

## 2020 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire for Developmental Disabilities

Name: Danielle Garbe Reser

District: 16

Position: State Senate



***1. If you have a personal connection or professional experience with someone who has a developmental disability, would you describe its impact on you?***

I have both personal and professional experience with the developmental disability community and appreciate the opportunity to connect with your members and learn from their experiences. My husband is the guardian for his older brother, David, who has Down syndrome. My mother-in-law, LaVonne Reser, was a big advocate for David and other families to ensure they had support networks and services, from schools to housing and work, including in partnership with The ARC. We also have a niece with disabilities who receives support from her parents, so I see the needs of our family members both as individuals who are part of the disability community and as family members taking on the roles of care providers.

Through my previous work as CEO of Sherwood Trust, a private foundation that invests in our community, I was part of projects involving three organizations in our area that serve our disability community. Lillie Rice has had on-site work opportunities for years that many families have appreciated. During my time at Sherwood Trust, we helped invest in their new program that has been successful in placing more individuals directly in community jobs. At Valley Residential Services, we invested in a new computer system to help reduce their costs and improve services. We were also partners with the Walla Walla Valley Disability Network (WWVDN), City of Walla Walla, and the Noon Rotary Club to create our town's first playground that meets a range of needs of children, from wheelchair-friendly swings to fenced-in play areas that allow for safe areas to run. We made sure the program was designed with input from families about their needs and it resulted in a great facility for the whole community.

***2. What are your top three legislative priorities and how would you help people with developmental disabilities in them?***

**Strong Starts for Kids** -- We need access to quality child care and early learning options for all children, including those with developmental disabilities. These are key investments we can make both for individuals to set them up for success in school and for families who need these support systems so they can be at their jobs.

**Resilient Economy** - We need an economy that can weather a storm without strong shocks to our communities. We can build more resilient systems by investing in infrastructure that gets people back to work and ensures we have ways to get goods to market. Many of our towns are not ADA compliant, and part of the investment in roads can ensure we have better, more accessible sidewalks.

**Accessible, Affordable Health Care** - Families need access to a full range of health care services and they need affordable options for health care coverage. I will be a champion for making sure our region, and particularly our rural communities, have access to the providers they need for physical, mental, or behavioral care in English and Spanish. Keeping our health care systems strong benefits all of us and ensures that individuals with disabilities will benefit from having access to the care they need closer to home and do not have additional travel or cost burdens to find the support they need.

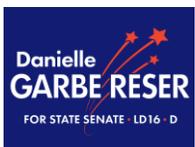
***3. With the current economic crisis, how would you protect services that people with I/DD and their families need?***

We need to approach the difficult budget environment ahead with an equity lens in mind, prioritizing funds for those most affected and maintaining investments in core services in education and health care in particular. I'd welcome conversations with individuals with I/DD and their families to learn more about the support they'd like to see from our legislature. I am particularly interested in better understanding how kids and families with I/DD are adjusting to learning virtually and what their needs might be. We need our schools and education systems to be inclusive, welcoming environments for kids.

***4. Is there other information you'd like constituents with developmental disabilities and their family and friends to know?***

I have dedicated my life to serving our country and our communities, first as a diplomat in both Republican and Democratic administrations for nearly 14 years and then as CEO of Sherwood Trust from 2015-2020. Originally from Moses Lake, I first moved to Walla Walla to attend Whitman, then moved for my diplomatic career, and after returning to the region met and married Todd, a fifth generation farmer in Walla Walla.

I love Eastern Washington and want to see our region thrive. I am running to build bridges between Eastern and Western Washington and our rural and urban communities and to bring common sense, community-driven, and fiscally responsible solutions to Olympia. We need a strong advocate in the State Senate to fight for the resources our region and our residents need. I lead by bringing people to the table to tackle problems together, and you would have an open door with me for your concerns, ideas, and suggestions. I'd be honored to earn your vote and support so I can serve you as your next State Senator.



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