



CREATING CHANGE THAT IMPROVES THE LIVES OF ALASKANS WITH DISABILITIES

STATE COUNCIL ON
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY
PANEL

INTERAGENCY COORDINATING
COUNCIL FOR INFANTS AND
TODDLERS WITH DISABILITIES

GOVERNING BOARD OF THE
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE
AGENCY

BENEFICIARY BOARD FOR THE
ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST
AUTHORITY

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GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL
ON DISABILITIES &
SPECIAL EDUCATION

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ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Council Mission

Creating change that improves the lives of Alaskans with disabilities.

Advocacy and Leadership

The Council worked with self-advocates re-establishing a statewide self-advocacy group called Peer Power. The group hired a part-time advisor, Tracy Golly, who will work at the Peer Power desk in the Council office. The Council assisted Peer Power to ask the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (The Trust) for technical assistance from a Trust consultant to provide Peer Power with board training and develop a long term work plan. Peer Power also worked with the Council to successfully advocate for 'mental retardation' to be removed from state statute and regulation. The Council worked with self-advocates and their family members to learn advocacy skills and to advocate with the legislature. The Council provided funding for Council members and community members to attend Key Campaign to advocate with the state legislature. The Council also works with Partners in Policymaking to educate self advocates and family members in grassroots advocacy.

Community Choice and Supports

The Council was also successful in advocating for \$450,000 of one-time funding for the Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC). The CBC provides intensive support and intervention to individuals at risk of being removed from their community or institutionalized outside of Alaska. The Division of Behavioral Health identified experts knowledgeable in behavior intervention for individuals with developmental disabilities, mental health diagnosis, brain injuries, and seniors with dementia. These experts provide individualized training and consultation to local providers and families, increasing their knowledge of behavior management.

The Council continued to work with Senior and Disability Services (SDS) on a rate review for community service providers. In August the Office of Rate Review released a new payment schedule for home and community based services, the Council and other community partners worked to determine the implications for these proposed changes and eventually the implementation of these regulations was postponed. The Council also continued to work with SDS on changes needed after the implementation of the new Home and Community Based waiver regulations.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2013

The Council also works with the Trust and the Stone Soup Group Inc to administer mini-grants (up to \$2,500, per individual, per fiscal year) for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities for services or equipment that improve their quality of life. In FY13, 316 individuals received grants totaling \$227,500.

Housing

The Council continues to participate in the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority's housing focus area workgroup, which concentrates on increasing housing options for individuals with disabilities. This group supports several projects to keep individuals in their own homes or to provide housing options when they are homeless or released from institutions or from the Department of Corrections. The Housing Modification and Upgrades program provides capital funds to help individuals with disabilities make modifications so they can remain in their home. The Council also worked with Senior and Disability Services on Home and Community Based Services regulations regarding services for individuals who live in housing owned by providers.

Transportation

The Council worked with the Alaska Mobility Coalition to successfully advocate for a \$1 million capital funds for community transportation providers. The Council staff participated on the newly formed Community Transportation Advisory Board. The Board replaces the Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force.

The Council provided comments on new State of Alaska's Medicaid Home and Community Based Services regulations. The State adopted some of the suggestions provided by the Council. After implementation of the new regulations occurred on July 1, 2013, the State of Alaska discovered some "unintended consequences" of the new regulations as far as their impact on Medicaid funded transportation services.

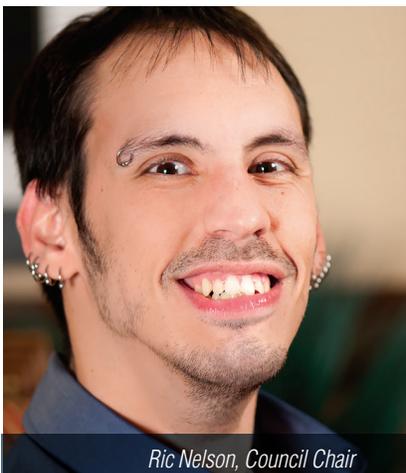
In 2013 a massive rewrite of the Anchorage Municipal code around taxicab and limousine services began, Council staff and some council members, especially self-advocates, were involved in every facet of what turned out to be a fairly controversial undertaking by the Municipality of Anchorage. The issues that were of most interest to the Council were the number of accessible cabs on the street, reports of discrimination against people with disabilities, and disability awareness training of cab drivers. The Council helped form a coalition of advocacy groups around these issues, which included the Alaska Mobility Coalition, the Disability Law Center, Access Alaska and the Statewide Independent Living Council. Council staff and the Council Chair provided both written and oral testimony at both Assembly work sessions and public hearings.

Employment

In the fall of 2012, the Council received a Project of National Significance Award to support the Alaska Integrated Employment Initiative to increase the number of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are employed in the community. The Council presented their Employment First initiative to the Alaska Mental Health Trustees and encouraged the Trustees to consider employment as an area of focus.

The Council's employment committee worked with Senior and Disability Services staff to develop changes to the regulations around supported employment options allowed by Center for Medicaid Services. The Council gathered individuals to provide public testimony on the regulations. The state changed several of the supported employment regulations as a result of Council efforts.

Project SEARCH (PS) continues to be a major emphasis of the Council. Council staff coordinate statewide efforts and provides technical assistance to each of the four sites, all located within hospitals. In May, 2013, there were 27 student interns that graduated from Project SEARCH. Two sites achieved 100% employment of the graduating interns, while the



Ric Nelson, Council Chair



Karli Lopez



Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus



Sharon Miranda

other two had over 70% placement rates. Many of the jobs obtained by the interns were well above the minimum wage, and were at least 20 hours per week, with several at 30-40 hours per week.

Under the Disability Employment Initiative, Council staff continued work to ensure there are disability resource coordinator positions at all job centers. In addition, all staff within the job centers receive 30 hours of training on: effectively serving job seekers with disabilities, the Ticket to Work program offered at job centers, asset building, accessibility, assistive technologies, partnerships and collaboration as well as blending/braiding of resources and leveraging resources. At the close of the year, there were 5 job centers serving as Employment Networks under the Ticket to Work program, 21 Tickets had been assigned or were pending assignment and 14 individuals were employed.

The Council convened the State as a Model Employer Workgroup to distribute the Survey of State Employees results in April. Findings from the survey being addressed include more training for supervisors and hiring managers on the Provisional Hire program and providing reasonable accommodations in the workforce. The Council brought together the Provisional Hire workgroup and met with the Governor's staff to discuss ways to improve marketing of the provisional hire program to hiring managers in the state and streamline the process.

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority funds a Microenterprise program to encourage Trust beneficiaries to develop their own businesses. The Council receives the \$125,000 funding from the Trust and a legislative general fund increment of \$25,000. The Trust beneficiaries (individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities, mental illness, traumatic brain injuries, Alzheimer's disease and related dementia and those experiencing chronic alcoholism and/or substance abuse) are able to apply for grants of up to \$10,000 and receive consultation from a small business advisor. \$86,228.34 was disbursed to 24 beneficiaries and an

additional \$112,428.41 was leveraged by outside sources as match funding.

Early Intervention

The Council worked with the State Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program to develop and implement several pilot programs to serve children with a 25% delay. The data from these pilot programs showed significant gain in early childhood outcomes for these children. The Council and its partners were successful in advocating for an increase of \$1.5 million from the legislature to serve children who were eligible under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act.

The Council worked with the state Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program (EI/ILP) office and Department of education and early development to develop an automatic process to share the contact information for children transitioning from Infant Learning Programs to district preschools. The Council also worked with the state EI/ILP office to develop statewide policies and procedures. The Council also worked with the state EI/ILP office to expand the number of professionals specifically trained to work in Infant Learning Programs.



Amy Simpson



Angie Fraize



Alexis Henning



ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2013

Education

The Council worked with the Department of Education and Early Education (DEED) to identify ways to increase the graduation rate for students with disabilities. Council staff presented recommendations to the State Board of Education. The Council also provided comments to the Board regarding changes to the No Child Left Behind waiver, teacher evaluation regulations, and early literacy screening.

The Council worked with a legislator to draft a statewide bill on the use of restraint and seclusion in schools. The Council gathered comments from many stakeholder groups including administrators, parents, and former students. The Council also held a planning meeting to create an advocacy plan for the upcoming legislative session. The Council successfully advocated for the continuation of the Special Education Service Agency, which provides consultation services to districts educating students with disabilities.

The Council assisted with planning the Alaska Statewide Special Education Conference (ASSEC) and presented the Inclusive Practice Award to educators who actively work to include students with disabilities in the school community. Earl Jeffery, from Hyدابurg, won the award for including students with disabilities in his regular education classes, including diving.

Health

The Council and its many partners in the autism community were successful in educating legislators about the importance of insurance coverage for individuals with autism. A bill was introduced in the previous legislative session and finally passed on the last day of the session. This bill requires private insurance providers to provide insurance coverage for individuals with autism.

The Council received a grant with the Division of Public Health to increase the number of individuals with disabilities who receive health screenings and who are prepared for natural disasters. The Council worked with the Division of Public Health to gather data and begin to implement this grant.

