

## ***Executive Director's Report October 22, 2009 Council Meeting***

### **Budget**

- The budget report through September 2009 is included in the packet. You will notice a revised format that we hope will be easier to understand.

### **Membership Update**

- Brandon Burris was reappointed by the Governor effective October 1, 2009.
- The Membership Committee will recommend Reginald Garey, Nicole Soileau and Bambi Polotzola to the full Council. If approved, these individuals will be recommended to the Governor for appointment to the Council. Mr. Garey and Ms. Soileau are self-advocates and Ms. Polotzola would represent the category of non-governmental, local or non-profit organization on the Council.

### **Plan Update**

- Our Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2010 Plan Amendments were submitted to the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) on August 15<sup>th</sup> and have been approved by ADD.

### **Advocacy Activities**

- The October issue of the *TriAngle* includes an article on the looming \$1 billion Medicaid crisis and the Congressional intervention that is required to avert this crisis. Strong advocacy by the Council with Louisiana's Congressional delegation on this issue is vital and urgent. Discussions were initiated with the delegation by Lynette and me when we visited with them in D.C. in July.
- An increase in Council appropriations was the other topic of discussion in our Capitol Hill visits. Back in Baton Rouge, numerous emails were sent and phone calls were made to our Congressional delegation in regard to a "Dear Colleague" letter in support of a \$1.5 million increase for Councils. As a result, Congressmen Joseph Cao and Charlie Melancon were two of fourteen representatives in the country to sign on.
- Letters were sent to members of the Commission on Streamlining Government in support of two recommendations regarding the state's developmental centers that were included in DHH's report to the commission. A letter was also sent to DHH Secretary Levine expressing the Council's support and appreciation for the inclusion of these recommendations in the DHH report.
- A letter was sent to Senators Landrieu and Vitter in support of H.R. 1675 that would make improvements to the Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program.
- As directed at the July meeting, a letter was sent to Kathy Kliebert urging OCDD to broaden the emergency waiver slot criteria and to designate a certain percentage of all new slots for emergency slots. This recommendation was first made by the Resource Allocation Stakeholders Group over a year ago.

- LaCAN leaders are attending and providing comments on the cost comparison between developmental centers and waiver services at the regional Listening Sessions of the Streamlining Commission.

### **Collaborative Efforts**

#### **State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC)**

- The SICC decided not to pursue changes in Louisiana's early intervention law in the 2010 legislative session. It was felt that the minor changes needed were not worth the risk of opening up the law.
- The Federal application for Part C funds was approved by the Office of Special Education Programs.
- There are still two parent vacancies on the SICC and parent representation is only 20% of the total membership when all positions are filled. I have been recruiting parent applicants and advocating with the Governor's Office for these positions to be appointed.

#### **Autism ACT 648 of 2008 Task Force**

- Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) will be surveyed regarding the extent of reimbursement from insurance carriers. The survey will provide information for recommendations to address any identified issues.

#### **DHH Autism Workgroup (HCR69 of 2008)**

- This group was charged with developing recommendations for a comprehensive plan to address the needs of individuals with autism across the lifespan in Louisiana.
- The recommendations were submitted to and reviewed by Representative Patrick Williams but the Joint Legislative Committee intended to receive it did not meet.
- Workgroup members felt that a comprehensive plan could provide a guide that each agency could use to drive plans and activities and therefore committed to continue developing the plan.

#### **BESE High School Redesign Commission**

- Discussion indicated strong support by the Dept. of Education and other stakeholders that universally high academic standards are necessary whether a student is being prepared to be college or career bound. The implications are that the Career Diploma Option will have stringent criteria.

#### **Positive Behavioral Support Project (PBS) at Louisiana State University**

- At the PBS Levels Determination Sub-Committee meeting, advisory members made initial recommendations regarding standards for identifying, classifying and labeling the extent to which schools implement PBS from the universal to the individual student levels.

#### **Louisiana Indian Education Association (LIEA)**

- The Council is working with LIEA and the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) to develop revisions to the American Indian Scholarship application that would

assist applicants who have disabilities by either directing them to their tribal VR offices or by possibly giving a preference point in the application process. Any revision made to the GOIA scholarship application that allows applicants to volunteer their disability status would allow for collecting data on American Indian students with disabilities who receive the scholarship. This may also include recipients who have family members with a disability. Consequently, more Indian students with disabilities may be identified to participate in the spring LIEA Indian Youth Leadership Camps.

#### Job Fair Committee

- Job fairs will be held throughout the state during the month of October. The dates, times and location of the job fair in each region can be found on the Council's website under "What's New." Organizers continue to register employers and outreach to job seekers.
- The employment videos produced by the Council will be shown during the Baton Rouge job fair on two new large screens. The chairpersons for the other eight regional job fairs have been notified of the opportunity to show the videos at their job fairs. The Council will provide copies of the videos for those who are able to show them.

#### System Transformation Grant Housing Advisory Group

- H.R. 1675 was introduced in Congress and would provide for a pilot within HUD's Section 811 program and create project based vouchers that must be issued with Low Income Housing Tax Credits specifically for people with disabilities.

#### OCDD Mortality Review Committee

- OCDD's new authority through ACT 345 of 2009 will result in timely acquisition of documentation of mortality information (death certificate, physician's notes, etc). The new process will expedite death reviews and will include an OCDD review of related trends and patterns.

#### Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC)

- Pranab Choudhury and Derek White were appointed to the LRC by the Governor on September 21<sup>st</sup>. In the September LRC meeting, Pranab was named Secretary and Derek was named to a committee to submit LRC recommendations to the Commission on Streamlining Government.

#### **Meetings Attended Since July 16, 2009**

Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) Technical Assistance Institute, Nat'l Assn. of Councils on Dev. Dis. (NACDD) meeting, and Hill Visits in D.C. – July 26 – 29  
Meeting with Hugh Eley re: Act 378 contract funds – August 11  
Briefing by DHH Secretary Alan Levine re: Medicaid Crisis – August 11  
State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) committee and council – August 12  
Meeting with the Boards of Families Helping Families in Regions I and II – August 13  
Meeting with Governor's Office staff re: SICC – August 17

Meeting with Kathy Kliebert – August 17  
Technical assistance/training day for LaCAN Leaders – August 21  
Cash Subsidy Ad Hoc Committee – August 24  
Membership Committee – September 2  
LaCAN Leadership Annual Planning – September 4  
Bylaws Committee – September 14  
Meeting with Kathy Kliebert – September 15  
*TriAngle* Editorial Board – September 15  
SICC Bylaws Committee – September 23  
Meeting with Alphonse Jackson re: legislative strategy – September 24  
Meeting with Sam Beech – September 28  
Meeting with Sec. Levine and his staff re: DDC budget – September 29  
Meeting with Alphonse Jackson re: legislative strategy – October 6  
LaCAN Kick-off – October 7