



Building State-Wide Self-Advocate Leadership: A Collaborative Approach



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NC EMPOWERMENT NETWORK

NC Empowerment Network (NCEN) has support from the AIDD Network.

- Members of this initiative consist of experienced self-advocate leaders recruited from each of the three DD Network partner agencies along with well-known advocates: the qualities they all bring are important.
- The goal is to be an organization for self-advocates by self-advocates.
- The NCEN does not want to supersede other self-advocacy groups in the state, but create an enduring and collaborative partnership for all.
- Training will be offered as part of the mission to reinvigorate the self-advocate movement in NC.
- Communication across the state is important—NCEN uses GLIP, an app for messaging, file sharing, task management.
- An experienced outside facilitator led NCEN to create a PATH Plan with a graphic facilitator to document results looking at the year ahead.

NCEN Vision is for people with disabilities to be influential leaders for social change.

NCEN Mission Statement: Advocating for inclusive and equal lives for North Carolinians with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout the state.

#GetYourLeadOn

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INVOLVING AND EMPOWERING SELF-ADVOCATE LEADERS

BACKGROUND. The NC AIDD Network consists of NC Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCCDD), Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities (CIDD), Disability Rights NC (DRNC). An entity for state-level self-advocate leadership has been lacking for several years.

- The NC AIDD network wanted to address the lack of cohesive statewide self-advocacy leadership and partnered to plan.
- Strong, effective self-advocate leaders participate in each NC AIDD Network agency, but no structured opportunity to come together as a self-advocacy group to effect state-level change.
- NCCDD formed the Inclusive Advocacy Leadership Development Initiative (IALD) to create future investment options in advocacy organizing and leadership training.
- NC AIDD Network committed to support increased self-advocate involvement and proposed a leadership opportunity to become the “fourth leg” of the NC AIDD Network—initiated, directed, and composed entirely of self-advocate leaders. The NC Empowerment Network is in process

Inclusive leadership training is critical to build skills and maintain self-advocate leadership in all arenas.

- The CIDD is one of few UCEDDs to recruit trainees in self-advocacy for graduate-level interdisciplinary training in developmental disability: LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities)
- The CIDD offers a targeted Leadership Training Consortium; self-advocate leaders are annually recruited to participate in this Maternal Child Health Bureau (MCH)-sponsored interprofessional opportunity.

MCH LEADERSHIP CONSORTIUM

An interdisciplinary leadership development curriculum for trainees and fellows comprising LEND participants, graduate students, Title V professionals, family advocates, and, since 2011, self-advocate trainees.

Cosponsored by UNC at Chapel Hill (School of Public Health, School of Social Work, LEND at Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities) and Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

- Three-day leadership assessment workshop explores personal leadership preferences, providing basis for each participant to develop Individual Development Plan to guide their leadership development goals over the year.
- Additional workshops focus on conflict resolution, cultural competence, family/professional collaboration.
- For 2017-2018, participants include 33 fellows or trainees, two of whom are Self-Advocate trainees.

Results for Self-Advocate Trainee Cohort Participants

- Normalizes the reality and expectation of individuals with IDD to assume leadership roles
- Provides access to professional level personal development and leadership skills
- Provides access to professional relationships and networking opportunities at the national level
- Provides opportunity, training, experience to increase personal skills and sphere of influence as they continue their Advocacy work.

Results for the rest of the cohort

- Normalizes the reality and expectation for individuals with IDD to assume leadership roles
- Provides opportunity to work with Self-Advocates as peers, often for the first time, and understand importance of inclusion to the disability rights movement from a first hand, personal level
- Demonstrates through direct experience the value/necessity of including Self-Advocates at all levels of planning/implementation
- Creates cohort of new professionals eager to assume leadership roles who consider including Self-Advocates desirable and vital.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

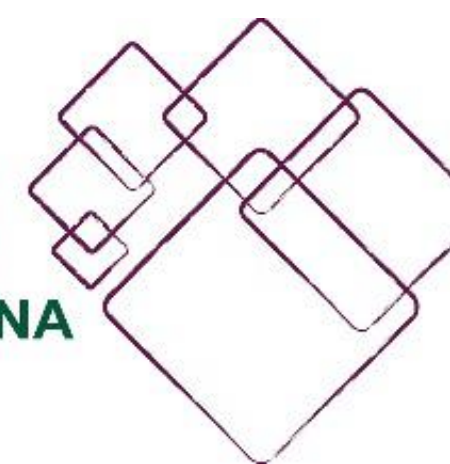


NORTH CAROLINA
EMPOWERMENT NETWORK



NCCDD
North Carolina Council on
Developmental Disabilities

DISABILITY RIGHTS
NORTH CAROLINA



NC-LEND
UNC
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

REFERENCE

Rosenberg A, Zuver D, Kermon M, Fernandez C, Margolis, L, Reflections on the contributions of self-advocates to an interdisciplinary leadership development program for graduate students in health affairs, *Disability and Health Journal* (2017).