



FULL COUNCIL MEETING

DRAFT MINUTES

Friday, September 20, 2024

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

3839 North Third Street, Suite 306

Phoenix, Arizona 85012

Meeting held via teleconference

The full Council meeting of the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC) was convened virtually Friday, September 20, 2024, notice having been duly given. Present and absent were the following members of the ADDPC:

Council Members Present

Melissa Van Hook, Chair

J.J. Rico, Vice Chair

Jessie Barbosa

Monica Cooper

Kin Chung-Counts

Meghan Cox

Bianca Demara

Vanessa Felix

Erik Jensen

Kathy Levandowsky

CJ Loiselle

Kristen Mackey

Janna Murrell

Gabriela Orozco

Kelly Roberts

Vijette Saari

Mary Slaughter

Sophie Stern

Mateo TreeTop

Council Members Absent

Rana Simms

Council Staff

Jon Meyers, Executive Director

Marcella Crane, Contracts Manager

Sarah Ruf, Communications Director

Jason Snead, Research & Communications Specialist

Lani St. Cyr, Fiscal Manager

Members of the Public/Guests

Brittany Chipley, MPA, Executive Director, AZ ABLE

Jacy Farkas, Director, UA/Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities (pending Council member)

Manuel Salazar, CEO of Take Charge America

Lynne Tomasa, PhD, MSW, FAAID, UA/Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities

Rene Washington, member of the public

Wanda Williams, Manager, Take Charge America

A. Call to Order/Welcome and Introductions

Chairperson Melissa Van Hook welcomed everyone to the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC or Council). The meeting was called to order at 10:03 AM. Introduction of Council members and roll call completed.

B. Minutes from June 21, 2024, Meeting

Chairperson Melissa Van Hook reviewed the June 21, 2024, minutes and asked the Council members if there were any comments or corrections to be made. As no changes were offered, a motion was called to approve the June 21, 2024, minutes. Sophie Stern made the motion, seconded by Jessie Barbosa. The motion carried.

C. Fiscal / Contract Update

Lani St. Cyr reviewed the ADDPC Financial Update and supporting documents. The fiscal updates are as follows:

Lani St. Cyr gave the ADDPC Financial Update and explained the Council has fully spent the FY 2022 award amount of \$1,500,930. The Council had requested, and ACL granted a no-cost extension for FY 2022 extending the project period through September 30, 2024. The Council has fully obligated and spent these funds and the work has been completed by the extended September 30, 2024, deadline.

The Council has received a total allotment of \$1,501,328 for FY 2023. The Council has fully obligated these funds and there is approximately \$211,051 remaining to be liquidated. The original obligation and project period requirements were both through September 30, 2024, with the final report due by September 30, 2025. However, a no cost extension request for the period of performance has been submitted to ACL. Staff has been notified the extension has been approved, however, the official Notice of Award has not been received to know the specifics of the extension.

The Council has received four allotments for FY 2024 bringing the award amount to \$1,497,202. The obligation and project periods are through September 30, 2025. There is approximately \$262,510 remaining to be obligated.

The Council also received an additional award in the amount of \$95,319 to expand the Public Health Workforce within the Disability Network. These funds are being tracked and reported on separately. The obligation and project period are through September 30, 2024. The contract for this project has concluded. The Council has received and paid the invoices for the full grant amount of \$95,319.

Next, the Council Funded Projects sheet was reviewed. This sheet shows all the current projects funded by the Council. All the proposals voted on at the June Full Council meeting are now reflected on this sheet. Staff is following up with any outstanding invoices for the contracts that ended in June.

Finally, the Budget Recommendation document was reviewed. This sheet has been updated to reflect the projects outlined in the FY 2024, 2025, and 2026 Workplans as well as the funding that has already been approved in the prior years.

The items highlighted on this sheet are the projects to be voted on. FY 2025 funds will be used primarily for projects to be decided on in the FY 2026 workplan. Currently, there is an anticipated surplus of \$270,000 for FY25 funds.

D. Executive Director Report:

Jon Meyers reported on the following agenda items:

- **FFY 2025 and FFY 2026 Annual Work Plans:**
Jon stated that the Administration on Community Living (ACL), reviewed our FFY 2025 and FFY 2026 Annual Work Plan and approved both work plans. There were no changes to make. The FFY 2025 Annual Work Plan will take effect October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025. Jon thanked staff and Kathy's committee for providing input during multiple reviews. Jon also stated that he posted two different versions of the Annual Work Plans for staff to look over. One is the version that is submitted through the Verity System that ACL requires Council's to use. It has much more detail and is not easy to read. The other version is a worksheet version that staff created for the Council which has most of the same information but makes it easy to understand.

Jon stated that he was notified by ACL that the contract for Council's to use the Verity System was not renewed and there is nothing in place for annual reporting. At this time, the Program Performance Report (PPR) will be completed in a Word version by December 30, 2024, however, we do not have the timeline for when ACL will have a new reporting system in place.

- **New Five-Year State Plan Development (2027-2031):**
Jon stated that the Council will be involved in the new five-year State Plan and that an ad-hoc committee will be formed to assist with elements of this process. The development of the new State Plan is very lengthy and requires a comprehensive review and analysis of state data, along with input from individuals with I/DD, their families/caregivers, and stakeholders around the state, especially from rural communities and tribal nations. This will also include the development of Annual Work Plans for federal fiscal years 2027 and 2028, with measurable goals, objectives and activities for those years. The due date of the next five-year plan and application documents is August 15, 2026. Jon stated that he will provide further details on the tasks and interim deadlines to work towards this.
- **FFY 2023 No Cost Extension Request:**
Jon stated a letter to ACL was sent last month to request a no cost extension on the federal FFY 2023 award to ensure those funds can be liquidated by September 30, 2025. Lani has identified a few projects that will support this request, such as the Data Hub/Community Index. The federal extension will allow Dr. Alex Kurz to analyze the DDD data he has been provided and upload it to the Data Hub, as well as update U.S. Census data. Staff approved a no-cost extension through January 31, 2025, for Dr. Kurz to finish his work. Once ACL provides formal notification, Jon will share any updates with the Council.
- **ADDPC 2024 Community Survey:**
Jon stated that he and Sarah worked on developing the questions for the 2024 Community Survey that is still open for the community and Council members to fill out. Jon also asked Council members to continue to share the link so that we have as many responses as possible to help identify areas that the Council needs to improve upon. At this time, approximately 54 responses have been received. The survey will be open until September 30, 2024. The responses will be analyzed and shared with the Council at the next meeting to share ideas on how to improve our operations and to help identify areas in the next five year State Plan. Sarah posted the link in the chat box.
- **FFY 2025 Council Budget (Vote):**

Jon gave an overview of the FFY 2025 Council Administrative Budget and explained how the Department of Economic Security (DES) as the Council's Designated State Agency (DSA) handles some of the administrative functions for the Council. He also explained how the total for the Personnel and Employee Related Expenses only reflects the administrative side of the work the staff does and does not show the amount of Council project work being performed internally which is reflected in the Goal Area projection. Lani St. Cyr also explained the budget amounts include partial funding from each of the three open grant awards, so may not directly reconcile with the fiscal/contract update sheets. She also clarified the 'Difference' column and the amounts in parentheses are an overspend from what was budgeted and that out-of-state travel was significantly higher than anticipated coming off the pandemic and the amount for Professional and Outside Services budgeted for FFY 2025 is higher than typical given the need to start the 5-Year State Planning process. This amount will not cover the full cost of the services needed for the work, but as the work will be done over the next 18-24 months it is what is estimated for FFY2025 and may come in higher than anticipated. There was also some discussion regarding continuing resolutions and anticipated funding.

A motion was made to approve the FFY 2025 Council Budget, as presented. Vijette Saari made the motion, seconded by Monica Cooper. The motion carried.

- **FFY 2025 Council Meeting Dates & Return to In-Person/Hybrid Meetings:**
Jon stated that Council meetings will resume in person beginning in the new fiscal year. For those members that cannot attend in person, an online link to the meeting will be available. The schedule for the upcoming meetings was shared. Jon also stated that the Council can reimburse Council members who live outside Maricopa County and would like to attend in person. Staff will work with the Council member to ensure they understand the reimbursement process. Executive Committee meetings will continue online.

Jon stated that after the November Council meeting, there will be an open house for Council members, staff, and members of the public to mingle. Since Covid-19, there hasn't been an opportunity to meet all the new Council members.

E. Committee & Work Group Reports:

Grants Committee: Marcella Crane provided an overview of each of the of the following new and renewal applications under consideration for funding by the Council.

1. *New Proposal – Direct ISA contract
UA Sonoran Center – Crisis Response & Trauma-Informed Care; Requesting \$100,000*

The University of Arizona Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities (Sonoran Center) will collaborate with the Arizona DD Network and community partners to develop and disseminate curricula and resources to improve crisis response and trauma informed practices for the I/DD community. Targeted efforts have been guided by the policy recommendations from the 2022 report on Arizona's Crisis Response & People who have ID/DD and 2023 findings from ADDPC's behavioral health/crisis response survey. The Sonoran Center will leverage resources and existing partnerships with the DD Network and the Link Center (mental health and DD technical assistance center) to inform and engage in the proposed activities.

The activities in Year 1 are broken into two categories:

Development of the Trauma Informed Care curricula will entail:

- Conducting a literature review, creating an inventory and needs assessment survey.

- Distributing needs assessment and analyzing data and creating a report for the curriculum content.
- Interviewing 10 individuals/organizations who have developed trainings.
- Developing a foundational module on trauma with specific content for health professionals.
- Conducting a pilot curriculum with community advisory council members, self-advocates, families, and disability professionals. The curriculum will be finalized in Year 2, if renewed.

Outreach and Dissemination includes:

- Identifying and creating a list of Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) courses and educational opportunities for students, to include content on trauma/crisis response for PwIDD.
- Developing and sharing two stories from the I/DD community regarding access to behavioral health/crisis related care.
- Developing a workshop for individuals with I/DD and families on how to access behavioral health services and how to create crisis support through legal options.
- Presenting developed workshop via online platform and at community events and conferences.

The budget supports the activities, and key staff are experienced in this work. If approved, the project will run October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025. The requested amount is \$100,000.

A motion was made to approve UA Sonoran Center proposal for the Crisis Response & Trauma-Informed Care project for \$100,000. Kathy Levandowsky made the motion, seconded by Sophie Stern. The motion carried.

2. *New RFGA Proposal*

UA Sonoran Center – Collaborative Approach to Better Respond to Sexual Violence Against Individuals with I/DD; Requesting \$75,000

Since 2018, ADDPC and its statewide network of collaborators have worked to improve awareness of and response to sexual violence against the I/DD population, as well as to identify effective means of preventing incidents of sexual violence from occurring. Still, national and local studies reveal significant gaps that undermine the health and safety of the I/DD population. More must be done to provide a clear understanding of how the state's legislation, regulations, and network of services and support can prevent and respond to sexual violence toward people with I/DD. In addition, more information regarding supportive services must be made available to individuals with I/DD who are actual or potential victims of the epidemic of sexual violence.

As reference to this grant solicitation, the Applicant is encouraged to download and read the report: <https://sonorancenter.arizona.edu/research/untold-stories-about-sexual-violence> "Sexual Violence Told Through Lived Experiences of Survivors, Families, and Professionals: The Impact of Sexual Violence on People with I/DD". The report is released by the Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities; Prepared by Lynne Tomasa, PhD, MSW, FAAIDD, from the University of Arizona Department of Family and Community Medicine Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities.

There are four required objectives, developed to be a systems change project, and the applicant can be renewed upon successful completion of four key objectives:

1. Create a committee that will develop a strategic plan to coordinate a sexual violence

awareness campaign. Members should be from a diverse group of stakeholders, to include, but not limited to, self-advocates, family members, Arizona's Protection & Advocacy organization (Disability Rights Arizona), Adult Protective Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities, law enforcement and judicial systems, healthcare (behavioral and physical), educational institutions and IDD advocacy organizations.

2. Review existing resources developed by the Arizona Sexual Violence and Disability Network, Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence (ACESDV), and other entities. Then, create an inventory of updated and new resources that can be adapted for specific audiences. All resources shall be created in plain language and culturally appropriate for the audience, including resources in both English and Spanish.
3. Identify and address, at the systems level, at least two policies that need to be developed (new) and/or enhanced to support individuals with I/DD who have been victims of sexual violence. Policies should also address impacts on victims'/survivors' families.
4. Engage with policymakers and elected officials to propose new policy changes that will strengthen existing laws for the prevention of abuse and neglect, proper reporting, and investigating allegations of sexual violence toward individuals with I/DD. Legislation need not be enacted by the end of the contract period, but effort must be shown that the Applicant is actively pursuing policy change.

Objective 1:

The Sonoran Center submitted a comprehensive proposal that addressed the four requirements. In year one, they will organize, facilitate, and work closely with the committee to develop a strategic plan. This committee will focus on the development of a sexual violence awareness campaign that can lead to the next step of an action campaign. The committee will review successful and unsuccessful campaigns, take a multi-layered approach, understand the audience targeted, and collaborate with embedded networks and community partnerships.

By November 2024, a 26-member committee will be formed, and members will be selected based on their expertise, experience, and commitment to the cause. The Sonoran Center provided a criteria list to be for the committee, which includes:

- Demonstrated experience or commitment to disability advocacy and/or sexual violence risk reduction.
- Professional or personal background in relevant fields.
- Lived experience as a victim/survivor of abuse, exploitation, and neglect.
- Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion principles.
- Ability to contribute time and resources to committee activities. The committee is expected to meet monthly over Zoom.

The committee will be tasked with several responsibilities, to include Campaign Development; Reviewing and Creating New Materials; Community Engagement/Partnerships; Organizing Events and Activities to share information; and Evaluating Progress. Sonoran Center staff have been identified in key roles to work with the committee and several working groups and have responsibility for monitoring and documenting all work.

Objective 2:

The Sonoran Center will maintain all resources in a centralized, online repository hosted on their website. This repository will be easily navigable and searchable. They will also incorporate user feedback through online surveys, feedback forms at events, focus groups, and direct outreach to stakeholders. This will allow the identification of common themes, suggestions, and areas for improvement. Materials will also be developed in plain language and are culturally appropriate and understandable. The Sonoran Center will conduct focus groups with target

audiences to test the clarity and cultural appropriateness of materials before finalizing them and employ professional translators and cultural consultants to create resources in Spanish and adapt them to be culturally relevant.

Objective 3:

In Dr. Tomasa's research report, it was clear that the identification, reporting, and response to sexual violence was severely inadequate and there was a lack of information and training on multiple levels. The Sonoran Center's proposal identified two policies.

1. Mandatory and optional training for DDD vendors and staff, support coordinators, and IOC committee members, and community organizations.
2. AHCCCS and DDD Incident Flowchart Assessment.

The policies were chosen because they represent significant processes that systems use to measure performance. The impact and outcomes for the individuals served may not be clearly defined. The community may not fully understand where gaps and improvements can be made.

Systems and administrators understand what works with their available resources but may not be asking the questions that can lead to improvements. An outside review may be helpful. Training in foundational principles and skills is necessary for all staff and organizations that provide support to individuals with I/DD and families. Specific competencies need to be identified, tracked, and evaluated. Regular training on broader but related topics is necessary. Training must be engaging and provide opportunities for feedback. Some examples of additional training include how to engage in conversations that build trust, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), how past and current trauma is expressed behaviorally and verbally.

Objective 4:

As lobbying is prohibited by ADDPC contractors, the primary role the Sonoran Center can assume is to support the statewide efforts of organizations whose expertise lies in these areas. They include ADDPC, ACESDV, DRAZ, The Arc of Arizona, Southwest Institute for Families and Children, and the Arizona Sexual Violence and Disability Network. SUCED can provide support through researching relevant background information, examining successful strategies and outcomes, and identifying useful resources to support the efforts of these organizations.

Objective 5:

The Sonoran Center identified a fifth objective to ensure expansion and training to students. They will collaborate with academic programs and colleges and universities that train future behavioral health, public health policy, and direct service providers in integrating sexual violence and I/DD into existing curriculum. By partnering with staff and faculty within the University, the Sonoran Center has the potential to reach hundreds of students who can utilize this knowledge in their future careers. This could make a significant impact on the future of how individuals with I/DD are treated, educated, and protected from sexual violence.

The proposal had minor clarifications to respond to. The budget supports the activities, and key staff are experienced in this work. If approved, the project will begin October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025. The requested amount is \$75,000. The evaluation committee approved the proposal with the clarifications to the ADDPC.

A motion was made to approve UA Sonoran Center proposal for the Collaborative Approach to Better Respond to Sexual Violence Against Individuals with I/DD for \$75,000. J.J. Rico made the motion, seconded by Sophie Stern. The motion carried.

3. *Renewal Proposal*
UA Sonoran Center – Native Center for Disabilities, Year 4; Requesting \$120,000

The Circle of Indigenous Empowerment (CIE or Native Center), the Native American-focused Sub-Center within the University of Arizona's Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities (Sonoran Center), partners with Arizona's 22 Tribal Nations, to further develop activities fostering awareness, services, and partnerships benefiting Native communities. The CIE's mission centers on providing culturally sensitive programs to amplify awareness of disability services, advocacy, and support within the Native American population across Arizona. Their indigenized approach to disability has proved to help reach Tribal members with disabilities in rural hard-to-reach communities and villages. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, they have a strong digital presence that allows the Sonoran Center to continue to reach the target populations through monthly webinar series and special online events.

In its initial year, the Native Center initiated foundational activities to establish its presence. These included meetings, presentations, and outreach efforts to communicate project objectives to the community. Concurrently, partnerships with Tribal Nations, state agencies, and community organizations were cultivated, allowing for comprehensive landscape analyses of varied communities within the state.

The second year focused on implementation and expansion, manifested through talking circles, coordinated meetings, a quarterly newsletter, and a successful monthly webinar series, all geared toward addressing issues within Native American communities.

During this past year, the Native Center faced staff changes and the hiring of a new Program Manager in January 2024. With new staff, the project rebranded to the Circle of Indigenous Empowerment (CIE), broadened outreach to new partnerships with organizations focused on Tribal education, disability non-profit and advocacy programs, higher education institutions and Tribal community advocacy programs to continue monthly webinars, presentations at local, state, and national conferences, and development of awareness resources on Traumatic Brain Injury, college resource guides, and toolkits.

For the first 3 quarters of the grant period, nine webinars were held; 838 people registered and 439 attended. Attendees identified their primary role and tribal affiliation:

Individuals with Disabilities = 22
Family Members = 20
Professionals Trained = 327
Tribal Affiliated = 192

The Native Center webinars, which started as Arizona statewide events, have grown to national events attended by Tribal leaders, professionals, and individuals with disabilities across the United States. This has been pivotal in helping to grow partnerships and outreach. Also, feedback from participants is used to guide Year Four program objectives and planned activities.

Activities planned for Year 4:

Objective 1: Expand Outreach and Engage with 16 Tribal Education and Health Departments and 3 Tribal Colleges to identify disability and workforce needs

Each of the 22 federally recognized Tribes have Tribal Education and Health Departments which oversee K-12, adult education, higher education assistance, Vocational Rehabilitation, Supportive Employment, Workforce Investment Opportunity, and mental health-substance

misuse programs. In Year Three, the CIE has met with six Tribal Nations (Navajo Nation, the Tohono O'odham Nation, Hopi Tribe, Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community, Gila River Indian Community, Pascua Yaqui) to reestablish partnerships to identify training and educational material development needs and provide Sonoran Center resources. In Year Four, the CIE will expand outreach and engagement to additional Tribal Education and Health Departments and Tribal Colleges.

Objective 2: Strengthen Native Youth and Adult Workforce Resources and Opportunities in Three Tribal Communities

By forging partnerships with Tribal and non-Tribal businesses, state programs, and training centers, the CIE intends to highlight the need to create diverse employment opportunities and culturally responsive training programs that match the skills and aspirations of Tribal Nations and members. In Year Three, the CIE met with the Navajo Nation, the Tohono O'odham Nation, Hopi Tribe, Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community, Gila River Indian Community, Pascua Yaqui and White Mountain Apache Vocational Rehabilitation and affiliated schools to share resources and identify youth and adult workforce needs. In Year Four, the CIE will focus on convening partners, increase capacity, and highlight practice-based Tribal programs.

Objective 3: Expand monthly training and continuing education opportunities key stakeholder to increase awareness on disabilities in AZ Tribal Nations

The CIE will provide on-site and virtual training, continuing education, and workshops for parents, health professionals, educational staff and other identified key stakeholders to improve educational services and healthcare services for Tribal members with disabilities. In Year Three, the CIE successfully hosted 11 webinars to date on topics pertinent to Tribal partners, key stakeholders and health care providers and developed resources on Traumatic Brain Injury, College Transition, Transition Services and Hearing Impairment in Tribal Communities. In Year Four the CIE will expand efforts to create additional educational resources.

Objective 4: Focus Collaboration with State and National Federal Agencies and Tribal Programs to increase awareness on disability services for AZ Tribal Nations.

In Year Three the CIE collaborated with the US Department of Labor's Division of Indian and Native American Programs (DINAP) and provided technical assistance on nationwide accessible training and content. In Year Four, the CIE will collaborate with higher education institutions, federal agencies, and Tribal programs to discuss, develop working groups, and increase awareness of the need to create a comprehensive network of services that address the diverse needs of Native individuals with disabilities.

Targeted Disparity as required by ACL: By 2026, the Council will strengthen a program that increases meaningful employment opportunities for transition aged youth with I/DD (ages 14-22) from the Navajo Nation by supporting a focus on training, technical assistance, direct services, and resources.

Since the advent of the CIE, including projects under the Native Center, the transition and employment outcomes for Navajo youth with disabilities has progressed through the creation and maintenance of participation in pre-Employment Transition Services, Project SEARCH, school pilot site partnerships, and Tribal/State Vocational Rehabilitation employment supports.

The CIE staff will have a primary role in coordinating and integrating across Sonoran Center Native and Transition projects focused on meaningful employment opportunities for Native transition age youth with disabilities. This includes a partnership with the Navajo Nation's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation to build capacity for providing transition services and

work-based learning opportunities that prepare and support Native youth with disabilities for post-secondary education and employment. They will work with project partners to assist in the development of training and relevant resources for schools and families, as well as participate in outreach and recruitment of Navajo youth with IDD to engage in leadership, skill building, and work-based learning opportunities that will be implemented as part of the proposed Objective 2 activities.

Evaluation data to capture for the Targeted Disparity requirement includes:

- # Navajo youth with IDD participating in work-based learning.
- # Navajo youth with IDD participating in leadership, advocacy and skill building activities.
- # Navajo Nation schools and staff receiving training and technical assistance to build capacity for transition services provision leading to meaningful employment.

The budget supports the activities, and key staff are experienced in this work. If approved, the project will begin October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025. The requested amount is \$120,000.

A motion was made to approve UA Sonoran Center proposal for the Native Center for Disabilities/Circle of Indigenous Empowerment for \$72,124. Sophie Stern made the motion, seconded by Gabriela Orozco. The motion carried.

2. System Access & Navigation:

Janna Murrell provided a summary of the committee's work. The committee most recently met on September 17, 2024, and discussed the "How-To-Guide" that will be launched on our website at the end of the month. Committee members reviewed the electronic version and input was gathered from users as a test pilot. Sarah will review the Guide to ensure all the weblinks work. The next step is to address the other activities under the System Access & Navigation goal.

3. Meaningful Careers:

Melissa Van Hook provided the update. Melissa stated the committee launched **Creating a Life Full of Possibilities!** webinar series in May. The 5th and final webinar **ThinkCollegeAZ: Expanding Opportunities for Inclusive Higher Education** will be on Wednesday, September 25 from 10:00 am-11:30 am. The webinars included sessions on Person Centered Planning, Alternatives to Guardianship, Project SEARCH and Work Programs, and Assistive Technology in the Workplace. In addition to sharing information on these important topics, the webinars helped increase awareness and support for the Council efforts to assist with transition planning, increase participation for postsecondary education, and increase opportunities for competitive integrated employment. If any Council member would like to receive a registration link for next week's webinar, they should contact Jason Snead or Sarah Ruf.

To date: Person-Centered Planning had 70 participants and 86 views on YouTube; Alternatives to Guardianship 104 participants and 124 views on YouTube; Project SEARCH and Work 30 participants and 33 views on YouTube; and Utilizing Technology 35 participants and 9 views on YouTube. The total number of psparticipants so far: 239 participants and 252 views on YouTube.

ADDPC is hosting a family learning session on *College Opportunities for Students with I/DD* on Thursday, October 3rd from 6:00 pm-8:00 pm at Ability360's Conference Center. A lot of enthusiasm and support for Think College have been generated thanks to our Supporting Inclusive Practices in College (SIP-C) project with the Institute for Human Development at Northern Arizona University. That project has spawned a new collaboration of inclusive

postsecondary education programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Council staff created two new Pathways to the Future resources which complement the six that were created last year. *Preparing for College* and *Work for Refugees with Disabilities* will be shared with educators, transition specialists, support coordinators, and others to help individuals and families with transition and future planning.

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Communities at the Center (a.k.a. Raising Expectations) reports have been shared with leadership at the Arizona Department of Education, Department of Economic Security (which houses the Division of Developmental Disabilities and Vocational Rehabilitation), and Employment First. Mike Leyva will work with representatives from the respective agencies to implement recommendations contained in the reports. We are also exploring a strategy that will focus on empowering I/DD consumers. The reports have also been uploaded to the ADDPC website. If you need assistance locating the reports, please contact Jason or Sarah.

We are working with our partners on promoting October's National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). ADDPC will:

- disseminate a press release
- share Governor Hobbs's Proclamation recognizing the month and her support for competitive integrated employment and justice and fairness for Arizonans with disabilities
- issue an Employment First policy brief in plain language
- create a social media campaign, and
- feature three new videos which highlight personal employment stories. Melissa gave special thanks and recognition to Stephanie Johnson with Vocational Rehabilitation for securing the DES Division of Employment & Rehabilitative Services Public Information Office to produce the videos. Thank you, Stephanie, and Vocational Rehabilitation!

Michael Leyva is in Tucson to discuss the possibility of partnering with the Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities and the Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind on a new Project SEARCH site for the Fall of 2025. Project SEARCH is a unique business-led, one-year employment preparation program that takes place at a workplace. It creates an opportunity for career-exploration through various types of hands-on training in a variety of departments. Participants acquire competitive, transferable, and marketable job skills. To date, 344 Interns have graduated from Project SEARCH in Arizona, and 71% of Arizona Project SEARCH graduates obtained competitive integrated employment in 2019. Melissa expressed optimism the Tucson site will come to fruition.

Melissa thanked Michael Leyva and committee members for supporting these and many more activities during the past year.

4. Behavioral Health & I/DD:

Jason Snead stated the Behavioral Health and I/DD committee was established almost 2 years ago to write a crisis report regarding the treatment of individuals with IDD and their interactions with law enforcement and the behavioral health system in Arizona. The report was used by some of the grant awardees in their proposals. Since the report was published, the behavioral health/IDD core team has been meeting with state agencies and other organizations to address the issues listed in the report throughout Arizona. One of the members of the core team is a professor at Arizona State University who is having her interns look at police reports tied to

group homes to gather data about the number of calls made for law enforcement visits. Another member of the core team is trying to do a cost analysis on individuals with I/DD experiencing crisis, particularly looking at individuals using ER versus outpatient services. The hope is that these efforts will bring awareness to the continued need to address barriers in the Arizona behavioral health system and for providers to appropriately address crisis response at the outset instead of families having to incur costs at an emergency level.

5. Work Plan:

Kathy Levandowsky stated the Committee met on August 2, 2024, to review the FFY 2025 Annual Work Plan with staff prior to submission to the ACL. Kathy noted the AWP is detailed for each goal, with performance measures to track for each activity, and collaborators or funded grantees for projects. She thanked staff for trying to keep it organized. Kathy also stated that if any Council member would like to join the ad-hoc committee to develop the next five-year plan, to let Jon know. The work will take almost two years to complete and input from across the community and Council members is important.

F. Grantee & Guest Presentations:

Lynne Tomasa with the UA Sonoran Center presented her research findings from the report, **“Sexual Violence Told through Lived Experiences of Survivors, Families, and Professionals.”** She discussed her research findings and recommendations and answered questions.

Dr. Tomasa thanked the Council members for their support during the time this research and report was prepared.

Recruiting participants for the study and data collection were done during the pandemic and it was difficult to secure participation from individuals, families, and professionals. The target was 25, and 26 individuals participated in the interviews. Recruitment was done by word of mouth.

Each interview was between 60-90 minutes and each interview was transcribed. Transcribing interviews and developing the key themes of the report took the greatest amount of time.

- Interview participant demographics include 8 survivors, 3 family members and 15 professionals.
- The age range was from 22 to 68; 20 were female and 6 were male
- The interviewees were from four counties: Cochise, Pima, Maricopa, and Yuma

Key findings from the survivor interviews and data show the experiences were difficult for all involved, including the researchers who had to read, to listen to and understand. In summary:

- Sexual violence starts at young age; many suffer from multiple incidents, from the same person or other individuals; it can happen at work, school, social settings.
- Impact is lifelong, a continuous process. We need to do a better job of observing behaviors and believing when we're told. We need to listen to the victim.
- It can take years for someone to feel safe enough to be able to share their story.
- Families are not immune from sexual violence. We cannot control another person, and we encourage social interaction. It is not the family's fault.
- There is an impact on the family relationship when this happens.
- Social media impact – we need to educate each other on the dangers and how it impacts this issue.
- Bullying needs to be addressed.
- Families also stated that they need more sex and healthy relationships education for risk reduction; and we need for better counseling.

Individual professionals shared their stories. They shared their historical perspective and lessons learned and the use of data. Staffing is a concern for many. They need more information on whether the data that is collected is useful or not to make any changes.

They also stated there is a lack of resources and they have concerns about staffing. They also stated that data collected by organizations and systems lacks coordination and transparency. The system in place to help is not victim/survivor friendly – how the legal system works, how investigations take place is often difficult for the survivor and their family. Training is important, there is a lot of good information, but can it be applied, and is there an opportunity for feedback for continuous improvement? We need more behavioral health services and professionals.

Big picture overview:

- Sexual violence can happen everywhere and anytime.
- It has a deep and lasting impact on individuals and families.
- Reporting is difficult, useful data is lacking.
- Agencies or organizations continue to work in silos, there is lack of collaboration on this issue; we don't often share.
- We need to be honest with what information can be shared.
- Behavioral health support is not accessible.
- Everyone needs support.
- There are many more hidden victims and survivors than are reported. This report only reached a small percentage. We know there are more victims in other settings.

The report outlines areas to address and next steps. There is more detail in the report, but it is broken up in three areas:

- Awareness and Support: Looking at diverse individuals to help with different ways of messaging. We need to be more creative and receive feedback from many people.
- Education and Training: How do we engage and keep good staff? What training is needed? How do we seek their input and make changes? How do we promote more skill sets?
- System Services and Coordination: Are there ways for the system to be efficient and transparent?

Dr. Tomasa wrapped up by saying, incrementally we're making progress, but we need to document it and continue to work on this subject.

Council members questions:

Kin Counts – Excellent report, how do we have more easily accessible information, like at a doctor's office, or at a library? At places where people can see how to get help? This will bring awareness because this topic is difficult to talk about.

Dr. Tomasa stated that we can do a better job of getting the information out, making sure the awareness is broad.

Melissa asked what can the Council do to support Dr. Tomasa's work? Dr. Tomasa stated that the difficult thing is to get the information out to those who are not part of the core disability community. Tell one person what you learned today, talk about this to someone. We assume that those not involved are not interested and that is not always the case.

Reports on the website are okay, but having printed reports is important to hand out to someone, and it's a better way to disseminate information. Some people will not read this online, or there is already a lot of information online and it gets buried.

Janna Murrell: We teach 2 classes at RSK on this topic and we're including your report in future classes.

Sarah posted a link to a news story featuring Dr. Tomasa. Melissa thanked Dr. Tomasa for her work and presentation, and Sarah posted contact for anyone to reach out to her.

Brittaney Chipley, the Executive Director of Arizona ABLE, presented on the **Arizona Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE)** program.

AZ ABLE is Arizona's ABLE Plan, offered to Arizona residents through a partnership with the Ohio STABLE Account Program and is administered by DES. The program began on March 5, 2018, after state legislation was signed.

An individual is eligible to establish an AZ ABLE account if they have a disability that occurred prior to the age of 26, plus one of the following: They are eligible to receive SSI or SSDI due to the disability; or they meet a condition listed on SSA's "List of Compassionate Allowances Conditions"; or they self-certify they have a disability.

Enrollment can be done by the individual with the disability (they will be the beneficiary) or an Authorized Legal Representative (ALR) which is an agent under power of attorney, conservator/legal guardian, spouse, parent, sibling, grandparent, or Social Security representative payee.

The amount of funding that can be added to an individual AZ ABLE account is \$18k per year, if the person with a disability is not employed, or up to \$32,580 per year if the person is employed; and the current lifetime maximum balance is \$541,000. The system will automatically reject excess contributions after the limit is reached.

Funds can be spent on several areas but must relate to the disability and help the person maintain or improve health, independence, or quality of life. Areas include Education, Transportation, Housing/Rent, Basic Living Expenses, Assistive Technology, Financial Management, Health & Wellness and Legal Fees.

As of June 30, 2024, there are 2,212 ABLE accounts in Arizona, with Maricopa County having the most at 1,500. The total amount of assets also as of June 30, 2024, is \$24,974,431.

There are few legislative actions that recently took place:

- **ABLE Age Adjustment Act:** Federal legislation raising the age of disability onset from 26 to 46 for the purposes of the ABLE program. This change goes into effect on January 1, 2026, and will allow approximately six million additional Americans to set up an ABLE account.
- **Arizona Department of Child Safety:** Legislation enacted to conserve SSI funds for youth in the state foster system. To date has resulted in 234 accounts being established with a total of \$1.33 Million (\$5,700 average account balance).
- **Social Security Direct Deposit:** Now allowing SSI/SSDI payments to be deposited directly into an ABLE account.
- **Tax Benefits:** \$2,000 individual/\$4,000 joint tax credit when filing taxes.

G. Announcements:

Sophie Stern stated her mother, Amy Silverman, received an award at the National Down Syndrome Congress annual convention in July.

J.J. Rico stated that next week there will be training on voting, and anyone interested can register for it.

Jessie Barbosa stated that she is partnering with DDD's chief medical officer to start an ADHS subcommittee that will address vaccine hesitancy and vaccine awareness for the ID/DD community. They will host their first meeting in October and Jessie invited anyone to join the subcommittee. Her email was posted in the chat box.

Janna Murrell posted in the chat box that the Transition Institute will be held in Spanish on October 12. Janna posted the link for registration.

Jessie posted in the chat box that if anyone is attending the Arizona SILC Conference on Monday, September 23, Arizona Department of Health Services will have free vaccines and resources, as well as an opportunity to sign up for a vaccine clinic.

H. Call to the Public:

None

I. Adjourn:

Chairperson Melissa Van Hook adjourned the meeting at 12:05 PM.

Dated this 26th day of September 2024
Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council