers

- Roel Adamson, ABQ People First President
- Amelia Dickey, ABQ People First Vice President

ABQ People First Support

- Wendy Corry DDC
- Jenny Bartos, DDSD
- Veronica Chavez-Neuman, The Arc of NM