

Executive Director Sandee Winchell Retires After Successful Advocacy Career

January 23, 2020

Executive Director Sandee Winchell recently retired from the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council. She began her career at the Council 34 years ago and served her last 20 years as the Executive Director.

Sandee is well known for her tenacity and dedication to improving the lives of people with developmental disabilities in Louisiana and their families. For over 30 years, she dedicated her life to the developmental disabilities community, showing compassion and support to thousands of individuals and families across this state. Because of her service and leadership, our state is better, and individuals and families are better. She assured that people with developmental disabilities and their family members had a voice in shaping laws, policies and programs that affected the disability world, insisting that self-advocates and parent-advocates have a seat at every table where decisions were being made about them.



It is not possible to detail all the changes and, more importantly, all the lives impacted because of her service and leadership. Some contributions to our state's developmental disability accomplishments during her job tenure include:

- More and better services for people with developmental disabilities
- Shifting Louisiana from ten large public institutions for people with developmental disabilities to one
- Shaping Louisiana's service delivery system and the Community and Family Support System to being both consumer- and family-centered and consumer- and family-directed
- Transforming Louisiana's Home and Community System from a "first-come, first-serve" basis to one that provides resources to people by priority of need
- Supporting the Families Helping Families Regional Resource Centers across the state that do the on the ground work to help people understand and navigate the systems designed to serve them
- Innumerable projects that provided seeds of change and demonstrated new practices to build the capacity of providers and people with developmental disabilities and their families
- Self- and parent-advocate access to learn the skills and strategies of effective advocacy, notably Louisiana Council's Advocacy Network (LaCAN) where all the advocates in yellow shirts were respected as credible agents of systems change

The Council wishes Sandee all the best in her well-deserved retirement and thanks her immensely for her service.

While the Council conducts its search for a new Executive Director, Deputy Director Shawn Fleming will serve as the interim Executive Director.

Contact Us

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