

## Reaching People with Disabilities through Healthy Communities

James Setzer, Former Director Umatilla County Health Department

### **This project has impacted my life because:**

By leading the County Health Department's participation in this project I learned a tremendous amount about how built environment is a public health, equity, and access issue for a large portion of my community that often does not have a voice or advocates. It taught me personally to see and understand disability and access issues in a way I did not before I had the privilege to work with community members who have disability and access obstacles in their everyday life. I see my community and world in a new, more inclusive way, and am reminded of the need to look out for others.

### **The most influential policy, system, or environmental change of this project to me was:**

The environmental change of placement of the wheelchair charging stations throughout the county. They assist those in wheelchairs so they will not be impeded in their desire to get out and participate in the life of our community because of having to worry about their wheelchair batteries running down. The stations also were a symbol to the community that the health department was listening to their concerns and working together to make things better.

### **As a result of this, I/we:**

Have made our county more open to the participation of those with mobility problems. They too can take advantage of what Umatilla has to offer.

### **What was the emotional connection, self-efficacy, or "ah-ha" moment for this project?**

Working with Darrin Umbarger was, for me, an honor and privilege. His attitude and ability to articulate the concerns and needs of the disabled community is truly great to see and exciting to support. He is a leader in our community and an equity champion. It is difficult not to be inspired by him.

*Please note that testimonials may be edited for clarity by the NACDD Communications Department.*