

# Utah's First Lady Headlines Disability Advocacy Day

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01/18/2022



Utah First Lady Abby Cox.

Photo courtesy of the Office of the Governor

## Event Also Includes Speaker on Intersectionality of Disability

Disability Advocacy Day is this Wednesday--and it will include two high-profile speakers. You can [register for the event](#) before January 19. After the 19th, you can view their presentations online, so check back here for the links!

### Abby Palmer Cox

Abby Palmer Cox is the event's keynote speaker. She became Utah's first lady when her husband Spencer J. Cox was sworn in as governor on January 4, 2021. She and Governor Cox, her high school sweetheart, have been married for 25 years.

As Utah's first lady, Abby hopes to inspire Utahns to break down the barriers that separate people from treating one another as equals. She is an outspoken advocate for "getting proximate," connecting through our differences, and combating the empathy crisis our country is facing. Abby's initiative is called "Show Up", and she uses her platform to convene, contribute to, and champion projects related to emotional self-reliance, service, foster care and sporting opportunities for children who live with intellectual disabilities. Both she and Spencer graduated from North Sanpete High School and Snow College. He followed her to Utah State University where she earned her degree in Special Education with a dual emphasis in Early Childhood and Severe Disabilities.

Abby speaks at 12:30, and a recording of her presentation will be made available after the event.

### Lydia Ocasio-Stoutenburg

Dr. Lydia Ocasio-Stoutenburg will speak on the intersectionality of disability--or the places where disability overlaps with other areas of discrimination like race, gender, class or sexual orientation. Her presentation is at 11:25.

Dr. Ocasio-Stoutenburg is a program manager for the [Step Up AT Program](#), with a focus on research and community engagement. She is a qualitative researcher, parent, and community advocate for children with disabilities in Miami, FL and their families. She received her Ph.D. in special education from the University of Miami and holds master's degrees in biology and bioethics. She is also the co-author of two books on caregiver advocacy across cultures, languages, disabilities, and other social identities. You can find her [books on family advocacy on Amazon](#).