

## **LSUHNO Human Development Center 2026 Activities Report, 1st Quarter for January - March 2026**

### **Quarterly Report Plain Language**

#### **What Is HDC?**

The Human Development Center (HDC) helps people with developmental disabilities all across Louisiana. HDC is part of a national group of centers at universities.

HDC ([www.hdc.lsuhsu.edu](http://www.hdc.lsuhsu.edu)) works in three main areas:

- Early Childhood
- Education, Transition, and Community
- Long-Term Training

#### **Early Childhood Programs**

These programs help young children ages 1–5 years old and the adults who care for them. The goal is to make sure all children can learn and grow in safe, welcoming places.

- Trained 70 teachers and school leaders during a full day of learning  
Topics included staying healthy, managing feelings, and helping children learn better
  - Gave over 300 hours of coaching in early childhood classrooms
- The Early Learning Center earned an “Excellent” rating from the Department of Education
- Coming Soon:
    - June: Open House at the Early Learning Center
    - July: One full week of training for early childhood teachers, focusing on inclusion, behavior, and emotions

#### **Education, Transition, and Community Programs**

These programs help:

- Students with disabilities
- Families
- Teachers and school staff
- Adults with disabilities who want to work in the community

and helps them learn how to support students and adults so they can succeed in school, work, and life.

#### LASARD (K-12 School Support)

- Provided training and coaching in 35 school districts
- Reached over 155 educators
- Will present at teacher and disability conferences this spring and summer

#### LADBP (Deafblind Project)

- Started a career mentoring program for youth with Usher syndrome
- Held an in-person transition weekend for students
- Trained Louisiana Rehabilitation Services staff in different parts of the state
- Taught a LSUHSC university class on communication with people who are blind or visually impaired

#### PAYCheck (Pre-employment Training for Students)

- Provided job coaching for 13 students in work-based learning programs
- Helped same students with job training, job shadowing, and workplace visits
- Started a Leadership Transition Lab to help school leaders improve transition services for students with disabilities

#### WIPA (Benefits Planning)

- Worked with 85 people who receive Social Security benefits
- Gave detailed benefits planning to 15 people

### **Long-Term Training Programs**

These programs train future leaders, professionals, families, and self-advocates. The Louisiana LEND Program trains people to support children and adults with disabilities. It focuses on teamwork, leadership, and family-centered care and provides over 300 hours of training each year.

LEND includes the Autism Diagnostic Clinic which evaluates young children for autism. The LEND Program also provides training on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).

- 14 scholars from different fields (like education, therapy, and health care) are finishing the program
- An award ceremony was held on April 24
- FASD United – Louisiana Chapter continues to meet monthly online
  - Plans trainings, events, and awareness activities
  - Offers support to families and caregivers across Louisiana

## Quarterly Report January-March 2026

### Overview of HDC

The **Human Development Center (HDC)** is part of a nationwide network of 68 **University Centers of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs)** and serves as a resource for Louisiana in the areas of education, research, and service relative to the needs of people with developmental disabilities. HDC is organized in the following initiative areas: Early Childhood; Education Transition, & Community; and Long-Term Training. See the organization chart on the HDC website [www.hdc.lsuhsu.edu](http://www.hdc.lsuhsu.edu). Each of HDC's initiative areas is described below including the highlights of their activities that took place during last quarter (October - December 2025).

### Early Childhood Initiatives

Early Childhood Initiatives target children between the ages of 1 and 5 years and include the Early Head Start Childcare Partnership (EHS-CCP) and the LSU Health Sciences Early Learning Center. These programs provide training, technical assistance, and resources to increase access and equity to quality inclusive early learning environments.

- Provided a full day of professional development for 70 teachers and administrators. Topics included *Universal Precautions in Early Childhood, Weathering the Storm: Managing Emotions, and Using Quality of Feedback to Enhance Learning*
- Provided over 300 hours of coaching in early childhood classrooms
- **Coming in June:** Open House at the Early Learning Center. Our inclusive infant-toddler center earned an "Excellent" rating from the Department of Education
- **Coming in July:** Professional Development Pre-Service Week. HDC will provide a full week of professional development in early childhood curriculum, effective inclusion, understanding behavior, emotional regulation for adults and children, and much more

### Education, Transition, & Community Initiatives

HDC's Education, Transition, and Community Initiatives provides continuing education and technical assistance to families, educators, administrators, and policymakers regarding best practices for evidence-based and inclusive education. Additionally, this initiative area supports agencies, programs, service providers, and job seekers with disabilities in their efforts to obtain and maintain community employment outcomes that are competitive and integrated. This initiative area builds knowledge and capacity of secondary and post-secondary educators, community providers, employers, and self-advocates/advocates. These programs include

**Louisiana Autism Spectrum and Related Disabilities project (LASARD), Louisiana Deafblind Project for Children and Youth (LADBP), West South-Central Work Incentives Planning Assistance (WSC-WIPA), Employment First Core Training, and Postsecondary Apprenticeship for Youth (PAYCheck).**

**LASARD**

- Continued to provide coaching and professional development across 35 state school districts and charter networks reaching over 155 educators (teachers, paras, and related service providers)
- Presenting at Teacher Leader Summit 2026 taking place May 26-28 at the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center:  
<https://doe.louisiana.gov/educators/professional-development/teacher-leader-summit>
- Presenting at the Institute for Human Development’s Evidence for Success Disability Conference June 22-24 in Chandler, Arizona: <https://in.nau.edu/institute-human-development/>

**LADBP**

- Launched our USH Career Mentoring Program for Louisiana youth with Usher syndrome, including an in-person transition weekend
- Completed our training series for LRS staff with three trainings in Central and North Louisiana, in partnership with the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC)
- Interdisciplinary class entitled “Communication Skills for Working with People Who Are Visually Impaired or Blind” being taught for LSU Health Sciences Center

**PAYCheck**

- Providing on-site job coaching for 13 Work-Based Learning Experiences for transition students from St. Bernard Parish Public Schools
- Supporting same transition students with Pre-ETS Classroom Training, Job Shadowing, and Employer Site Visits
- Launched Leadership Transition Lab for 2026-2027 school year to support school district leaders in strengthening their transition services for students with disabilities

**WSC WIPA**

- Worked with 85 active caseloads of Social Security beneficiaries
- Provided intensive benefits planning services to 15 Social Security beneficiaries

## Long-Term Training Initiatives

HDC's Long-Term Training Initiatives provides training opportunities to graduate students, professionals, families, and self-advocates. HDC's Interdisciplinary Training program is **Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities (Louisiana LEND)**, which is funded by US Department of Health and Human Services- Maternal Child Health Bureau. The HDC LA LEND program is designed to prepare students for future roles as leaders in supporting families and individuals with developmental delays/disabilities and special health care needs. It promotes principles of family and person-centered care as well as interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaboration.

LA LEND provides over 300 hours of training as well as clinical and field experiences to graduate students and professionals working in a variety of disciplines, as well as self-advocates and family members. HDC's Interdisciplinary Training Initiatives also includes the **Autism Spectrum Disorder Interdisciplinary Diagnostic Clinic (ASDID)** which provides autism evaluations for young children and training on **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)**.

- The **LEND** 2025-2026 cohort of 14 scholars from various disciplines including Education, Speech Language Pathology, Occupational Therapy, Counseling, Dentistry, and scholars with lived experience are completing program. The year-end award ceremony and celebration was held on April 24 following the scholar's capstone presentations.
- Louisiana's **FASD United** chapter continues to meet monthly, via Zoom. In these meetings, members work together to plan awareness activities, community trainings, professional development, and to provide peer support to families and caregivers. FASD 101 trainings are continuing to be offered for families, professionals, and communities around the state.