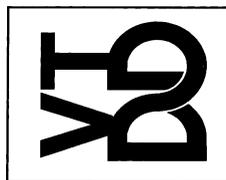
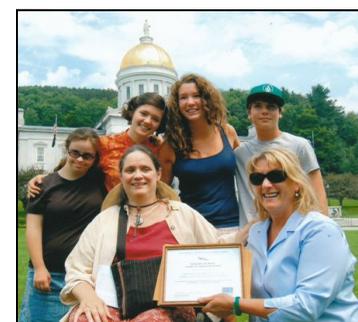


VT Developmental Disabilities Council
103 S. Main Street Room 117 1 North
Waterbury, VT 05671-0206



VERMONT DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL



2009 ANNUAL REPORT



Greetings from the President

Last year was a time of many changes. Special thanks to the extraordinary leadership of President Tami Trowell, who led VTDDC for many years, creating many pathways to increase public awareness about critical issues affecting people with developmental disabilities.



With our strong commitment to work toward our goals, we are making a positive impact.

This year we fully launched our five-year State Plan, and worked towards its five Goals through in-house activities and grant projects. Targeted Requests for Proposals helped us fund more grant projects than ever before, with focus on creating positive images of Vermonters with developmental disabilities, connecting people with each other, and helping people find their voice with policymakers.

New projects include *We Can*, which supports self-advocates to educate legislators at the State House, and the *Advocacy Response Network*, which provides up-to-date advocacy information and helps keep organizations and grass roots activists connected. Our successes included increased funding for job supports to assist special education students leaving high school. VTDDC also launched new media initiatives and innovative models to support youth as they transition from school to work and community.

We hope you learn about VTDDC through this Annual Report. Please continue to stay connected.

Sincerely,

Harriet B. Hall

Harriet Hall, President

Agency Representatives

<i>Lucy Abair</i>	<i>Department for Children & Families</i>
<i>Ron Clark</i>	<i>Agency of Human Services, Office of Vermont Health Access</i>
<i>Kathy Hamilton</i>	<i>Nonprofit Organization, Bennington</i>
<i>Carol Hassler, MD</i>	<i>Department of Health</i>
<i>Renee Kievit-Kylar</i>	<i>Division of Vocational Rehabilitation</i>
<i>Michael Mulcahy</i>	<i>Department of Education</i>
<i>Ed Paquin</i>	<i>Vermont Protection & Advocacy</i>
<i>Susan Ryan</i>	<i>Center on Disability & Community Inclusion, University of Vermont</i>
<i>Joan Senecal</i>	<i>Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living</i>

<u>Staff</u>	<i>Karen Schwartz</i>	<i>Executive Director</i>
	<i>Jeff Coy</i>	<i>Systems Analyst & Planner</i>
	<i>Judith Parsons</i>	<i>Administrative Assistant</i>

To Contact the Council

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Council Members as of 6/30/09

Self-Advocates, Individuals and Family Members

<i>Patty Czarnecki</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Ira</i>
<i>Pamela Dow</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Milton</i>
<i>Herb Gingrich</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Middlebury</i>
<i>Harriet Hall</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Newport</i>
<i>Robert Harvey</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Barre</i>
<i>Jay Lafayette</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Rutland</i>
<i>Brian Lawlor</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Woodstock</i>
<i>Dennis Lindberg</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>S. Burlington</i>
<i>Lance Mead</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Brandon</i>
<i>Lisa Maynes</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Colchester</i>
<i>Robert Price</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Essex</i>
<i>Jessica Sanville</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Lyndonville</i>
<i>Lisa Smedy</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Barre</i>
<i>Tami Trowell</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Brattleboro</i>



What is VTDDC?

VTDDC is a state-wide Council that works to increase public awareness about critical issues affecting people with developmental disabilities and their families.

The Mission of VTDDC is to facilitate connections and to promote supports that bring people with developmental disabilities into the heart of Vermont communities.



60% of its 23 members are self-advocates and family members. VTDDC uses its federal funds for projects at the local, regional and state levels. These projects bring Vermonters with developmental disabilities into the heart of their communities through public education, leadership training, and advocacy aimed at enhancing individual and family-centered supports and services.

We Believe . . .

In communities where all people have a “voice” and are heard with respect.
In safe communities where all people have equal value.
In communities that are friendly and support equality and fulfilling relationships.
With opportunities, people grow and share their dreams and abilities, and
That the humanity we share is more important than our different abilities.

VTDDC's Five-Year State Plan GOALS for 2007-2011

- ◆ People with developmental disabilities and their families have information necessary to advocate to get their needs met.
- ◆ People with developmental disabilities and their families will be actively engaged in activities that bring them into the heart of Vermont's communities.
- ◆ People with developmental disabilities and their families will have open and fair access to a range of supports, services, resources and opportunities based on the needs they identify.
- ◆ Students in high school will have the supports they need for a smooth transition to life in the heart of their communities.
- ◆ People will have increased options for transportation services for work, school, medical, social, recreational and other personal needs.



“Speak Out for Understanding” stars local high school students speaking about their own experiences living with developmental disabilities. Based on a nationally acclaimed service-learning project, the film promotes awareness and equity. *Grantee: Harwood Union High School*

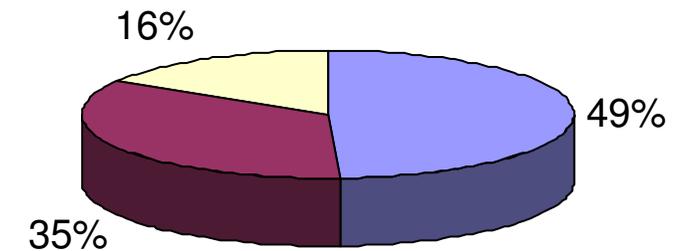
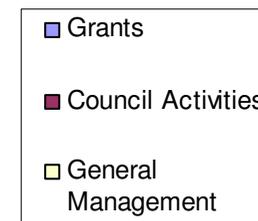


FY 2008 Council Budget

Grantees provided \$ 73,177 in matching funds [cash and in-kind services].

FY 2008* Income	
Federal Funds	\$ 462,315
Less Expenses	\$ 452,183
Carry-over to FY09	\$ 10,122

FY 2008* Expenditures	
Grants	\$ 222,148
Council Activities	\$ 156,424
General Management	\$ 73,611
TOTAL	\$ 452,183



* October 1, 2007 to September 30., 2008

Media & Publications

“Choosing Words with Dignity” raises awareness of People First language. In FY 2008 VTDDC distributed thousands of copies to diverse entities in VT and across the US to public schools, state universities, hunters’ safety trainings, print media, managers’ trainings, city and state government, and Department of Corrections employees.



“179 VOICES: Thoughts on Services and Supports for People with Developmental Disabilities” describes what is happening in VT through the words of people with developmental disabilities and their families who responded to VTDDC’s State Plan survey.

“Boards of the Future” and the accompanying workbook offer specific language and exercises to train people with developmental disabilities who are interested in, and would like to learn more about, serving on the board of an organization.

Films Sponsored in Whole or Part by VTDDC:

“The Apartment, Admit One to Adulthood” features a unique transition program that bridges school and community life for young people whose peers have graduated. *Grantee: Montpelier Public Schools*



“Bill's Bill”, a film in four parts, documents the hard work that made VT Special Education a reality, including interviews with key activists and dramatization starring Vermonters with developmental disabilities. *Grantee: VSA Arts Vermont*

Sampling of Results from FY 2008 Grant Projects, Activities & Partnerships

People Trained

- ◆ 174 people trained in employment.
- ◆ 151 people trained in inclusive education.
- ◆ 1,843 people trained in systems advocacy.
- ◆ 639 self-advocates trained in leadership and self-determination.
- ◆ 277 people trained in community supports.

People Benefiting

- ◆ 46 students transitioned from school to community and jobs.
- ◆ 38 people gained supports to participate in community activities.
- ◆ 168 people were active in inclusive recreational activities.
- ◆ 57 people received scholarships for workshops and trainings.

People Active in Advocacy

- ◆ 2,093 people actively participated in systems advocacy.
- ◆ 267 policymakers were educated about issues.
- ◆ Awareness initiatives reached at least 122,533 people.

LEADING TO POLICY CHANGES, including:

- ◆ \$1.1 million supported employment for 38 youth leaving school.
- ◆ Established and funded Traumatic Brain Injury Trust Fund.
- ◆ Home Access Program stabilized as part of VHCB.
- ◆ VT’s Guardianship law reformed and Task Force created.
- ◆ Revised juvenile delinquency, child abuse and neglect statutes to address needs of parents and children with disabilities.



Highlights of Projects Funded by VTDDC

Developmental Disability Network Projects help build services and supports and make connections across Vermont.



Families Together Project is developing a state-wide network of individuals with developmental disabilities and families across the lifespan that connects people to each other, provides support, and enables people to strategize and advocate on public policy issues. In FY 2008 it hosted five events, two regional conferences and new regional support groups for families of youth and adults. This project was jointly funded with the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living. *Grantee: Vermont Family Network*

Information, Referral and Assistance is building capacity for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families so they are able to obtain up-to-date, impartial and unbiased information. They access resources and assistance about services and supports through an 800 number and links to 2-1-1. *Grantee: Vermont Family Network*

“Our Voice” Project provided a chance for self-advocates to develop a workshop on disability rights, self-determination and choice.



The training, based on their life experiences, enhanced supports and shifted attitudes of providers and others. Now embedded in a regional developmental service agency staff training, the workshop is also presented in the community.

Grantee: Counseling Service of Addison County

Executive Committee Fund provides small grants for individuals and family members to support their attendance at trainings and conferences, and to organizations for activities that enhance the lives of people with developmental disabilities.

In addition to individual grants, VTDDC helped fund:

- ◆ An inclusive ***Theatre Adventure Program*** for youth and adults.
- ◆ A ***Pilot Mentor Program*** matching students who are deaf with experienced mentors.
- ◆ ***“Including Samuel,”*** a film and panel presentation to educate audiences about the richness in diversity.
- ◆ The ***Charting the Course*** Transition Conference, and the
- ◆ ***TEACCH Supported Employment*** Conference.

Vermonters who received training funds said:

“Knowing our daughter may achieve these things was humbling and thrilling.”

”All teachers should see ‘Speak Out for Understanding.’ ”

“I found myself in this project.”

“We saw how important it is to push for independence and continual instruction throughout adulthood to sustain viable employment.”

“Each family named one achievement their child had in the past year. There wasn’t a dry eye in the room.”



“We found the power of truth. Being true is the key to acceptance of all people.”



“I was able to use the information from the seminar and apply it to situations in my son’s life right now.”

“Most importantly we found that we were not alone.”

Youth Passing Through Transition Projects are reaching out to Vermont's students in special education to provide helpful information about the transition process from high school, how to get involved, and to have experiences that get them ready for work, further education and community living.



Youth Transition Project fosters youth involvement and success in transition from high school to work and community life, with a unique *Job Club* and peer mentoring model that includes the regional *Your Life After Graduation* resource book developed by, and from the point of view of, a local self-advocate. Its Peer Transition Advocate presented the model at the National

Association for Professionals in Supported Employment Conference, with the resource book featured as a model on the VT Department of Education's transition website.

Grantee: Counseling Service of Addison County

Transition Toolkit Project supports high school students with developmental disabilities to give them a strong voice as active participants in transition to life after high school through use of the "Get the Life You Want" planning toolbox linked with peer mentoring. The model was presented at the state-wide *Working with Youth* conference.

Grantee: Green Mountain Self-Advocates



VTDDC's Self-Advocacy Project helps people with developmental disabilities take control of their lives, make decisions, solve problems and speak for themselves. *Grantee: Green Mountain Self-Advocates*

Accomplishments included:



- ◆ Started a local youth chapter called *Bully-Proof*, in a new region.
- ◆ Published outreach newsletter *Speaking for Ourselves*.
- ◆ Featured on *The Next Frontier* radio show.
- ◆ Trained 76 self-advocates in *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, including youth, students and working adults.
- ◆ Invited as keynote at the Rutland Community Partnership.
- ◆ Presented 12 Disability Awareness Workshops to school audiences across VT, trainings for state employees, emergency medical technicians, and to 226 participants in the annual VT Hunter Education Day.
- ◆ Supported 11 local self-advocacy groups through 32 technical assistance visits.
- ◆ Partnered to plan and hold a cross-disability leadership retreat with the VT Center for Independent Living and VT Psychiatric Survivors.



Communication Support Project educated about, and provided people with developmental disabilities with, communication accommodations needed to meaningfully participate in legal proceedings. Accomplishments included training 300 regional staff of VT's Department of Children and Families. Jointly funded with the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living. *Grantee: University of Vermont, Center for Disability and Community Inclusion*



Advocacy in Action Projects bring individuals, families, and organizations together to plan and participate in advocacy events that educate and inform policymakers and communities about the priorities of people with developmental disabilities and their family members.

“We Can” Project supports people with developmental disabilities so they can educate legislators about the challenges they face, their policy priorities, and the positive contributions they make in their communities, and provides training to strengthen advocacy skills. Outreach included a regional luncheon with legislators that was covered by local press. *Grantee: Green Mountain Self-Advocates*

Advocacy Response Network Project provides information, a rapid response system, and related legislative and policy analysis to have an effective advocacy network of people with developmental and other disabilities and family members on laws, policies and practices that have an impact on their lives. *Grantee: Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights*



Disability Awareness Day & Events Project held training workshops and hosted the keystone Disability Awareness Day event at the State House. The event connected individuals with disabilities and family members with policymakers to increase awareness of disability rights and policy priorities. Training included a cross-disability leadership retreat led by ADAPT, focusing on community organizing and grassroots advocacy for disability rights.



Grantee: VT Coalition for Disability Rights

Disability Awareness and Media Projects support initiatives that present positive images of people with developmental disabilities and their family members, friends, and community members, on the job, at school and at every other kind of community and social gathering.

Community Transition Film Project produced and presented a film featuring the voices of youth with disabilities leaving school to educate others about the strengths and challenges they face. The film’s focus is a unique transition program that bridges school and community life for students who “walked with their class” at graduation, and who stay on until age 22 in special education to learn life skills in the community. *Grantee: Montpelier Public Schools*



“Bill’s Bill” Film Project created the “Bill’s Bill” DVD that increases awareness about the hard work that made Vermont’s special education law a reality and a model for the country. Told through interviews, music and dramatization, its stars are Vermonters with developmental disabilities, finding their voice through art. *Grantee: VSA Arts Vermont*



VTDDC members, staff and grantees were also featured in:

- ◆ Forums on *The New Frontier*, a disability issues radio program hosted by a family member.
- ◆ Vermont Public Television’s Public Square series (*Speak out for Understanding* film, also linked on VPT’s website, and in newsletter).
- ◆ News article on regional luncheon for self-advocates and legislators.

