



SOUTH CAROLINA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL

SOUTH CAROLINA OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE POLICY AND PROGRAMS
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION: *The mission of the South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council is to provide leadership in planning, funding, and implementing initiatives that lead to improved quality of life for people with developmental disabilities and their families through advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change.*

SOUTH CAROLINA PRIORITY AREAS FOR 2021:

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS, EMPLOYMENT, SELF-ADVOCACY

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS People with intellectual and developmental disabilities have access to their own choice of formal and informal community-based services, supports, resources, and activities throughout their lifetime.

Objective 1: Support at least two programs that provide people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families with information about their rights, services, and supports.

- Able South Carolina - Building Advocacy in Transition Systems (BATS)
- Brain Injury Association – Life with Brain Injury
- Center for Disability Resources – Assistive Technology Expo
- Family Connection – Hopes and Dreams

Objective 2: Support at least two programs that provide people with intellectual and developmental disabilities opportunities to improve community integration, inclusion, and productivity.

- Project HOPE Foundation - Person-Centered Discovery
- Able South Carolina -Mapping Your Future/Empowering Your Future
- SOS Care, Inc. – Summer Life Skills Club
- York Adult Enrichment Centers - York CAN inclusion Project
- Arc of the Midlands - STRIVE

Objective 3: Support at least one program that addresses an emerging health issue for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities using evidence-based practices and interventions.

- Community Options - Healthy Living Made Simple
- SOS Care, Inc. – Holistic Health

Objective 4: Support at least one program that includes an organization serving South Carolina's Latino/Hispanic community and improves access to community-based services, supports, resources, and activities.

2021 Community Supports Program Results

- ❖ 1019 Received Advocacy Training
- ❖ 15 Board Positions
- ❖ 12 Evidence-Based Practices
- ❖ 0 Policy Changes

Arc of the Midlands STRIVE Program



STRIVE supports opportunities to improve community integration, inclusion, and self-determination. The program is developed and implemented by a collaborative, multi-service provider group consisting of SOS, Thrive, The Arc of the Midlands, and UCP. STRIVE takes place in a community home and/or apartment located in the community. The program utilizes real homes and the surrounding community to work on independent living skills and learn how to navigate and access the community. Adults with id/dd receive individualized assessments. Each participant in the program develops a life action plan by a certified special needs Life Quality Coach.



STRIVE breaks down complicated parts of becoming independent and gives instructions which allows individuals to speak/advocate for themselves. This allows them to express their thoughts, preferences, and interests in appropriate ways. Effective communication strategies are taught allowing focus on technology, social media, and other communication channels.

Collaboration efforts allow promotion of wellness; teaching skills needed to make healthy choices which enhance well-being, healthy nutrition choices, meal preparation, a wide range of physical activities, managing stress,

medication management, and self-care/hygiene. Each week participants focus on a different topic – dealing with real hands-on skills for everyday life. Participants worked on planting flowers and framing photos to hang pictures around the house.



(L-R): Willie Carter, Marcia Potter, Haven Jennings, Mark Lowell

EMPLOYMENT People with intellectual and developmental disabilities have access to competitive, community-based career opportunities throughout their lifetime.

Objective 1: Support programs for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities that improve access to integrated workforce development systems.

- **Able South Carolina – Advancing Capacity and Collaboration for Employment Support Services (ACCESS)**
- **University of South Carolina – Model for Employment Training Advancement (META)**
- **SOS Care, Inc. - Transition Resource Conference and Expo**
- **Center of Disability Resources – Project SEARCH Strand, SC Interagency Transition Alliance Conference**

Objective 2: Support programs that empower people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to develop and direct their own career strategy using appropriate evidence-based and best practice methods.

- **SOS Care, Inc. – Making Change II**

2021 Employment Program Results

- ❖ **595 Received Advocacy Training**
- ❖ **0 Board Positions**
- ❖ **7 Evidence-Based Practices**
- ❖ **0 Policy Changes**

ACCESS GRANT HIGHLIGHTS

Advancing Capacity and Collaboration for Employment Support Services (ACCESS) with Able South Carolina focuses on equal opportunities for competitive, integrated employment. Collaboration partners work to explore barriers in the current service delivery system and build provider capacity through access to comprehensive trainings, sustainable systems change and collection of data to inform service delivery choices. Training is focused on state-specific provider qualifications and the standardized curriculum on Employment First. Partners have access to technical assistance on evidence-based employment practices to develop self-advocates and implement sustainable train-the-trainer model.

- There is statewide interest in customized employment because of the ACCESS grant. We have reconnected with the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM, previously WINTAC), which is providing technical assistance to SCVRD to help them implement customized employment. Having national technical assistance to help advance customized employment in our state has been critical to making sure agencies are collaborating and maximizing the funding and support available.
- Because of the ACCESS grant, the SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD) is now developing policies and procedures to contract with DD providers for customized employment in the future. SCVRD staff have noted on several occasions how the ACCESS grant brought customized employment to their attention and the need to contract with DD providers to offer this valuable service to consumers.

- Another success for this reporting period is the positive survey results collected. 7 out of the 8 consumers noted that the program has helped them to self-advocate, learn their rights and responsibilities, and gave them confidence and pride.
- Four consumers with intellectual disabilities gained competitive, integrated employment in year 2 of the ACCESS grant.
- The ACCESS grant has built a partnership between SCVRD, Thrive Upstate, and The Charles Lea Center.
- An Integrated Resource Team (IRT) in Greenville was developed in year 1 of the ACCESS grant and is still meeting regularly in year 3. The IRT includes partners at SCVRD, Thrive Upstate, Goodwill, SC Works, SC Commission for the Blind, and the Upstate Warrior Solution. These partners meet monthly to discuss job leads, share employer contacts, and work collaboratively through barriers they are facing with their consumers obtaining employment.

SELF-ADVOCACY People with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families are empowered to affect statewide leadership training opportunities that contribute to active participation in cross disability leadership coalitions and systems change efforts.

Objective 1: Support at least one statewide self-advocacy organization led by people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to provide opportunities for increasing leadership abilities and to meet self-defined organizational goals.

- **Centers for Disability Resources – Impact SC**
- **Able South Carolina - EQUIP – Self-Advocacy & Leadership in Young Adults**

Objective 2: Support opportunities that strengthen leadership abilities in peer-to-peer networks of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

- **Able South Carolina – Youth Leadership Forum (YLF)**
- **Arc of the Midlands – Let’s Talk**
- **SC DD Council - SC Dementia Care Strategies**
- **UNH -IOD - Disability Road Map**

Objective 3: Support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their family members to engage cross-disability, culturally diverse leadership boards, committees, commissions, councils, and similar coalitions.

Objective 4: The Developmental Disabilities Council will collaborate with South Carolina’s Center for Disability Resources (UCEDD) and Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities in South Carolina (P&A System) on at least one program that engages system beneficiaries to assess system barriers and influence positive changes in service delivery, policies, interventions, and strategies.

2021 Self-Advocacy Program Results

- ❖ **466 Received Advocacy Training**
- ❖ **109 Board Positions**
- ❖ **11 Evidence-Based Practices**
- ❖ **0 Policy Changes**

Able South Carolina, EQUIP Program

Holden Roberts



Holden Roberts is a 21-year-old male with Autism who has been involved with both the Equip program and the South Carolina Youth Leadership Forum (SC YLF) with Able SC for many years. Through these programs, he has been able to work on his communication, independence, and employment, and leadership skills, in addition to connecting with his peers and making friends across the state of South Carolina. Holden credits these programs with how he has grown as a leader, individual, and proud person with a disability over the last few years.

His confidence grew as he stepped into a leadership role as a Peer Staff at the 2021 SC Youth Leadership Forum, where he supported new and returning delegates and interviewed Judy Heumann. Following his experiences at the SC Youth Leadership Forum, Holden continued to support his peers in the Equip Hangouts by encouraging others to share and supporting them when they were unsure what to say or nervous about how others might react. Holden never stopped leading and so, it was only natural that he takes the next step in officially becoming an Equip Leader in the Equip program. Now Holden is continuing to support his peers in the same ways he always has but as a paid staff member of Able SC. As a young adult staff member, he now has the opportunity to further develop his skills in peer support and will work with his peers one-on-one to help them reach their goals, while he continues to grow as a leader and reach his own goals.

**Roger Kuperman,
DD Council Chairperson**



This year, it has been amazing to see self-advocates and their families thrive in the midst of the pandemic. The strength, courage and leadership displayed has been nothing short of amazing. As we continue following safety protocols and make decisions about returning to in-person, I would like to thank our grantees for ensuring the needs and programs in place continued and for making necessary adjustments in how to best provide

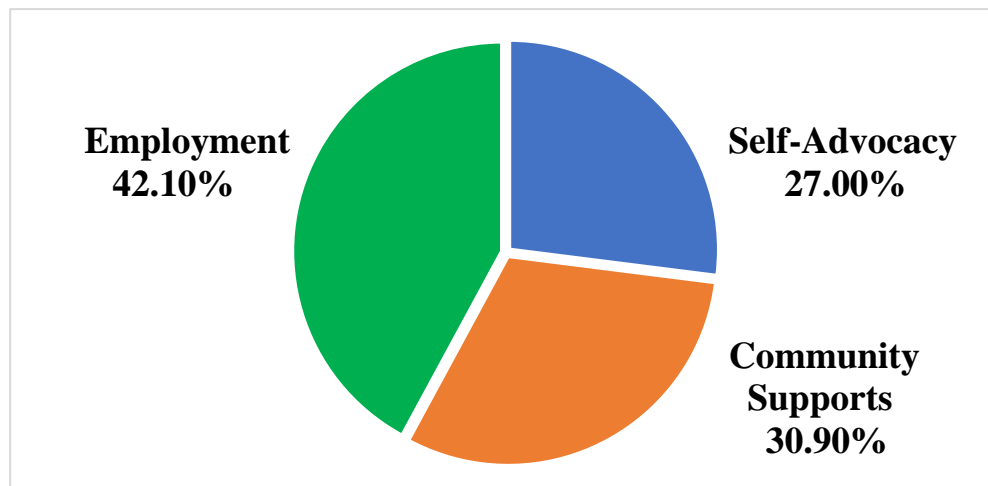
those services. Those efforts have kept the core focus on advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change.

With my own family, I have seen my daughters struggle with the lack of normal social interactions. They have strived and persisted through this by completing a double major with a 3.92 GPA and transitioning out of high school into college with a 3.9 GPA. The virtual platform was not easy, the necessary hands-on approach required was key to providing critical understanding of complex ideas. So as a father, I picked up a calculus book for the first time in over 40 years, and helped my daughter learn calculus. She stated she understood and overcame, scoring a 95 on her exam.

It is because of the same desire of our grantees, agencies, organizations, and stakeholders that we continue to move beyond “that is just the way it is” and push for new innovative ideas and use the energy which helps us to continue to strive to the next level of excellence within the disability community. Knowing the level of functioning, seeing the work ethic, discipline, and desire, and pushing through all barriers has produced incredible results. As the DD Council Chairperson, I would love to see us continue to provide opportunities for people with disabilities and their families, changing outdated systems, and removing barriers.

A special, “Thank You!” to the DD Council Members, to the staff, to our grantees, agencies, organizations, stakeholders, and EVERYONE committed to moving boundaries and removing barriers.

2020-2021 Developmental Disabilities Council Allocation of Resources



**SC DD Council Executive Director,
Valarie Bishop**



As we continue to make our way through COVID-19 and try getting back to normalcy, I want to thank each of our grantees, stakeholders, agencies, and organizations for the remarkable work keeping programming available and operating seamlessly.

Our mission to continue initiatives which lead to improved quality of life for people with developmental disabilities and their families remains at the forefront of all we do. This core concept allows us to strive for improvements in service areas and push boundaries and eliminate barriers.

We are increasing our efforts working on systemic barriers. We are focusing on those intangible pieces which set the tone. We are building trust, having needed conversations, and intensifying our collaborative efforts, all of which create a solid foundation in moving forward and pushing boundaries. I want to extend a huge thank you to everyone who has contributed to our accomplishments for this report year. Our mission is important to the work that we do and we will continue to work to provide leadership in planning, funding and implementing initiatives that lead to improved quality of life for people with developmental disabilities and their families through advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change.



SOUTH CAROLINA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL

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