

GROWING OUR **POWER**

Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

WHO We are

The Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities is established and funded under the federal Developmental Disabilities Act along with Disability Rights Idaho, the state's protection and advocacy organization, and the Center on Disability and Human Development at the University of Idaho.



OUR MISSION

The Council promotes the capacity of people with developmental disabilities and their families to determine, access, and direct the services and/or supports they need to live the lives they choose, and to build the community's ability to support their choices.

GROWING OUR POWER!

Denise Wetzel, Council Chair



The Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICDD) was successful in passing legislation requiring background checks for guardians and conservators in 2013! The Council, stakeholders, and some dedicated self-advocates worked on this legislation for the past two years. In fact, I can remember one of the first meetings I attended as a new Council member was when our Council Chair at the time, a self-advocate, recommended the Council draft legislation to address the issue. It is so exciting to see the work of the Council put into action and become a reality.

The highlight for me this past year was the opportunity to attend the statewide self-advocacy conference, "Possibilities of All Abilities". Two gentlemen from Vermont, Tracy Thresher and Larry Bissonnette, came to provide an inspiring keynote using facilitated communication. Everyone at the conference had the chance to view their documentary, *Wretches and Jabberers*, which features Tracy and Larry as they travel the globe speaking to other individuals with Autism about self-advocacy through typing! It is a dream I have for my own son to also learn to type to help him communicate with others.

The Council continues to provide leadership to groups of stakeholders working to create positive system change. The Employment 1st Consortium made steady progress working on policy recommendations that will further the

ability for adults with developmental disabilities to receive person-centered supports working in jobs of their choice at a livable wage. The Collaborative Workgroup on Adults Developmental Disability Services will soon be providing recommendations for Medicaid benefits package to the Department of Health & Welfare.

I am so proud to be part of such a forward moving organization that encourages and empowers people with developmental disabilities to find their voice and experience their individual and collective power.

*Our deepest fear
is not that we are
inadequate.*

*Our deepest fear
is that we are
powerful
beyond measure.*

Marianne Williamson

POWERFUL POSSIBILITIES



Christine Pisani, Executive Director

What a year it has been! We selected the theme, "Growing Our Power," for the 2013 Annual Report because of the steady and purposeful work of the Council to support people with developmental disabilities having rich opportunities to engage in all of the work we do.

The Council continues to lead the work for Idaho's Employment First Consortium. Members of the Consortium continue to make on-going progress on improved employment policy and implementation of best practice. There has been a tremendous amount of work that is furthering the ability of individuals with developmental disabilities to find and keep jobs of their choice, paid at a livable wage.

In 2010, our then Council Chair James Steed, brought the issue of background checks for guardians to the Council's attention. He asked the question: "Why would it be that people who are paid support are required to have a criminal history background check and not the people appointed as our guardians?" This began the Council's two-year work with key stakeholders to ultimately pass landmark legislation requiring criminal background checks and the disclosure of other information about the potential guardians and conservators of vulnerable adults.

The Possibilities of All Abilities Statewide Self-Advocacy conference took place this past spring with close to 200 people attending. Leadership opportunities for people with disabilities were weaved throughout every step of planning and hosting the conference. Members of the Idaho Self-Advocate Leadership Network, Idaho's statewide self-advocacy organization, shared their leadership expertise in directing the vision of the conference and pitching in for much of the work required to host this type of event. The conference ended with a surprise Power Shout Out by 30 powerful state leaders surrounding the conference attendees to shout out positive messages of support.

All of this work has grown the number of Idahoans with developmental disabilities who have experienced leadership for the first time and are now hooked on working to make a difference to improve the lives of whole communities one person at a time.

2013 OBJECTIVES

Service System Improvement:

- Inclusive Education
- Employment First Initiative
- Disability Mentoring Day
- Quality Support Staff
- Developmental Disabilities Services Systems Change
- Community Capacity



Leadership Development:

- Statewide Self Advocacy Organization
- Self Advocacy Conference and Leadership Training
- Leadership Development for Families
- Council Member Leadership

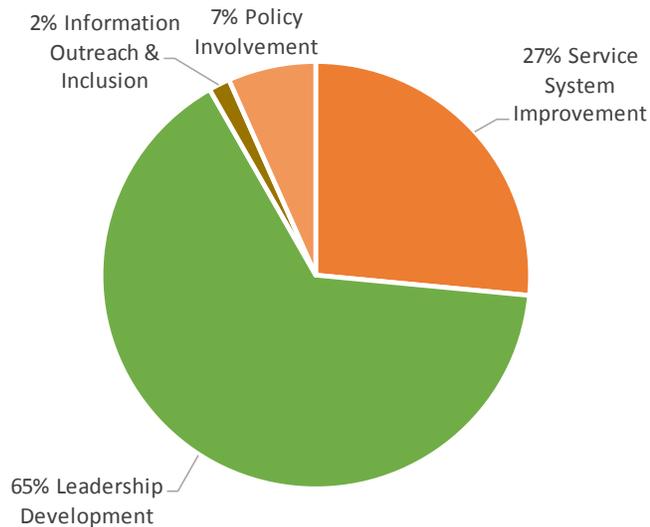
Information, Outreach, Inclusion:

- Inclusion and Awareness
- Access to Information

Policy Involvement:

- Participation with Coalitions
- Legislative Advocacy Training
- Council Policy Agenda and Member Advocacy

Fiscal Year Resource Distribution



Policy Involvement

Guardianship Law Improved

The Council worked with **Representative Grant Burgoyne** and other stakeholders to pass landmark legislation requiring criminal history background checks and the disclosure of other information about the potential guardians and conservators of vulnerable adults, including adults who have developmental disabilities. This legislation took over two years of effort. Representative Burgoyne worked tirelessly through a number of barriers that had to be figured out in order to pass this legislation. He is a true champion for people with disabilities in Idaho and we are grateful for his commitment and compassion.



Disability Advocacy Training

The Council collaborated with members of the Consortium of Idahoans with Disabilities to create and host Disability Advocacy Day training events that took place in Idaho Falls, Coeur d'Alene, Twin Falls, and Boise. The topics presented at each training included Managed Care for Medicaid recipients, Medicaid Expansion, and Communicating with Your Legislators. The majority of the 125 participants were family members with 50%, followed by Service Providers (34%) and people with disabilities (14%) and people reported they would be able to better advocate in their community because of what they learned.

Disability Advocacy Day at the Statehouse

The Council participated in Disability Advocacy Day at the Capitol Friday, February 8th. Council staff supported a number of self-advocates to meet with their legislators and attend the Joint House and Senate Health & Welfare public hearing. Council staff and members created a basket full of toothbrushes with tags that read "Restore Preventative Dental" and used them to market the idea at the Capitol for the day.



"Restore Medicaid Dental Services"

Inclusive Education Initiative

Inclusive Education Task Force

The Council coordinated the Task Force to meet and develop a strategic plan that included activities to: create awareness about inclusion at the post-secondary level through a service learning project that engaged academic departments other than special education; create a website to house best practice in inclusive education, resources, and video examples from Idaho schools (InED Network); and enhance teacher training efforts.



Inclusion First Video Challenge

The InED Network launched the Inclusion First Video Challenge, a youth-based media campaign designed to help make a positive impact on schools and communities and the way people think about the inclusion of everyone. The contest was announced to Idaho middle and high school teachers across the state to encourage inclusion of all students in the general education classroom and community. The Challenge invites students to create a 30 to 60 second video that will inform and motivate youth to include everyone and promote an environment where kindness and respect for others matters.

Inclusion in Education Award

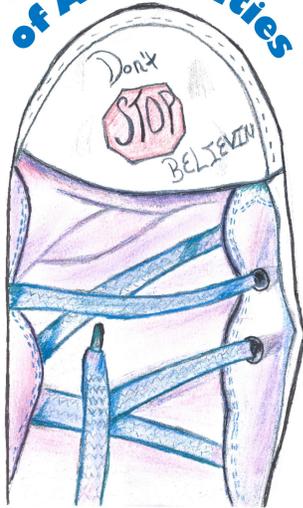
Every year, the Council selects a nominated school, teacher, or school group in Idaho that does a great job including students with developmental disabilities in school activities or events. Biology teacher Matthew Hellhake of McCall-Donnelly High School was selected to receive the Inclusive Education Award for 2013. Mr. Hellhake was nominated for this award by Jo Lynn Garrison of McCall whose son, Scott, is in his class. The award was presented to Mr. Hellhake at an assembly at the high school and the McCall newspaper printed an article with a photo.



Information about the award was also included in the Idaho Association of School Superintendents state conference program and in the State Superintendent of Public Instruction's monthly newsletter to school district administrators and teachers.

Teacher Matthew Hellhake and student Scott Garrison doing science at the river.

Possibilities of All Abilities



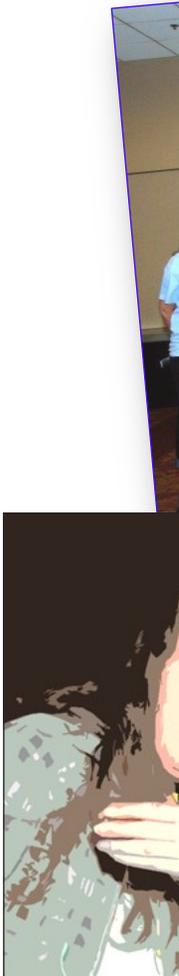
2013 IDAHO SELF-ADVOCACY CONFERENCE
Artwork by Michelle Moore

Possibilities of All Abilities

On May 21-23 the **Possibilities of All Abilities** statewide self-advocacy conference took place in Boise with 165 people attending. Participants included 112 individuals with disabilities. Leadership opportunities for people with disabilities were weaved throughout every step of planning and implementing the conference. While providing leadership experiences was the ultimate goal of the 2013 conference, there were many unanticipated outcomes that took place as a result of the work of the conference.

Keynote presenters were selected for the conference based on their demonstrated leadership skills, accomplishments, and ability to motivate individuals to take action in their personal lives as well as working together for larger social change. **Larry Bissonette, Pascal Cheng, Tracy Thresher, and Harvey Lavoy**, stars of the documentary film *Wretches and Jabberers*, opened the conference. Both Tracy and Larry type to communicate and present a powerful message about the assumptions people make about human intelligence based on a person's behavior and communication style.

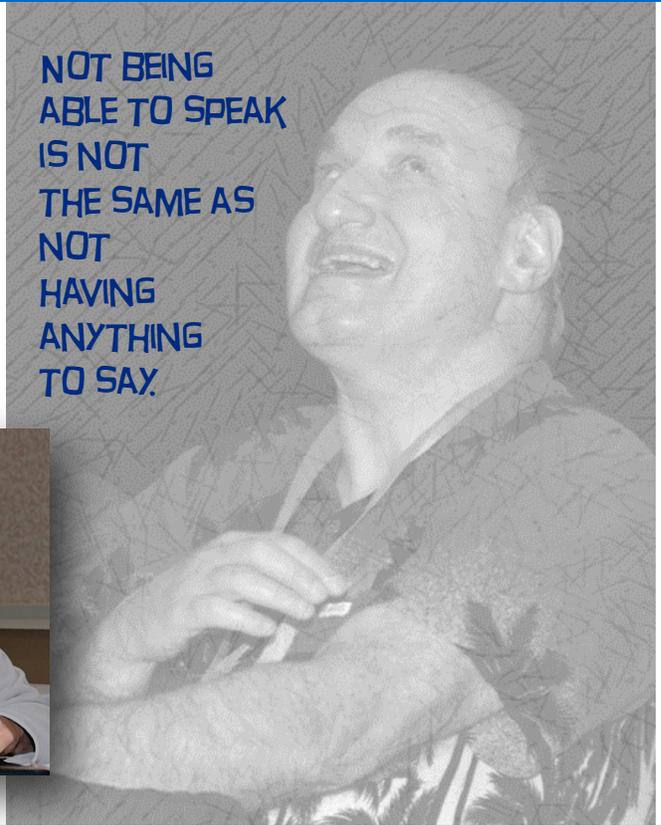
Joelle Brouner, the 2nd day keynote, who was serving as the Executive Director of the Washington State Rehabilitation Council. She inspired the group and got real with the message that advocacy is not about just speaking for yourself, it is about advocating for the larger group. She covered the responsibilities of being an advocate and the important role each person can play in making positive change.



Statewide Self Advocacy Conference

A highlight of the conference was the closing finale when 30 powerful state leaders surrounded the conference attendees to shout out messages of support. On center stage a group of self-advocates painted large letters that spelled out the word "P.O.W.E.R." while the crowd listened to the song "Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow." The sights and sounds made for a powerful end to a wonderful conference.

NOT BEING
ABLE TO SPEAK
IS NOT
THE SAME AS
NOT
HAVING
ANYTHING
TO SAY.



Employment



Employment First Initiative

The **Idaho Employment First Consortium** (IEFC) developed a message and vision for Idaho that will be the undercurrent of the group's work on policy development and systems change to improve employment outcomes for people with disabilities:

“All Idahoans with disabilities have the right and responsibility to work and contribute to their community.”

The Consortium continued to meet in 2013 and worked on strategies to achieve objectives defined by the stakeholder group:

- Increase the number of individuals with developmental disabilities working in community employment
- Increase the number of employers hiring individuals with disabilities
- The state of Idaho will officially adopt and support, through policies and funding, an Employment First philosophy
- Increase the employment rate of young adults with disabilities completing high school
- Increase in the number of individuals using work incentives
- Increase in the number of employers creating internships and mentorships

The Council, in collaboration with the Idaho State Independent Living Council, funded a contract for national and state **employment policy research**. The contract was awarded to the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts – Boston. The research focused on funding for integrated employment, state agency structures, collaboration between agencies, best practice in assessment of employment outcomes, and quality assurance. The information and recommendations included in the final report will directly impact the strategic planning, policy development, and systems change activities of the Employment First Consortium.



The Council submitted an application to the **Employment Learning Community** project and was chosen to be one of seven states to receive technical assistance. The project assists states in improving systems and services to increase inclusive, competitive employment for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It is intended to support multi-stakeholder, state-level consortiums like ours. The Employment Learning Community is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion.

It's My Business EXPO Launched at 2013 Tools for Life Conference

Council funds and staff supported the 9th annual **Tools for Life Secondary Transition and Assistive Technology Fair** in Boise. The 2013 theme was employment and the 290 participants included 134 students from 33 school districts.

Highlights of the conference include dynamic keynote presentations by John Evans and Dwayne Dyer, two professionals working at the state level in Washington state and both individuals with disabilities; and a panel of local employers who provided important tips to students about applying for and being successful in a job.

The first Idaho **"It's My Business Expo"** was held as part of the conference. Eight entrepreneurs participated in the Expo. Each had display tables with informational materials about their business, how they got started, resources they used, etc. Four of the participants had products for sale at the Expo and did very well. The Expo was open to fair participants both days and an evening reception was open to the public.



It's My Business EXPO



Employment & Community



Disability Mentoring Day

Disability Mentoring Day events were held October 2012 in three local communities: Moscow, Twin Falls, and Idaho Falls. More than 135 students were mentored by over 95 employers in local areas. Local planning teams also held pre-event activities and training for students, orientation for employer mentors, and celebration luncheons where students and businesses spoke about their experience. The Council awarded each local event a grant of up to \$1000 to support the implementation of DMD activities. Council funds of \$2450 leveraged a total of \$12,847 in donations and volunteer hours.

Community Inclusion Award

Idaho Cub Scouts Pack 325 of Moscow, Idaho was selected to receive the 2013 Community Inclusion Award. Each year the Council recognizes a nominated organization, group, business, or community event that supports all citizens to be included and able to fully participate in community activities. What is outstanding about this Scout Pack is their way of naturally and seamlessly including scouts and parents with disabilities in their activities. They have emphasized using “people first” language (instead of referring to a person by his/her disability) and have encouraged and supported scouts to take on disability education projects when working toward their badges. They also work as a team to ensure that all scouts are able to attend the annual camping trip.

Council Chair, Denise Wetzel, presented the award to Pack Leader Jason Coston including a grant of \$500 to support the Pack’s future inclusion practices.

The nomination was made by Brenda Kotewa, a mother of one of the scouts. As she indicated in her nomination, the scout pack “took the time to educate the cub scouts about disabilities and how being accepting and inclusive of others is a key part of being a great cub scout.”



Quality in Services



Collaborative Work Group on Adult DD Services

The Council continued to coordinate the Collaborative Work Group on Adult Developmental Disability Services (CWG), a state-level interagency/multi-stakeholder group working on recommendations for a re-designed service system for adults. Work of the group included evaluation of all

service systems available to adults with developmental disabilities and how they could work more effectively for the adults they are serving. The group completed research comparing Idaho's array of services with other states' benefits packages and service system infrastructure. Work was assigned to three subcommittees dealing with individual budgets, managed care models, and array of services. Ongoing discussions included updates on managed care efforts, methodology for determining individual budgets, and provider rates and access to services, and concerns or ideas regarding issues with Idaho's current service delivery model.

Direct Support Staff Training

The Council provided \$4,500 to support the fall 2012 Partnerships Conference on Human Services. There were 538 attendees including 16 identified as parents, 9 identified as self-advocates, and 21 identified as certified family home providers. Of those who completed evaluations, over 96% thought the conference was very good or truly terrific and would attend again. There were 31 presentations/workshops, 28 presenters, and 18 sponsors. Council funds leveraged an additional \$58,057 from registrations and co-sponsors.



2012-2013 COUNCIL MEMBERS

Denise Wetzel, *Chair*

Shiloh Blackburn, *Vice Chair*

Joe Raiden, *Consumer Representative*

Parents

Toni Belknap-Brinegar

Jo Lynn Garrison

Jennifer Halladay

Debra Parsons

Joni Sullivan

Paul Tierney

Denise Wetzel

Self-Advocates

Shiloh Blackburn

Ritchy Cardwell

David Dekker

Joe Raiden

Guardian

Dona Butler



STAFF

Marilyn Sword
Executive Director

Shane Carlton
Admin. Assistant

Amanda Holloway
Program Specialist

Christine Pisani
Program Specialist

Tracy Warren
*Program Specialist/
Planner*

Agency Representatives

Jim Baugh, *Disability Rights Idaho*

Jean Christensen, *IDHW-Division of Medicaid*

Jane Donnellan, *Vocational Rehabilitation*

Raul Enriquez, *Commission on Aging*

Julie Fodor, *Center on Disabilities and Human Development*

Alison Lowenthal, *Department of Education*

TeRonda Robinson, *Community Partnerships of Idaho*

Colleen Sisk, *Partnerships for Inclusion*

Jacque Watson, *IDHW-Maternal and Child Health*

Boards, Councils, and Special Committees on which the Council is represented:

- Aging and Disability Resource Center Advisory Council
- Center on Disability and Human Development Consumer Advisory Council
- Children's Service System Redesign Access Committee
- Consortium for Idahoans with Disabilities
- Early Childhood Coordinating Council
- Idaho Community Care Council
- Idaho Council for Purchases from Nonprofit Businesses that Serve People with Disabilities (USE Council)
- Idaho Employment First Consortium
- Idaho Employment for People with Disabilities Stakeholder Group
- Idaho Home Choice Advisory Council
- Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition
- Interagency Workgroup on Public Transportation
- Special Education Advisory Panel



Marilyn Sword

Saying Goodbye to a Respected Leader

Marilyn Sword, who served the Council as Executive Director for over 15 years, retired in September 2013. Her accomplishments over those years were varied and many. Marilyn left behind a legacy of effective advocacy and strong support for Idahoans with developmental disabilities and their families.

"This is a terrific job and, because of the Council's unique role, there is always the opportunity and responsibility to push to improve the service system, to make things better for adults and children with developmental disabilities and their families, to not be satisfied with the status quo," Marilyn said. "I am grateful for the partners we have worked with and the changes we have been able to make."

Working with staff and Council members, in addition to the advocates and family members who volunteer for the Council was a highlight for her. "I have seen so many people with disabilities grow and become leaders in their communities," she said. "I have seen parents go through the Council's Partners in Policymaking training and emerge as strong, informed, vocal advocates for their children and others. It has been a rich 15 years of vivid pictures, voices, faces and friendships."



VISION

*All Idahoans participate
as equal members of society,
empowered to reach their full potential
as responsible and contributing citizens
of their communities.*



While in Idaho, self-advocacy conference keynote speakers Larry Bissonnette and Tracy Thresher, stars of the film "Wretches and Jabberers," visited Black Canyon High School in Emmett and talked to 23 students in the special education classroom of teacher Annette Lutes.

Tracy and Larry communicated with students through technology to share their message that "not being able to speak is not the same as not having anything to say."

VALUES

Independence

Respect

Equality

Participation

Integration

Choice

Partnership

Responsibility

Inclusion

Community

Quality of Life



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