

**Executive Director's Report
July 18-19, 2018 Council Meeting**

Budget

- The budget report with expenditures through May 2018 is included in the packet.

Action Plans and Annual Report

- The Annual Report for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY)17 was completed and is available on our website [here](#).
- The FFY18 Action Plan included funding of \$15,000 for states and U.S. territories to assist individuals with developmental disabilities and their families remain in their homes in the aftermath of the 2017 hurricanes. We received information from the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) that Puerto Rico was the territory that needed assistance. The Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) must approve a cooperative agreement between state Councils for the transfer of funds. Unfortunately, the agreement AIDD developed for a state to provide funds to Puerto Rico included terms that were impossible for us to meet so we were unable to provide this hurricane assistance.
- Public input was solicited on the FFY19 Action Plan the Council approved at the April meeting and none was received.

Federal Allotment and Funding Issues

- DD Councils received an overall increase of \$3 million in appropriations for FFY18. AIDD applied the formula used to determine each state's grant allotment and Louisiana received an additional \$3,398 over our FFY17 grant. However, we had received \$37,098 of reallocated funds from Puerto Rico in FFY17 so we are actually realizing a net decrease of \$33,700 from FFY17.
- Historically Councils have had two years to obligate each year's grant funds and three years to liquidate those funds. Councils could enter into contracts throughout the two year obligation timeframe and use the three year timeframe to perform the work and liquidate the funds. AIDD has unexpectedly issued a change in interpretation or definition of obligation, now stating that all work must be completed within the two year obligation period. NACDD is working with all Councils to fight this new interpretation and hopefully prevent it from being implemented. If it does come to fruition, it will cause major problems for our Council and all others.

Membership Update

- Enrice Jones, Hyacinth McKee, and Crystal White were appointed by the Governor on June 27th: An orientation for these three new members was held at the Council office on June 22nd.
- Dee Budgewater and Mitch Iddins were also reappointed on June 27th.
- Mark Thomas has left the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) to assume the role of Deputy Secretary of the LA Department of Health (LDH). Julie Foster Hagan was appointed as the new Assistant Secretary of OCDD and will represent that office on the Council. Her appointment to the Council by the Governor is pending.

- The Governor’s Office of Elderly Affairs has not yet decided on a permanent replacement for Sharon Buchert and a new director has not yet been hired for LA Rehabilitation Services, leaving both of those Council positions vacant.

Staff Changes

- De’Van Stephenson resigned to return to a university setting. The position vacancy was announced through Civil Service and initial interviews were held on June 28th and 29th. Second interviews will be held on July 2nd.

Ad Hoc Committees

- The **Partners in Policymaking Ad Hoc Committee** met on June 21st to develop recommended policy changes for the program. These will be first considered by the Self-Determination/Community Inclusion Committee and then the full Council at the July meeting and are linked on the committee agenda.

Advocacy Activities and Provision of Information

Community Supports

- Successfully planned and implemented LaCAN’s advocacy campaign that resulted in:
 - funding for 650 mixed waiver opportunities to people with the most urgent needs on the waiting list;
 - the creation and funding of a hi-needs service for people with certain complex and challenging needs in the NOW initially, and eventually in the ROW;
 - funding for an increase in the night IFS rate in the NOW;
 - restoration of proposed cuts to services to people with developmental disabilities;
- Provided information and support to five Council members and seven LaCAN members in testifying before the Appropriations and Finance Committees in support of the issues listed above and TEFRA. Provided testimony and information to legislators on all of these issues. Organized three “yellow shirt days” in these Committees and in the House Chamber with a total of 118 LaCAN members attending.
- Provided information and support to Senator Sharon Hewitt and legislative staff that resulted in changes to the NOW Fund ([Act 665](#)) to allow its use for all DD waiver slots and enhancing the capacity of the DD home and community based system.

Education

- Advocated for the House Education Committee to consider ramifications related to allowing teachers to unilaterally remove students from campus, using physical force and physical restraint, and calling law enforcement related to student behavior. SB298, SB301 and SB303 all failed to pass during the 2018 Legislative Session.
- Advocated for the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) to provide the state’s plan for supporting schools with implementing their model master discipline plans and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). LDOE provided a plan for eight regional consortia of local school systems with a leadership team comprised of some individuals who do not appear to possess the knowledge nor authority to carry out PBIS initiatives. LDOE staff indicated LDOE will pull together a different group of individuals to create a statewide PBIS plan in the fall of 2018.
- Upon request, provided Senator Claitor information related to data elements included and apparently absent from various LDOE publications. SB310 of 2018 passed requiring the

State Treasurer to withhold twenty-five percent of LDOE's state travel funds in any year required data are not reported.

General

- Hosted a Legislative Debriefing for LaCAN and FHF Leaders where we shared information on the outcomes of the legislative session and the current state of affairs in both home and community-based services and education. Information was shared and feedback was solicited on LaCAN's activities before and during the session, emphasizing what was most effective and what we can do to improve in the future.
- Provided information through LaDDC News on the following:
 - [Council's FFY19 Action Plan](#)
 - [Customized Employment Training](#)
 - [LDH's Decision to Mail Letters to Medicaid Recipients re Proposed Budget Cuts](#)
 - [Leadership Changes at OCDD and LDH](#)
 - [Legislative Session Wrap-Up](#)
- Provided information through Facebook and Twitter on various issues of interest to people with developmental disabilities and their families, including information on the regular and special legislative sessions.

Collaborative Efforts

OCDD System Transformation Core Work Group

- Agreed with OCDD's proposal to utilize a "per diem" rate for those who qualify for enhanced complex needs rate, rather than an increase in hourly rate
- Agreed that the criteria to receive the per diem be based on support tasks required of the Direct Support Professional (DSP), rather than the disability or diagnosis of the individual and provided input on the list of support tasks
- Recommended that providers be given flexibility in how the per diem can be used, i.e., increase DSP wages, hire nurse/behavior consultant, invest in training, etc.
- Agreed with OCDD's proposal that after all individuals with emergent and urgent needs are offered a waiver opportunity, additional waiver slots be offered to those in ICFs/DD and nursing homes wishing to move into their own homes
- Received update on the number of waiver offers, linkages, certifications, and requests for re-screening. No one who has been screened has filed a formal appeal.

Health Care Stakeholder Meetings

- Participated in several meetings during the special and regular legislative sessions to discuss advocacy efforts needed to ensure a budget was passed that fully funded LDH and other high priorities such as education.

NACDD Public Policy Committee

- Provided information on our Council's grassroots advocacy network and activities and advice to other states to prevent the loss of home and community based services if they are ever faced with a similar fiscal crisis.

NACDD Executive Director Obligation/Liquidation Work Group

- Developed a survey for all Councils to complete regarding the impact on AIDD's new interpretation of "period of performance"

- Discussed potential impact and strategies to prevent implementation of the new interpretation

Meetings Attended (by Executive Director) Since April 2, 2018

Senate Finance Committee re: LDH's budget – April 8
 House Appropriations Committee re: LDH's budget – April 9
 Membership Committee – April 9
 House Appropriations Committee for Public Testimony on HB1 – April 10
 State Interagency Coordinating Council – April 12
 Meeting with Michelle Alletto, Jeff Reynolds, Mark Thomas re: NOW Fund – April 12
 Meeting with Sen. Hewitt, A. McReynolds, L. Gary, legislative staff re: NOW Fund – April 12
 OCDD Public Meeting on Waiver Changes – April 16
 Senate Finance Committee re: SB347 – April 17
 Council Meeting – April 18-19
 NACDD Conference Call re: obligation/liquidation issues – May 3
 Meeting with Toni Ledet re: Inclusive Child Care Project – May 3
 Senate Finance Committee for Public Testimony on HB1 – May 7
 Membership Committee – May 9
 LATAN's Technology for Life Event – May 9
 NACDD Conference Call re: obligation/liquidation issues – May 11
 Meeting with small group of Partners' participants – May 14
 Meeting with Mark Thomas – May 14
 Conference call w/ Administration on Community Living re: LA's fiscal crisis – May 21
 Meeting with Mark Thomas – May 29
 House of Representatives/Yellow Shirt Day – May 31
 NACDD Public Policy Committee re: LA's fiscal crisis – May 31
 OCDD System Transformation Core Stakeholders Group – June 5
 Conference call w/ LRS and WINTAC on customized employment – June 7
 Meeting with representative from VoterVoice.net – June 7
 OCDD System Transformation Core Stakeholders Group – June 13
 Partners' Ad Hoc Committee – June 21
 Partners' Debriefing – June 21
 Orientation for new Council members – June 22
 Legislative Debriefing for LaCAN Leaders and FHF Directors – June 26