



Bobby Jindal
Governor

Director's Report to the DD Council

April 19, 2011

The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs is beginning to feel the effects for the first time of reduction in full time employees. The executive assistant role on staff is still frozen and will hopefully be filled in July.

2011 Regular Session

GODA is gearing up for the 2011 Regular Session which begins on April 25, 2011 and runs until June 23, 2011. Total 839 bills have been pre-filed in both houses. That number is substantially down from the 1,905 filed last session. Thus far GODA has identified 32 House bills and 26 Senate bills that could potentially impact the Louisiana disability community. The "hot topics" of the 2011 Legislation Session will be: (1) selling/privatization of prisons, (2) the ceasing of "day-treatments" by the Office of Juvenile Justice; (3) the Coordinated System of Care Network and, (4) salary/benefits for state employees.

GODA will host a weekly Legislative Update call every Friday at 11:00 AM. The call will give updates on bills that affect the disability community and provide an opportunity for discussion and input.



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Constituent Updates

Since January 1, 2011 GODA has provided the following:

- 322 Disability Survey Results
- 160 opened constituent cases. 80% calls concerning financial assistance of some kind
- 7 disability related proclamations from Governor Jindal.

2011 Inclusive Schools Art Contest

GODA hosted its first Inclusive Schools Art Contest since inheriting the program from the DD Council last year. The event was held at the Secretary of State's Archive Building in Baton Rouge. We reached out to 350 schools throughout the state to participate in this year's program. We had 22 schools participate in the program with 76 total art entries. The event was well attended with standing room only in the lecture hall. Jamar Ennis created a video mixing art show winners and images of inclusion in action that was presented at the show. Each first place winner read one hundred word essay on what inclusion means to them. Lynette Fontenot gave the key note address on inclusion and captured the audience with her presentation.



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Statewide Independent Living Council

The Statewide Independent Living Council held its most recent quarterly meeting on April 14th in Lake Charles, Louisiana at the Southwest Louisiana Independence Center. This was one of the first meetings the Council has held outside of Baton Rouge in several years, providing the members an opportunity to visit a center for independent living and gain insight as to the services being provided and the consumers being impacted. The Southwest Louisiana Independence Center invited the members to visit the completion of their recently purchased and renovated center. Also present at the meeting were members of the Center's staff as well as a consumer who shared his recent employment story as a result of working with the staff of Southwest Louisiana Independence Center. The meeting also included a viewing of the documentary, *The Hidden Workforce*, which featured several members of the Council. Ken York, interim director of LRS, provided federal as well as state level updates. The meeting was a great opportunity for interaction among the members as well as an opportunity to witness the impact of independent living services in the Lake Charles community.

ADA Related Issues

The effective date for the new ADA amendments went into effect on March 15, 2011. The *enforcement* date of the changes will not go into effect until March 15, 2012. GODA will host a one day ADA Symposium sometime in early summer that will address the changes. The Symposium will be open to the public with the first session targeting professionals such as lawyers and architects and the second session geared toward service providers and persons with disabilities.