



## **FULL COUNCIL MEETING**

### **DRAFT MINUTES**

Friday, November 18, 2022

10:00 AM – 12:30 PM

3839 North Third Street, Suite 306

Phoenix, Arizona 85012

*Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.01 (G), the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council and its standing and ad-hoc committees may obtain public comment if it so desires. A formal call to the public will take place at the end of the meeting. Members of the Board may not discuss items that are not specifically identified on the agenda. Meeting was conducted by teleconference.*

#### **Council Members Present**

Melissa Van Hook, Chair  
J.J. Rico, Vice Chair  
Monica Cooper  
Bianca Demara  
Vanessa Felix  
Erik Jensen  
Benjamin Kauffman  
Katharine Levandowsky

Kristina Lopez  
Kristen Mackey  
Janna Murrell  
Gabriela Orozco  
Wendy Parent-Johnson  
Kelly Roberts  
Vijette Saari  
Mary Slaughter  
Janet Viloría

#### **Council Members Absent**

Kin Chung-Counts  
Meghan Cox  
James Rivera  
Mateo TreeTop

#### **Council Staff**

Jon Meyers, Executive Director  
Marcella Crane, Contracts Manager  
Steve Freeman, Director of Communications  
Michael Leyva, Contracts/Grants Coordinator  
Lani St. Cyr, Fiscal Manager  
Jason Snead, Research & Communications Specialist

#### **Members of the Public**

Bryan Dai, Co-Founder and CEO, Daivergent  
Cameron Dogan, Director of Operations, Daivergent  
Heather Williamson, Northern Arizona University-Institute for Human Development  
Cassandra Avery  
Fiona Donohoe, DES/VR

**A. Call to Order/Welcome and Introductions**

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

**B. Minutes from September 23, 2022, Meeting**

Chairperson Melissa Van Hook reviewed the September 23<sup>rd</sup> 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 September 23, 2022, minutes. Monica Cooper approved the motion, seconded by Gabriela Orozco. The motion carried.

**C. Fiscal / Contract Update**

Lani St. Cyr reviewed the ADDPC Financial Update and supporting documents. As of November 2022, the following fiscal updates are as follows:

The Council has fully spent the FY 2020 award and has complied with the one-time no cost extension given by the Administration for Community Living. Under the extension the obligation and project periods had been extended through September 30, 2022. The liquidation of funds and final reports will need to be completed by December 31, 2022.

The Council has received the full allotment for FY 2021, in the amount of \$1,500,930 and has received a reallocation of FY 2021 funds from Puerto Rico in the amount of \$34,412, bringing the Council's total funding for FY 2021 to \$1,535,342. The Council has fully obligated the FY 2021 award amount and has met the original September 2022 obligation deadline. However, ACL has offered a one-year no cost extension for FY 2021 funds and the Council staff has submitted a letter requesting this extension. This extension will make the new obligation and project period through September 30, 2023, allowing an additional year for the work awarded with the obligated funds to be completed. We will have until December 31, 2023, to liquidate FY21 funds. There is approximately \$210,623 to be liquidated.

The Council has received the full allotment for FY 2022 in the amount of \$1,500,930, which is the amount previously estimated. This is level funding to FY 2021 excluding the Puerto Rico reallocation. The obligation and project periods are through September 30, 2023, with the liquidation of funds through September 30, 2024. The Council has fully obligated these funds and there is approximately \$1,232,092 remaining to be spent or liquidated.

The Council has also received the first allotment of FY23 funding in the amount of \$315,762 under the current Continuing Resolution through December 16, 2022. The total amount is being estimated at \$1,500,930, which is level funding with the prior two fiscal years.

Next, an update was given on the additional awards the Council has received.

First, the Council received \$84,288 for projects specific to COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy. These funds are being tracked and reported separately. ACL has also granted a one-year no cost extension for these funds, which the staff submitted a letter requesting. With the extension, the funds must be obligated, and work completed by September 30, 2023. To date the Council has spent \$35,258 and has encumbered \$46,661 through September 30, 2023. The remaining balance of the award will be used in partnership with NAU/IHD on a project to better understand the lived experiences of people with disabilities throughout the pandemic including barriers to health services such as awareness and access to the COVID-19 vaccine.

The Council received an additional award in the amount of \$95,319 to expand the Public Health Workforce within the Disability Network. The funds will also be tracked and reported separately. The obligation and project period are through September 30, 2024. Currently there is not a project in place for these funds, but discussions have been underway.

Next, the Council Funded Projects sheet was reviewed. The Committee was informed that all projects voted on and approved at the last meeting have been added.

Finally, the Budget Recommendation document showed items to be funded based on the workplan recommendations. The sheet now reflects the projects outlined in the FY 2023 Workplan. It was mentioned that the NAU/IHD SIP-C project was not in the workplan or budgeted for a fourth year.

#### **D. Executive Director Report**

Jon Meyers reported on the following agenda items:

- Council vacancies/renewals/recommendations:  
Jon stated that he has been in communication with the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions to ensure the remaining vacancies are filled. We're pleased to welcome Janet Vilorio as a representative from the Department of Health Services. Janet is with the Office of Children with Special Health Care Needs. We're awaiting official notification to fill the DES/DAAS position and a self-advocate. Persons have been identified for each, and Jon stated he looks forward to having them join the Council soon. In addition, several Council members whose term expired earlier in September filled out the proper paperwork to serve another term. Jon stated that as the Governor's Office transitions to a new Governor and administration, it may take longer to hear back, but he is hopeful the Council roster will be completed soon.
- FFY 2023 Notice of Award:  
Jon stated that ACL notified the Council of a partial award for FFY 2023 funds. All Councils are operating under a federal Continuing Resolution and there is discussion that if Congress passes a new budget, funding for Councils may increase.
- Programmatic Progress Reports (PPR) 2022 Update:  
Marcella Crane stated that work has started to complete the PPR for FFY 2022. All the information and data are currently being gathered and drafted by staff to edit and then upload into the Verity Analytics system. This is work completed from October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023, based on the Council's FFY 2022 Work Plan and includes updates on the DD Network, Fiscal spending, required areas under the Comprehensive Review and Analysis, Evaluation of the Council's progress to meet the Goals, and funded projects. The PPR is due December 30, 2022.
- Covid-19 Vaccine Hesitancy and Public Health Workforce Development special funding updates:  
Jon stated that a portion of the Vaccine Hesitancy funds has been used by Michele Thorne and Michelle Jacquez, to undertake a study on parents and caregivers, people with I/DD and the I/DD community on their attitudes towards Covid vaccines and hesitancy concerns. A second attempt to receive responses from the target group yielded over 4,600 responses. The data has been analyzed and a draft report will be submitted for review. Jon thanked Jason Snead and Steve Freeman for their work to reissue a survey of parents and caregivers related to pediatric vaccine acceptance/hesitancy. There are approximately \$45k in funds left to use by September 30, 2023, and those funds are awarded to NAU/IHD for additional work through a formal contract. NAU/IHD will look at conducting a survey to gather additional input from individuals with disabilities

in Northern Arizona, including tribal communities. This work will supplement what NAU/IHD is already doing with their direct funding from the CDC. That information will then lead to a better understanding of what the medical community and its partners can do to address vaccine hesitancy and alternative ways to communicate messages about the importance of vaccines. NAU will have until September 30, 2023, to complete the work.

DD Councils received notification of additional monies for Covid-19 response in the amount of \$95,319 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021. These are one-time funding awards and funds must be used by September 30, 2024, to cover wages and benefits for public health professionals (directly or through contract) as well as the costs associated for equipment, training and supplies. Jon and Mary Slaughter have discussed different ideas on how these funds could be used and to collaborate with the University of Arizona College of Public Health and the Western Arizona Health Education Center (WAHEC). A draft scope of work has been developed on addressing needs of the aging I/DD population; focus groups and outreach will be done by WAHEC. More will be reported in January when the scope of work is released, and a contract can be in place.

- **ACL State Councils Infographics:**  
Jon shared a resource that ACL developed to communicate to the public and stakeholders, the work of the Councils. This resource is easy to read, highlights the work and focus of the Councils and he encouraged the Council to share it with others. It will be posted on the ADDPC website and shared with Council members.
- **Administration on Disabilities Commissioner visit:**  
Jon informed the Council that Jill Jacobs, the Commissioner for the Administration on Disabilities, will be visiting Phoenix, especially the Council on November 30, 2022, at 1:30 PM. Jon has been in communication with Erica McFadden on her upcoming visit and has been asked to invite Council members, self-advocates, and our disability partners to this meeting. We also plan to open our conference call phone line for those that can call in. Final meeting arrangements are being worked through and Jon will send an update via email to the Council members.

#### **E. ADDPC Year in Review – FFY2022**

Jon Meyers provided a summary of the FFY 2022 Year in Review described in a PowerPoint presentation. During this past year, there have been many changes. The Council experienced a change in leadership transition after 5+ years under Erica McFadden, rapid emergence from pandemic restrictions and a return to semblance of prior life, new investments in I/DD service system, and unforeseen economic challenges.

The Council has also seen a year in accomplishments, as the Council maintained a focus on vital work for Arizonans with I/DD. This includes support for projects in key areas; research to identify barriers, causes, and solutions; and policy and advocacy affecting change to key systems. There have been significant and valuable collaborations with the DD Network partners for many of the Council objectives.

Jon highlighted several Council projects and their accomplishments under the Five Goals. Projects highlighted under the Self-Determination goal include Southwest Institute for Families & Children (SWI)-Arizona Statewide Self-Advocacy Coalition, UA Sonoran UCEDD-Transition AHEAD Roundtable, and the Arizona Center for Disability Law-Special Education Advocacy Program (SEAP).

Highlighted under the Meaningful Careers goal is NAU/IHD -Supporting Inclusive Practices in Colleges (SIP-C) Project and Creating a Successful Path- Employment & Transition Webinars.

Highlighted under the goal of Inclusion with Engagement is UA Sonoran UCEDD-Continuing Medical Education & Self-Advocacy Video Series, and the Community Disability Index/Data Hub developed by Dr. Alex Kurz with ASU.

The goal of Safety included release of the Arizona's Crisis Response & People with I/DD 2022 Policy Recommendations report and is tasked with supporting the Arizona Sexual Violence & Disability Network, with strategic planning provided by The Arc of the United States.

The fifth goal is System Access & Navigation. This goal is addressing the gaps in various life transitions (i.e., childhood to elder stage) for people with I/DD and how they navigate various agencies and organizations that provide resources and support. This goal also supports the federal requirement, Targeted Disparity, by funding the UA Sonoran UCEDD-Native Disability Center. The Center provides Native-focused programs to increase knowledge of disability services and programs available to Arizona's 22 tribal communities and off reservation urban communities with significant Native American populations.

In summary, Jon stated Council-led and Council-funded projects achieved significant and measurable outcomes, Council staff or members have been featured in numerous media reports, and our current portfolio is 17 contracts in place with 13 different organizations, funding approximately \$893,421.

The Council is currently in the first quarter of the 2023 Work Plan addressing the five goals, and areas of opportunity to address include cultural diversity, healthcare initiatives, future planning for all main transition points in life, including a focus on aging with I/DD, and service system improvements.

## **F. Committee/Roundtable Reports**

### **1. Grants Committee:**

#### Renewal requests

Northern Arizona University – Institute for Human Development: Supporting Inclusive Practices in College (SIP-C) program (Year 4)

Marcella Crane provided the overview of the 4th year of funding request by NAU/IHD for the SIP-C program.

SIP-C is a best practice model project funded by the ADDPC for three years. It is a model project for schools of higher education to support students with I/DD to transition to post-secondary education and is under the Meaningful Careers/Employment Goal.

Support for Year 4 Renewal, \$50,000 Requested amount is based on the three-year project at NAU/IHD. SIP-C's service area encompasses over 53,076 square miles, including under/unserved communities that have limited postsecondary transition services for individuals with disabilities. Among these are many Tribal communities, which are part of the target populations of the SIP-C program. Per the American Community Surveys (2018), AZ has the highest population of American Indians in the nation. Four counties in SIP-C's service area have populations of American Indians as high as 75% (U.S. Census Bureau).

As of 11/1/2022 SIP-C has received 46 applications from individuals with I/DD, of which 36 applications have been reviewed and approved; ten applications are pending review. 66% of all applicants receive vocational rehabilitation services support, and 21% have tribal affiliations.

Research suggests that positive support systems are necessary for American Indian students with I/DD to integrate into fully inclusive PSE environments. One of SIP-C's core values is to "Set the Bar High" for success by advising, encouraging, and supporting students to participate and thrive in higher education experiences. The second core value, the "Front Door First" approach, promotes inclusion, authenticity, and self-advocacy while facilitating institutional awareness about the presence and needs of diverse learners participating in PSE opportunities.

Evaluation data is collected on three fronts and final data will be reported in the final narrative report due January 2023. At the participant level, IHD tracks improvement in self-determination, self-advocacy, use of academic and technology supports, person-centered planning and the achievement of academic and employment goals.

At the Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT) level, IHD tracks improvements in levels of interagency collaboration, and IHD also tracks data from the Faculty/Staff level, measuring the impact of any professional development opportunities delivered by project staff. Anecdotal information shows participant satisfaction with the project, and students who participated in SIP-C show they are more aware of their preference in goal setting, interests, their own strengths and limitations, increased level of independence and ability to take responsibility for decisions.

IHD has established partnerships with four institutions of higher education in Northern Arizona: Northern Arizona University, Coconino Community College, Mohave Community College, and Northland Pioneer College. They also collaborated with local education agencies that include, Flagstaff Unified School District, Kingman Unified School District, and Red Mesa Unified School District.

To oversee the tasks, IHD has established a 28-member Interagency Collaboration Team, with representatives from VR, DDD, Department of Diné Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, and ADE-Exceptional Student Services

NAU/IHD's request for 4th year funding is to expand the project into Yuma County, specifically in partnership with Arizona Western College. IHD proposes to integrate the SIP-C model components and strategies through the formation of "campus and community outreach, response, and engagement" (CCORE) teams. The function of CCORE will be to leverage existing experience and community partnerships to embed SIP-C core values while collecting qualitative data to inform the creation of an "inclusive postsecondary transition workbook" (IPTW) for the target students and staff that will be offered support. A main highlight of the workbook is its detailed information for AWC faculty and staff, with which they can coordinate with external agencies, such as VR and local education agencies, to define pathways for transitioning students with I/DD to successfully enter postsecondary environments. They plan on having the workbook available in print and online.

In addition, if granted Year 4 funding, IHD will support SIP-C staff to: Conduct an extensive literature review; Create and implement a comprehensive evaluation plan; Form 2 pilot CCORE teams, one at a current SIP-C institution of higher learning and one at Arizona Western College; Form a student self-advocacy group (SSAG); Create an Inclusive Postsecondary Transition Workbook (IPTW); and

test for replication and sustainability efficacy in under/unserved regions throughout the state of Arizona.

IHD provided 3 Letters of Support and they each detailed how they would provide support to SIP-C expansion to Arizona Western College. DDD will provide staff to attend their monthly cross-sectional team. Voc. Rehab. will also provide a staff member to attend the monthly cross-sectional meetings, respond to any evaluation/data collection requests, provide a staff member to attend the one-day training that will be held at Arizona Western College in the Summer of 2023, and provide the cross-sectional team all of VR's professional training to at no cost to any participant. The letter of support by the Arizona Western College president was also highly supportive; the College will provide office space for staff and be a part of the cross-sectional team meetings and assist with the upcoming training.

Kelly Roberts was asked to clarify a question from Katherine Levandowsky on how the expansion of the project into Yuma will be sustained post-ADDPC funding. She asked if Yuma would be willing to continue the project after ADDPC funding.

Kelly stated she is looking into other sources of funding outside of ADDPC and other federal funding. In addition, she is looking into other parts of the state to expand and see what is existing or already in place, where IHD can partner with interested institutions. Kelly also stated she wants to expand professional development of staff at the university/college level as a way for the project to continue.

Wendy Parent-Johnson asked how the ADDPC funding is different or supports or augments the federal funding from Transition and Postsecondary Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID). Kelly stated that IHD had most of the groundwork laid because of the ADDPC funding, and IHD was able to show the data and reasons why TPSID funding would be critical. In addition, the ADDPC funding is for individuals with ID, and the federal funds for TPSID funding is for only individuals with DD; however, Kelly noted that the models is the same for awarding purposes.

Vanessa Felix stated she would like to help the project in Yuma. Kelly Roberts and Marcella Crane stated she would share her contact information with the project manager at NAU.

Kelly also wanted to thank and give a shout out to Dr. Sakenya McDonald, the project coordinator for the project.

Melissa asked for a motion to approve NAU/IHD's Supporting Inclusive Practices in Colleges Year 4 proposal, for \$50,000. The motion was made by Vijette Saari to approve a fourth year of funding; the motion was seconded by Vanessa Felix. Kelly Roberts abstained. The motion carried.

## 2. System Access & Navigation Committee:

Mary Slaughter provided an overview of the work of her committee. There are two updates: The first is the committee is starting to conceptualize the scope of work around the transition needs of elderhood, starting with holding focus groups throughout the state to discover issues of most concern for families and individuals with I/DD who are approaching "elderhood". This "discovery" can lead us to further work to identify system gaps. In the end we can then develop a separate Navigation Guide for approaching this stage of life for people with I/DD and their families.

The second update is the status of the Early Childhood and Youth Transition Guide. The committee intern, Amber Owens, who has been working with ADDPC, has drafted the resource (Steve provided a link in the chat box), called the "Getting Started Guide", that is organized around typical questions families might have as they are beginning to explore the worlds of diagnosis, early childhood issues, and youth transition issues. Discussion is now geared toward how to release this guide to the public, especially to families, and how best to use technology that families are most comfortable with, such as accessing the guide through a QR Code. We also have been discussing how to track how the guide is used and if the information is helpful. The other question to be answered is who will maintain and update this guide as information changes. With Jon's help, we'll continue to work on those issues.

Janet Viloria with the AZ Department of Health Services, the Office of Children with Special Health Care Needs, stated she really appreciated this update and would like to know more about the guide, and how she can collaborate on this project. Mary will reach out to Janet and provide an update on the work of her committee. Janet expressed an interest in joining this standing committee.

### 3. Meaningful Careers Committee:

Melissa Van Hook provided the summary of the five large projects undertaken by the committee.

- We had a Committee Meeting on November 3rd and met with the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) team from the University of Massachusetts Boston to review the Intensive Study of Arizona's VR Program and Policies project. The ICI team is led by Jean Winsor, PhD, who previously conducted a Council-funded study that resulted in publication of "The Power of Disability Employment: The Impact to Arizona's Economy", which has been recognized for its in-depth analysis and recommendations. ICI shared they will use a mixed methods approach including secondary data analysis, policy and practice document review, and data collection from stakeholders to conduct the current study. ICI reviewed identification of comparison states and why they were selected (Alaska, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nevada, North Dakota, and South Dakota); described how they will examine national best practices of VR policies and programs and compare with Arizona's current VR system; take an in-depth look at Pre-Employment Transition Services; look at the collaboration between VR, local schools, workforce development systems, and Division of Developmental Disabilities; and review implementation of Section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act. ICI also shared how interviews will take place and how many will be conducted. Interviews will take place in person, over Zoom, and over the phone. Two project staff members live in Arizona and will be available to meet in person at times and locations most convenient for individuals and families, including in the evenings. One additional staff member will travel to Arizona to assist with in-person interviews of individuals and families and agency staff.

The Meaningful Careers Committee appreciated ICI asking if there were specific individuals that should be recommended for interviews, of which there will be 90 stakeholders total.

- Youth with I/DD = 30
- Family member of youth = 30
- Other stakeholders, i.e., VR staff, VR contracted provider staff, school staff, etc. = 30

The Committee felt confident ICI will conduct a comprehensive study and make meaningful recommendations. ICI has one year to complete the study and a report will be issued.

- Jon, Mike, and I met with the Center for the Future of Arizona (CFA) team who will be coordinating Communities at the Center, also referred to as the Raising Expectations initiative. The Council identified this as a systems change initiative that involves a series of convenings and builds a collaborative to identify gaps in services that impede expectations of youth with intellectual and



developmental disabilities to have careers. CFA will partner with Arizona Town Hall, a respected organization with a track record and deep expertise in facilitating community dialogue and generating key takeaways and recommendations. The convenings will advance the following objectives:

- A. Introduce data and explore issues impacting the transition of young people with disabilities into postsecondary education and career success.
- B. Gain an understanding of the challenges and opportunities, and gaps in services that impede raising expectations, from cross sector leaders, as well as surface opportunities for action.
- C. Amplify the voices of young people with disabilities themselves, and their families, with an emphasis on addressing these gaps early, with conversation focused on opportunities for raising expectations among families and educators of younger students with disabilities to nurture their potential, build their agency and confidence, and cultivate the skills needed for long-term success, identify areas of opportunity where the Center for the Future of Arizona, ADDPC, and others could partner to support these priorities, whether through additional data, tools, or resources.

CFA and Arizona Town Hall will host a series of 3-4 Community Conversations (held in-person and virtually) with key stakeholder groups. Melissa expressed gratitude to Kristen Mackey for recommending that AzEIP (Arizona Early Intervention Program), DDD and VR be at the table. Following the series, CFA and Arizona Town Hall will then convene, drawing upon the learnings of the first listening sessions, a collaborative cross-sector gathering that will share the early learnings, engage in dialogue across perspectives about challenges and opportunities, and crystallize key takeaways and opportunities for action.

CFA will also facilitate polling and post-conversation surveys that deepen the understanding of the concerns, priorities, and opportunities for actions that emerge from these conversations.

CFA will develop an action-oriented final report to communicate the findings with a long shelf life. This will capture the data, Community Conversations themes and stories to bring more voices and perspectives to the issue, the potential areas of action where partners can come together to advance solutions.

- What started out as a group effort to work together on the Creating a Successful Path employment and transition webinar series has led to a true collaboration among the DD Network, comprised of ADDPC, ACDL, NAU/IHD, and the Sonoran UCEDD, and other key community partners. New partnerships on this project also include Arizona Employment First, Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) Arizona Chapter, and Vocational Rehabilitation, all of whom teamed up to promote National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) in October. The group led by ADDPC met every week starting in August and planned a wide variety of activities to promote NDEAM and Employment First. The partnership:
  - Requested a NDEAM proclamation from Governor Ducey
  - Issued a NDEAM press release
  - Developed an Employment First and NDEAM social media campaign using Facebook, Twitter, Employment First, ADDPC, APSE, and DD Network websites

- Refreshed the Arizona Employment First website
- Added APSE's Employment First animated video to Arizona Employment First website
- Revised a policy brief on tax incentives for businesses hiring people with disabilities and created a press release to accompany the policy brief. The strategy was targeted to Arizona's 97 Chambers of Commerce, to encourage Chamber leaders to reach out to their small business members to hire people with disabilities.
- Created and added 3 new professionally produced employment videos to the Arizona Employment First website.
- Conducted 4 training sessions.

Mary Fleck, Regional Program Manager for the Southern Arizona region of Vocational Rehabilitation and her team graciously offered to provide training, which the group enthusiastically accepted. It was the Windmills Training Program - Changing the Perception of Abilities series of highly interactive disability inclusion trainings that empowers and equips employment professionals to understand the business community and helps businesses to become more inclusive of individuals. The program is based on the concept that attitudes about persons with disabilities are instrumental in forming behaviors towards individuals with disabilities.

Marketing materials were quickly created, and four training sessions were conducted. Over 100 people participated in the training and surveys were distributed during each session. At the end of the final session, the participants said they wanted more training. Mike Leyva is already working on a plan for Disability Awareness Month in March 2023 to bring the group back together and plan activities.

- The partners wanted to create three employment videos for NDEAM and have the videos featured on the Arizona Employment First website. ADDPC wanted to feature individuals in meaningful careers. Individuals who have used agency and partner resources to not only obtain competitive, integrated employment, but who are thriving in their careers and serving as role models. Three individuals are currently featured in professionally produced videos and sharing their personal story on why Employment is Important to Them. The Council thanked the Arizona Center for Disability Law, especially J.J. Rico for sponsoring the production of three new videos that share the message of employment. The Council viewed one of the videos featuring Gabrielle Ficchi, PhD, MA, LPC, LPCS, CRC, CEO/Therapist.

Melissa and Mike wanted to thank the following individuals for their support. Some of the work that has been shared would not be possible without the collaboration, participation, and enthusiastic support of:

Natalie Luna Rose, with ACDL, thank you J.J. Rico.

Ava Celeste Secrest, with NAU/IHD, thank you Kelly Roberts.

Heather Wolff-Holstein and Lizzie Jeffrey - they were on the job for only 2 days when they accepted to work with Mike. I also thank Wendy Parent-Johnson at the UA Sonoran UCEDD.

Mary Fleck, with DES/Vocational Rehabilitation, thank you Kristen Mackey.

Melissa also acknowledged and thanked ADDPC staff members Jason Snead and Steve Freeman.

- The last update is the work conducted by Karla Krivickas to support the Employment First Initiative. APSE, of which ADDPC is a member, has agreed to request the introduction of a legislative resolution supporting Employment First.

A draft of the resolution has been prepared and now that the election is over discussions will begin regarding potential bill sponsors. In preparation, background sheets, talking points and a new employment brief are being developed. There will also be a new annual report - a data dashboard that will benchmark employment success and can be easily updated every year. The most urgent task is to identify and train a select number of self-advocates to meet with legislators.

As part of this task the work group is beginning important and difficult conversations regarding what specific policy changes should be pursued. A full 50 state review of existing policies is underway to support these decisions.

Through this process APSE and partners have identified the need to be more involved in rule making opportunities at AHCCCS and DES to support Post-Secondary Education.

The Council's FFY 2023 Work Plan recognizes the importance of postsecondary education and training and includes the following goal: Convene a roundtable to share recommendations with education leaders around expanding AZ pathways to post-secondary education for students with I/DD and develop an action plan based on those discussions.

Karla Krivickas, founder of Think Inclusion, is a state board of education member and former Council member, organized the first convening of the three current (University of Arizona, Grand Canyon University, and Northern Arizona University) and one forthcoming (Arizona State University) college programs for students with intellectual disabilities. Council staff also attended. The meeting was the first time that all four-program staff met and shared details of their respective programs. Participants agreed to meet quarterly and begin discussing common issues and potential solutions. Melissa will be attending future meetings and welcomes anyone else to join.

4. Behavioral Health & I/DD Committee:

Jason stated that the behavioral health core team developed an informational flyer concerning the removal of AAC communication devices from DDD/ALTCS members in residential and healthcare settings. The flyer will be shared on social media, schools, residential settings, and healthcare facilities. The committee also created a Google form to collect people's experiences around the removal of communication devices within residential settings, behavioral health facilities, and schools. The plan is to make it available via press release and social media. The group also had a meeting with the Care1st health plan team that deals with crisis response. Lastly, the Division of Developmental Disabilities has committed to trainings regarding communication devices in January 2023.

Kathy asked how notices (the flyer and the google link) are sent to families, how they are communicated to members. Jason stated information needs to be sent to group homes and it has to be translated into Spanish. Melissa suggested we can ask our partners to send this information out and use social media to assist.

Janna Murrell stated she and Raising Special Kids would help to send the information out. Monica Cooper requested that the Council send it to self-advocates. Gabriela Orozco said she is able to assist, as well.

### **G. Grantee Project Presentations:**

Technology-Enabled Employment Skills Training:

Dr. Heather Williamson, researcher with NAU, Institute for Human Development

Bryan Dai, Co-Founder and CEO, Daivergent

Cameron Dogan, Director of Operations, Daivergent

Presenters from Daivergent and NAU/IHD collaborated to implement an existing technology job skills building program for adults with I/DD. Thirteen adults were recruited and completed the program, all of whom were either affiliated with DDD, Vocational Rehabilitation or transition services. Interested participants spoke with a member of the NAU team and completed a brief screening on their interest in technology jobs and technology skills building. The personalized services offered by Daivergent lasted anywhere from 3-9 months in duration, and included an initial assessment of interests and goals, virtual work simulations of technology-enabled jobs of interest, technology support from a virtual support professional (VSP), and virtual social groups. Each participant was paired with an online VSP and met weekly to ensure goals were met. Participants made progress in the technology skills they hoped to achieve because of the training. 15% of the participants identified as Native American, 62% lived in rural areas, 10 were males and 3 were females.

Evaluation data that was captured (7 of the 13 participated in interviews to share their experience) showed that participants were motivated to join the program to develop new technology skills, become more confident in using technology, and be better prepared for jobs. Participants also showed an increase in confidence and motivation, found benefits in learning from home, obtained technology skill certificates and learned how to use email and online calendar, work or learn from home, and improved their resume, interview skills and other professional development skills.

During the presentation, they presented two success stories. John's career goal is to be a technical support provider by assisting with fixing hardware issues and to work with people. John completed Google's Technical Support Fundamentals certification program and is motivated to start the next level of Technical Support Training. Participating in this program improved John's self-esteem and confidence.

Jane wanted to turn her passion for art into a career. She completed learning modules to improve her confidence in using technology, improve her graphic design skills, gain a LinkedIn learning certificate, and learn web design. Jan also created new friendships through social groups. She stated that Daivergent helped her reach her goals and she gained hands-on training for her future graphic design job. Both individuals stated their support team/VSP encouraged and believed in them to complete their assignments.

The Council funding ended in August 2022 and Daivergent is now approved as a Vocational Rehabilitation vendor in Arizona for job training, work adjustment training, and job development and retention. The company will work on creating a credentialing application for AHCCCS/ALTCS and a technology lending library to address barriers that families often face when accessing technology. Also, Daivergent will partner with Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (Navajo Nation) programs, and consult with Transition to Work programs for youth and young adults with I/DD. Daivergent expressed appreciation to the Council for their support.

Council member feedback: Melissa stated she was excited about the project and is very impressed that Voc. Rehab is part of this work and that they are partnering with and reaching out to underserved rural areas.

Kathy stated she agreed with Melissa's comments.  
Erik stated he was very impressed.

Job Coaching Training and Transition AHEAD Roundtable Partnership Projects:  
Dr. Wendy Parent-Johnson, UA Sonoran UCEDD

Wendy Parent-Johnson presented two of UA Sonoran's UCEDD funded projects. The Job Coaching project was funded for 2+ years, January 2020 to June 2022 and was partially delayed in implementation due to the Covid-19 pandemic, during which the trainings were converted to virtual presentations. The funding support was intended to increase knowledge and capacity of employment support professionals across Arizona; it focused on topical trainings, in person job coach trainings, and the development of online employment toolkit and technical assistance for the provider community. In all, 22 virtual and in person training courses were conducted with approximately 826 professionals. Specifically, 8 virtual trainings were done in the first year, that addressed the components of supported and customized employment; 4 virtual trainings were done on relevant topical areas (i.e. employment first, career planning and working with employers); 6 virtual trainings covered agency and provider personnel (for providers and Voc. Rehab staff); and there were 4 in-person 2-day trainings that addressed supported/customized employment implementation in Phoenix, Flagstaff, Tucson and Yuma. All participants received a certificate of participation and pre/post data was captured.

Evaluation data and feedback showed that participants gained new knowledge and skills in implementing Employment First and employment techniques, and that they would use the training in their work. Positive feedback on the content and trainers was provided, participants stated the information was useful and relevant to their work and it increased professional networking among the participants.

The impact of this continues, with resources and information provided in an online employment toolkit to assist employment professionals in understanding and learning supported employment best practices. It also created an application process for provider technical assistance and assisted a rural employment service provider to transition its employment services to competitive integrated employment, and it created a direct support professional networking group called Monday Mindset Chat that allows for employment professionals to come together across the state to discuss best practices, barriers and successes in employment services. Lastly, this project assists with Continuing Education courses that will be more in-depth and interactive and will be available statewide.

TAR Project Presentation:

Wendy then provided an overview of the Transition AHEAD Roundtable (TAR). This is a best practice model adapted from the South Dakota UCEDD to Arizona. It's a collaborative project aimed at addressing the key transition needs and future action planning for youth, ages 14-20, and their families. The overall goal of the project is to provide a comfortable and secure space for youth and their families to explore and discuss the youth's interests, goals, and barriers to a successful adult transition with knowledgeable staff and providers that will provide support and services. In a holistic manner, the Roundtable addresses five key areas: Employment, Healthcare, Education & Training, Relationships and Community, and Independent Living. Peer mentors and family support are embedded in the module, and it is school based, working with middle schools.

TAR is funded for a third year, and to date 32 youth, from diverse backgrounds and between the ages of 14-22, have participated. TAR identified youth with I/DD from public, charter and tribal schools in AZ, and the project is inclusive of youth from various backgrounds and disabilities, including if English is not

their primary language. TAR is conducted virtually due to the pandemic, which also allows the project to expand outside of Tucson and focus on youth with I/DD in the foster care system, Hispanic and Tribal youth. Wendy shared the model project and two Vision Boards from two participants.

Feedback has been gathered by phone and conducted at 2-months and at 6-months to gain an understanding from the participants (youth and their families). Families have provided feedback post participating in TAR. The project also received feedback from partner organizations. Anecdotally, feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and is used to provide recommendations to adjust their programming and to ensure that they are providing the best services.

Partner organizations stated they are glad to be part of this project, by helping to disseminate information statewide and provide families with valuable information about their services. They also provide constructive feedback on areas to improve such as local schools, RSK, Ability360, Voc. Rehab., etc.

School liaisons shared a noticeable impact on students thinking more about ways to accomplish their goals, more interest in classes or training after high school, and more talk about personal interests and preferences following their experience with TAR, including interest in living independently.

Similar feedback by parents coincides with feedback from teachers. They report seeing changes in their child, such as now taking a more active role at home, working toward their goals, expressing to be independent and finding work. Families also reported changes in their perceptions of their young adult and, more notably, in their expectations of their young adult. The most significant area of growth was related to increased choice-making with reports of students trying to make choices important to them. Other notable changes include families' perceptions that their young adults show greater confidence in their abilities to do things and express their own interest.

Council feedback on Wendy's presentations:

Gabriela stated she loved the Vision Boards.

Janna stated she wished this could be done for all our students.

Wendy stated that she is working on how to sustain the model project and how it can be a service modality; that is the goal and feedback Wendy is getting.

Kathy asked if any personality tests are used in these programs, such as Meyers-Briggs. Wendy stated that is not asked and nor do we want to know what disability the participant has. We don't want to pigeonhole any student on what they perceive they should be doing with their lives. We focus on what the youth wants, what the family wants. She wants to flip that pyramid and to focus on strengths of each student.

Melissa asked Wendy how many of the providers that attended the training are going to move to competitive employment and away from sub-minimum wage. Wendy stated that the participants were mostly from providers. We need to continue to share and move this along in Arizona.

#### **H. Announcements:**

Janna Murrell stated that Raising Special Kids is rolling out a new training curriculum on recognizing the signs of abuse and neglect for caregivers. The training will be available in English and Spanish in 2023. She thanked Gabriela Orozco for her assistance and being part of the work group for the pilot. We'll ask the Council to help share this once it's released in early 2023.

#### **I. Call to the Public:**

None.

Full Council Meeting  
Draft Minutes  
November 18, 2022  
Page 15

**J. Adjourn:**

Chairperson Melissa Van Hook adjourned the meeting at 12:36 PM.

Dated this 23rd day of November 2022  
Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council