



**Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs  
(GACDA)**

**Annual Report 2017**

# Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs

The Governor's Advisory Council on Disabilities Affairs (GACDA) was established by Governor John Bel Edwards through Executive Order NO. JBE 2016-10 on April 7, 2016 to monitor state compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and to advise the governor on the needs of individuals with disabilities in Louisiana. GACDA is also charged with assisting the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs with the resolution of state disability issues and provide education, communication, and networking services concerning disability issues and needs for all Louisiana citizens. GACDA is composed of 31 members appointed by governor Edwards. Support staff, facilities and resources for GACDA are provided by the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs within the Governor's Office of Programs and Planning.



GACDA is required to submit an annual report to the governor pursuant to Executive Order NO. JBE-2016-10. This report highlights the significant activities undertaken by GACDA in addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities in the state of Louisiana.

This annual report provides an overview of the important achievements of GACDA. The council carries out its responsibilities through its various standing committees. These committees are comprised of individuals representing the public, not-for-profit, and self advocate sectors who provide invaluable contributions of time, expertise and unwavering commitment to articulate the needs of individuals with disabilities.

# Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs Members



**Lynette Fontenot**  
GACDA Chairperson



**Laura Brackin, Ph.D.**  
Representative of  
Community  
Providers  
Association



**Donna Breaux**  
Member at Large



**Mary Breaud, Ed.D.**  
Representative of  
Higher Education



**Sharon Buchert**  
Representative of  
Governor's Office of  
Elderly Affairs



**Gerald Boudreaux**  
Representative  
Member of the  
Louisiana State  
Senate



**Katie Corkern**  
Representative of  
Families Helping  
Families



**Pam Darby**  
Member at Large



**Amy Dawson**  
Representative  
Member of the  
Governor's Office of  
Emergency  
Preparedness



**Ashley Jefferson**  
Representative  
Member of the  
Office of Behavioral  
Health



**Gale Dean**  
Representative  
Member of the  
Statewide  
Independent Living  
Council



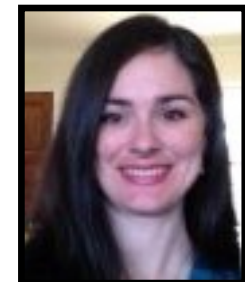
**Sharon Hennessey**  
Representative  
Member of People  
First Louisiana



**Joshua Hollins**  
Representative of the  
Department of  
Transportation and  
Development



**Jamie Wong**  
Representative of the  
Louisiana Department  
of Education



**Jamie Karam**  
Representative  
Member of LATAN



**Steve Kaufman**  
Representative  
Member of the  
Advocacy Center



**Christopher Kirby**  
Representative of the  
Department of  
Children and Family  
Services



**Linda Kocher**  
Member at Large



**Tara Leblanc**  
Representative of  
Office of Aging and  
Adult Services



**Cynthia Obier**  
Representative of the  
State Fire Marshal  
Public Safety



**Lauren Mayfield**  
Representative of  
the Louisiana  
Association of Special  
Education  
Administrators



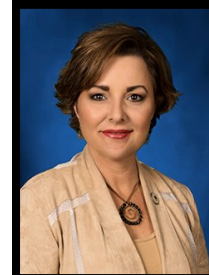
**Kelly Monroe**  
Representative of the  
Arc of Louisiana



**Libby Murphy**  
Representative of the  
Louisiana  
Rehabilitation Council



**Paula Rodriguez**  
Representative of the  
Deaf Grassroots  
Movement



**Malinda White**  
Representative of the  
Louisiana House of  
Representatives



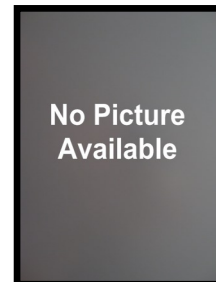
**Linda Theriot**  
Representative of the  
Department of Veteran  
Affairs



**Mark Thomas**  
Representative of the  
Office of Citizens with  
Developmental  
Disabilities



**Sandee Winchell**  
Representative of the  
Louisiana  
Developmental  
Disabilities Council



**Harry Brady**  
Member at Large



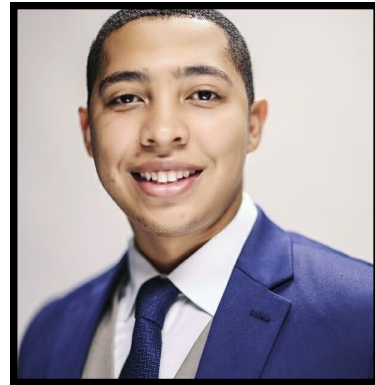
**OFFICE** *of the* **GOVERNOR**

**JOHN BEL EDWARDS**



**Bambi Polotzola**

**Governor's Office of Disability Affairs, Executive Director**



**Jolan Jolivette**

**Governor's Office of Disability Affairs, Assistant Director**



**Jessica Lewis**

**Statewide Independent Living Council, Director**



**Bruce Parker**

**Governor's Office of Programs and Planning, Director**

# Employment Committee

<u>Members:</u> Libby Murphy (Chairperson)	Jamie Wong
Dr. Laura Brackin	Gale Dean
Dr. Laureen Mayfield	Sen. Gerald Boudreaux
Linda Kocher	Sandee Winchell
Donna Breaux	Chris Kirby
Pam Darby	Rep. Malinda White
Mark Thomas	Kelly Monroe
Ava Dejoie*	Dr. Mary Breaud

## **Mission And Areas of Responsibility**

This committee provides recommendations to identify problems and concerns with issues of employment, while promoting an understanding of the employment needs and potential of individuals with disabilities. The Employment Committee monitors legislation relative to equal opportunity and access for employment.

## **Committee Accomplishments**

In 2017 the Employment Committee accomplished the following:

- Established the Employment First workgroup
- Led in collaborative efforts with multiple agencies and organizations to promote National Disability Employment Awareness Month during October.



# Accessibility Committee

<u>Members:</u>	Steve Kauffman (Chairperson)	Amy Dawson
	Jamie Karam	Lynette Fontenot
	Sharon Buchert	Cynthia Obier
	Katie Corkern	Linda Theriot
	Sharon Hennessey	Dr. Ashley Jefferson
	Tara Leblanc	Paula Rodriguez
	Jim Sprinkle*	Andrew Baer*

## **Mission And Areas of Responsibility**

This committee meets quarterly and provides recommendations to identify the problems and concerns with issues of accessibility for Louisiana citizens with disabilities . The Accessibility Committee provides assistance to ensure that communications, emergency services, public services, and public entities are accessible for people with disabilities.

## **Committee Accomplishments**

In 2017 the Accessibility Committee accomplished the following:

- Recommended accessibility and accommodation changes to the legislative ADA Coordinators office
- Developed a survey to make recommendations to address accessibility issues that exist at the State Capitol



## Education Committee

<u>Members:</u>	Dr. Lauren Mayfield (Chairperson)	Libby Murphy
	Dr. Mary Breaud	Jamie Wong
	Paula Rodriguez	Sandee Winchell
	Dr. Ashley Jefferson	Katie Corkern
	Rep. Malinda White	Lynette Fontenot
	Sen. Gerald Boudreaux	Dr. Dana Hunter*
	Ashley McReynolds*	

### **Mission And Areas of Responsibility**

This committee provides recommendations to identify problems and concerns with issues of education, while promoting an understanding of the education needs and potential of individuals with disabilities. The Employment Committee monitors legislation relative to equal opportunity and access for education.

### **Committee Accomplishments**

In 2017 the Education Committee accomplished the following:

- Requested a letter to be written to the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) to explain LDOE's expenditures for 2016 and 2017.
- Wrote letter urging LDOE and BESE to delay their Louisiana ESSA Plan submission.





# Transportation Committee

<u>Members:</u> Jamie Karam (Chairperson)	Linda Kocher
Amy Dawson	Chris Kirby
Donna Breaux	Kelly Monroe
Sharon Buchert	Steve Kauffman
Gale Dean	Sharon Hennessey
Tara Leblanc	Linda Theriot
Cynthia Obier	Pam Darby
Joshua Hollins	Dr. Laura Brackin
Dr. John Schweitzer*	Andrew Baer*
James Sprinkle*	Tina Anthlone*

## **Mission And Areas of Responsibility**

This committee shall identify the needs, concerns, and availability of accessible transportation for individuals with disabilities in Louisiana. This committee is charged with making recommendations to the Governor and appropriate agencies relative to accessible transportation.

## **Committee Accomplishments**

In 2017 the Transportation Committee accomplished the following:

- Created and implemented statewide transportation survey to determine the transportation needs of people with disabilities in Louisiana.
- Planning meeting with Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) to go over policies and preparedness during emergency and disaster situations for individuals with disabilities.



## 2017 GACDA Legislative Report



There were several legislative victories which were led by GACDA members and their affiliated organizations:

- HB 79/Act 266 by Rep. Franklin Foil prohibits the administration of corporal punishment to students with exceptionalities (except gifted and talented students) and to students who are eligible for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and who have an Individual Accommodation Plan. Further, makes present law and proposed law applicable to charter schools.
- SB 58/Act73 by Sen. Fred Mills establishes legislative intent for the modernization of the statutes governing the human services districts and authorities to clarify their purpose in the health delivery spectrum. This requires a minimum number of professionals and consumers with experience in the fields of developmental disability, mental health, and addictive disorders on each board; updates requirements for board member education and training and affirms the district and authorities role in providing community services in partnership with the local law enforcement and judicial offices; Requires each district and authority to set aside funding in an amount equal to at least 9% of its state general fund appropriation each fiscal year for services for persons with developmental disabilities.
- SB 152/Act 74 by Sen. Troy Carter provides that upon request of an applicant for a driver's license or a special identification card who needs accommodation, a designation that the applicant needs accommodation will be exhibited on the driver's license or special identification card, upon presentation of a statement from a qualified medical professional licensed in the state or any U.S. state or territory verifying the medical reason, including any mental, physical, or developmental disability, the applicant needs accommodation as established by administrative rule and prohibits any additional fee for such designation.

## 2017 GACDA Legislative Report

- HB 253/Act 146 by Rep. Patricia Smith revises terminology in present law referring to the deaf and persons who are hard of hearing by deleting and making substitutions for derogatory, inaccurate, and obsolete terms. Elimination of corporal punishment in schools for students with disabilities.



- HB 582/Act 273 by Rep. Patricia Smith decreases the monthly tax from 5 cents to 4 ½ cents and expands the services upon which the tax is levied to include wireless handset devices. This requires the tax to be levied per month and to be assessed per line for each wireless access line and per telephone number for each wireless handset device. Applying the \$0.045 monthly rate to these transactions implies collections of \$5.6 million. Comparing this estimate, less 3% of collections for timely remittance, to the most recent landline collections figure of \$700,000, this implies a revenue gain of \$4.7 million. Rebalancing the revenue source of the telecommunication fund from land lines to cellphones. The telecommunication fund is the funding source of the Louisiana Commission for the Deaf.

- HB 337/Act 270 by Rep. Julie Stokes extends current law to include both new and existing dwellings; changes the amount of the income tax credit to the lesser of \$5,000 or the cost of the construction; authorizes excess, unused credit to be carried forward and applied to subsequent tax liability for 5 years; requires the renovation of an existing dwelling to meet any of the standards enumerated; authorizes a taxpayer to claim the tax credit if there is a valid and enforceable contract of lease between the taxpayer and any individual who has a physical disability that requires, or will require, the inclusion of accessible and barrier-free design elements in the dwelling and who occupies and resides in any portion of the dwelling pursuant to the terms of the contract of lease; establishes a program cap not to exceed \$500,000 in credits granted by the Louisiana Department of Revenue each calendar year and provides for the claim of credits on a first-come, first-served basis. A taxpayer whose claim is disallowed due to the cap may claim the credit in the next calendar year and have priority over other claims.



- HB 179/Act 292 by Rep. Julie Stokes expands the "Right to Try Act," which authorizes the prescription of investigational drugs, biological products, and devices to certain terminally ill patients who have given informed written consent to investigational treatment and who meet other criteria necessary to be deemed "eligible patients." The law stipulates that a person who can understand and comprehend spoken English but is physically unable to talk or write may be deemed as meeting the criteria of present law relative to consent if he is competent and able to indicate consent by other means.

# GACDA Legislative Recommendations for 2018

## Education

- GACDA recommended the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) move appointing authority to the Governor.
- Allow teachers of the deaf and ASL interpreters to return to work after retirement if a critical shortage is determined.
- Recommended LEAD K, which establishes procedures to promote the sharing of comprehensive information and resources and provide assessment opportunities for families for children who are Deaf, Deaf Blind, and hard of hearing.

## Healthcare

- Fund waivers by appropriating \$4.15 Million in State General Funds for FY19 to provide home and community-based waiver services to 800 individuals with developmental disabilities (DD) on the waiver waiting list identified as having the most urgent needs.
- Enhance rate for people with complex needs by appropriating \$2.66 Million in State General Funds for FY19 for an enhanced rate in the New Opportunities Waiver (NOW) to support individuals with complex behavioral and/or medical needs.
- Fund and implement TEFRA by appropriating \$11.7 Million in State General Funds for FY19 to implement the TEFRA Medicaid State Plan Option in Louisiana.



## **GACDA Activities in 2017**

GACDA has collaborated with the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs to adequately educate, address, and resolve issues and concerns relative to the disability community. Members of GACDA have consistently participated in various initiatives that promote, encourage and support citizens with disabilities so that they may have an equal opportunity to actively participate in all aspects of life.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Symposium**

The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs hosted the ADA Symposium at the Claiborne Building on July 26, which was the 27th anniversary of when the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law. The ADA Symposium was free to attend and featured national accessibility expert Kristi Avalos, CEO/President of Accessology. Over 150 people attended the ADA Symposium and were able to participate in one of the breakout sessions for Higher Education, Employment, and Local Disability Awareness which allowed attendees to network, collaborate, and discuss next steps. Communications Directors Shauna Sanford spoke at this event on behalf of Governor John Bel Edwards to express that accessibility is an important concern for his administration. The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs presented Ms. Avalos with a certificate of appreciation for her participation in this event.



## Employment Roundtables



Gov. John Bel Edwards proclaimed October as “Disability Employment Awareness Month” in Louisiana. During October the Governor’s Office of Disability Affairs traveled to 10 cities across the state on an Employment First Tour in collaboration with the Louisiana Workforce Commission and Families Helping Families. The roundtables had representation from Louisiana Rehabilitative Services, Louisiana Workforce Commission, Human Service Districts/Authorities, local school districts, support coordinators, supported employment providers, businesses, economic development agencies, self-advocates and other interested parties.

The attendees were able to connect and network with others and give feedback on their successes, concerns, best practices and what is needed regarding employment for individuals with disabilities. During the roundtable discussions, participants talked about information parents and students need to receive to start preparing individuals for employment, navigating available resources, educating employers, and collaborating with agencies, businesses, and other interested parties to create more job and career opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

“Employing people with disabilities is an economic justice issue,” Bambi Polotzola, Executive Director of the Governor’s Office of Disability Affairs said. “The lack of workforce participation by individuals with disabilities is an untapped labor market. We can and we will do better. We are working collaboratively across government agencies and with businesses throughout the state to improve employment opportunities and outcomes.”



## Louisiana Selected as a Vision Quest State

Due to the efforts of the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs and GACDA over the past year in collaboration with diverse and varied stakeholders, Louisiana has been selected to receive Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) as a Vision Quest (VQ) State for the 2018 fiscal year under the United States Department of Labor's, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP). Vision Quest States are eligible to receive up to 100 hours of technical assistance to support the state in achieving its goals as an EFSLMP state. Louisiana will participate in the School-to-Work Transition and WIOA Implementation working group. ODEP will assist Louisiana in achieving results that will positively impact the lives of the individuals that we serve through our state's service delivery systems. Since its inception in FY 2012, the EFSLMP has provided intensive onsite and virtual technical assistance to cross-system state government teams to further their efforts to increase competitive, integrated employment outcomes for all individuals with disabilities.



# Governor's Office of Disability Affairs Monthly Disability Newsletter

Governor's Office of Disability Affairs distributes a monthly newsletter to highlight the relevant issues and concerns of disability in Louisiana. The newsletter is designed to deliver important news and announcements that impact the disability community. Some of the content in this newsletter is created by the members of GACDA. This newsletter also provides information about disability affairs and other programs and events sponsored by agencies and organizations that serve individuals with disabilities. The newsletter is distributed statewide to increase awareness of the available statewide disability programs and services. The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs has archived all of its 2017 newsletters. These archived newsletters can be found at: <http://gov.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/category/13>

## Governor's Office of Disability Affairs Newsletter January 2017

January 31, 2017

### Louisiana Will Host Statewide Independent Living Council Congress

Louisiana will host the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Congress in New Orleans, Louisiana in 2018 and 2019. The SILC Congress made the decision to host the next two events in New Orleans, Louisiana under the leadership of the Director of Statewide Independent Living Council, Jessica Lewis. In addition, Jessica and the SILC Chairperson, Gale Dean, represented Louisiana during SILC Congress in Phoenix, AZ on January 17-20, 2017, and participated in many workshops to strengthen Louisiana SILC goal progression. The workshops included topics relative to: expanding the SILCs impact through new authorities, overview of final regulations, and uniform administration requirements. Jessica was selected to be a part of a Diversity case study put on by Wayne University within the conference. She was also named the Region 6 Regional Representative, which covers Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico.



### Restore Louisiana Task Force Continues to Work for Families Affected by Floods

In September, Gov. Edwards created the [Restore Louisiana Task Force](#) to oversee the recovery process after historic flooding in March and August 2016. The task force has the following responsibilities:

- Establish and recommend to state and local agencies the priorities in developing plans for recovery and redevelopment. These priorities focus on six areas – housing, economic development, health and social services, community planning and capacity building, infrastructure and natural and cultural resources.

**CONNECT** *with*  
**the GOVERNOR**

EMAIL *the*  
GOVERNOR

REQUEST *of*  
*the* GOVERNOR

APPLY *to*  
SERVE



*Happening* **NOW**



LouisianaGov 2 hours ago  
RT @elizabethcrisp: Odd statement from @SenJohnKennedy on #lalege budget debate. Sculpture was not during @LouisianaGov admin & #lalege alr...

LouisianaGov 1 day ago  
Medicaid expansion increased coverage for patients with substance abuse disorders: report



# Governor's Office of Disability Affairs Programs and Events

GACDA participated in the coordination of the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs major events.

## The 2017 GOLD Awards

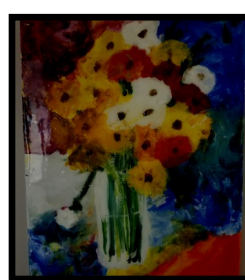
The Governor's Office hosted the Governor's Outstanding Leadership in Disabilities (GOLD) Awards on November 16, 2016 at the Old State Capitol. The GOLD Awards ceremony was created to serve as an opportunity for Louisiana to pay tribute to the achievements, dedication, and extraordinary efforts of individuals who benefit the disability community. Several GACDA members participated in the coordination of this event. The GOLD Awards ceremony was televised statewide. The following awards were presented:

- Educator of the Year: Julie Bourgeois
- Direct Support Professional of the Year: Latasha Walker
- Service Provider of the Year: Terrebonne Arc
- Employer of the Year: University Medical Center
- Volunteer of the Year: Trach Mommas
- Family of the Year: The Pierce Family
- Service Animal of the Year: Bella
- Youth of the Year: Lillian Dejean
- Veteran of the Year: Kenneth Carmouche
- Patsy Barrett Memorial Award: Jane Rhea Vernier
- Ken Vince Memorial Award: Jay Isch
- Distinguished Merit Award: Ashley McReynolds
- Elected Official of the Year: Rep. Patricia Smith
- Public Servant of the Year: Mark Thomas



## The 2017 Inclusive Arts Contest

Over 70 individuals participated in the 2016 Inclusive Arts Contest. To bring greater awareness of the importance of inclusion in today's society, the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs accepted entries that illustrated or describe ideas related to this year's theme: "Together We Succeed." A ceremony took place on November 15, 2017 in recognition of the Inclusive Art Contest participants. Dana Territo won the "Lynette Fontenot Excellence in Inclusion award" for the best overall entry. The award is named after the chairperson of GACDA due to her role in the founding of the Inclusive Arts Contest. Participants were encouraged to use art as a means to share their vision, experiences and talents to demonstrate this years theme of inclusion. Medals and special recognition from Gov. Edwards were presented to those who earned first place, second place, third place, and honorable mention. Individuals received recognition at the ceremony. GACDA Chairperson Lynette Fontenot was the keynote speaker. This event was also televised statewide.



## Rallies and Awareness Days

GACDA has collaborated with the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs to participate in many disability rallies and disability awareness days. The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs has issued and presented various proclamations and certificates of recognition to support the various programs and events that encourages disability awareness. Many of these events were sponsored by members of GACDA and their respective agencies. These are a few events that involved members of GACDA:

### 2017 Disability Rights Day at the Capitol



### 2017 Deaf Rights Rally



### Autism Awareness Events



## NOLA Disability Pride Festival

NOLA Disability Pride Festival is a one-day festival for the disability community of Greater New Orleans, bringing together individuals, organizations, and agencies around the mission of disability pride.



## Epilepsy Awareness Walk 2017



## Louisiana Disability Advocates Traveled to D.C. to Advocate for Children

Trach Mommas of Louisiana organized a trip to Washington D.C. to oppose the devastating cuts that were proposed to healthcare. Several mothers, advocates, and children with disabilities went on this trip as well as Pam Darby, Amy Dawson, and Bambi Polotzola, Director of the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs. The group arrived in D.C. to visit U.S. Sen Bill Cassidy and was granted a brief meeting with a staff person from his office. Senator Duckworth from Illinois, a retired U.S. Army Iraq War veteran who lost both legs due to severe combat wounds, met the group in the hallway outside of Senator Cassidy's office and offered her encouragement for their efforts. Also, they visited the Republican National Committee headquarters because of their concern about the Republican healthcare bill, but were not allowed inside. The trip was covered by several media outlets, including CNN and Time, and got significant national attention and coverage.

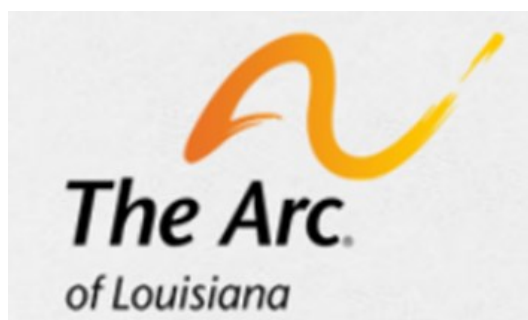


## GACDA Community Partners

Governor's Office of Disability Affairs and GACDA collaborates with various community partners in the effort to connect individuals with disabilities with the appropriate and necessary information and resources. Establishing relationships with other groups enables GACDA to build a diverse network of individuals to better serve the disability community.



The **Advocacy Center of Louisiana** (AC) protects, empowers, and advocates for the human and legal rights of people with disabilities and seniors living in Louisiana, in order that they may live an integrated life in the community, free from abuse, neglect and exploitation. The AC is the protection and advocacy (P&A) system for Louisiana. There is no charge for AC services. AC provides 6 types of assistance: Information & Referral, Legal Assistance, Investigations of Abuse and Neglect Outreach & Training, Systems Advocacy, Legislative Information and Education.



The **Arc of Louisiana** advocates with and for all people with intellectual and related developmental disabilities and their families so that they shall live to their fullest potential.



**People First of Louisiana** is a self-advocacy group run by people with disabilities, for people with disabilities, where people learn to speak up for themselves about decisions they make. Members can connect with others in their community, across the nation and around the world and learn about their rights and responsibilities as citizens. <http://www.peoplefirstla.org>



COMMUNITY PROVIDER ASSOCIATION

The **Community Provider Association** is a member-driven association dedicated to providing leadership and support to agencies serving individuals with disabilities through community-based programs. <http://www.communityprovider.org/>



Louisiana Developmental  
Disabilities Council

The **Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council** advocates for a system of services and supports in Louisiana which enable individuals with developmental disabilities to exercise self-determination, be independent, productive and integrated and included in all facets of community life. The Council's mission is to lead and promote advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change to improve the quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.



**Families Helping Families** is a statewide network of ten family-directed and family-staffed regional resource centers which provide information on all types of services, goods, technologies, and activities that improve the quality of life in the community; help individuals understand their rights and how to advocate for themselves; and lend support from someone "who has been there." <http://www.laddc.org//Initiatives.cfm?aid=6&id=9>



**LaCAN** advocates for policies and systems that support inclusion everywhere people learn, work, live, and play. LaCAN advocates for service systems that support children and adults with disabilities to live in their own homes and be fully-included and participating members of their local schools and communities. [www.lacanadvocates.org](http://www.lacanadvocates.org)

# Louisiana Association of Special Education Administrators



**LATAN** assists individuals with disabilities to achieve enhanced quality of life and greater independence through access to Assistive Technology (AT). LATAN serves Louisiana citizens of all ages with all types of disabilities and those with limitations due to aging who need AT. AT includes items that individuals use to assist them in daily activities, such as canes, wheelchairs, communication devices, hearing aids, keyboard alternatives, learning software, and vision aids. LATAN envisions a future in Louisiana in which individuals who use AT can achieve greater independence, are more



The **Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs** serves as a focal point for Louisiana's senior citizens and administers a broad range of home and community based services through a network of Area Agencies on Aging. GOEA has developed an extensive network agencies recognized as the Aging Service Network. This network consists of the 64 Parish Councils on Aging (COA), 36 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), 139 Senior Centers, University Centers, Advocacy and Service Organizations, the Senior Corps (Foster Grandparents, Senior Companion, Retired Senior Volunteer Program), the



The **Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness** is responsible for coordinating the State's efforts throughout the emergency management cycle to prepare for, prevent where possible, respond to, recover from and mitigate against to lessen the effects of man-made or natural disasters that threaten our State. The State, through GOHSEP, has a significant responsibility to protect communities, citizens, property and assets in the event of an emergency or disaster. GOHSEP does that by working with partners from State and Federal agencies; Parish, Tribal and local governments; nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); private nonprofits (PNPs) and other private-sector businesses to achieve its Mission and Vision.

## Children's Cabinet

The **Children's Cabinet** serves as the governing body for the State of Louisiana responsible for coordinating funding and programmatic services at the state and local level, related to children and their families. It consists of the cabinet secretary of each state department and is chaired by the executive director of the Children's Cabinet, who is appointed by the governor. The mission is to achieve the most effective and efficient use of monetary, human and organizational resources to lift children and their families out of poverty. The Children's Cabinet Advisory Board provides information and recommendations from the perspective of advocacy groups, service providers and parents on policies and programs relating to Louisiana children.

Children's Cabinet Advisory Board Strategic Goals:

- Advise and assist the Children's Cabinet
  - Coordinate agency resources and provide linkages among agencies that serve children and families
  - Develop policy, program and budget recommendations to address child and family issues



The **Louisiana Statewide Interagency Coordinating Council** (LA-SICC) works in collaboration with the Louisiana Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, in an advisory capacity, to design and oversee the implementation of a family-centered, community-based, comprehensive, inter-agency system for infants and toddlers (birth through two years of age) who are eligible for Early Steps and their families. Our goal is to advise and assist the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), as the Lead Agency, in the monitoring and evaluation of this system to ensure that families are supported and the potential of each child is maximized.

# Women's Policy and Research Commission

The **Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission** exists to:

- Research and collect facts and statistics about the wellbeing of women.
- Make special studies of conditions pertaining to the employment, health, safety and financial status of women in the state of Louisiana.

Louisiana.gov > LDH > Office of the Secretary

## Louisiana Commission for the Deaf

The **Louisiana Commission for the Deaf** provides accessibility services for persons whom are Deaf, deaf-blind, or have hearing loss or speech impairment to gain equal access to any public or private service. Accessibility services include, but are not limited to: Interpreting, Document Interpretation, Telecommunication Interpretation, Telecommunications and general accessibility equipment, Hearing Aids, Information and referral, Advocacy, Consumer Training, and Public Service Announcements. Each year over 20,000 residents benefit directly from services contracted for by the Louisiana Commission for the Deaf (LCD). LCD has eight (8) community-based Regional Service Centers who ensure accessibility is provided to all consumers.

[Workforce Development > Louisiana Rehabilitation Services](#)

## Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC)

The **Louisiana Rehabilitation Council** listens to the concerns of those with disability issues, reviews, analyzes and evaluates the state rehabilitation program, collaborates with other state agencies, organizations and consumer groups. The LRC consults with and advises LRS on the performance of its responsibilities under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, particularly in the areas related to eligibility, extent, and scope of services provided.

[http://www.laworks.net/workforcedev/lrs/lrs\\_lrc.asp](http://www.laworks.net/workforcedev/lrs/lrs_lrc.asp)



Statewide Independent Living Council

The mission of Louisiana's Independent Living program(s) is to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities, facilitating integration and full inclusion of individuals with disabilities into the mainstream of American society. Louisiana's Independent Living Partners promote a philosophy of Independent Living, including: consumer control, peer support, self help, self-determination, equal access, and individual and system advocacy.

# GACDA State Agency Partners



AGING & ADULT SERVICES

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



We put people to work.

<http://www.louisianabelieves.com/>



## Our Vision

- Working to keep children safe
- Helping individuals and families become self-sufficient
- Providing safe refuges during disasters



DOTD serves the transportation and water resource needs of Louisiana residents, businesses and government partners. We are committed to teamwork, quality, integrity, professionalism, innovation and excellence in serving our customers.



LOUISIANA office of state  
**FIRE MARSHAL**  
PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

protecting life and property from  
the hazards of **fire** or **explosion**



<http://sfm.dps.louisiana.gov/>