



STRATEGIES TO EMPOWER PEOPLE

EMPOWERING INDEPENDENCE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY



Strategies to Empower People (STEP) is an organization dedicated to supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in living fulfilling, independent, and self-directed lives. With a wide range of programs including Supported and Independent Living Services, and Employment Supports, STEP provides person-centered assistance tailored to each individual's goals and abilities. Guided by core principles of dignity, choice, and empowerment, STEP believes in creating opportunities for people to lead their own lives with confidence and purpose. The integration of Assistive Technology has further strengthened these values enhancing independence, promoting safety, and opening new pathways for communication, learning, and daily living.



Jay Kolvoord

Jay, CEO of Strategies to Empower People (STEP), brings over 30 years of experience in the field of developmental services, combining deep industry knowledge with a passion for innovation and inclusion. As the driving force behind STEP's participation in the Assistive Technology Pilot Program through the California Department of Developmental Services, Jay played a central role in getting the program up and running. He ensured staff had the training, structure, and resources needed to successfully launch and sustain the initiative. Under his leadership, STEP one of only three agencies selected statewide has developed a model program that integrates technology to enhance independence, safety, and quality of life for individuals with intellectual and physical disabilities. Jay's decades of experience and hands-on leadership continue to strengthen STEP's mission and advance the use of assistive technology as a powerful tool for empowerment.



Joaquin Saucedo

Joaquin, an Assistive Technology Manager at STEP, plays a vital role in the Assistive Technology Pilot Program through the Department of Developmental Services. He works directly with individuals to identify, set up, and customize a wide range of assistive devices including smart home tools, adaptive appliances, safety detection systems, and health monitoring technologies such as glucose meters, blood pressure cuffs, and medication dispensers. Joaquin also provides personalized training, troubleshooting, and ongoing support to ensure each person can confidently use their technology to increase independence, safety, and quality of life. His commitment and technical expertise have been instrumental in the growth and success of STEP's Assistive Technology Program, where he continues to make a meaningful impact every day.



Jordan Bluford

Jordan, is an Assistive Technology Specialist at Strategies to Empower People (STEP), working alongside Joaquin to advance STEP's Assistive Technology Program through the Department of Developmental Services Pilot. He helps individuals set up and learn to use a range of assistive devices from smart home tools to health and safety monitoring systems—empowering greater independence and confidence. Jordan also ensures the program reflects STEP's principles of inclusion, empowerment, and choice by keeping staff and participants informed, involved, and heard about changes, challenges, and successes. His collaborative approach helps technology truly enhance the lives of those STEP supports.

Website
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