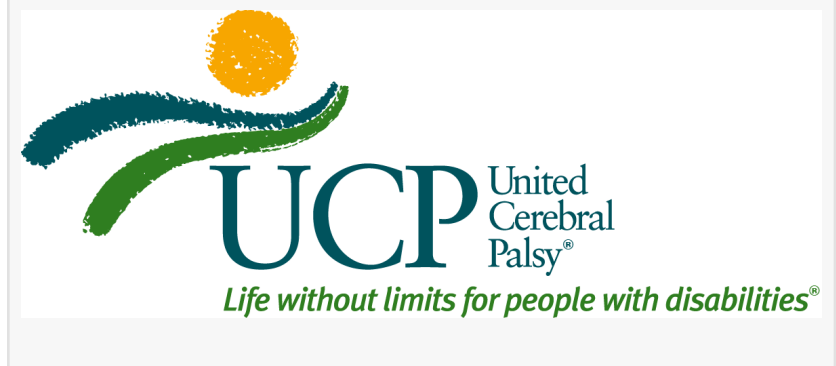


United for Impact: UCP Leaders Gather to Strengthen Services and Celebrate Progress

Advocacy and innovation took center stage as United Cerebral Palsy leaders convened to strengthen programs and opportunities for people with disabilities.

VIENNA, VA, UNITED STATES, May 13, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [United Cerebral Palsy \(UCP\)](#), a leader in

providing resources and assistance to individuals with disabilities, proudly hosted its 2025 Annual Conference from April 27-29 in New Orleans, bringing together affiliate leaders, advocates, and changemakers for three days of connection, collaboration, and bold vision. With the energy of the Crescent City as a backdrop,



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*UCP President and CEO
Armando Contreras*

attendees engaged in powerful sessions focused on leadership development, program innovation, advocacy, fundraising, marketing, and peer-to-peer learning — all grounded by a shared commitment to building a more inclusive future for people with disabilities.

“This conference was more than an event — it was a catalyst,” said UCP President and CEO Armando Contreras. “We witnessed leaders from across our network step into conversations with courage, creativity, and a deep sense of purpose. Whether exploring the impact of artificial

intelligence on services or strategizing to defend Medicaid, this community showed what it means to lead with heart and drive collective impact.”

The event featured over a dozen workshops and panels, including a standout discussion on employment pathways for people with disabilities. Affiliate and social enterprise leaders shared real-world insights on person-centered planning, employer partnerships, vocational training, and inclusive workforce development, offering attendees both inspiration and practical tools to expand opportunity in their communities.

“The UCP Annual Conference reminded me that we’re not alone in this work,” said Colleen Crispino, president and CEO of UCP of Long Island. “Every session sparked new ideas, but more

importantly, it gave us momentum. I'm leaving with more than a notebook full of strategies — I'm leaving with a renewed sense of community in our network."

In addition to dynamic learning sessions, critical advocacy discussions took place during the conference. Affiliate leaders and UCP's federal policy consultants from The Porter Group led frank, forward-looking conversations around Medicaid, disability rights, and navigating today's rapidly shifting policy landscape.

"Medicaid is the most comprehensive system we have to support people with disabilities across every stage of life," said Andrea Stoesz, director of external affairs at Gillette Children's and chair of [UCP's Public Policy Committee](#). "It's not just a funding source — it's the cornerstone of community living, health equity, and economic stability. Disruptions to this program won't just impact care access; they carry real human and fiscal consequences. That's why the conversations at this year's conference were so powerful — we're not just responding to policy shifts but proactively shaping strategies to protect what matters most."

The conference also celebrated extraordinary individuals and partners whose leadership and service embody UCP's mission. Honorees included:

- Janeen Latin (UCP Central Pennsylvania), recipient of the Kathy O. Maul Leadership Award
- Janet Chandonnet (UCP of Mobile), recipient of the Service Excellence Award
- U.S. Senator Ruben Gallego (Arizona), recipient of the Legislative Award
- Jazz Pharmaceuticals, recipient of the Chair Award

"UCP is a network of action," said Contreras. "When we gather, we don't just talk — we build. We challenge each other to grow, to innovate, and to lead. That's what this conference was about, and it's what drives us forward every day."

As the conference closed, excitement was already building for what's next: UCP officially announced its 2026 Annual Conference, which will take place April 27-29 in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. With the theme "United in the North," the organization looks forward to expanding its impact and bringing even more voices into the conversation.



Throughout the event, leaders from across the United Cerebral Palsy Network explored leadership development, program innovation, fundraising and marketing strategies, advocacy, and more, all aimed at strengthening organizations and building more inclusive communities.

The 2025 UCP Annual Conference was made possible by the generous support of these proud sponsors who are dedicated to UCP's mission to promote the independence and inclusion of people with cerebral palsy and other intellectual and developmental disabilities: MassMutual, Jazz Pharmaceuticals, Philadelphia Insurance Companies, Waymo, Google Accessibility, and Mutual of America Financial Group.

About United Cerebral Palsy

United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) was founded in 1949, and today, its network of affiliate organizations in the United States and Canada provides a wide range of services annually to more than 150,000 children and adults with cerebral palsy and other disabilities. These services include information, resource referral, advocacy, research, educational instruction, early intervention, therapies, job coaching, integrated employment, home and community-based services, recreational opportunities and housing assistance. UCP is committed to the mission that all people with disabilities should be treated as equal members of an inclusive society. Learn more at ucp.org.

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