NEVADA GOVERNOR’S COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

­­­Project Status Summary

 FFY’ 25 Second Quarter Project Status Summary

For the period of January 1, 2025, through March 31, 2025

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GOAL 1: (In House) 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, support and rights.

# Areas of Emphasis and identified barriers addressed: Quality Assurance, not knowing what services are available, not enough or can't access services, targeted disparity (racial/ethnic and rural communities).

## Objective 1.1

Council members and staff will provide and participate in public education activities that increase Nevadan’s awareness of disability services, policies, and practices.

**NGCDD Expected Outcome(s):**

* Individuals with I/DD, families and professionals will report being better informed on disability services, policies and practices thus increasing their sense of choice and control in making informed choices.
* Participation in 25 Public Awareness Events by 2026.

**Activity Summary:**

Activity A) Self-Advocacy coordinator will create and distribute a statewide quarterly newsletter in English and Spanish via email, direct mailing and social media that provides resources, information and supports in plain language on advocacy, current policy issues, health, mental health, social services, housing, transportation, employment, education, transition, quality assurance and other subjects relevant to the North, South and Rural areas of the State.

Activity B) Self-Advocacy coordinator will regularly collect input to gauge impact and inform future newsletters.

Activity C) Council members and staff will participate in at least 5 Public Awareness Events in communities across the State to inform individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, and professionals about resources and/or topics of concern identified through public input for this State Plan.

**Of Note:**

**Projects Manager (PM):**

This 2nd quarter the PM and Staff planned extensively and brought together Developmental Disability Awareness Day 2025 at the Legislature on March 4, 2025. Staff planned two great days were individuals and their families would come from Las Vegas on bus or surrounding areas to attend these two days of educational awareness, legislative agendas and how to become a successful advocate while advocating for your rights and needs. We made sure to secure stay and transportation for everyone for those two days. The PM and staff made sure to have two filled days of events for all individuals with full agendas with maps of Carson City, NV. Aside from this Legislative Day we invited our attendees to attend a day of training at the Old Assembly Chambers on March 3, 2025. The training day consisted of a light breakfast and early training on legislative education which included Nevada Legislative process, use of NELIS, how to approach our legislatures and other legislative agendas on advocating successfully. We take pride in being able to bring this education to our I/DD community and other individuals to make their Advocating successful during and after legislative session. After training we held a lunch for everyone attending the training. After lunch everyone broke up into groups and made their ways into Committees and Senate Floor Sessions that were scheduled that day.

Partners in Policy making students went on a special agenda where they were given a tour by their PIP instructors. After a great day of learning and advocating we planned out an evening of fun and great camaraderie between individuals, family and professionals of the I/DD community. The PM planned with help of Max and Chris of Mountain Dog Visual Media to bring together an evening at the Automobile Museum in Reno for an unforgettable evening of a viewing of “Our World in Our Words” which included a panel of all our great advocates showcased in the short documentary film and the film and production team. Our attendees were invited to tour the museum, have a few appetizers and we then took over the theater at the museum for a showing of this great short film that highlights some of our best advocates from the I/DD community.

After the viewing our panel who consisted of the film makers and the stars of the short film took questions from audience and we got to know the individuals better while finishing our evening learning of the struggles and adversities that a lot of individuals with I/DD have to overcome on a daily basis to be able to manage in a society where they are not given the same options as other individuals. This short film has brought so much awareness all over the world as it has been shown in many other countries and states and has brought awareness to those in the I/DD community and especially those who are not part of the I/DD community. I think this film has brought awareness to a lot of family and individuals of those who don’t have the pleasure of knowing someone with a disability.

On our final Day, which was March 4, 2025, DD Awareness Day we held a light breakfast at the Nevada State Legislature and let our advocates and families get familiar with committee/floor meetings happening that day as well as meeting their individual representatives to have meetings of awareness to them and giving them the opportunity to advocate their needs to their representatives. We encourage all individuals to meet with their representatives so that they become familiar with them and develop relationships of advocacy. The NGCDD prides itself in knowing that we bring these opportunities and educational experiences to the I/DD community. We concluded our day of great meetings with representatives and everyone who came in by bus from Las Vegas where then taken back to their hotel where they proceeded to board the bus and head back to Las Vegas. We had two great days of advocacy and learning and hope to do it again next legislative session. We had a great outpouring of individuals that brought together approximately 100 individuals for both days and our evening at the museum for the showing of “Our World in our Words”.

Another project that the PM has been working on is the monthly Lunch and Learns that have become very successful. Since they were so successful last year, we decided to bring them back again this year. The PM has been working hard to find speakers for our monthly zoom meetings with great topics for our I/DD community that educates them on topics of importance and also teaches them to advocate for themselves. We have had a great outpouring of individuals from the I/DD community and also from professionals. We have had great numbers of attendees from 30-40 individuals come on to each of our Lunch and Learn meetings and have become educated on topics like:

* Legislative Breakdown and Tips to be Successful at the Legislature- this presentation was given by speaker Destini Cooper Senior Policy Analyst from the Research Division at the Legislative Counsel Bureau on February 12, 2025.
* “Benefit Basics”- this was given by speaker Melanie Honsbruch of the Colorado Office of Employment First on March 19, 2025.

We have more speakers scheduled for each Month during the rest of the 2025 year which we hope will continue to be successful. The PM has been working closely also with Melanie Honsbruch and Tiffany Cron from the Colorado Office of Employment First to bring more Lunch and Learn topics. Upcoming Lunch and Learns are being posted regularly on our website as they become available.

**Outreach and Fiscal Manager (OFM):**

The OFM attended Developmental Disability Awareness Day (DDAD) at the Legislature in Carson City, NV, on March 3, 2025.

In coordination with legislative attaches, the OFM facilitated over sixty meetings between DDAD participants and state legislators. These meetings provided a valuable opportunity for attendees to engage in advocacy and raise awareness of developmental disability issues.

In the afternoon, the OFM and the Executive Assistant hosted a special session for the Partners in Policymaking students. During this session, students heard from self-advocates who are actively engaged in legislative work this year. They also had the opportunity to meet Nevada Lt. Governor Stavros Anthony, tour the Capitol grounds, and visit the Nevada State Library and Archives.

Additionally, the OFM attended a screening of *Our World in Our Words* at the National Automobile Museum in Reno, NV.

## Objective 1.2

Council members and staff will participate in a minimum of 6 (councils/committees/coalitions) to promote communication within and between agencies to ensure cohesive information about services and supports is available to more individuals with I/DD and their families.

**NGCDD Expected Outcome(s):**

* Ensure people with I/DD are represented in Statewide Councils, Committees, and Coalitions.
* Information will be shared across agencies individual’s w/I/DD and their family members, ensuring a more cohesive delivery of services and supports for people with I/DD and their families.

**Activity Summary:**

Activity A) Council members and staff will participate in statewide committees and councils comprised of multiple agency representatives.

Activity B) Council members and staff will regularly report on information gathered to Council members and self-advocates. Self-Advocacy coordinator will include this information in the quarterly newsletter.

* The Executive Director is the President of the NDALC Board, a member of the NDALC PAIMI Council, and a Member of the NCED CAC Committee.

**Of Note:**

**Projects Manager (PM):**

This past quarter the PM has continued to meet and attend scheduled meetings and then some. This past quarter the PM attended NACDD Public Policy Meetings, NACDD Monthly Task Force as well as the NACDD Medicaid Task Force Meetings held by Erin Prangley. We continue to get value information from NACDD on ongoing issues going on in the Federal level as well as important information concerning the I/DD community and the changes that are affecting the I/DD community as well as the councils and what is needed and the amount of Advocacy needed in these times of changes and looming agendas affecting everyone. We continue to get valuable information and guidance from NACDD and Erin and staff. We continue to pass these important changes and information to our advocates and their families. These meetings have become important in the way that they have brought together all the councils and given them a platform for ideas and new and innovative ways to advocate and also as support in our changing and evolving government and its changes.

On January 29, 2025, the PM attended the Calling All Advocates: Medicaid Advocacy in 2025 webinar. This was offered by The Arc and had speakers Claire Manning, Senior Director of Advocacy & Mobilization of The Arc as well as Kim Musheno Senior Director of Medicaid Policy of The Arc and Yvette Pegues Chief Executive Officer of The Arc. They spoke about the growing concern of Medicaid and the effect of declining Medicaid benefits as well as other Medicaid topics of concern from the I/DD community.

**Outreach and Fiscal Manager (OFM):**

The Outreach and Fiscal Manager (OFM) actively participated in several key meetings, contributing valuable insights and observations.

The OFM attended the State Independent Living Council (SILC) meeting via ZOOM on January 9, 2025. The OFM attended the SILC meeting, which focused on the Open Meeting Law (OML). A few key items were discussed that the OFM had not been previously aware of.

The OFM attended the Human Rights Commission (HRC) meeting via TEAMS on February 27, 2025. Several of the individuals discussed pertained issues around the need to lock up medications, particularly due to one individual’s prior suicide attempt involving medication misuse. Plans were discussed to involve behavioral specialists to support this individual’s needs.

Several individuals were identified as needing support with budgeting and money management. Habilitation (Hab) Plans have been developed and implemented to assist in these areas.

The OFM participated in a meeting with a delegation of six individuals from Iraq who work with people with disabilities. The delegation is touring the state to learn about disability services and supports. Their goal is to help shift cultural perceptions and improve inclusion and support for people with disabilities in Iraq.

## Objective 1.3

Reduce identified barriers to accessing technology and digital information for individuals with I/DD representing racial and/or ethnic disparities, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Blind/Visually Impaired and/or those living in rural communities.

## Interpreter Grant – ASL Anywhere

Organization: Global Technical Communications

Project Director: Patty Kuglitsch

Project Period: Oct 01, 2022, to September 30, 2023

Fiscal Year: FFY 23

Total Grant Funds: $ 40,000

**NGCDD Expected Outcome(s):**

* By 2026 individuals with I/DD (including identified targeted disparity groups) will report a significant increase in their ability to access and use the technology and tools required to get the resources and information provided through digital technology.
* Council will provide best practice recommendations and work with providers to ensure best practices.

**Activity Summary:**

Educate Tech service providers and policymakers on barriers faced by people with I/DD. Provide recommendations on best practices informed by Council efforts. Work with providers/policymakers to implement best practices. Target outreach to Hispanic, Blind/Visually Impaired, Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Rural communities to make informed decisions and track outcomes to inform ongoing needs.

**Grantee Proposal:**

GTC will provide training on how the ASL Anywhere app works and how it benefits individuals as well as agencies and organizations. Training will be provided to Individuals with I/DD’s, state and local agencies, organizations, and any interested constituents. GTC will collaborate with the Nevada Commission for Persons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing in consulting with service providers and policymakers. GTC will provide packages to NVCC, DETR/BVR as a mode of sample/trial period to monitor the need of sign language interpreting services in the I/DD community and the need for the application. These agencies will be monitored by GTC, and all findings will be reported to NGCDD to evaluate the need and effectiveness of the application and service provided. The monitoring and data collection will also help in determining any barriers and overall benefits of these services in the I/DD community and overall, for state/local agencies and any organizations interested in adopting this application/services beyond the first year.

**Activity Summary:**

Activity A) In Quarter 1 (October- December) GTC will offer 8 packages and training to Nevada Care Connection (NVCC), two packages for each center so that they can test the service. Offer 4 packages and training to Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation-Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DETR-BVR). This training and information will be offered to train the I/DD community and at the same time build relationships with the community and agencies offering the packages. GTC will collaborate with the Nevada Commission for Person who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing to bring forward a service that will benefit the I/DD Community/Individuals who are Deaf and or Hard of Hearing. GTC will collect consumer surveys and all data to understand and recognize the benefits of the application/packages being offered as well as any impacts and barriers. This information will be reported to NGCDD quarterly.

Activity B) In Quarter 2 (Jan-September 2023) grantee will create an outreach/marketing initiative on social media, e- mail and virtual platforms to engage the I/DD community and state and local agencies/organizations on the benefits of the ASL Anywhere service/application. GTC will create information and application forms in collaboration with Nevada Commission for Persons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Applications for individuals will be available online and online Training will be offered to the I/DD community via zoom and in person for the purpose of applying for the application services. GTC will report quarterly to NGCDD on all information, outcomes/impacts, and data applicable. This information can be gathered by providing consumer surveys to all trainees and agencies receiving training.

Activity C) In Quarter 3 (April-June) grantee will collect information/data on the impact of the services as well as how many new packages are purchased, number of people applying for the service, number of people registered and all information on impacts, barriers, and necessary modifications to the service. Continue outreach/marketing through social media, email, and virtual platforms. Training will be offered in accordance to individual and agency demand. GTC will continue collaboration through the process with the Nevada Commission for Person who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing to bring forward a service that will benefit the I/DD Community/Individuals who are Deaf and or Hard of Hearing. GTC will collect consumer surveys and all data to understand and recognize the benefits of the application/packages being offered as well as any impacts and barriers. This information will be reported to NGCDD quarterly.

Activity D) In Quarter 4 (July-September 2023) grantee will collect information/data on the impact of the services as well as how many new packages are purchased, number of people applying for the service, number of people registered and all information on impacts, barriers, and necessary modifications to the service. Continue outreach/marketing through social media, email, and virtual platforms. Training will be offered in accordance with individual and agency demand. GTC will continue collaboration through the process with the Nevada Commission for Person who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing to bring forward a service that will benefit the I/DD Community/Individuals who are Deaf and or Hard of Hearing. GTC will collect consumer surveys and all data to understand and recognize the benefits of the application/packages being offered as well as any impacts and barriers. This information will be reported to NGCDD quarterly.

**Of Note:**

The OFM and Catherine Nielsen, met with the GTC Team via ZOOM on January 21, 2025. There was a discussion on the appropriate process for compiling the interpreter report and distributing the survey developed by the GTC team. The OFM and Catherine Nielsen will coordinate with Communication Access Services (CAS) to obtain necessary information for the survey distribution.

The OFM emphasized the importance of being included in all meetings, activities, and communications related to the grant. Full inclusion will help protect the interests of the Council, ensure transparency, and prevent potential miscommunications or issues.

The OFM and Ms. Nielsen met with GTC via Zoom on February 14, 2025, to discuss the interpreter report and concerns regarding potential bias as perceived by stakeholders. It was explained that GTC would no longer be required to provide the report. Instead, GTC was asked to develop a proposal outlining how they would like to utilize the remaining funds to fulfill the terms of the contract. The OFM will follow up with GTC to discuss a contract amendment and the use of the remaining funds.

Every time GTC receives an application, an email is sent to the applicant, thanking them for their submission and informing them of their eligibility for the ASL Anywhere-Tive app. If eligible, the email includes guidelines on downloading and using the app. If the applicant is not eligible or additional information is needed, they are notified accordingly. Additionally, a confirmation email is sent to inform eligible users that 61 minutes have been added to their account. GTC also follows up with consumers to check if they need training on how to use the app.

GTC reviewed and updated its networking lists on Google.

A press release was sent to service providers.

A letter of introduction, along with a copy of the press release, was distributed to 26 Nevada County School Districts and the Superintendent.

GTC created a flyer for the Nevada County School Districts and parents. In February, GTC sent a follow-up email with the flyer, requesting that it be shared with parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing children.

GTC followed up multiple times with DETR-BVR in Las Vegas to check whether they had downloaded the Tive app and resolved their email issues. In March, a counselor confirmed that all DETR-BVR offices had successfully downloaded the Tive app and expressed interest in training. The training is scheduled for April 3rd.

GTC sent initial and follow-up emails to Nevada Care Connect and the Jewish Family Services Agency to check whether they had downloaded the Tive app.

GTC reached out to consumers who received minutes in 2024, informing them that they would be eligible for 61 minutes in the 2024-2025 period.

On January 28th, GTC received an email from NGCDD stating that grant activities were temporarily suspended until February 1st. GTC acknowledged the email. On February 3rd, NGCDD notified GTC to resume services.

GTC brainstormed; developed and finalized survey questionnaire for Nevada interpreters. Sent the questionnaire to Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities; Nevada Commission for the Persons who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Communication Access Services-Nevada Interpreter/CART Registry, Nevada Department of Health and Human Services for their feedback. On February 14th GTC met with NGCDD and learned that GTC would not conduct the interpreter survey due to few reasons.

GTC and NGCDD met and revisited the contract as GTC was no longer responsible for the interpreter survey. We brainstormed ideas of how GTC could use the remaining funds. One possible idea was to provide minute packets to the first responders and provide training.

Reached out to Heather Lafferty, Coordinator with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion/Access and Functional Needs, NV Division of Emergency Management, and let her know that GTC is offering 24/7 interpreting services. The benefits of ASL Anywhere-Tive were shared with her.

GTC reached out to some consumers asking for their video testimonials via email, text and videophone calls.

GTC gave some consumers instructions of how to find Tive app online and download the app.

GTC provided the consumers support for troubleshooting with their app. Or provided answers why the consumers and interpreters had problems connecting.

Per consumers’ request, GTC assisted them filling out the application and downloading the app. The consumers received training on how to use the app.

GTC sent out the survey to 81 customers and sent two reminder emails. Upon receiving a completed survey, GTC sent a thank-you email. Additionally, GTC followed up with consumers who experienced challenges and provided support.

GTC gave a presentation on the first quarter reports to NGCDD.

GTC developed and disseminated two flyers to the current and potential consumers.

After learning that NGCDD could not process 3 packages due to the “new amendment” in the contract. GTC requested a meeting with NGCDD to clarify the contract amendment. GTC is waiting for the meeting.

GTC provided video relay interpreting information to a consumer to pass to her Human

Resources. She needed an interpreter for the job fair.

GTC received twenty (20) applications, all of which were processed. However, five of the twenty applications were provided as a courtesy by GTC. GTC does not want to turn consumers away and aims to ensure they have access to communication.

Out of 87 consumers, GTC received 3 video testimonials and 10 testimonials.

Out of 87 consumers, GTC received 29 surveys.

Seven (7) individuals requested assistance with downloading the app and received

training on how to use it at the same time.

GTC continues to provide the consumers technical support and online training.

GTC maintains the demographic data.

**Consumer #1**

I had a vision appointment as I had problems with my contact lens. I had a hard time reading and all was blurry. I asked the clinic for an interpreter, and they said they could not provide one because the insurance won’t cover the service. I had to use ASL Anywhere-Tive app. I was so pleasant with VRI services. Communication went so smoothly. I understood everything what the doctor said. At my last visit, the communication was horrible. We had to write back and forth. It was frustrating. With VRI services, the doctor was able to correct my contact lens. Now I can read very clearly!

**Negative Impact: The medical provider refused to hire on-site interpreter because the insurance won’t cover the interpreting service.**

**Consumer #6**

I had a car accident and the VRI app was very useful. I used it when I was at the auto body shop. The repair guy showed me all areas that needed to be repaired. The signal was very good. We communicated very well and understood each other because the interpreter did a good job interpreting. I am very happy to have the app. I plan to use it when I take my dog to the vet. On the other note, I had a dental appointment, and I was so surprised that the clinic has VRI services. He brought the iPad, and we communicated. I must praise him for that! I save my minutes for other things!

**Negative Impact: None**

**Consumer #10**

I just started using Tive app and I think it is cool. I used the app for my job interview. It’s better than I write back and forth. I think I communicate better when I use VRI. The interpreter understands me good.

**Negative Impact: None**

 **Objective 1.4**

In house Council members and staff will address emerging needs of individuals with I/DD through state, regional, or local level systemic change.

**NGCDD Expected Outcome(s):**

* Targeted outreach to the I/DD community will address emerging needs across all levels of the state in hopes to ensure people with I/DD will report no current unaddressed emerging needs.
* Information from these efforts and community input will be utilized to direct future efforts.
* By 2026 individuals with I/DD and their family members will report having no current emerging needs or all emerging needs are currently being addressed.

**Activity Summary:**

Activity A) Use information gathered from Council efforts and other stakeholder input to develop and implement advocacy and communication efforts in conjunction with individuals with I/DD, family members and other key stakeholders to address needed changes to statutes, rules, policies, procedures, practices, and/or funding/staffing issues that improve outcomes for individuals with I/DD.

Activity B) Work with key stakeholders and policymakers to implement best practice recommendations.

Activity C) Provide ongoing, coordinated outreach to Access and Functional Needs communities statewide on resources and supports for emerging needs and track outcomes to inform future needs.

**Of Note:**

**Projects Manager (PM):** The PM has been working closely with AzulBlue in Southern Nevada. Azulblue is one of the closest organizations which we continue to support because of their continued growth as an organization working with individuals with I/DD. The PM has been working closely with three families that are part of the AzulBlue organization. It was brought to our attention that these individuals and their families were in need of support as they had emerging needs that were not being addressed from Desert Regional Center. After receiving proper permission from the individuals and their families we were able to do proper follow up with each individual case worker for each individual. After several weeks of communication and exchange of information we were able to get these three families back on track and helped eliminate the gap between their case worker and the families. This experience was very eye opening for everyone as you realize that lack of communication between both parties and hope that barriers in language and communication are better addressed in the future.

The Projects Manager also attend the NGCDD Virtual Townhall via Zoom on January 16, 2025. This was a great evening for our I/DD community to continue our ongoing fellowship and advocacy concerning our 5-year state plan and the many concerns that the I/DD community faces. One of the main topics of concern is what was called “lack of funding” from Desert Regional Center and the concern of various providers, caretakers and individuals who are living in homes, apartments where their rent is covered largely by DRC and one of the biggest housing providers being Betty’s Village. Betty’s Village has become a large topic of discussion because they have been seeing the effect of these declining funds affect many residents in their housing facility. We are staying alert and working closely with ADSD and can only refer them back to ADSD for any concerns.

**Outreach and Fiscal Manager (OFM)**

The OFM attended the NGCDD’s Virtual Townhall via ZOOM on January 16, 2025. Discussions centered around concerns about the loss of funding for Desert Regional Center (DRC) and its potential impact on residents of Opportunity Village. Many participants expressed worry over how the funding cuts could affect services.

At the request of Ms. Nielsen, the OFM followed up on behalf of an individual with a disability who was awaiting the delivery of custom-made shoes. The OFM connected with the individual’s sister to gather additional information and obtain contact details for the shoe provider.

The OFM then contacted the manufacturer of the shoes. During the conversation, it was clarified that the individual is covered by both Medicare and Medicaid, which must be billed prior to any other payment options. Once denial notices are received from both insurance providers, the individual can present these denials to the Desert Regional Center (DRC) for potential reimbursement.

The company inquired whether the OFM or NGCDD would assume responsibility for payment. The OFM clarified that NGCDD would not be making any payments or signing any forms and instructed the company to work directly with the individual. The company confirmed that the shoes were ready for pickup and verified that the individual had a scheduled appointment. Despite another request from the company for the OFM to sign forms, the OFM reaffirmed that NGCDD would not assume responsibility and reiterated that the company should bill the insurance providers. The company agreed to proceed with the appointment.

Subsequently, the OFM followed up with the individual’s sister, who confirmed that the shoes had been received. While the company requested that she sign a form, she declined but was able to successfully obtain the necessary denial letters.

# GOAL 2: (In House) Individuals with I/DD will have the information, education, and training necessary to participate in local and state advocacy and policy making activities.

# Areas of Emphasis and identified barriers addressed: Quality Assurance, Education (school aged through college), DD Act Mandates for Advocacy, DD Network Collaboration, Youth and Leadership.

## Objective 2.1

Council members and staff will establish or strengthen a minimum of one State self-advocacy organization led by individuals with I/DD in Nevada.

**NGCDD Expected Outcome(s):**

* Individuals with I/DD will identify common barriers, increase advocacy, knowledge, policy activities and connections to create a stronger unified voice and educate policymakers on key issues.
* Increase strength and leadership of self-advocacy groups led by individuals with I/DD in Nevada.

**Activity Summary:**

Activity A) Support individuals with I/DD to participate in Legislative sessions by providing information on current policy initiatives and meeting with their legislators to educate them on issues important to them.

Activity B) Provide annual funding opportunities for individuals with I/DD to attend disability-related conferences and summits to increase their knowledge and share that knowledge with other Nevadans with developmental disabilities.

Activity C) Self-Advocacy coordinator will collaborate with DD Network Partners and other DD stakeholders to facilitate a DD Network Statewide Self Advocacy Summit every other year, led by individuals with I/DD for individuals with I/DD, to identify common barriers, increase advocacy skills, knowledge, and connections to create a stronger unified voice within the I/DD community.

**Of Note:**

The Council has partnered with Down Syndrome Organization of Southern Nevada (DSOSN) to help them strengthen and grow their organization. We are helping them by providing them a contractional amount of $12,800 dollars to help support various objectives for 5-core programs within DSOSN. The information from our townhalls has helped us identify several emerging needs including the need to address recreational activities, early intervention support, support for information, respite care, public speaking and computer skills. This funding for Self-Advocacy support for DSOSN will help strengthen them and the individuals in this organization. We hope this will help strengthen and grow their efforts as a growing organization.

The contract has been broken down into supporting various programs within DSOSN. The following is how it is being broken down:

**DSOSN Early Intervention Program, Total: $5,000**

This program is designed to provides services and/or referrals to the following:

* Expected mothers of a pre-born child diagnosed with IDD (DSOSN is listed as a service provider with several local hospitals/maternity units). This service goes beyond Down Syndrome and expands into all intellectual and developmental disabilities.
* Music Therapy (ages 0-6 yrs)
* Playgroup Activities (0-6 yrs).
* Other age-appropriate activities/programs for families with young children with a diagnosed IDD.

The plan is to establish an early intervention program to provide these services with the end goal receiving support through other avenues such as Nevada Early Intervention Services (NEIS), Nevada Department of Education, available respite funding through other sources, and grant funding.

Professional support for grant writing to assist in obtaining ongoing support to sustain early intervention program long-term. Overall, the State of Nevada has very few respite opportunities particularly for those in the early intervention age range. This program will provide services to new families and families that have little to no support elsewhere. This was identified as an urgent emerging need through our town halls that the Council can assist in addressing before our next 5-Year State Plan. Respite will likely be a part of the next 5-Year State Plan, and it is important that we make an impact on the need now.

Expected Outcomes – Sustained and ongoing programs to address the developing needs for children within the stated age group who have a diagnosed I/DD. Retain the services of (or consult with) a grant writer who can provide support to find sustained funding for the program and their services. The Council’s funding will provide an initial start up to supplement the costs of the equipment for the program. Many respite funding providers require there to be an established program for additional funding to be provided. This Council’s funding is limited to this fiscal year only.

**Recreational Support under Emerging Needs, 1.4, Total: $5,000**

**Dance Classes**

Two classes per week (Saturdays and Mondays), $75 per student total (DSOSN cost is $45/student, Student Cost is $30/month). NGCDD proposed support will enable DSOSN to pay $50/month and reduce the students’ cost to $25. The design of requiring a portion of the support to be covered by the students is to build their commitment to the class. When students are required to pay a portion, it encourages them to be more accountable, responsible, and consistent in their attendance to the scheduled classes.

Justification: Recreation has become an emerging need. Not only will it need to be included in our next 5-Year State Plan, but we have a dire need to address this essential service that is currently lacking in our state. We have little to no recreational opportunities for children or adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities. This program is designed to provide this service. Long term, the program will be seeking additional support to continue beyond Council funding.

Expected Outcomes – By 2026 individuals who attend this program (and their parents/caregivers) will report on how they have measurably improved their dancing skills, and how their involvement in this program has enhanced their awareness/understanding of what it means to be responsible and being a member of a team

**Art Classes**

This class is provided on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month, at a net cost of $500 per month for two classes (this includes compensation for the art teacher and art materials). The class is open to ages 8+ for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Justification: Recreation has become an emerging need. Not only will it need to be included in our next 5-Year State Plan, but we have a dire need to address this essential service that is currently lacking in our state. We have little to no recreational opportunities for children or adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities. This program is designed to provide this service. Long term, the program will be seeking additional support to continue beyond Council funding.

Expected Outcomes – By 2026 individuals with I/DD and their family members who attend this program will report on how they have having benefitted from the recreational exposure provided by the art class, and the extent to which the class has satisfied other social needs that would have otherwise left unaddressed.

**Performing Arts Programs**

This program is open to ages 16+ of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Recreation has become an emerging need. Not only will it need to be included in our next 5-Year State Plan, but we have a dire need to address this essential service that is currently lacking in our state. We have little to no recreational opportunities for children or adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities to engage in the performing arts or stage production. This program is designed to provide this much-needed service and, in the process, create a unique opportunity for individuals in the I/DD community to develop and showcase their artistic talents. Long term, the program will be seeking additional support to continue beyond Council funding.

Expected Outcomes – By 2026 individuals with I/DD who have attended this program (parents/caregivers) will report on how this program have addressed their recreational needs, and other areas in which the program has enriched their lives.

**Public Speaking and Computer Courses for Public Speaking – 2.1 Leadership Training, Total $2,800**

**Computer Labs**

Some individuals with little to no computer skills or opportunities to learn them are now sufficiently using computers, learning, and researching information. They’re learning to write letters, save files, and how to retrieve and send documents to someone. All these skills can assist in writing and delivering testimony at the Legislature. Independence growth. Each class runs for 10 week, 2 days per week, from 4-5:30 PM (3 hours per week). Open to ages 16+ of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Expected Outcomes – Individuals with I/DD will identify common barriers, increase advocacy, knowledge, engage in policy activities and connections to create a stronger unified voice and educate policymakers on key issues. Increase strength and leadership of self-advocacy groups led by individuals with I/DD in Nevada.

Increased advocacy, skills for writing testimony, delivery of testimony at the Legislature during 2025 session and/or during 2026 interim session.

**Public Speaking Classes**

This class creates an environment where individuals with I/DD can improve their verbal communications skills, allowing them to communicate with confidence outside of their own peer/family circles. The class is also designed to improve the social skills and knowledge of the students. The class is provided at least once per year (frequency depends on the interest list and resources). Each class runs for 12 weeks, 2 days per week, from 4-5:30 PM (3 hours per week-times may be modified as needed). The class is open to ages 16+ of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Expected Outcomes – Individuals with I/DD will identify and learn how to overcome common barriers to conversational communications, and use the skills developed to enhance self-advocacy, knowledge, policy-engaging activities, and build connections to create a stronger unified voices of advocacy to educate policymakers on key disability-related issues and concerns.

Students will also increase their strength and leadership of self-advocacy groups made up of, and/or led by, individuals with I/DD in Nevada. Additional benefits (intended outcomes) of this class include increased advocacy, skills for writing testimony, delivery of testimony at the Legislature during 2025 session and/or during 2026 interim session.

Since this is fairly new, we have little to report back from DSOSN. We hope to have more next month as we will be keeping monthly reporting on this contract.

**Early Intervention Program:** As of right now Peter Whittingham DSOSN chair has reported for the month of March that they had a start/up/grand opening and have developed new and professional teaching tools and learning aids for children and parents with help of a vendor Lakeshore for their Early Intervention Program. This is helping children and parents interact with each other and also helps the children interact with peers in fun, learning, emotionally stimulating environment. Parents appreciative on receiving resources in form of literature from NEIS. In March they held 2 classes with a total of 33 attendees (14 children and 19 parents/caregivers).

**Dance:** They have formalized and structured dance instructions, provided

by professionals, to DSOSN members/and other individuals diagnosed with intellectual developmental disabilities.This class is designed to improve the dance skills of participants, while improving their awareness of responsibility to work as a member of a team; follow instructions; encourage initiative, and appropriate social conduct in a group. Participants have been submitting videos to DSOSN practicing at home and improving their dance as a unit and in Unisom with others in their groups. They have stated that they have improved confidence to perform as a group in public and are more determined through observation and feedback from teachers and other students and parents.

**Performing Arts:** DSOSN has been working on participants receiving structured training in stage performance to help them to maximize and showcase their acting and stage-performance skills and abilities under the guidance of trained professionals and volunteers. Participants have been fulfilling their recreational needs while enriching the lives of other participants and families. A couple commented “This program promotes awareness, friendships, inclusion, and social development.” “These programs give my daughter new challenges for growth as an adult.”

**Art-Painting:** Art class is facilitated by a professional artist who guides the participants in a step-by-step process draw a displayed image/scene (all participants are diagnosed

with a disability). In addition to satisfying some recreational needs, the Art Class

also creates an environment where the participants can see the results of their efforts when they follow instructions. Parents and caregivers who attend and often join their loved ones in the class, enjoy the opportunity to do a fun activity with their loved ones, in a setting that is not always available to them.

**Public Speaking:** This class is designed to help students develop their confidence in communicating in public, and to advocate for themselves. Upon completing the class, they will be better able to speak up for themselves, and with preparation, be able to make presentations at conferences or before policy makers. Students are learning how to become peer-leaders in self-advocacy, improve confidence when communicating in public, and enhanced their abilities to write and deliver a statement on what it means to be included as a member of the disability community. These classes will be validated on impact by other facilitators, volunteers, students and parent/caregivers. It will also be based on completion of assignments and presentation at graduation.

Plans for the Computer Lab are to follow in June after the Public Speaking class is completed.

## Objective 2.2

Council members and staff will annually support individuals with I/DD who are considered leaders, to provide leadership training to 15 individuals with I/DD who may become leaders.

**NGCDD Expected Outcome(s):**

* By 2026, 75 students with I/DD Statewide will have information on self-determination, advocacy, post-secondary education, employment, and other transition options before graduation in order to become better leaders once they graduate.
* Self-Advocate leaders will provide leadership training.

**Activity Summary:**

Activity A) Self-Advocacy coordinator will annually implement curriculums such as the NGCDD Youth Empowering Students Y.E.S. peer to peer education model in a total of 3 schools throughout the state (North, South and Rural) to provide students and teachers with information on self-determination, advocacy, post-secondary education, employment, and other transition options upon graduation.

Activity B) Council members will participate in the implementation of curriculums as appropriate.

**Of Note:**

**Projects Manager (PM):**

Our Y.E.S. program continues to look for schools. With help of our council co-chair Stacy Alaribe, we have been in contact with Billinghurst Middle School out in Washoe County. We have been in talks with them for a few months and will be presenting at their school for staff on our Y.E.S. program. We hope that they will let us bring the Y.E.S. program as a transitional tool for their students to become familiar with what they can expect in the future and get them thinking about what they want to do or be in the future. The PM was also in talks with Lyon County but unfortunately, they stated that their staffing was not interested at this time in implementing a transitional program at the High School. We will continue to reach out to them and see if they want to implement it next year. We are hoping to also work with other Departments within the state to collaborate in other transitional efforts.

## Objective 2.3

Council members and staff will support people with I/DD to participate on cross-disability and culturally diverse Coalitions.

**NGCDD Expected Outcome(s):**

* By 2026 25 individuals with I/DD will have or will be now participating in cross disability and culturally diverse coalitions statewide.
* Individuals with I/DD will be better included and represented in their communities.

**Activity Summary:**

Activity A) Self-Advocacy coordinator will work with Council members and advocacy groups to annually identify 5 individuals with I/DD representing North, South and Rural areas of the state who want to participate on cross-disability and culturally diverse Coalitions.

Activity B) Self-Advocacy coordinator will work with Council members to support identified individuals to find Coalitions that would best fit their interests and support education to those Coalitions on the benefits of including individuals with I/DD, and how best to include them.

**Of Note:**

**Project Manager:** Currently we are collaborating with AzulBlue in bringing together their Medical & Advocacy Conference for this month in April. The PM has helped bring together a Panel from ATAP and DRC for this conference and we have also helped with their translating/interpreter needs. We hope that this effort from the council makes their Conference productive and successful so that we continue to collaborate with them in the future.

## Objective 2.4

DD Network Partners: Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities (NGCDD) and Council members; Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities (NCED); Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center (NDALC), will annually support leadership training for a minimum of 20 individuals with I/DD and/or family members of individuals with I/DD.

**NGCDD Expected Outcome(s):**

* By 2026 100 people w/I/DD and family members will have increased leadership abilities thus becoming better advocates for themselves and others.

**Activity Summary:**

Activity A) Council staff will facilitate training.

Activity B) Council members will participate in trainings as appropriate.

Activity C) DD Network Partners will provide support and sponsorship as appropriate.

Activity D) DD Network Partners will recruit and promote training.

Activity E) DD Network Partners will provide staff as needed.

**Of Note:**

**Outreach Fiscal Manager (OFM):**

The OFM and the Executive Assistant are serving as co-instructors for the Partners in Policymaking class. Sessions have been held on January 11, February 8, and March 15, with an additional special session conducted during Developmental Disability Awareness Day (DDAD) on March 3, 2025.

The curriculum covered a range of topics, including the history of disability services and advocacy movements, societal perceptions of people with disabilities, strategies for engaging with public officials, utilizing media to amplify advocacy messages, effective team meetings, and the legislative process at both the state and federal levels.

The program began with twelve participants. However, due to personal circumstances, three participants withdrew, leaving nine active participants as of the end of March.

GOAL 3: Develop and strengthen systems that improve quality services and access to quality services and supports, for individuals with I/DD and their families.

# Areas of Emphasis and identified barriers addressed: Quality Assurance, Employment, Health, Education (transition services in high school), Transportation and Housing, not knowing what services are available, not enough or can't access services.

## Objective 3.1 - Transportation

Create systems change through the implementation of policies to reduce the barriers to transportation for people with I/DD in Nevada.

**NGCDD Expected Outcome(s):**

* Policies will be created that promote accessible transportation that reduces barriers to transportation for people with I/DD. Measurable progress will be made in reducing barriers to transportation for people with I/DD. More people with I/DD will have prominent roles in reduction of barriers through participation on transportation boards.

**Activity Summary:**

Activity A) Use the NGCDD Transportation Ad-Hoc Committee White Paper and other best practice findings to educate transportation providers and policymakers on the barriers faced by people with I/DD and recommendations on best practice for systems change.

Activity B) Work with transportation providers and policymakers to implement best practice recommendations through the creation of a statewide transportation board(s), ensuring individuals with I/DD have prominent roles on those boards.

**Of Note:**

**Outreach Fiscal Manager (OFM):**

The OFM is collaborating with Diana Rovetti from the NCED to coordinate this year’s iCanBike camp sessions.

Unfortunately, Ms. Rovetti was unable to secure a location in Carson City for one of the camps. However, she successfully secured the Reno-Sparks Convention Center for the camp, which will be held from June 16–20, 2025.

## Objective 3.2 - Employment

Educate individuals with I/DD, their families and community-based employers/employer groups on National best practices, and the benefits of hiring individuals with I/DD.

## Employment Grant

**NGCDD Expected Outcome(s):**

Through coordinated outreach and education, at least 30 individuals with I/DD and their family members will be provided information on their rights and employment options in Nevada.

Additionally, at least 20 employers/employer groups will be provided information on National best practices for employing individuals with I/DD in Nevada.

**Of Note:** The Council is exploring opportunities to secure our site as a Community Based Assessment through Vocational Rehabilitation. We have successfully completed one internship and one community-based assessment (CBA). Moving forward, individuals with disabilities will be able to apply for a CBA with our office.

## Objective 3.3 - Housing

Improve access to quality housing options and supports for individuals with I/DD Statewide.

## Housing Grant

**NGCDD Expected Outcome(s):**

At least 30 individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities will be educated on housing options and supports available. People with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities will report an increase in options, supports, and access to affordable and accessible housing.

**Of Note:** Council staff provided testimony on several measures at the Legislature to discuss the concerns about housing in Nevada, particularly as it pertains to the lack of available and affordable, accessible housing.

## Objective 3.4 – Transition

# Increase access to quality services and support for individuals with I/DD transitioning into or currently in adulthood.

## Transition Grant

**NGCDD Expected Outcome(s):**

At least 15 individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) living in group or nursing homes, 15 family members of those with I/DD, and 20 professionals will be educated on the rights, services, and options for individuals with I/DD after high school.

**Of Note:** The Council is exploring opportunities to put the Youth Empowering Students (Y.E.S.) program into the school virtually. We have made the video available on YouTube and have spoken with several schools about implementing this into their curriculum for the next school year. Updates will be provided as schools have confirmed their support.

# Glossary Of Terms

**Activity Summary** = A summary of grantees’ progress on their activities for that period. Information is summarized from grantee reports and from Project Manager meetings with grantee.

**Best Practice:** A practice that incorporates methods or techniques that have consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means, and that is used as a benchmark.

**Deliverables Summary:** Specific measurable outcomes the grantee said they would accomplish in their application.

**Goal(s)** = Over-all goal(s) identified by the Council in their current five-year state plan that the grantees are helping the Council accomplish through their grant award. Several grantees can be working toward the same goal but through different objectives.

**Grantee Proposal** = What the grantee said they would do to in their application.

**NGCDD Expected Outcome(s)** = What the Council expects to see as a result of grantee efforts.

**Objective(s)** = What the grantees have specifically agreed to accomplish during their grant period and how they said they would accomplish it.

**Of Note** = Any concerns, issues and/or additional information the Council needs to know. Will include any previous recommendations from the Council and the grantee’s progress toward those recommendations.

**Performance Measures** = Specific number of people affected by Council efforts.

**Promising Practice** = A practice with an innovative approach that improves upon existing practice and positively impacts the area of proactive. The practice should demonstrate a high degree of success and the possibility of replication in other agencies or settings but has not been tested.