

Governor's Office of Disability Affairs

Report to the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council

December 31, 2016

Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs (GACDA)

GACDA met on December 6, 2016, at the state capitol.

Accessibility Committee recommended

- 1) drafting a letter to FEMA to include questions in their interview assessment to survivors in regards to access and functional needs.
- 2) attending the State Bond Commission meetings and provide updates relative the accessible projects.
- 3) monitoring of the state fiscal accessibility issues, including good faith assessments in making sure that state facilities are accessible.

Education Committee recommended

- 1) sending a letter to the congressional delegation regarding language in the regulations of ESSA that could negatively affect diploma/graduation options for students with disabilities as well as potential disincentives to educate students with disabilities.
- 2) discussing with the Governor's policy staff the elimination of corporal punishment in schools for students with disabilities.

Employment Committee recommended

- 1) establishing a workgroup to advance Employment First priorities
- 2) Louisiana state government becoming a model employer for people with disabilities, known as State As Model Employer (SAME).

Transportation Committee recommended

- 1) developing a statewide survey to help identify transportation needs and resources for people with disabilities by geographic location. The survey will be live for one year; quarterly reports will be made available. Strategic targeting will take place if participation is lacking in certain areas.

GACDA approved two other legislative recommendations:

- 1) funding LRS fully so that LWC/LRS can get the full federal matching funds
- 2) rebalancing the revenue source for the telecommunication fund from land lines to cellphones.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 21, 2017 from 9am to 3pm at Claiborne Building in the Thomas Jefferson Rooms.

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Governor's Office Leadership in Disabilities (GOLD) Awards

The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs hosted the GOLD Awards ceremony on November 16, 2016 at the Old State Capitol. Governor Edwards served as the keynote speaker at the ceremony. Governor Edwards and First Lady Donna Edwards took pictures with each award recipient and congratulated them on their achievement. The award recipients are as follows:

Distinguished Merit Award	Deborah Aymond
Patsy Barrett Memorial Award	Jamie Duplechine
Ken Vince Memorial Award	Rashad Bristo
Educator of the Year	Melissa Chastant-Huval
Youth of the Year	Lucas Dorion
Family of the Year	Jim & Ann Sprinkle Family
Volunteer of the Year	Deborah Banks
Employer of the Year	Louisiana Praline Factory
Service Provider of the Year	Paula Rodriguez
Direct Support Professional of the Year	Bobbie Gillard
Veteran Services of the Year	Operation Hero
Service Animal of the Year	Frankie Grossnickle

The GOLD Awards can be viewed online at <https://youtu.be/pgotb83oQhM> and will be televised on local access channels throughout the state.

Inclusive Arts Contest Ceremony

Also recognized prior to the GOLD Awards were the winners of the Inclusive Art Show Competition, Inclusion Matters: A Better World for All. GACDA Chairperson Lynette Fontenot was the keynote speaker of the Inclusive Art Show Contest. Lynette presented the inaugural "Lynette Fontenot Excellence in Inclusion Award" to the recipient earning best overall honors, Carter Byrd.

GOV Talks

The Governor's Office of Programs and Planning hosted GOV Talks on Foster Care in November, which can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/5d8rNoQoPa0>. The next GOV Talks will be on the Opioid Epidemic and will be held on January 11, 2017 at 11am on the 4th floor of the State Capitol. Those wanting to attend can RSVP to Jolan.jolivette@la.gov.

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>.