

Executive Director Report January 2020

Budget

- The [Budget report](#) with expenditures through November 2019 is on the website. Council travel expenditures are at an all time high due to expenses related to participation in the NACDD Conference in July, the Council retreat in October and multiple meetings . It may be necessary to increase the budget amount to cover travel expenses through June 2020.

Federal Reporting

All required federal reports were submitted on time:

- FFY19 Program Performance Report
- FFY 20 State Plan
- FFY21 Annual Work Plan

Federal Appropriation

- Congress passed appropriation bills for FFY20 with an increase in funding for DD Councils by \$2 million.

Membership Updates

- The Membership Committee made two recommendations for full Council to consider:
 - A candidate and an alternate to consider submitting for the Governor's consideration to fill the seat being vacated in Southeast Louisiana.
 - To send a letter requesting the Administration on Community Living reconsider the rule defining a parent of a child with a developmental disability for purposes of Council membership to not exclude parents whose children with developmental disabilities have died.
 - [The Administration on Disabilities issued a memo](#) related to membership of family members of a deceased individual in September 2016.
- The Membership Committee decided to re-open the recruitment of applicants to fill the upcoming vacancy in North Louisiana. [See LaDDC News](#).
- Jamie Wong resigned from the Louisiana Department of Education and, subsequently, the Council. Kristi-Jo Preston has been submitted for Governor appointment.
- Tara Leblanc accepted a new position within LDH and resigned from the Council. A request has been made for the person to represent the Office of Adult and Aging Services.
- Orientation for Temisha Sonnier is scheduled for January 3, 2020.

Cyber Attack

- State offices, including the Council, experienced a cyberattack on November 18, 2019. Staff experienced disruptions to email, files on shared drives, printing, and internet for weeks. Staff were resourceful and creative to ensure no disruptions occurred to any scheduled meetings, trainings and events during this electronic interruption.

Conference

- The Council's bi-annual conference, Navigating the System Across the Lifespan, held on November 18, 2019 was well received with over 150 participants, including 12 Council members indicated the conference provided valuable information. Much appreciation to all the presenters, exhibitors, attendees, Council members, Council staff, and volunteers who made this year's conference such a huge success.

ACL Disaster Preparedness, Recovery and Restoration Listening Tour

- Supported federal partners, the Administration on Community Living, with hosting a listening tour on Disaster Preparedness, Recovery and Restoration. Key takeaways were recommendations for more person-centered policies, more individualized response system as alternatives to medical special needs shelters (which participants indicated were not options for some individuals with severe needs), and a registry of individuals with special needs.

Partners in Policymaking Coordinator

- Adrienne Thomas was selected to serve as the coordinator for Partners in Policymaking.

LaCAN

- Roundtables will not be held this year. In August, LaCAN leaders and the Partners Coordinator expressed a desire to make changes to the roundtable format and program. In October, LaCAN leaders and FHF Directors engaged in a pre-planned discussion to determine possible changes to roundtables. After considering the large number of advocacy agenda items, the large number of first-time legislators to educate, the short time frame prior to the 2020 Legislative Session, and the reduced Council staff during this period, the majority of the leaders and directors voted it would be best to not hold roundtables this year. In lieu of roundtables, multiple member meetings will be held in each region. LaCAN leaders and FHF Directors expressed member meetings will enable them to break up the information on the Council's Advocacy Agenda, increase engagement with their LaCAN members and facilitate more personable connections between LaCAN members and legislators.

- LaCAN Leader training has focused on presenting information and supporting LaCAN members in advocacy related to the [nine items on the Council's 2020 Advocacy Agenda](#).
- [Recruitment to fill LaCAN Leader vacancies](#) in Regions I and II are ongoing. Interviews of applicants to fill the vacancy in Region I are anticipated in early January 2020.

Advocacy Activities and Provision of Information

- During the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) Systems Transformation Stakeholder Group meeting on November 5, 2019 Council staff advocated for ongoing training of the SUN assessment assessors to ensure accuracy and consistency of ratings statewide, the use of the ROW 50 pilot to assist individuals with transitioning out of residential placements, and allowing individuals residing in the home of waiver recipients act as that individual's direct support worker.
- Staff participated in and supported LaCAN Leaders in participating in the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) stakeholders' group meeting to provide information and obtain feedback on LDH's proposed implementation of Act 421 of 2019 (TEFRA). Advocated for a program more aligned with the original intent of TEFRA rather than the creation of a program with limited availability and a waiting list for services.
- Council staff advocated for financial incentives to be offered to employment support providers serving the unserved/underserved populations during the October 2019 Louisiana Rehabilitation Council meeting. Although a quorum was not met (second meeting in a row), LRC members expressed interest in this topic being considered for action during the next meeting where a quorum is achieved.
- Advocated for the Louisiana Department of Education to revive the Data Quality Review Sub-Committee of the Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline to provide validity and integrity of data and develop uniform definitions of behavior codes.
- Provided training on Act 833 of 2015 to East Baton Rouge Parish School System.

Shared information for people to apply or participate in:

- [Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation 2020 Public Policy Fellowship Program](#)
- [U.S. Department of Health & Human Services 2019 Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee](#)
- [LaDDC Council Membership \(Regions 1, 8, and 9\)](#)
- [Stakeholder Meeting on LDH's Plan to Implement Program for TEFRA Population](#)
- [ACL Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery Listening Session](#)
- [2020 Disability Policy Seminar](#)
- [2020 AUCD Policy Forum](#)

The following DDC Newsletters were released via listserv and advertised via Facebook and Twitter:

- [LaDDC News – Recruiting Strong Advocates for DD Council](#)
- [DD Network Public Forums Announcement](#)
- [Relationships & Intimacy: Preventing Exploitation Training Opportunities](#)
- [2019 LaDDC Survey – We Want to Hear From You!](#)
- [Council's 2020 Legislative Agenda – REVISED](#)
- [Council's 2020 Legislative Agenda](#)
- [Stakeholder Meeting on Plan to Implement Program for TEFRA Population](#)
- [ACL Emergency Preparedness Listening Tour](#)
- [Agenda for 2019 Conference “Navigating the System Across the Lifespan”](#)
- [Partners in Policymaking Coordinator Vacancy – Apply Today!](#)
- [Recruiting Strong Advocates for DD Council](#)
- [New Council Officers Elected](#)
- [Registration Live for 2019 DDC Conference](#)

Meetings Attended (by Deputy Director) since October 17, 2019

- Meeting with Julie Foster Hagan – November 4 and December 19
- Special Education Advisory Panel – November 6
- Council Conference: Navigating the System Across the Lifespan – November 18
- ACL meeting with DD Network (Chris Rodriguez/AC) – November 19
- Administration on Community Living (ACL) Disaster Preparation, Response and Recovery Listening Tour – November 19
- Council Membership Committee – December 3 and 18
- LaCAN Leader Training – November 21
- East Baton Rouge Parish School System (Act 833 Training) – November 21
- Louisiana DD Network Forum Planning – December 4
- Advisory Council for Student Behavior and Discipline - December 6
- Governor's Outstanding Leadership in Disability Award Ceremony – December 10