

# Weathering the Storm



Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities

Annual Report 2009

“The little reed, bending to the force of the wind, soon stood upright again when the storm had passed over.”

~ Aesop



# 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 Disabilities 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.

# Weathering the Storm

For more than a year a monster economic storm has roared across Idaho and the entire nation. State agency budgets affecting services to all citizens have been cut as result of decreased tax revenue. Individuals with developmental disabilities and families with children with developmental disabilities were not spared by the storm's fury.

Cuts to the Council's state budget funds have halted projects, some already underway, some not yet begun. Federal funding has remained steady but provided only through a Congressional continuing resolution to maintain the previous year's budget amount. The future economic forecast is no brighter, predicting that the state will experience "elimination of programs and whole departments", thus the storm continues.

In the face of the storm, the Council pressed forward with already existing efforts and worked in collaboration to begin others. The two-year-old organization Idaho Self Advocate Leadership Network was certified as a non-profit organization. Nampa became the second chapter joining the already formed chapter in Pocatello and self-advocates in Moscow and Idaho Falls began efforts to organize chapters in those two cities.

With funding from a Medicaid Real Choice Systems Grant, 13 professionals were trained and certified as Person-Centered Planning Specialists. They are now facilitating development of person-centered plans for adults and transition-age-youth. "Idaho Help", an online web-based community resource directory with more than 11,000 resource listings was launched as well.

A position statement promoting alternatives to guardianship was finalized and released while the Council worked in collaboration with 2 different stakeholder groups to prepare proposals for the upcoming legislative session. First, a respectful disability language bill will seek to remove the "R" word and other demeaning terms from existing laws. Second, a draft plan to transition 2/3 of the population from Idaho State School and Hospital to community programs is being prepared for consideration by the Legislature.

I have given you just a glimpse of some of the successes the Council on Developmental Disabilities achieved in 2009. As you read this report, I believe you will be impressed by Council efforts to weather the storm and strive to improve the lives of Idaho citizens with developmental disabilities.

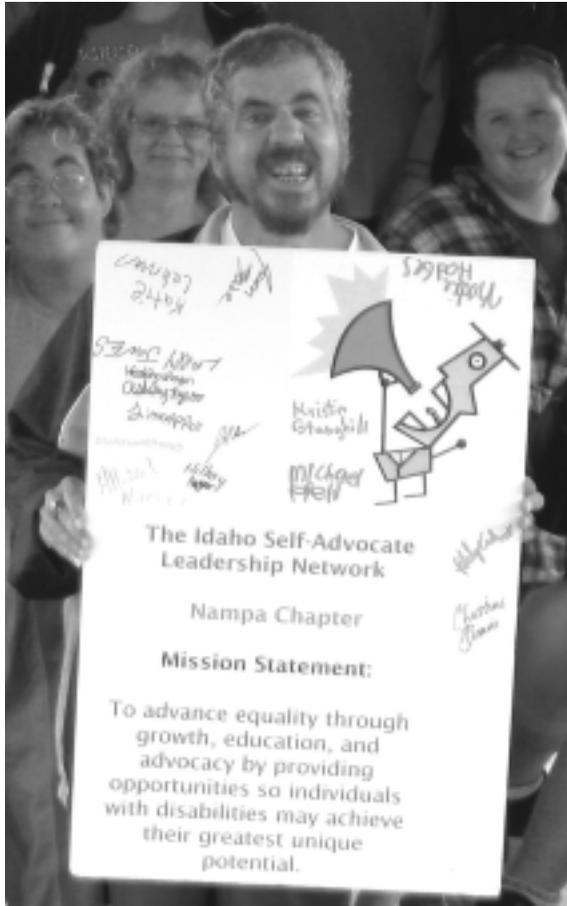
*Alonzo Statham, Chairman 2009-2010*  
**Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities**



# Council Outcomes

- **Education:** Students with disabilities receive an appropriate education in inclusive environments.  
Children experience seamless transitions between age/grade related developmental and educational programs.
- **Employment:** Individuals with developmental disabilities work in integrated settings where the majority of workers are individuals without disabilities.
- **Community Supports:** People with developmental disabilities and their families have a meaningful say over participant-directed service systems management, including planning, implementation and evaluation.  
A statewide system that delivers quality supports and services is available to individuals with developmental disabilities.  
The needs of people with developmental disabilities are addressed in disaster and emergency preparedness plans and policies.
- **Housing:** Multiple housing options are available to people with developmental disabilities.
- **Quality Assurance:** Self advocates and families are informed about the philosophy of self-determination.  
People with developmental disabilities demonstrate self-advocacy skills.  
Abuse prevention and support services meet the needs of people with developmental disabilities.
- **Transportation:** Communities provide accessible and affordable transportation to their citizens.
- **Cross Cutting:** The general public has a greater awareness of people with developmental disabilities and the issues they face.

# Weathering the Storm in 2009



*Larry Jones proudly displays the Nampa Chapter mission statement.*

## The Idaho Self-Advocate Leadership Network Continues to Grow

The statewide Self-Advocate Leadership Network continued to grow as a newly formed non-profit organization. Joining the already established community chapter in Pocatello, a new chapter was formed in Nampa, while efforts continued to organize chapters in Moscow and Idaho Falls. New chapters helped expand the membership with more than 50 self-advocates now calling themselves members of the organization.

## Person-Centered Planning Specialists Trained

With partnership between the Council and the University of Idaho, Center on Disabilities and Human Development, thirteen Person-Centered Planning Specialists received a 5-week web-based training and a 3-day face-to-face training through a Real Choice Systems

Change Grant from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid. With these new skills, specialists began working with individuals with disabilities and their families through a person-centered approach that will enable them to build relationships, connect to their communities, and get resources and supports to reach individually established goals. Because the project focuses on natural supports, the needs of informal support caregivers will be assessed, something new to Idaho.

# Weathering the Storm in 2009



*Person-Centered Planning Specialists and trainers at the Spring 2009 training.*

Another grant activity helped us develop and establish, *Idaho-Help*, a web-based community resource directory. With over 11,000 state and local listings people may locate resources to meet specific needs through a search option. See it at [www.idahohelp.info](http://www.idahohelp.info).

## Guardianship Position Statement Adopted

A position statement promoting alternatives to full guardianship, developed by self-advocates, was finalized and released by the Council. The position statement is different from the longstanding, traditional view of "protecting and caring for people with developmental disabilities". Guardianship is viewed as an obstacle to individuals wanting more choice and control in living self-determined lives. In promoting alternatives to guardianship, the Council position statement recommends that the transition years (ages 14 through 18) be devoted to individuals learning about their rights and alternatives to guardianship. Parents are advised to learn about alternatives such as power of attorney, conservatorship and partial guardianship. These options would allow individuals to maintain their individual rights and rely on someone else for those specific issues for which they need assistance. The position statement is on the Council's website at [www.icdd.idaho.gov](http://www.icdd.idaho.gov).

## Respectful Disability Language Legislation Developed

Council Executive Director, Marilyn Sword served on a 15-member committee with State Senator Les Bock of Boise and helped draft a bill that, if approved, will remove certain archaic and disrespectful language from existing Idaho law. Primarily the bill's effects will remove the "R" word, handicap, and other similar terms and replace them with disability, intellectual disability, or cognitive impairment. Developed during the summer, the proposed legislation has support of a wide range of groups from disability advocates to state agencies, service providers, and insurance industry representatives.

Idaho is one of a number of states seeking to update the language in its laws. Motivation to change came from the overwhelming support shown to Special Olympic athletes as Idaho hosted the 2009 World Winter Games. Special Olympics initiated its own campaign, "Spread the Word to End the Word", suggesting a more appropriate "R" word "Respect".

## Idaho State School & Hospital Review

The 2009 Idaho Legislature directed the Department of Health and Welfare to convene a stakeholder committee to: 1) determine the services needs and costs for individuals residing at Idaho State School and Hospital in Nampa; and, 2) develop a plan to transition people out of the institution. Driven largely by state budget shortfalls and the high cost associated with serving a low number of people, the committee began meeting in the summer and included legislators, Dept. of Health and Welfare and other state agency staff, Governor's staff, self-advocates, family members, service providers, and advocacy organizations.

The plan to be presented to the Legislature proposes to reduce the resident population to 28 over a 3-year period, develop crisis beds in three areas of the state, system changes to better serve individuals with challenging behaviors, and limit admissions to those who are medically fragile, are dangerous or aggressive or who are in crisis.

If given legislative approval, Idaho will be significantly closer to closing its only state-run institution serving people with developmental disabilities and developing the community services that support this transition.

# 2009 Accomplishments

## Idaho Youth Leadership Forum

Boise State University was once again the location for the 2009 Youth Leadership Forum attended by 11 students from across Idaho.

Enduring long days loaded with new experiences, new faces, great food and loads of fun, the delegates developed new leadership skills that will serve them for many years. In addition to meeting job mentors and having breakfast with policymakers, the delegates enjoyed a tour of the governor's office and the legislative chambers.

Richard Pimentel, nationally recognized activist, author and lecturer addressed the students and encouraged them to use their leadership potential to make positive change in their communities. On Career Choices & Employment Day, delegates met with job mentors in their career of interest and heard Logan Olson tell her success story about starting *Logan*, a fashion and social etiquette magazine. As a person with



*YLF Delegates enjoy the MK Nature Center.*

an acquired disability, Logan is featured in the publication as a model and advice columnist.

A big thank you goes to the Computers for Kids Program for providing each student with a refurbished laptop computer of their own to take home.



*YLF volunteers make it a great program. Pictured left to right: Jessica Besel, Beau Stiles, Scott Smith.*



*Logan Olson talks to youth about her experiences (her mom & co-presenter, Laurie, is in the background).*

## Tools for Life Fair 2009

Coeur d'Alene hosted the 2009 Tools for Life: Secondary Transition and Technology Conference that attracted 472 attendees, including 167 students from throughout the state.

Keynote speaker, LeDerick Horne returned this year to open the conference with his inspirational poetry and empowering speech. Logan Olson, founder of *Logan* magazine, inspired youth to reach for their dreams.

Students enjoyed many different sessions on transition-related topics including a popular session on

relationships presented by newlyweds Larkin and Jen Seiler. New at the conference this year was a workshop called "That's Life" that included a real life simulation focused on increasing knowledge and skills about personal finances. Tools for Life has become the premier statewide conference for youth in Idaho.



*Larkin Seiler and Jennifer Magelky-Seiler present "Relationships: Going from Friends to Dating, to Marriage."*

## Determined to Vote

Positive outcomes from the Council's Determined to Vote project were realized in voting booths across the state when 362 people voted in the November general election. The number of voters represents 40% of the total number (914) of people trained to use the accessible ballot marking devices. Determined to Vote trainers focused their efforts on training transition-aged high school students and individuals residing at State Hospitals North and South and Idaho State School and Hospital. 816 transition-aged high school students received training while 73 individuals residing in the three institutions were trained.

The training project was supported by a grant from the Idaho Office of the Secretary of State which made it possible to produce a DVD for training county clerks and poll workers in each of Idaho's 44 counties. The DVD was posted on the Secretary's of State website and featured individuals with disabilities proclaiming their desire to vote and demonstrating the ballot marking devices.



*Nampa SALN Chapter members get involved in their community. The group helped homeowners who were unable to clean up their yard during the "Rake-Up Nampa" event.*

## Supporting Training for Direct Care Professionals

A total of 554 people attended the Partnerships in Human Services Conference at Boise Centre on the Grove. The overwhelming majority of attendees were direct support professionals but 23 self advocates and 25 parents of children with developmental disabilities also attended. The Council supported the conference through a cash grant helping to fund 9 training tracks with 54 different workshops.

The IdahoHelp website was updated to include more than 11,000 local and state resources for individuals with disabilities and their families. Training on how to access and use the information on the website was provided at two different state conferences.

After 2 years of providing training and certification, the Department of Health and Welfare discontinued financial support for the College of Direct Support. Pushed by budget reductions, the department cited mediocre use and results as the determining factors for cutting funding. The program trained 525 direct support professionals during the period of operations.

## Self Determination and Leadership Training

Members of the Idaho Self Advocate Leadership Network (SALN) conducted 26 Self Determination and Leadership Development training sessions in 2009. The training taught individuals with disabilities how to become effective self-advocates, provided awareness about their rights, and emphasized why it is important to speak out as a self-advocate. A total of 120 parents and self-advocates attended the training sessions which were provided throughout the state. In addition, 30 University of Idaho students received disability awareness training from SALN members.

A Partners in Policymaking class, consisting of 8 parents and 6 self-advocates began in August with the majority of the sessions taking place in Moscow and Coeur d'Alene. Contractor Blue Sky Planning is coordinating the 8 month-long leadership development program.





## Disability Mentoring Day

Three Idaho communities sponsored Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) projects during the year. Boise and Filer joined Idaho Falls which held its 8th annual DMD "work your dream job for a day" event. Students from four different high schools and a workshop participated in Idaho Falls while 20 high school students were part of the program in Filer and 4 in Boise.

The Council provided separate grants totaling \$1500 to three organizations planning and conducting DMD programs: Idaho Falls Community Transition Team, Filer School District and Boise Living Independence Network Corporation (LINC).



## Idaho APSE

The newly formed Idaho APSE Chapter (formerly Association for Persons in Supported Employment) held its first annual meeting in conjunction with the Partnerships in Human Services Conference at the Boise Convention Center. Former APSE Executive Director Celane McWhorter was the keynote speaker and shared the story of APSE's inception, history and vision for the future. Idaho APSE members also heard from conference presenter Dale DiLeo, author of the book *Raymond's Room* that exposes the negatives of segregating people with developmental disabilities.

Idaho APSE shared information about the organization and created a mailing list from people visiting their conference booth. The first newsletter was published and mailed to 70 people and organizations. Idaho APSE remains a chapter in development as it continues to build and grow its membership base.

## Sharing the News

The national media spotlight was focused on Idaho, host site for the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games. Opening and closing ceremonies for the games were broadcast locally by Boise television station KTVB, Channel 7. The Idaho Statesman, the state's largest newspaper used the stage to focus on Idaho issues related to people with developmental disabilities by publishing a front page article on the Council and its work.

News about new Council member appointments made by Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter appeared in several newspapers with combined circulations of 250,000. A story about the Nampa SALN chapter holding a car wash fundraiser was broadcast over a local television station and published in a community newspaper. The Pocatello SALN Chapter made the news on several occasions with their fundraisers, public awareness events, and a story featuring the mission and purpose of the Pocatello Chapter of the SALN.

The Council newsletter, *Visions and Values*, was published three times and mailed to 4,600 recipients each time, including state and federal lawmakers. Finally the 2009 Annual Report, *Moving Forward*, was produced and mailed also to state and federal law makers and others.



*Nampa Chapter Treasurer, Heather Rager, helps at the car wash.*

## Improving Transportation

Two Council-involved projects continued to improve accessible transportation availability and possibilities throughout the state. First, the State Independent Living Council's AmeriCorps Accessible Transportation Network Project began operations with a Project Coordinator, 11 AmeriCorps Transportation Coordinators in 6 Idaho Transportation Districts, who in turn recruited 67 volunteers. Action plans were completed and grant applications were submitted with 4 grants receiving funding which helped transportation companies purchase 3 accessible

vehicles, provided ride vouchers for people with disabilities, and made available new bus benches. The Council supported this project through a cash grant to help fund personnel costs for the Project Coordinator position.

Second, the Interagency Work Group on Public Transportation (IWG) continued to carry out elements of the Idaho Mobility Action Plan (IMAP).

I-WAY was adopted as the theme and logo for Idaho's mobility management efforts.

The work group continues to promote collaboration in developing mobility solutions. Council Director Marilyn Sword was elected to serve as Chair of the Work Group for 2009-2010.



*Council Chair, Alonzo Statham, encourages youth to become leaders at the Idaho Youth Leadership Forum.*

## **Boards, Councils & Special Committees on which the Council is represented:**

**Consortium of Idahoans with Disabilities**

**Interagency Workgroup on Public Transportation**

**Children's Service System Redesign**

**Adventure Island Playground Planning**

**Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition**

**Idaho Community Care Advisory Council**

**Disability Rights Idaho Board of Directors**

**Family Support Policy Council**

**Center on Disabilities and Human Development Consumer Advisory Council**

**Idaho Training Cooperative, Intensive Behavioral Intervention Committee**

**Idaho State School and Hospital Advisory Board**

**St. Alphonsus Children's Classic Race Exec. Cmte.**

## Federal FY 2009 Council Members

**Chair** Rick Betzer, Parent - Outgoing Chair  
Alonzo Statham, Self-Advocate - Incoming Chair

**Vice Chair** James Steed, Self-Advocate

**Consumer Representative** Shiloh Blackburn, Self-Advocate

### Self-Advocates

Angie Flores  
Kristyn Herbert  
Mike Smith

### Guardian

Dona Butler

### Parents

Toni Belknap-Brinegar  
Jo Lynn Garrison  
Bob Jackson  
Corrine Johnson  
Chris Lynch  
Joni Sullivan



### Agency/Organizational Members

Julie Fodor	Center on Disabilities & Human Development, U of I
Jim Baugh	Comprehensive Advocacy, Inc.
Jane Donnellan	Vocational Rehabilitation
Leslie Clement	IDHW, Division of Medicaid
Jacque Hyatt	State Department of Education
Gioia Frahm	Commission on Aging
Beth Cunningham	Community Partnerships of Idaho
Lisa Robbe	Partnerships for Inclusion
Mitch Scoggins	IDHW, Maternal & Child Health

### FY 2009 Staff

Marilyn Sword, Executive Director  
Christine Pisani, Program Specialist  
Ron Enright, Program Specialist  
Tracy Warren, Program Specialist

Amanda Holloway,  
Administrative Assistant 2  
Samantha Wallace,  
Office Specialist 2

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

# Vision

# Values

Independence ♦ Respect ♦ Participation  
Integration ♦ Choice ♦ Partnership ♦ Responsibility  
Quality of Life ♦ Inclusion ♦ Community ♦ Equality

*Pictured on front cover:  
Blustery weather and a cold political climate did not stop  
advocates from speaking to the legislature about the  
importance of community services.*



Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities  
802 W. Bannock, Suite 308  
Boise, Idaho 83702

(208) 334-2178 ♦ FAX (208) 334-3417 ♦ TTY (208) 334-2179  
Webpage: <http://www.icdd.idaho.gov>