



# LEND Never Ends: Strategies for Ongoing Engagement of LEND Graduates in a Statewide Leadership Network

Erika Ryst, MD; Stephen Rock, PhD; Jamie Astor, MS; David Frydman, MA; Belinda Pirtle, EdS

Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities, University of Nevada – Reno, Reno, NV

## BACKGROUND

The Nevada LEND (NvLEND) program began in 2011 when it received the first-ever grant to establish a LEND in Nevada. Unique to the NvLEND has been a focus on training practicing professionals as well as graduate students, which has quickly produced a network of MCH leaders in Nevada.



In order to measure the impact of this group and to engage these graduates in an ongoing relationship with LEND, the first four NvLEND graduate cohorts were surveyed as part of a 2015-16 Leadership Project. This poster presentation reviews the results of the graduate survey and describes how it inspired the NvLEND "Unconference," an innovative format for enhancing the networking of LEND graduates.

## OBJECTIVES

- 1) Report the percentage of NvLEND graduates who work with MCH populations, who work in interdisciplinary teams and who serve as leaders.
- 2) Describe how the Unconference format can engage LEND graduates in ongoing networking relationships.
- 3) Generate strategies to engage LEND graduates in ongoing relationships with each other and the LEND network.

Q4 Are you currently serving in a leadership role?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 1



## NvLEND GRAD SURVEY

- In December, 2015, all forty-nine NvLEND graduates were asked to complete a ten-item online survey.
- Response rate was 65%
- 78.13% reported that they work with MCH populations 75% of the time or more
- 62.50% reported that they work with individuals with disabilities 75% of the time or more
- 40.63% reported that they work in an interdisciplinary fashion 75% of the time or more
- 74.19% reported that they serve in leadership roles.
- Of the 32 respondents, 75% reported interest in attending a LEND networking event.

### Examples of Leadership Positions:

- Research
- Grant work
- Recruitment of high school students into health care fields
- Founder and president of non-profit foundation for autism
- State professional association leadership
- "Advocate and blogger in the neurodiversity movement"
- Board member--Nevada Policy and Legislation Committee for Children's Mental Health
- Provision of training for first-responders on how to interact with people with disabilities.
- Coordinator of county Fetal Infant Mortality Review
- Developer of multi-disciplinary, regional assessment teams within the school district to assist school sites with autism assessment.

## NvLEND UNCONFERENCE

- "Unconference" first appeared in announcement for 1998 computer programmer conference.
- Participants decide on topics, create an agenda, and break off into discussion groups.
- Facilitates authentic conversation, group engagement, networking and practical solutions.



- NvLEND Unconference, May 20, 2016
- 25 participants from all over state; 40% LEND faculty; 12% UCED faculty; 12% current trainees; 24% LEND graduates; 12% community professionals.

## NVLEND UNCONFERENCE

Six session topics generated by attendees:

- Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Mental Health Comorbidity and Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Family Engagement Strategies
- Integrating Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) with Mental Health
- Assistive Technology Strategies
- Autism Assessment and Diagnosis

## EVALUATION

- 83.33% highly satisfied with Unconference; 16.67% moderately satisfied
- Integrating PBIS with Mental Health most highly rated
- "Would you come to a future NvLEND Unconference?"—100% chose "absolutely."

## ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- Electronic newsletter/listserve
- Special topic interest groups
- Distribution of written bios of current and past LEND trainees
- Innovative "Unconference" format

## REFERENCES/CONTACT

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Erika Ryst, M.D.  
eryst@medicine.nevada.edu  
775-682-9061