

Advocates as Trainees

Center for Leadership in Disability
Georgia State University
October 21, 2021



1

Today's Objectives

1. Participants will be introduced to the new LEND requirement regarding inclusion of self-advocate trainees
2. Participants will be introduced to the self-advocate trainee and faculty roles
3. Participants will understand the differences between discipline specific and interdisciplinary training
4. Participants will be provided recommendations for recruiting and selecting self-advocate trainees



2

Presenters



Molly Tucker, MSW
Training and
Advocacy Manager



Mark Crenshaw, MTS
Director of
Interdisciplinary
Training



3

Poll Question

Do you currently have long-term self-advocate trainees?



4

Introduction

The first bullet point under “specific objectives” in the NOFO states that programs should:

Train graduate and post-graduate students, family members, **people with disabilities**, and community professionals.



5

New Requirement

“By year 3 of the project, each LTT **cohort must include** a person with a disability as a self-advocate trainee. Self-advocates participating in LEND will build upon the skills and knowledge acquired through their lived experience with disability to develop and enhance their leadership expertise and share a disability perspective with other trainees.”



6

Self-Advocate Trainees



7

Who are Self-Advocate Trainees?

- “Self-advocates/individuals with disabilities (including those with intellectual disabilities)”
 - Must demonstrate readiness to develop leadership skills and share disability perspectives
 - No educational minimum is required
 - Trainees do not have to be enrolled in an academic program
 - Will participate as long-term trainees, and be expected to complete the required 300 training hours



8

Self-Advocate Trainees

“By year 3 of the project, each LTT cohort must include a person with a disability as a self-advocate trainee. Self-advocates participating in LEND will build upon the skills and knowledge acquired through their lived experience with disability to develop and enhance their leadership expertise and share a disability perspective with other trainees.”



9

Things to Consider when Selecting Self-Advocate Trainees

Build upon the skills and knowledge

- Does the individual have an understanding of self-advocacy?
- Does the individual have experience advocating for themselves and/or others?
- Does the individual recognize the importance of speaking up for themselves and/or others?



10

Things to Consider when Selecting Self-Advocate Trainees

Develop and enhance their leadership expertise

- Does the individual already demonstrate leadership skills?
- Does the individual want to enhance their leadership skills?
- Is the individual interested in learning how to utilize these skills within the disability community?
- Is the individual comfortable receiving feedback and mentorship?



11

Things to Consider when Selecting Self-Advocate Trainees

Share a disability perspective

- Is the individual comfortable sharing their personal experience with others?
- Does the individual understand and recognize that their experience is not everyone's experience?
- Is the individual willing to learn from faculty, presenters, their peers, and others with disabilities?



12

Possible Goals for Self-Advocate Trainees



18

Self-Advocate Faculty Members



19

Self-Advocate Faculty

“Key faculty members on the interdisciplinary team should include individuals **who have lived experience** with ASD/DD, both personally (self-advocates) and as family members.”



20

Self-Advocate Faculty

- One self-advocate faculty member must be included by year three of the grant cycle
- Self-Advocate Faculty will:
 - Support self-advocate trainees
 - Provide guidance to trainee cohort
 - Teach and mentor trainees
 - Coordinate community experiences
 - Advise faculty
 - Assist in planning and curriculum development



21

Additional Responsibilities of Self-Advocate Faculty

- Assist with trainee interviews
- Attend all team meetings and planning sessions
- Attend courses (when possible) to support self-advocate trainees
- Participate in research and evaluation activities
- Participate in workgroups and special interest groups



22

Discussion Question

**What characteristics or traits
do you look for in a self-
advocate faculty member?**



23

Traits and Characteristics of Self-Advocate Faculty

- Passion for advocating with and for people with disabilities
- Adept at supporting and mentoring self-advocates
- Well connected within the disability community
- Has prior experience or understanding of the LEND program



24

Traits and Characteristics of Self-Advocate Faculty

- Able to think critically and provide feedback that will strengthen the overall program
- Feels comfortable sharing their perspective with trainees, staff, and faculty
- Able to discuss their transition from pediatric to adult care
- Willing to share their story and be self-reflective



25

Traits and Characteristics of Self-Advocate Faculty

- Someone who:
 - Is not intimidated by individuals with advanced degrees
 - Is not intimidating to other self-advocates
 - Understands that there are multiple ways for trainees to be successful
 - Has experience navigating systems of care as a member of a family and as an adult



26

Traits and Characteristics of Self-Advocate Faculty

- Someone who is:
 - A strong communicator
 - Able to engage in conflict resolution
 - A life-long learner
 - Patient and able to self-regulate
 - Independent
 - Willing to receive feedback



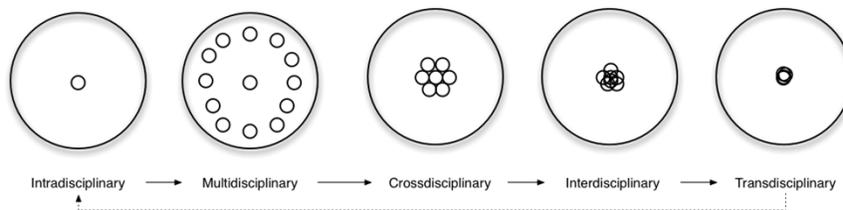
27

Interdisciplinary Training



28

Interdisciplinary Training



29

Self-Advocacy Discipline

- Should be treated like all other clinical and non-clinical disciplines
- Trainees should be full integrated into the interdisciplinary training program
- Trainees may receive supplemental content during their supervision meetings
 - An additional curriculum is not required
 - Content should reinforce what is being covered in the larger program
 - Conversations should focus on leadership and reflection
 - Planning their next steps for their leadership



30

Training Components



31

Completing their LEND Training

- Generally, trainees are expected to complete their training within a 12-month period
- Self-advocate trainees may complete their training over two years
 - They can only be counted as your self-advocate trainee for **ONE** of the two years
 - Stipend will be distributed over two years, instead of one
 - If a trainee is going to participate in a second year, it is recommended that you speak with your project officer before moving forward



32

Recruiting Trainees



33

Discussion Question

**How do you recruit
self-advocate trainees?**



34

Recruitment Strategies

- Build relationships with community organizations and non-profits
- Pipeline training programs in your state
- Inclusive Post Secondary Education Programs
- Referrals from past trainees, LEND and/or UCEDD staff and faculty



35

Recruitment Strategies

- Attend advocacy events in your community
- Connect with your DD Council, Protection and Advocacy Office, and Independent Living Councils
- Word of mouth
- Highlight successes and trainee outcomes
- Provide alumni testimonials



36

Summary

- Programs must have a self-advocate LTT by year 3
- Programs must have a self-advocate faculty member by year 3
- Self-advocate trainees should be included in all aspects of the LEND program



37

Any questions?

