

**Human Development Center**  
**Quarterly Report to the DD Council**  
(July 2012)

Update/progress on Council funded initiatives

1. **Employment Consortium.** During the last quarter, the Employment Consortium conducted seven (8) two-day "Basic Supported Employment" (i.e., an introduction to the philosophy, goals and general strategies for accessing, delivering/participating in supported employment) workshops and one "Train the Trainer" workshop. A total of 44 persons completed Basic Supported Employment workshops during the period; 13 participants were job-seekers with disabilities and 31 were support staff, agency administrators or family members. During the fiscal year 187 individuals participated in 20 different Basic Supported Employment workshops in seven different cities (i.e., Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Hammond, Lafayette, Lake Charles, Orleans, Ruston). In addition, four Train the Trainer workshops were held during the year in three different cities (i.e., Baton Rouge, Lafayette (twice), and New Orleans). These workshops were attended by only 12 participants and of the twelve, only three completed all requirements.

As will be discussed in our end of project report to the Council, we believe that the strength of this project was that by providing information about access to, and what to expect from, Supported Employment services- self-advocates, family members and advocates are better prepared to engage in grassroots advocacy for greater access to and high quality Supported Employment services to support the community employment aspirations of persons with disabilities. Both grassroots advocacy for Supported Employment services coupled with leadership from state agencies to ensure that Supported Employment personnel are adequately trained and competent will be required to "move the needle" and achieve desired employment outcomes for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

HDC staff are interested in collaborating with others to build the grassroots strategies to grow demand and high expectations for real employment outcomes among persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In addition, HDC staff are attempting to increase the knowledge, skills and competence of Supported Employment personnel by providing competency-based training for Job Coaches and Job Developers and by working with both National and State APSE chapters to encourage Supported Employment personnel and agency leaders to establish a highly skilled Job Coach/Job Development workforce in Louisiana, as described below.

2. **Medical/Health Profession Training and Continuing Education.** HDC will be serving as the lead agency on a project that will develop a curriculum and impact the personnel preparation and continuing education of physicians, nurse practitioners,

and/or physician assistants. This initiative, funded by the Council, aligns with ongoing efforts of HDC, Dr. Sue Berry (Title V) and Project House Call (among others) to provide interdisciplinary training and clinical experiences to health and allied health professionals that will result in greater understanding of the health care needs, preferences and priorities of persons with disabilities, as well as enhanced skills for serving the healthcare needs of their patients with disabilities. This project will blend together components of a number of different approaches taken both within and outside of Louisiana in the past. The project is very formative at this point as it is just in its initial start-up.

#### Description of HDC's Employment related activities

- HDC staff continue to provide a 40-hour competency-based Supported Employment training. This training is based on the national competencies identified by APSE (the national association on employment). The training fits another need in the state that the DDC funded training does not directly address. That is, the 40-hour training prepares Job Coaches and Job Developers to take the national accreditation test. This curriculum complements the more introductory/awareness level training funded by the DDC. To date, HDC has conducted 6 "classes" (i.e., 40 hours spread out over several weeks). Approximately 100 people have successfully completed these workshops. Five additional 40-hour competency-based Supported Employment trainings for Job Coaches/Developers have been scheduled (see tentative dates and locations on our website: <http://www.hdc.lsuhsu.edu/>).
- The DDC funded training provides the bottom up push for greater access and better quality services to support the community employment aspirations of persons with disabilities. The 40 hour competency-based training for Job Coaches and Job Developers will provide the knowledge and skills to service providers so that community employment outcomes can be achieved.
- HDC continues to support the state chapter of APSE to create another venue for both advocacy and professional development related to improved access to, and quality of, Supported Employment services in Louisiana.
- HDC staff are working with two Supported Employment vendors in Greater New Orleans to train and mentor their Supported Employment personnel through the process of supporting job seekers with intellectual and developmental disabilities to obtain community employment. To date, HDC staff have mentored agency staff to complete the eligibility and discovery process for 9 job seekers. Currently agency staff have been mentored to achieve additional LRS milestone-related activities that are part of the job development and job-match process for 6 job seekers. Three of the six job seekers are very close to obtaining their first community job with the support of agency staff who are being mentored by HDC staff on this project. While this "one person at a time" approach is slow and arduous; it may well be the best way to impact the system at this point in time. Hopefully, job-seekers in this project will be interested in joining other grassroots efforts to increase demand for access to quality Supported Employment services- and the participating agency staff will acquire the knowledge, skills, and competence required to increase the agency's

capacity to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to achieve their desired community employment aspirations.

- Two of HDC's ongoing grant funded projects (US Department of Education: Post-secondary Education for All Collaborative and US Department of Justice sub-contract from Institute for Educational Leadership: Ready to Achieve Mentoring Program) have included and achieved employment outcomes for students with identified intellectual/developmental disabilities served by the respective projects.
- HDC submitted a preliminary grant proposal to the Organization for Autism Research (OAR) to implement a project designed to evaluate the effectiveness of implementing strategies to support and enhance self-determination of job seekers with autism spectrum disorders within the job seeking, learning and maintaining process. Unfortunately, our proposal was not selected for funding.
- HDC entered into an agreement with LRS in which we used some discretionary funds as "match" thereby allowing LRS to pull down the additional funding necessary to continue to provide Benefits Analysis and Work Incentives Planning to LRS eligible social security beneficiaries and recipients with disabilities. Our plan includes training key LRS staff to learn and take on an increasing role in the Benefits Analysis and Work Incentives planning over the course of the year. The end goal is for LRS to have the capacity to provide this valuable service to eligible customers within the agency, and thus not be subject to the whims of federal funding.
- HDC staff continue to participate on OCDD's Employment First committee.
- HDC staff continue to participate on the Work Pays consortium.
- HDC staff continue to assist LRS with policy and procedure review, as requested.

#### Description of other selected HDC projects that may be of interest to Council members

- HDC established an Interdisciplinary Diagnostic Clinic for youth suspected of having Autism Spectrum Disorders in collaboration with Children's Hospital and Dr. Sue Berry of the LSUHSC-Tiger Care clinic. This interdisciplinary clinic began seeing children this summer. The clinic provides a comprehensive, child and family-focused evaluation that provides a venue for medical and other health/allied health students to observe and learn about arena-style play- and routines-based evaluation techniques. This nascent clinic is a model of "best practice" for evaluation and one that families have reported high satisfaction with.
- The LA Department of Education approved one additional year of funding for both the Louisiana Autism Spectrum and Related Disabilities project (LASARD) and the Louisiana School Psychology Internship Consortium (LASPIC). Both of these projects have been in existence for a number of years (i.e., LASARD for 7 years and LASPIC for 21 years). Both have been well received by educators, school administrators, and other members of the school communities in which they have functioned. These projects have contributed greatly to the professional development of educators and administrators around the state and have received high marks from teachers and families who have participated in them.
  - The LASARD project has provided embedded professional development to educational teams in 48 partner schools located in 39 parishes using a

school-based coaching approach to support educational teams to implement best practices for educating students with ASD and related disabilities. The project has created and posted a variety of web-based training modules and resources, available at no cost. In addition, the project conducts monthly on-line to participating schools and open access workgroups that all educators can participate in. Finally, nearly 2,000 people have participated in the annual HDC-LASARD Summer Institute, as well as regional and statewide training events.

- LASPIC has been recruiting talented doctoral level School Psychologists to Louisiana from universities all over the United States and providing high quality supervised doctoral psychology internships in an American Psychological Association accredited program (one of only 19 in the country). Approximately 200 School Psychology interns have completed the LASPIC program since its inception and about 60% of the completers stayed in Louisiana to practice for at least 5 years (despite the non-competitive wages paid to School Psychologists relative to other states). Of the 200 completers, nearly half were from out-of-state. Those out of state psychologists would almost certainly NOT have come to Louisiana to work had they not been recruited to LASPIC. LASPIC has been a valuable tool for helping to fill the personnel shortage for licensed School Psychologists in Louisiana.
- Our work on these two projects goes on pretty much as normal as we focus on the important goals that we have. However, if these projects/services are to continue, we will need to devise strategies to ensure continued funding. The continued support of the Council and other advocates for quality education is both needed and appreciated.