

Governor's Office of Disability Affairs

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council Report

June 30, 2016

Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs (GACDA)

GACDA was re-established by Executive Order JBE-16-10, which became effective on April 7, 2016. The members of GACDA are charged with advising Governor John Bel Edwards on the needs of individuals with disabilities in Louisiana.

GACDA held its first official meeting on June 21, 2016, at the state capitol, and Lynette Fontenot was appointed Chairperson.

The Council voted to have four standing committees:

Accessibility chaired by Stephen Kaufman with the Advocacy Center;

Education chaired by Laureen Mayfield with the LA Assoc. of Special Ed Administrators;

Employment chaired by Libby Murphy with the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council; and

Transportation chaired by Laura Brackin with Community Providers Associations.

*Membership of the committees may include non-GACDA members who have expertise in these areas. If you would like to be appointed as a member of any of the committees, let Lynette Fontenot or Bambi Polotzola know of your interest.

GACDA approved by unanimous vote the following:

- Recommend that Governor Edwards issue the Employment First Executive Order
- Recommend Accessibility Review Training of all Facility Planning Managers by the Office of State Fire Marshall
- Request GODA staff research all resolutions passed in 2016 that have to do with disability accessibility.

Future meetings are scheduled for June 21, September 20, and December 6.

Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) held their meeting on May 19, 2016. The SILC is comprised of many self-advocates and individuals who have an immediate family member with a disability.

The new appointees of the SILC include:

Rocky J. Fuslier - Lake Charles
Rashad D. Bristo - Mansfield
Steven Nguyen - Marrero
Anita C. Gray - Baton Rouge

Erick W. Taylor - Baton Rouge
Danny K. Cottonham - Lafayette
Jamie Duplechine - Lafayette

The next SILC meeting will take place on July 7-8 in Lake Charles, Louisiana.

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Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Roundtable Discussion

GODA hosted an ADA roundtable discussion on May 23, 2016, to explore various topics, including how to identify areas of noncompliance with the federal civil rights law, and how to avoid violations of the ADA. The presenter was national accessibility expert Kristi J. Avalos, the President and CEO of Accessology. Over 70 people participated in the roundtable discussion, which included ADA coordinators, human resource directors, governmental agencies, advocates, university administrators, engineers, public, and self-advocates.

2016 Inclusive Art Contest

Seventy-one people participated in the 2016 Inclusive Art Contest. Carter Byrd of LaPlace was selected "Best in Show." Medals and special recognition from Governor John Bel Edwards will be presented to those who earned first place, second place, third place, and honorable mention. These individuals will be invited to participate in the Governor's Outstanding Leadership in Disabilities (GOLD) Awards Ceremony, which will be held later this year and televised throughout the state. Artwork from this year's competition will be publicly displayed and showcased around the state.

Lecture Series

The Governor's Office of Programs and Planning will begin hosting monthly presentations with Q&A on various topics presented by experts. The first presentation will be held on Monday, July 18, at 11AM. The invited guest presenter will be Ruth Kennedy, who will present information regarding Medicaid Expansion. Presentations will be live streamed from the Governor's website.

Website and Newsletters

The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs publishes a monthly newsletter, which is posted on the Governor's webpage at <http://gov.louisiana.gov/page/disability-affairs>.