

Report to the DD Council
From the Advocacy Center
March, 2010

1. Legislative advocacy. We are trying to convince the legislature to fund the Community Living Ombudsman Program (CLOP) up to its 2008 level. Last year the program was cut by 40%. We have been able to keep it going at almost full capacity by using carryover funding and other AC funds. All of the carryover has been spent this year and the additional AC funding is no longer available. Thus, without additional dollars (from \$625,000 to its 2008 funding of 888,800) we would have to severely cut back this program – just at a time when more people will be living in group homes as Louisiana downsizes its large ICFs/DD.

We are also following other legislation, particularly HB 1, and any legislation that may be introduced as a result of the Streamlining effort.

2. We are pursuing a remedy for people who have been deemed to be incompetent to stand trial and are being held in jails instead of going to Feliciana Forensic for active treatment. We hope the outcome will be more active treatment for those who need it.
3. Our Facebook social networking project continues to grow. As noted in a recent article in the New York Times (March 24, 2010): “For many people, social networks are a place for idle chatter about what they made for dinner or sharing cute pictures of their pets. But for people living with chronic diseases or disabilities, they play a more vital role.People fighting chronic illnesses are less likely than others to have Internet access, but once online they are more likely to blog or participate in online discussions about health problems, according to a report released Wednesday by the Pew Internet and American Life Project and the California HealthCare Foundation. AC’s Facebook page currently has 751 fans.
4. AC’s Gustav and Katrina case management programs officially ended on March 31. This is the first time since December, 2005 that AC has not run a case management program for victims of a hurricane. We’re hopeful that it will be a long time before such services are again needed by the population of Louisiana.