



West Virginia Developmental Disabilities Council

2022 Annual Report: *Celebrating 50 years!*



Former and current Council members and staff gathered to celebrate 50 years since the establishment of the Council through a Governor's proclamation.



2022 Legislation

SB 647 was signed by the Governor preventing the discrimination of a person with a disability from receiving an organ transplant because of their disability.

Training Spotlight

The Council hosted a virtual training by Darcy Elks titled "The Power of Roles". In total, 48 people attended including people with developmental disabilities, family members, and service providers. 98% of attendees reported they were very satisfied with the training.



Partners in Policymaking

The Council hosted its 20th Partners in Policymaking class. Nine people graduated in the Council's first all-virtual class. Sign-ups are open for the 21st class which will be held both virtually and in-person beginning September 2023.

Council Grants & Projects



People First of West Virginia

People First has 112 active members and reached 5,914 people through their newsletters, events, and social media. People First now operates a café open for breakfast and lunch in Parkersburg.

People First produces a monthly show titled "Legislative Matters Now with M&M" to provide information and education on current policies and legislation in West Virginia. Visit the People First Facebook page to watch the episodes.



WV Student Success Project

Improving expectations and outcomes for youth with disabilities

The *WV Student Success Project* promotes high expectations and full community inclusion of young people with disabilities. Their website now has 12 videos of students who have been successful in a variety of endeavors. Check them out: wvstudentsuccess.org

This 3-year community inclusion demonstration project concluded in 2022. On average, project participants gained 12 new relationships .



More than 80 community members engaged in community conversations to discuss inclusivity in their local communities.



Fair Shake network currently has 160 members with 50% of their membership comprised of people with developmental disabilities or their family members.

In 2022, Legislative Training Day and Disability Advocacy Day was held virtually. The two day event was attended by 45 people who discussed topics including additional funding for home and community based services. Fair Shake staff attended 8 community events to advertise the organization and talk with community members.

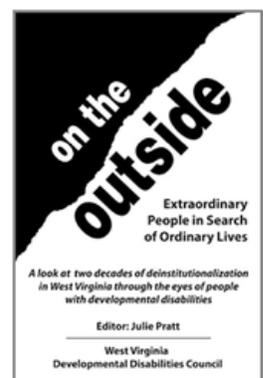


The Council contracted with Astrive Advocacy to provide community education and training on WV Special Education Policy 2419 and Supported Decision Making. Astrive Advocacy provided 12 total training sessions across the state which were attended by 183 people.



Think Kids hosted both virtual and in-person conversations to strategize on best practices for families as they explore and access medical care for their children with special health care needs. The final report from this grant is available at thinkkidswv.org.

"On the Outside" is now available in Kindle format. First published in 1998 by the Council, this book documents the stories of people with developmental disabilities who spent time in institutions before transitioning into the community. Visit the Amazon store to purchase your copy today.





In September, DD Council members Tracy Hartnett, Brandy Beery, and Charlotte Roth attended the Civil Rights Summit along with staff members Steve Wiseman and Katie Arbaugh. Council members attended topics regarding Disability & Civil Rights and Fair Housing.



Happy Retirement!

Linda Higgs, Program Specialist, and Steve Wiseman, Executive Director, both retired in 2022. They served the Council with determination and dedication. The Council wishes them the best on their retirements.



Words from our Chairperson: Brandy Beery



As we waved goodbye to the year 2022, the Council has had some very exciting moments. The Council could finally meet in person after missing one another for 2 years due to the pandemic. Thank you to everyone involved with the Council for cooperating through those times and all our Zoom meetings. We congratulated Linda Higgs on her retirement, with over 30 years of service with the Council and we greatly miss her. In April, Partners in Policymaking had its 20th class graduation. March 7, 2022, marked the 50th anniversary of the Council and was celebrated with a reading of the Governor's proclamation. Our staff at the Council has grown with 2 new additions, Katie Arbaugh and Debbie McVey, and their expertise has been very beneficial to the mission on the Council. Of course, thank you to all our Council members. You help serve our state to further the independence, productivity, integration, and inclusion of people with developmental disabilities. I appreciate your time and support and look forward to 2023.