

4 The Road Ahead...

Change is in the air. As services for people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD) are scrutinized, the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCCDD) continues to represent the interests of the 172,000 people who benefit most when change is driven by best practice and "best policy."

Among the NCCDD's latest initiatives is the development of a model for medical and health care "homes" that meets the unique needs of people with I/DD and their families. The "home" in this case is not bricks and mortar, but is a model coordinating high quality, long-term and primary health services and supports across a lifetime. The NCCDD will award funds to meet this goal in the near future. In concert with the state's emergency management system, the Council is also advancing improved emergency preparation strategies, such that first responders are aware of specific issues people with I/DD face in emergencies.

Recognizing the success of the Advancing Strong Leadership in Developmental Disabilities initiative,

the Council has approved funding for a second year. This innovative curriculum, from the University of Delaware's National Leadership Consortium on Developmental Disabilities, inspires, informs and motivates "next generation" leaders from NC's service provision, management and advocacy sectors.

To address the dramatically large disparity between unemployment rates for people with I/DD and the general population, the Council is acting on several fronts. It is an active supporter of the North Carolina Employment First initiative, through its work with the State Employment Leadership Network; its "Reaching the Summit of Success" initiative; and a soon-to-be initiative with the state's Department of Public Instruction. The goal of these efforts is to change attitudes and to encourage employers to tap into the talents of the workforce of people with disabilities.

NCCDD Chair and NC Business Leadership Network founding member Ron Reeve is a proven leader in efforts to increase employment opportunities, pressing for jobs at competitive wages in

integrated, community settings. Increasing employment for people with I/DD is a major priority of the Council, and will be stressed in connection with Disability Employment Awareness Month in October.

National Direct Support Professionals (DSP) Week arrives September 8 to 13. The NCCDD notes that quality services and supports begin with the informed, responsive, empowering interactions between people and their frontline workers.

Finally, the NCCDD is deeply committed to supporting people with disabilities and families in the state's efforts to advance Medicaid reform.

As a champion for positive systems change, the NCCDD will continue to make its mark, such that people with I/DD and their families have every opportunity to live good lives in welcoming communities.

Sincerely,



Holly Riddle, J.D., M.Ed.
Executive Director, NCCDD



Catalyst for Change

SUMMER 2013

NEWS OF THE NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



"Shout Out" for Direct Support Professionals

Too often people who make important contributions to the wellbeing of others don't get the respect and credit they deserve. That is why we look to Direct Support Professionals (DSP) Week to help correct that.

The week of September 8th will be Direct Support Professionals Week, and the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities joins with the U.S. Senate in extending this honor.



NCCDD member Renate Macchirole, who has long provided support services to people in Dare County, says it is most fitting to recognize those who actually do the work. "It is already difficult to find qualified candidates for these positions and projections suggest there will be a significant shortage of DSPs in the future," said Macchirole.

Aware of the vital role DSPs play, the Council has intensified its focus on the issue under its 2011-2016 State Plan. The executive director of the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals, Joseph Macbeth, spoke to the Council in May and will be working with the NCCDD to establish a chapter of the group in North Carolina. Key themes of the Alliance are fostering increased professionalism, enacting a code of ethics and increasing opportunities for growth.

Ms. Macchirole will serve as the Council's ambassador during the shout-out for Direct Support Professionals Week in North Carolina.

Hiring people to do the job

The rate of unemployment for people with disabilities is alarmingly high, more than twice that of the general population, and the problem of joblessness among people with intellectual or other developmental disabilities is the highest of all, at about 70 to 80 percent. Observing that a job and career opportunity is often the key step toward self-determination and upward movement on the economic ladder, NCCDD Chair Ron Reeve says action on the problem is needed now.

"It is not enough to just talk about the issue, but we have to change the pattern and get people into jobs," he said. "We need to demonstrate to employers that people with disabilities can perform well in jobs in the community if only given a chance."

The Council has funded initiatives that are designed to change perceptions, practices and policies to

address this situation. It will make use of the national Disability Employment Awareness Month in October to promote the abilities and value of people with disabilities in the workplace.

Reeve noted North Carolina's

Business Leadership Network (NCBLN) is a beacon for change in the workplace and endorsed its efforts. The NCBLN has a significant number of the state's largest employers committed to increasing the hiring of people with disabilities. Companies such as Bank of America, Duke Energy, IBM Lenovo,

Eaton and Lowe's are key members.

"We will need to broaden efforts across the state to reach medium-sized and smaller companies, since that is where most jobs will be created, or where existing positions need to be filled," said Reeve.

As part of a series of initiatives to

Hiring People, see page 2



NCCDD can help fund NC conferences

Aware that presentations on intellectual and other disabilities (I/DD) can provide valuable learning experiences and a way for the Council to advance its mission, the NCCDD makes funding available to make exceptional speakers on key topics possible at numerous, statewide conferences each year..

"The Council supports presentations that provide new insights into issues affecting people with I/DD and family members. This is often the way that the NCCDD

introduces innovations in policy and practice into the state," said Executive Director Holly Riddle. Ms Riddle emphasized that experts from the professional, parent and self-advocacy community have all been among the speakers sponsored by the NCCDD.

The NCCDD has helped fund keynote presenters at diverse state meetings as well as national meetings, most recently the 2012 American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Conference in Charlotte.

"Catalyst" - An instrument for change

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Emergencies? Are you prepared?



When it comes to emergencies, "Everyone goes back to Floyd," said Chelle James with the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management (NCDEM). She refers to the September 1999 hurricane that flooded rivers and creeks, drowning 57 people and destroying crops, animals, homes and businesses.

James is the human service program manager with the NCDEM, a statewide agency that recently received a grant from the NCCDD. The NCCDD released funds with the goal of enhancing emergency response to individuals with disabilities.

The ReadyNC.org website provides tips so people with disabilities can

remain independent and have choices, even in an emergency:

- ✓ Consider the technology, service providers, service animals, health-related items and special devices needed daily.
- ✓ Have a support network of people who understand your emergency plan and kit contents; give one person the key to your home; have a transportation plan.
- ✓ Contact your community response team about your specific needs to stay independent.
- ✓ Plan on how you would survive for a short time, if alone without electricity.
- ✓ Create an emergency kit that will

allow you to survive for 72 hours.

- ✓ Register with the Red Cross Safe & Well* program; give your password to relatives and friends to locate you in a shelter.
- ✓ Complete the emergency medical/family contact information form so others are aware of your specific medical needs and contacts.
- ✓ Talk with medical and in-home services and how to obtain those services in a disaster.

"Preparedness is everyone's responsibility," said James. "The more prepared you are, the faster the response and recovery."

* go to <https://safeandwell.communityos.org>

Call for 2013 Hefner award nominees

Nominations for the prestigious Hefner Award will be accepted through September 27. This honor recognizes a North Carolinian with intellectual or developmental disabilities, or a family member, who has made significant contributions to the quality of life for individuals with I/DD.

The award was named for Jack B. Hefner, an NCCDD member for 22 years. Mr. Hefner was widely known as "Big Jack," said NCCDD Executive

Director Holly Riddle. "His perseverance, kindness, and quick wit and ability to bring people together made his advocacy the gold standard in improving the lives of people with I/DD."

The award will be presented at the November Council meeting in Cary.

Applications can be found on the Council's website, nccdd.org/hefner or obtained by contacting the Council office, 919-850-2901 or toll-free 800-357-6916.

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advance competitive, integrated employment, the Council is funding several initiatives that will make a difference. In partnership with the Department of Public Instruction, NCCDD's funds will advance strategies in North Carolina's schools that will improve the expectations for young adults with intellectual disabilities as they leave high school. The NCCDD has also provided funding to support the expansion of Project SEARCH, an internship program that gives youth a chance to demonstrate their skills and move into the workforce. Initiatives like these will better prepare young adults with intellectual and other developmental disabilities for competitive jobs and careers in the community.

Rossi Fund expands reach

Valuable assistance to help advance individual understanding and self-advocacy is available through the Jean Wolff-Rossi Fund for Participant Involvement. Upcoming educational conferences are listed on the website and a "Buddy Scholarship" is explained to encourage two people from a community to jointly attend to return with ideas to better their community.

Scholarships reimbursements may include costs such as training fees, transportation, personal assistance and child care up to \$600. Applications are available online at nccdd.org/services/rossi_fund

Joshua Strasburg added to NCCDD staff

Joshua Strasburg is the newest member of the staff at NCCDD, joining as a systems change manager in July. Strasburg comes to the Council from The Arc of Orange County in Chapel Hill, where he was the supervisor of adult services.

Earlier, he held posts with North Carolina Neuropsychiatry and The Charles House Association.

Strasburg served as an Airborne Infantryman with the U.S. Army, based at Fort Bragg, N.C., and Camp Greaves, Korea.

Strasburg has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.



Preparation of this newsletter was funded by the United States Department of Health and Human Services under provisions of Public Law 106-402. The contents do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of the US Administration on Developmental Disabilities or the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

New members bring advocacy, parent involvement, more

A number of new members have been appointed to the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities by the governor, and are eager to share their expertise on behalf of the 172,000 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities that NCCDD represents.

Kelly Woodall



Wake County self-advocate Kelly Woodall said she believes everyone

needs to be educated about people with I/DD. "Sometimes people dance around the issue of disability and are afraid to discuss it, be open about it, because it's still a hush, hush topic," she said. Prior to her appointment, Woodall was the executive director of the Association of Self-Advocates of NC.

Outgoing and vocal, Woodall said she feels she has a leg up on how the state works regarding supports for people with disabilities and the required paperwork. "Systems typically don't change until someone gets hurt or abused," she explains, "but the Council embraces the belief that things can be changed for the better before something negative happens."

Senator Ellie Kinnaird



Also appointed to the Council is State Senator Ellie Kinnaird, a veteran

legislator who has served nine terms in the NC General Assembly. She represents Chatham and Orange counties.

An attorney, Sen. Kinnaird serves on the Health Care and the Appropriations on Justice and Public Safety committees, as well as the Judiciary II and Agriculture committees.

She was the 2008 winner of the North Carolina Rehabilitation Association's "C. Odell Tyndall Award" for Outstanding Legislative Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities. In 2002, Sen. Kinnaird was recognized for her leadership by the Governor's Advocacy Council, which was later succeeded by Disability Rights North Carolina.

Kerri Bennett Eaker



Another new member, Kerri Bennett Eaker, brings nearly 20 years of experience working with families

and children with I/DD. She has an adult son with disabilities and lives in Buncombe County.

Bennett Eaker has been heavily involved with the Family Support Network. "My focus through all these years has been with the whole family, how disability affects the parent, as well as the siblings and the person him or herself," she said.

The divorce rate for families with children with or at risk for disabilities is 75 percent, she explains. Respite time for parents and siblings can help keep marriages together.

There are many resources in

North Carolina for people with disabilities, but people need to be educated about them, Bennett Eaker said. Still, much work remains to be done at the local level, she added, and there is a need to get businesses more involved in providing employment for people with disabilities.

Anna Cunningham



Another parent, and new Council member from Wake County, Anna Cunningham brings a wealth of experience from raising two children with disabilities who are now adults. She said family dynamics involving people with disabilities are often not discussed, but families do feel pressure. "Some dynamics involve feelings of failure, wishing that you could do more," she said.

The system is complicated, says Cunningham, and challenging to understand. There is a need for greater clarity in the rules that define what services and supports are to be funded.

Cunningham says her goal on the Council is to help direct funding toward the right initiatives, promote the provision of the right resources in the right amount and spur efforts to "cross pollinate" ideas. She references "ignition points," or areas where great growth and paradigm shifts can occur within a whole community. "That's really what we're after."



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