**Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities**

**Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2023 Annual Report**

The Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities (NGCDD) is a federally funded, self-governing organization authorized in the Federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act) and established under Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 232.320, housed within the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (NV-DHHS). The NGCDD serves as an independent educator to the Governor and Legislature on public policy issues. Our Federal charge in DD Act is identifying the most pressing needs of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in Nevada and developing innovative and cost-effective ways to advance advocacy through policy, capacity building and systems change activities to promote equal opportunity, self-determination, and community inclusion.

In the FFY 2023, the Council spent approximately $800,000 in grants, contracts, and state funds, and currently has 5 staff and 1 intern.

This annual report for the FFY 2023 year outlines the goals and objectives set forth and achieved by the Council Staff and Council Members toward our 2021-2026 5-Year State Plan. This was a difficult but productive year for the Council. Most goals and objectives were met or exceeded, and progress has been made overall on the 5-year state plan outcomes and outputs.

We have increased the number of federal and state funded projects and increased activities and visibility in all areas of the State. We continue to work collaboratively with our DD Act partners and the state agencies and organizations that serve individuals with developmental disabilities across the state.

**NGCDD Performance on Goals for FFY 2023**

Input gathered from individuals with I/DD, families, professionals, and state services led to the selection of the goals and objectives of our 5-Year State Plan.

The top Federal Areas of Emphasis based on identified needs and funding capacity include:

* Employment
* Health
* Quality Assurance = monitoring, improving, or providing education on services to prevent abuse, neglect, discrimination or interfere with basic human rights
* Transportation
* Housing
* Education (school age through college and transition services in high school)

The top barriers to accessing the areas of emphasis include:

* Long wait lists/not enough services.
* Not knowing what services are available.
* Not enough or cannot access coordinated health, dental, mental health, and other human and social services.
* Not enough services or support for residential/assisted living or other housing options.
* Not enough accessible and/or affordable transportation options.
* Not enough transition services into adulthood.
* Not enough services or supports for getting and keeping a paying job.
* Hispanic and Rural communities are most lacking in all Areas of Emphasis.

The key activities for this plan include:

* Serving as an independent educator to the Governor and Legislature on public policy issues that impact people with I/DD.
* Gathering input on the services available and barriers faced by people with I/DD to create a 5-Year State Plan that addresses the most important issues identified based on funding, capacity, and Federal “Areas of Emphasis” outlined in the DD Act.
* Advocacy, capacity building, and systems change activities to improve self-determination, independence, productivity, integration, and inclusion in all areas of community life for people with I/DD.
* Funding innovative projects that test best practices or look at new approaches to inform policies and practices that lead to greater independence and self-sufficiency for people with I/DD.
* Supporting people with I/DD and their families to be full and equal participants in decisions that affect their lives.

In response to the results of the needs assessment and the requirements of the DD Act, a detailed plan of action for the NGCDD was developed as part of the 5-year proposal. The goals were designed to improve the lives of Nevadans with developmental disabilities and their families. Additional periodic information can be found in the quarterly project performance report at each quarterly Council Meeting. The complete plan and progress on each of the goals and objectives are included annual periodic performance report for FFY 2023.

**Goal 1: The NGCDD will work towards ensuring that individuals with I/DD and/or family members of individuals with I/DD will be able to make more informed decisions about their lives by improving access to information on services, supports, and rights.**

* For the 2022-2023 (FFY 23) year, a total of 211 individuals with I/DD, 236 family members of those with I/DD, and 218 professionals in the disability community were served. This goal was substantially exceeded.
* The Council expanded their Zoom video-conferencing package to include the ability to host language translation. During the NGCDD Partners in Policymaking (PIP) class, one student needed language translation into Spanish. By use of this feature and interpreters, seamless language translation was provided during all NGCDD PIP classes and graduation event. This allowed the Council to reduce the barriers to accessing technology for students with language translation needs.
* Council Staff and Members participate on various Councils, Committees, Coalitions and Boards. These include but are not limited to:
	+ Commission for Persons who are Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing
	+ The Nevada Resilience Advisory Committee
	+ The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
	+ Commission for Services for Persons with Disabilities (CSPD)
	+ The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Group for the Department of Health and Human Services – State of Nevada
	+ Carson Agency Action Network
	+ Aktion Club of the Carson Valley
	+ Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities – Consumer Advisory Committee
	+ The Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center (NDALC) – Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI) Council and the NDALC Board.
	+ Family Resources Sub-Committee – Interagency Coordinating Council
	+ Interagency Coordinating Council
	+ National Association for Councils on Developmental Disabilities Council
	+ The President’s Committee for Person’s with Intellectual Disabilities
* The Council continued circulating the anti-bullying publication featuring stories and advice from Self-Advocates, Family Members, Teachers, and Professionals around the State on how to combat the issue of bullying in the State of Nevada. Copies of this publication have been sent statewide electronically and is now available in English and Spanish. The Council often works to raise awareness about developmental disabilities within the community. This anti-bullying campaign helped reduce stigmas and discrimination, fostering a more inclusive society. As public attitudes shift, we’ve ultimately seen a reduction in bullying overall.
* The Council added an accessibility feature known as the Recite Me Toolbar to our website. This toolbar allows for individuals with accessibility needs to utilize different features to increase their access to information on our website. The features include selection of font size, font types, color themes, language translation written and spoken verbally into 60+ language, and more.
* The Council created community health binders aimed at providing resources to increase public education, awareness, access to services and supports, and information on their rights. By improving access and reducing barriers to receiving and organizing this information, this project increased the ability of individuals with I/DD, their families, and other community members to make informed decisions about their lives.
* Council Staff and Members hosted and attended various events in the community including:
	+ Mark Wellman Adventure Day
	+ Americans with Disability Act Anniversary Celebration at the Sparks Marina
	+ The Journey of Hope Carson City Friendship Visit
	+ Autism Awareness Fair
	+ Carson City Health Fair
	+ Disability Awareness Day
	+ Down Syndrome Network of Northern Nevada Buddy Walk
	+ A Night Under the Star Prom – Douglas County Leadership
	+ Mesquite Annual Health Fair
* Council Staff and Members attended various conferences and trainings across the country aimed at advancing education, awareness, networking, and resources, which will allow individuals with I/DD to be able to make more informed decisions about their lives by improving access to and quality of already available information on services, supports and rights. These conferences included:
	+ Association of People Supporting Employment First – Denver, Colorado – 3 Staff Members, 1 Community Member with a disability, and 3 Council Members attended this event.
	+ National Association for Councils on Developmental Disabilities – Washington, DC – 2 Staff Members and 2 Council Members attended this event.
* The Council provided educational materials to the public who were able to make more informed decisions about their lives by improving access to information on services, supports, and rights. These educational materials included information on:
	+ Alternative Diploma Guidance for the State of Nevada
	+ Transition through a lifespan
	+ Reducing Bullying in the Community Guidance
	+ Preparing for an Emergency
	+ Medical Information Cards
	+ Middle School and High School Transition
	+ 504 and the IEP Process
* The Council provided full interpretation/accommodations into requested formats (ASL, Spanish, and large print) reducing barriers to access technology and digital information for all Council sponsored events and meetings. The Council also provides Braille information on all staff’s business cards. In addition, the Council has purchased a Braille printer that will be available to use in 2024. This will allow the Council to expand access for individuals with visual impairments.

**Goal 2: The NGCDD Staff and Members ensured individuals with I/DD will have the information, education, and training necessary to participate in local and state advocacy and policy making activities.**

* For the 2022-2023 (FFY 23) year, 206 individuals with I/DD, 155 family members of those with I/DD, and 97 professionals in the disability community were served. This goal was substantially exceeded.
* For FFY 23, the NGCDD provided 4 individuals with I/DD and 11 family members of those with I/DD participating in 128 hours of curriculum and completed the NGCDD Partners in Policymaking curriculum. Graduation took place for the NGCDD PIP Class of 2023 at the University of Nevada Reno on August 12, 2023.
	+ Important topics covered include:
		- History and Future of Disabilities: People First Language
		- Quality and Inclusive Education
		- Person Centered Planning, Self Determination, and Informed Choice
		- Supported Decision Making
		- Housing
		- Government: Local, State and Federal Policy, Legislation and Process
		- Parliamentary Procedure and Serving on Boards
		- Community Organizing and Advocacy
		- Family Support and Supported Living
		- Accessibility and Assistive Technology
* The Council created a series of videos for the Youth Empowering Students (Y.E.S.) Program designed to provide students in middle and high school with information on transition options available to them. Topics information is provided on includes:
	+ Rights and Services Available
	+ Diploma Options
	+ Supported Decision Making and Guardianship
	+ Post-Secondary Education
	+ Employment Options
* Additional educational materials on transition out of middle/high school was provided to students with I/DD and family members at various public education events.
* The Council hosted the Silver State Self-Advocacy Conference 2023 in Las Vegas, Nevada at the Palace Station. A total of 75 individuals with I/DD, 65 family members of those with I/DD, and 85 professionals in the disability community participated in this event, with a total of 17 participants participating online. The Council provided funding that covered 38 hotel rooms and 25 roundtrip flights for self-advocates and family members in the I/DD community. During the conference, the Council hosted speakers from across the country on various topics surrounding the disability community. Those topics included (but were not limited to):
	+ Leadership
	+ Policymaking
	+ Advocacy
	+ Voting Rights
	+ Sexual Education
	+ Community Safety
	+ Independent Living
	+ Mental Health
	+ Community Services and Supports
	+ Early Intervention, IEPs, School Supports
	+ Panels on: Disability Services, Self-Advocacy, Integrated Employment, and Sexual Assault Prevention
* The Consumer Leadership Development Fund (CLDF) was established to make funds available to help offset the costs for self-advocates and/or parents/family/guardians of children/adult children with developmental disabilities to participate in conferences, workshops, and other training opportunities, that will increase their knowledge of disability issues and increase their skills as advocates. Funds were provided to support a total of 2 individuals with I/DD and 8 family members of individuals with I/DD to attend events across the country.

**Goal 3: The NGCDD Staff and Members worked towards developing and strengthening systems that improve quality services and access to quality services and supports for individuals with I/DD and their families.**

* For the 2022-2023 (FFY 23) year, a total of 86 individuals with I/DD, 64 family members of those with I/DD, and 74 professionals in the disability community were served. This goal was substantially exceeded.

For 2022-2023, the NGCDD provided grants to the community for three objectives.

* For the Council’s transportation objective, the Council hosted in partnership with the Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities (NCED), the State UCED, two iCanBike camps.
* For the Council’s employment objective, the Garden Foundation was granted $40,000 to develop an employer training to provide information on having an inclusive workplace. Three community-based employers were trained on National best practices and the benefits of hiring individuals with I/DD. People with I/DD in Nevada have reported an increase in employment options available to them and in information/access to integrated and competitive wage jobs.
* For the Council’s housing objective, the Kenny Guinn Center was granted $44,380 to study the barriers to housing options for people with disabilities in the state of Nevada. The grantee created a resource guide available to the public that describes the options available and ways to access them.

For the remaining objectives, projects were completed in-house. This included:

* For the Council’s transition objective, information was continuously provided on transition over a lifespan. A total of 25 Life Stages Tool Guides in English and 10 in Spanish were distributed over the year to various organizations and at all community events supported by the Council. Organizations included: Douglas County School District, the Aktion Club of the Carson Valley, AZULBLUE, Families for Effective Autism Treatment (FEAT), Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center, the Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities, Down Syndrome Network of Northern Nevada, the JUSTin Hope Foundation, and more. 100% of surveys returned stated their advocacy skills and/or knowledge increased, and they would recommend the Tool Guide to someone else.
* Council Staff participated in meetings with the Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation (DETR), to provide feedback to be utilized in their required Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. This assessment provided in-depth feedback of the employment needs of individuals with disabilities in Nevada.  As part of this assessment, DETR plans to utilize this information to design and carry out programs and services that meet the changing needs of persons with disabilities.
* Council Members from the Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities and the Aging and Disability Services Division, Nevada’s Department of Health and Human Services, worked in collaboration to create a community needs survey to gather input for the review of the Olmstead plan for Nevada. The input gathered during this review will be utilized to improve services available and help inform the development of Nevada’s Olmstead plan.

The Council focused heavily on Legislative Education for the 2023 Legislative Session. Before session, the Council provided a report to each Legislator with our Policy Priorities to include all Council Position Statements. Testimony was provided in both written and verbal form on a total of 33 bills. The Council tracked 131 bills total, with 24 Senate Bills and 36 Assembly Bills passing and another 71 that died in session.

The Council also put out a Community Survey to gather input from the community on the input of Council activities. The information below is a recap of the information in that survey:

Survey respondents: 37.5% - People with a Disability, 25% - Family Members, 15.63% - Professionals, 3.13% Person with a Disability and a Family Member of a Person with a Disability, 15.65% A Professional in the disability community and a person with a disability or a family member, 3.13% - Other (