



MCDD QUICK NEWS

Here's What's Happening in Council Offices
for the month of January 2006

SPECIAL PLANNING RETREAT SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 11 & 12, 2006

The Council will be holding a Planning Retreat on January 11 and 12, 2006 at the Wingate Inn in Helena. The retreat will allow for the entire council membership to participate in the development of the 2007-2011 long range plan. We will start the retreat at 1:00pm on the January 11 and finishing by 4:00pm on January 12, 2006. The retreat will be held at the Wingate Inn here in Helena. A catered dinner by Benny's will be served on Wednesday evening. The Planning Retreat will be facilitated by Beki Brandborg.

This retreat will not take the place of the regularly scheduled January meeting. That meeting is scheduled for January 26, 27, 2006. We appreciate member's flexibility in adjusting their January schedules to attend both meetings. We certainly understand there may be members who cannot attend both for a variety of reasons.

ADD PROGRAMS TO RECEIVE 1% ACROSS THE BOARD CUTS

The Administration on Developmental Disabilities has informed our national organization, NACDD (National Association of Council on Developmental Disabilities) that a 1% across-the-board cut will be applied to all programs under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act). According to sources at ADD, these cuts will be applied evenly to all programs.

Here is a recap of the FY2006 appropriations process - Early in February of 2005 the President released his FY06 budget request that provided level funding for all DD Act programs. The House and Senate Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Subcommittees (Labor-HHS-ED), also provided level funding to DD Councils. The FY2006 Labor-HHS-ED appropriations bill was one of the last annual appropriations bills to be considered by Congress prior to their adjournment for the year. Just before Thanksgiving 2005, conferees met and passed a conference report. The following day, in a rare and dramatic move, the full House unexpectedly

defeated the conference report because of inadequate funding for certain programs, including health, education and low-income programs.

In December 2005, just following the Thanksgiving recess, Conferees put together and passed a NEW conference agreement on the FY 2006 Labor-HHS-ED appropriations bill. The House passed the revised bill on December 14, by a vote of 215 to 213, and sent it to the Senate.

In the Senate, the conference report was attached to the FY 2006 Defense appropriations bill because it was determined that there were not enough Senate votes to pass it as a stand-alone measure. The Senate passed the bill by voice vote late in the night of December 21, 2005.

Although we certainly would have liked to see an increase, or remain at level funding, in this political climate and commitments made around the world a 1% cut is not all that bad. Many programs were cut or drastically reduced.

HONORING CEREMONY HELD AT OCTOBER 2005 MEETING

The elders of the Chippewa-Cree Nation allowed the Council to be a part of a most wonderful event at the October meeting. Tribal Elder Alvin Windy Boy led the Honoring Ceremony for Council member Shawn Parker of Rocky Boy. Mr. Windy Boy talked to the group on the importance of tradition and family, and the faith of the native peoples being reverence for nature. Both Alvin and Shawn prayed and sang in the Cree language, and then shared the prayer with the Council in English. Shawn was presented with a Spirit Pouch and Pendleton Blanket at the Ceremony end. The members of the Council wish to extend their humble and heartfelt thanks for allowing us to be a part of this moving and milestone event.



Shawn & Alvin Windy Boy Shawn Parker



Alvin presenting Shawn his Spirit Pouch

MONTANA YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM RECRUITING PARTICIPANTS FOR SUMMER 06 SESSION

The Montana Youth Leadership Forum is gearing up for the 2006 Summer Session scheduled for July 17-21 in Helena. Applications are available either

by contacting the Youth Leadership Forum at www.montanaylf.org, mylfuneh@bresnan.net or 442-2576. Applications are also available by contacting Council offices at 1/866-443-4332 or 443-4332. Application forms must be postmarked by March 3, 2006 for consideration.

Specifically the youth leadership forum is recruiting for twenty high school sophomores, juniors and seniors will be selected, there will be no expenses for selected delegates and they will get to participate in an exciting, fun and educational four-day training program.

To be eligible for the Montana Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities, students must a) have a disability (as defined by the ADA), b) be in the 10th, 11th or 12th grade as of December 31, 2005, c) must have demonstrated leadership potential in school and in the community and d) reside in Montana.

If you know of someone who you believe would benefit from this outstanding opportunity and meets the eligibility requirements, please encourage them to apply.

ADAPT TO HOST "REAL PEOPLE - REAL VOICES" IN NASHVILLE

ADAPT will be hosting a day documenting institutional bias in America through compelling stories of those who have personally experienced being in nursing facilities or institutions. It will be held on Sunday, March 19, 2006 in Nashville, Tennessee from 9:00am to 9:00pm

The "Real People - Real Voices" stories will be used to develop a report, a power point presentation and a short documentary that can be used by advocates at the state and national levels to bring about changes in the long term service and support delivery system.

If you are a person with a disability who has been in an institution, or you know of someone who would like to be one of the up to 100 people to testify at the "Real People - Real Voices" event, please contact ADAPT at 512/442-0252 or via email at bobkafka@earthlink.net Deadline for completing an application is February 15, 2006.

MEET THE MEMBER

Over the course of 2006 we'll spotlight all the members of the MCDD. Starting us off for the new year are Council Chair Jan Wenaas and Council Vice-Chair Melissa Clark. We recently caught up with these two busy ladies and here's what they shared with us.



Jan Wenaas

Tell us about yourself, your family, pets, etc.

Although I was born and raised in North Dakota, I consider myself a Montanan at heart. I have lived in Great Falls since July of 1975 and am the mother of six wonderful children, four of my own and two step-children, ranging in ages from 29 down to 21. My husband, Mark is a self-employed contractor/carpenter and we live in a home on the Missouri River so we are fortunate to enjoy our children's love of boating and water skiing. My oldest daughter Jodi lives at Treasure State Group Home and my two youngest children are getting their Bachelor of Science degrees this spring. My stepdaughter is married and also lives in Great Falls. We will be traveling to St. Petersburg, Florida the end of March to attend my stepson's wedding. We love animals and have a big black, very loving dog named Homer that although he looks like a big black bear welcomes anyone and everyone into our yard, usually without even barking. Our cat, Mocha is also as friendly as Homer and they are often found fast asleep side-by-side.

I am a contracting officer for the US Forest Service. I enjoy my job very much and last fall worked from Louisiana on a buying team in support of Hurricane Katrina. It was a very interesting experience and I was fortunate to be able to help.

I love the outdoors and my husband and I hope to do some cross-country skiing this winter. In the summer we both enjoy hiking, especially in Glacier National Park. This year will be a busy one for me. In addition to attending my stepson's wedding, I am helping my youngest daughter plan her wedding which will be in September of 2006 in Great Falls.

How did you find out MCDD? Regional Council experience, provider experience, etc.

I learned about MCDD by attending a meeting a public forum held at Easter Seals which discussed the prioritization of areas of emphasis by the Council. As a parent of a daughter with multiple disabilities, I have been involved with the service system since she was around a year old, she is now 29. Jodi has received services from Quality Life Concepts (QLC) for many years and in that capacity I was familiar with regional councils. I have been on the Board of QLC off and on over the years.

What do you think the most important role of the Council should be?

This is a difficult question because the Council is so multi-faceted and provides such an important role in so many contexts. The council is instrumental in advocating and funding programs and services that enhance the lives of children and adults with developmental disabilities. MCDD through the Calls for Invest process encourages innovation and opportunities for new programs and expansion and/or improvement of present programs to enable individuals to be or become more independent, productive and

integrated into all facets of community life. MCDD also does a wonderful job at promoting public awareness and public understanding regarding issues pertaining to developmental disabilities.

What goals would you like to see the Council set? What would you like to see the Council do?

I am very excited about our strategic planning meeting to expand on the excellent work done at the October 2005 meeting. I would like to see more opportunities for those individuals graduating from high school both in employment and supported living arenas. I am very supportive of promoting and expanding on recreational opportunities for individuals and families.

Expansion of respite care and the need for additional funding continues to be an area of concern to allow families opportunities to take care of themselves. I am also concerned about turnover rates for direct care staff and low salaries. These three issues are not easily resolved but to ensure quality care of those who are unable to care of themselves, these are issues that need to be addressed. I would like to see if the Council could encourage some innovation for these three issues in the Call for Investment process.



Melissa Clark

Tell us about yourself, your family, your pets etc.

My name is Melissa Clark and I am the Vice-Chairperson of the Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities. I am one of the first diagnosed Fetal Alcohol Syndrome children in the state of Montana.

I am the proud owner of a gourmet dog biscuit business called Lissie's Luv Yums which was established to fight Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and help people with disabilities have employment and give hope to others.

I am an Associate member of the Sisters of Humility of Davenport, Iowa.

I get community support services from Quality Life Concepts.

I have a supportive boyfriend and my Lab-Akita dog is named Tiger. My foster mother is Johnelle Howanach CHM.

I just donated my first 100 dollars of pennies to "For the Children" Fetal Alcohol Syndrome support group and Agape House, a home for at-risk young adults.

How did you find out about MCDD? Regional Council experience, provider experience, etc.

When my Mom was director of Advocates for the Developmentally Disabled we went to Montana Citizens Advocacy Coalition meetings and learned about the Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities and met some people.

What do you think the most important role of the Council should be?

I think the most important role of the MCDD is to insure a high quality of life for every Montana citizen with developmental disabilities.

What goals would you like to see the Council set?

Better training for EVERYONE who works with people with developmental disabilities. This training should be available for family members also. Included must be concept of scheduling and time. This is to ensure we will be treated with dignity by all who are responsible for our services, really listening to us and taking us seriously when we speak and ask for help. Also better wages for our direct care givers as the high rate of turn over is very hard on us.

What would you like to see the Council do?

Have people with disabilities give teaching sessions on how to work with us. Provide dollars and help to get this done. These sessions must be required of all staff and directors of agencies that deliver service by my community.

DATES OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS

Here's an overview of meeting dates and events that may be of interest:

January 3	Housing for Hi-Risk Behaviors	Helena
January 10	MYLIF Advisory Board M	Helena
January 11/12	MCDD Planning Retreat	Helena
January 17	MT Home Choice Coalition	Helena
January 23	Housing for Hi-Risk Behaviors	Helena
January 25-27	MCDD Council Meeting	Helena

Contact Council staff for more information on any of these meetings.

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We hope this brief and informal newsletter is helpful for Council members and others. If you have a question on any item presented or would like to see additional items in future newsletter please contact Council staff at 866-443-4332.

A HAPPY
NEW YEAR