

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

Update/progress on agency initiatives

During the past three months, the Employment Consortium conducted six (6) two-day training sessions. Four of the sessions were "Basic Supported Employment" (i.e., an introduction to the philosophy, goals and general strategies for accessing, delivering/participating in supported employment). Two sessions were designed to support individuals who had completed the Basic training use the project developed materials to replicate the training in the future. A total of 80 persons completed these trainings during the past three months; bringing the total for this fiscal year to 116. Nine of the training participants completed both the Basic and "Train the Trainer" sessions. Trainings were held in the following locations: Lake Charles, Hammond, New Orleans and Lafayette. Last quarter additional trainings were held in Baton Rouge, Houma and Alexandria, as well as New Orleans and Lafayette. Sessions scheduled in Shreveport and Ruston were cancelled due to lack of interest. Evaluations for all sessions have been overwhelmingly positive.

To better meet the needs of participants in the Basic training the project has developed two different training curricula. The initial set of training materials was developed with service providers, parents, and advocates in mind. Over time, we have noticed an increasing number of self-advocates attending the trainings. Project modified the curriculum to be more responsive to the learning styles and needs of many of the self-advocates with intellectual disabilities. We now market one version of the training directly to self-advocates and another version of the training to our initial target audience (i.e., providers, parents, advocates). With this in mind, in the next two quarters, we would like work more closely with People First to set up future training sessions and encourage People First members to acquire the skills necessary to continue training after the DDC funded portion of the project ends.

Status of agency's activities/participation on DDC plan initiatives and impact

HDC supports several of the Council's plan initiatives. In this report, I will highlight our activities related to Employment. DDC funding and support for the Employment Consortium initiative, along with other concurrent events, has helped to give rise to a number of other Community Employment activities of HDC faculty and staff. Some of the activities that have "spun off" from the seed-funding of the DDC are briefly described in the bulleted list that follows on the next page.

- HDC staff designed and are now implementing 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. 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 supported the establishment of a 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.
- In the past several weeks, HDC has established relationships with two Supported Employment vendors in Greater New Orleans to assist them to begin providing supported employment services to their clientele by training and mentoring the agencies' job coach and job development personnel.
- 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. We will find out later this summer if we will be invited to submit a full proposal.
- HDC continues to operate the Louisiana Work Incentives Planning and Assistance project funded by the Social Security Administration. Although the federal legislation authorizing funding for WIPA projects is about to end due to the failure of Congress to reauthorize that portion of the WIA, HDC continues to investigate strategies to continue providing benefits planning and work incentives education.
- 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.