



VT DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL
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VERMONT DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL



**2012 ANNUAL
 REPORT**

Greetings from the President

Over the past year VTDDC provided valuable leadership in advocacy. We were sad to say good-bye to staff and long time members while we had the pleasure of welcoming new ones.



We developed our new State Plan based on what people told us they needed, and we received very positive feedback from our federal funder Administration on Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities. We are excited to launch new Council projects and new Requests for Proposals to realize the Plan.

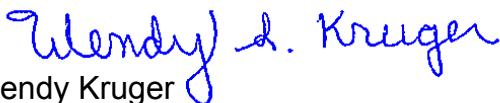
We were encouraged by the enthusiastic response to our innovative small grant and scholarship program that brings direct benefits to individuals and family members.

We were able to make connections with legislators and agency policymakers at our meetings and at the State House, with a proclamation read in House Chambers to honor the 40th anniversary of the federal Developmental Disabilities Act. A key accomplishment was passage of the Respectful Language Bill, led by grantee Green Mountain Self Advocates.

We will continue to focus on bringing the voices of Vermonters to the State House and the Vermont community in the coming year. With ever decreasing budgets we need to make sure our representatives are mindful that funding affects families and individuals.

This Report is a sampling of VTDDC achievements in 2011. Please contact us to learn more.

Sincerely,


Wendy Kruger

Agency Representatives

Diane Dexter

Department for Children & Families

Ron Clark

*Agency of Human Services,
Office of Vermont Health Access*

Vacant

Nonprofit Organization,

Carol Hassler, MD

Department of Health

Mary O'Neill

Department of Education

Ed Paquin

Disability Rights Vermont

Susan Ryan

*Center on Disability & Community
Inclusion, University of Vermont*

Clare McFadden

*Department of Disabilities, Aging
and Independent Living*

Jerry Wood

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation



To Contact VTDDC

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Like us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/VTDDC>

Council Members as of 3/01/2012

Self Advocates, Individuals and Family Members

<i>Donna Bennett</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Brattleboro</i>
<i>Jim Caffry</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Waitsfield</i>
<i>Craig Davis</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Middlebury</i>
<i>Gary De Carolis</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Burlington</i>
<i>Dale Hackett</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Barre</i>
<i>John Hall</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Newport</i>
<i>Wendy Kruger</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Morrisville</i>
<i>Jay Lafayette</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Burlington</i>
<i>Lisa Maynes</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Colchester</i>
<i>Robert Price</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Essex</i>
<i>Marcy Ryan</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Winooski</i>
<i>Jessica Sanville</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>East Haven</i>



Staff

<i>Karen Schwartz</i>	<i>Executive Director</i>
<i>Jeff Coy</i>	<i>Systems Analyst & Planner</i>
<i>Chelsea Sicely</i>	<i>Administrative Assistant</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 help build connections and supports
that bring people with developmental disabilities
and their families
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, share their dreams, their abilities, and that

the humanity we share is more important than our differences.

State Plan GOALS for 2012-2016

- 1) At every stage of life Vermonters with developmental disabilities and their families will have easy access to information about services and supports in common everyday language.
- 2) Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council will support more Vermonters with developmental disabilities and their families to have strong voices to ensure quality of service and freedom from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- 3) All individuals with developmental disabilities and their families will have equitable access to flexible, individualized quality services and supports.
- 4) All across Vermont people with developmental disabilities will have more positive, supportive relationships that will help them be well and be part of activities that bring them into the heart of their communities.
- 5) More Vermonters with developmental disabilities will be employed for more hours and more pay in jobs they choose.

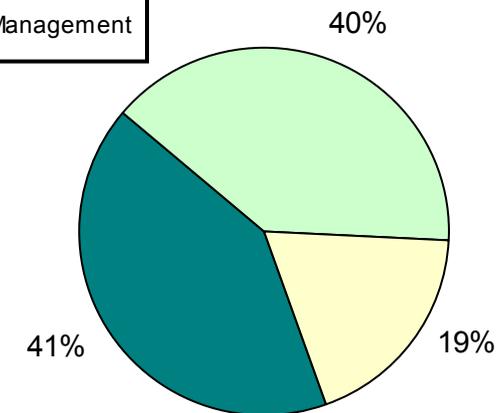
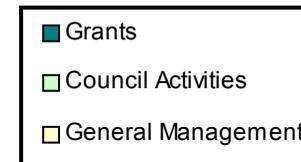


FY 2011 Council Budget

Grantees provided \$79,637 in matching funds
[cash and in-kind services]

FY 2011* Income	
Federal Funds	\$ 477,839
Less Expenses	\$ 467,229
Carry over to FY11	\$ 10,610

FY 2011* Expenditures	
Grants	\$ 195,117
Council Activities	\$ 185,036
General Management	\$ 87,076
TOTAL	\$ 467,229



* October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011

Media & Publications

2011 State Plan Survey Results available on the web, includes comments from over 250 Vermonters about the situation in Vermont for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Choosing Words with Dignity raises awareness of People First language. VTDDC distributed thousands of copies to diverse entities in VT and across the US to public schools, state universities, print media, managers' trainings, city and state government.

Boards of the Future and the accompanying workbook offer specific language and exercises to support people with developmental disabilities who are interested in serving on the board of an organization.

Sponsored in Whole or in Part by VTDDC:



Our Bill of Rights about the rights and responsibilities of self advocates as citizens of the United States and Vermont.
Grantee: Green Mountain Self-Advocates.



Bill's Bill increases awareness about the hard work that made Vermont's special education law a model for the country. Told through interviews, music and dramatization, its stars are Vermonters finding their voice through art.
Grantee: VSA Arts Vermont



Living the Autism Maze about the experiences of Vermont parents of children with autism facing a maze of conflicting information and competing interventions.
Grantee: Barbano & Farber



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

Grant Projects, Activities and Partnerships

Sampling of Results from FY 2011

People Trained

- 509 people trained in quality assurance
- 34 people trained in community supports
- 468 self advocates trained in leadership and self determination
- 917 people trained in systems advocacy

People Benefiting

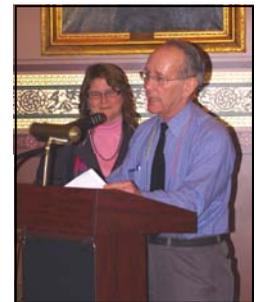
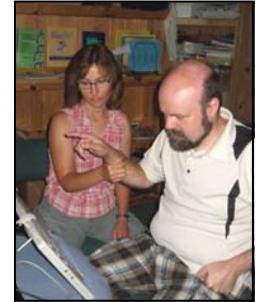
- 3,012 students supported to reach educational goals
- 2,415 people supported in community activities
- 105 people received scholarships for workshops and training
- 7,551 people benefitted from quality assurance efforts

People Active in Advocacy

- 611 people actively participated in systems advocacy
- 3 people gained membership on Vermont and National Boards
- 273 policymakers were educated about issues
- Awareness initiatives reached at least 273,802 people

LEADING TO POLICY CHANGES, including:

- Passage of
** **Respectful Language Bill**, with self-advocates on its Task Force; and
** **RBI Rules** (Department of Education) that protect against misuse of restrictive behavioral interventions.
- Restored 50% of funding cuts to Developmental Services, Choices for Care and Attendant Care Services; and ensured that job supports for graduating students remains a funding priority.



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 for support and to strategize and advocate on public policy issues. Activities included outreach at events and conferences; regional groups led by parent peers; informational evenings; forums on adult medical care and developmental services; workshops on the legislative process and housing options; medical school & education department presentations by family faculty; and getting the word out on budget concerns.

Grantee: Vermont Family Network



Information, Referral and Assistance Project

offers up to date, impartial, and unbiased information to individuals and families. Its rack cards and bookmarks let families statewide know there is a place they can get resources and assistance about services and supports through an 800 number; improved website; and listserv.

Grantee: Vermont Family Network

Executive Committee Fund

The Executive Committee Fund provided small grants to 105 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:

- ***KidPower Safety Training***, for children with and without disabilities
- ***Horse Assisted Riding***, matched youth with peers and trainers
- ***Inclusion Fusion Dance troupe performance at Champs Sports Bowl***
- ***Awareness Theater Residency & Shine high school performance***



Vermonters who received training funds said:

“We left feeling empowered and motivated to be the best parents to our daughter.”



“You have been understanding, supportive and educational in ways no other institution, school or program has been.”

“It gave me a way to express my fun and silly side.”

“I really feel grounded and directed on what steps I need to take.”

“I return rejuvenated to do more for our son.”

“I heard the latest developments and thoughts from the best in their respective fields.”

“My family and I can support each other on the challenges that lie ahead.”



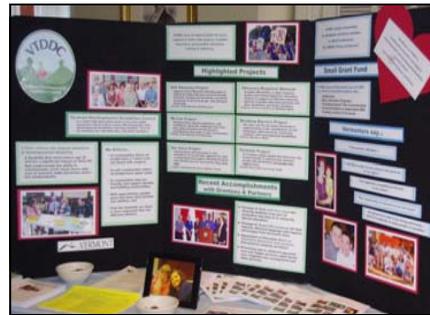
Youth Employment Projects support youth who have a functional developmental disability, are out of high school, and are not eligible for developmental service employment support in Vermont.

YES! Youth Employment Specialist Project was recognized by national VocRehab SEDL, and published a report about its success in achieving a 100% employment rate for young adults with Autism Spectrum and similar disorders through activities like employer and student training and its model 8 week series "Social Skills On the Job".

Grantee: VT Dept. of Vocational Rehabilitation

Greeting Card Project to develop and implement a training program that prepares participants to engage in business activities based on marketable greeting cards and other products that tap their expressive talents.

Grantee: Zack's Place



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

Some of the Project's Accomplishments

- Peer run trainings on self advocacy included:
 - Series of 6 basic self advocacy workshops
 - 7 Habits of Successful Teens for high school students
 - Voices & Choices conference, with 22 workshops attended by 500
- Partnered in cross disability projects:
 - Teamed with Disability Rights VT to present a workshop on job discrimination along with accessible handout..
 - Presented at Conversion Institute about strategies to close sheltered workshops for U.S. and Canadian audience.
 - Presented at National Disability Rights Network on cognitive accessibility
- Public awareness outreach included:
 - Featured in **IMPACT** article on sexuality, national newsletter from Minnesota Institute on Community Inclusion.
 - Wrote report **Keeping the Promise: The Meaning of Community Living**, with SABE Autistic Self Advocacy Network & Youth Leadership.
 - Capitol city parade & float to Spread the Word to End the Word
 - Published 2 widely distributed newsletters that highlighted personal stories focused on transition to post-secondary education and the world of work.
 - Taught visiting Project Harmony special educators from Belarus about competitive employment.
- Worked with youth in 7 regions
- Provided 16 technical assistance visits to 12 local groups
- Recruited self-advocates for the THINK College innovative secondary education advisory board.



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 self-advocates to educate legislators about the challenges they face, their policy priorities, and the positive contributions they make in their communities. Activities included developing accessible materials; skill training; supporting testimony & legislator meetings; taking lead on Disability Awareness Day; and regional legislator events. Self-advocates shared personal stories with legislators and were featured and quoted in statewide media. *Grantee: Green Mountain Self Advocates*



Advocacy Response Network Project’s website and rapid response e-mail alert system gets the word out so people with developmental and other disabilities and their families can be strong advocates. Through alerts, policy briefs and updates, schedules, and notices people get information to connect directly with the Governor, legislators, and state officials about laws, policies, and practices that impact their lives. *Grantee: Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights*



Vermont Leadership Series offers Vermont’s first leadership training series focused on developmental disability advocacy. Presented over 2 weekends, the series trains individuals with developmental disabilities, family members and allies about the history of the disability movement, current issues, systems change; and how to be an effective advocate and leader. *Coordinated with Green Mountain Self Advocates*

Disability Media Awareness Projects present positive images of people with developmental disabilities on the job, at school and at every other kind of community and social gathering.

Speak Out for Understanding extended its service learning model, tapping older students to teach disability awareness to incoming high school students and the larger community, and using its tool-kit, books and films to educate the community culture of acceptance (see page 11). *Grantee: Harwood Union High School*



Living Connections Portraits Project is a traveling photo essay that shines a light on community supports by showing the mutual relationships of people of all ages and their caregivers. *Grantee: Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights*

VTDDC members, staff and grantees were also featured in:

- The Next Frontier
- VT Public Radio
- WCAX
- VT Digger
- Rutland Herald
- WPTZ TV
- Washington World
- Burlington Free Press
- Times Argus

