

PADDC Outlooks

FALL 2023



Using Plain Language

To make Council information more accessible

PADDC believes that information should be easy to understand. To improve the way we communicate, the Council spent several months learning to present information in plain language.

Training was provided for staff members, Council and committee members, and grantees. It will take some time to get better at using the new skills we learned, but we hope this change will make our publications more accessible for everyone.

The Council's value statements were one of the first things to be rewritten in plain language. How did we do?



PADDC Value Statements

1. **Generic Change.** We work to change generic systems for all people in ways that do not relate solely to disability.
2. **Systems Change.** We promote activities that make wide reaching changes through broad social and cultural systems.
3. **Natural Part of the Human Condition.** We believe disability is a natural part of the human condition – we see disability as a difference, not a deficit.
4. **Inclusion.** We prefer activities to be integrated with people without disabilities in regular and generic settings.
5. **Cross-Disability.** We fund activities in common areas such as housing, health, employment, and community inclusion.
6. **Intersectionality.** We believe that the skills involved in understanding disability are related to the skills of embracing all forms of diversity.
7. **Empowerment.** We engage in activities that meaningfully involve people with disabilities from start to finish.

A NOTE FROM THE PADDC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The Council made a big splash this summer! Three projects presented at the national conference, a Council member was sworn in to a national committee, and one of our grant leaders received a national award. I am so proud of the talent and leadership within the PADDC network. I know that when we engage at the national level, we improve our work and expand our impact.

There are more exciting things to come. The final group of new grants are up and running. That means our Five-Year Plan is now at full strength. Our advocacy efforts are increasing, and we are beginning a year of focused information and learning for advocates and families.

In the coming year, PADDC is supporting conferences held by Speaking for Ourselves and the PEAL Center. We will offer scholarships to the Office of Developmental Programs' (ODP) Everyday Lives conference in January. The Gather for Change grants will provide information about a range of topics. You can learn about Medicaid coverage, the Home and Community Based Services Final Rule, choice and control in ODP Waivers, healthy relationships, inclusive communities, disability history and advocacy, social capital, and more. Make sure you check our calendar and follow us on social media. You don't want to miss out.

PADDC grantees are coming together in October to network and plan. Project leaders will build strong connections to create lasting change. Each grant in isolation is like a drop of water, making a ripple. But many projects, working together, are enough to make a splash, a wave, a sea change, perhaps? I can't wait to see their impact when they join forces and rally around their common goals.

I want you to feel connected, too. Each month, PADDC will "Spotlight" one topic or priority. Look for it on our website and social media. And connect to PADDC (and me, too!) through our new LinkedIn Group. This is more than just a page! As a "Group" we can talk about issues, share resources, post events, and engage with each other and with the community.

The goals are set. The plan is in place. Our network is strong. I am confident that working together, we will succeed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lisa A. Tesler". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Lisa A. Tesler
PADDC Executive Director

News and Noteworthy



Honoring 30+ Years

At the April 2023 PADDCC meeting, **Celia Feinstein** (pictured left with her husband, Randy) was recognized for her extraordinary contributions to the work

of Council for more than 30 years.

In addition to her professional role as a federal partner (Institute on Disabilities at Temple University), Celia served as the lead for the evaluation, nominations, and policy and information exchange committees. Her experience and passion helped improve the lives of countless Pennsylvanians. Thank you, Celia!



In July, PADDCC honored long-time project officer, **David Golin** prior to his retirement on August 4. After first working as a Council grantee, David started his career with Council in 1991.

David has been a brilliant, insightful, kind, supportive, and values driven leader. He dedicated himself to helping thousands of people with developmental disabilities. To show how much progress we have made in PA during his career, the number of people living in State Centers was reduced from 4,000 to 500. In his remarks, he also expressed pride in Council's work to support the creation of the Attendant Care Service and its work to promote faith inclusion. Thank you, David, for 31 years of service to PADDCC!

Council Grantee Honored

At the 2023 National Council on Independent Living conference, **Alan Holdsworth** received the inaugural Judy Heumann Advocacy Award! In his acceptance remarks, he shared his passion for advocating for disability-inclusive curriculum in K- 12 schools. Thanks to Alan, Pennsylvania now has a pilot program to instruct students on the political, social, and economic contributions of individuals with disabilities.



Past PADDCC Chair Appointed to National Advisory Council

Congratulations to PADDCC member and past chairperson, **Nancy Richey**, who was sworn in as a member of the [RAISE Family Caregiving Advisory Council](#). Nancy is pictured below as she was introduced during the virtual meeting.

The advisory council was established through the RAISE Family Caregivers Act. The Council provides recommendations to the Secretary of Health and Human Services on effective models of family caregiving, support to family caregivers, and improving coordination across federal government programs. We can't think of a better person to represent families.



Scan the QR code to learn more.

ADVOCACY

TIP OF THE MONTH

Take Advantage of Opportunities to Share Your Expertise and Learn from Others.



Pictured above, back row: left to right: Donna Cushing, Amy Nieves (PA Council member), Jenn Mikos (PADDC staff), Lisa Tesler, Robin Michaelson, and Robert Michaelson. Seated: left to right: Cara Cushing, Dr. Bev Weinberg, and Heather Michaelson (Integrate for Good presenters)

Pennsylvania was well represented at the 2023 **National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities** (NACDD) conference. The theme this year was “Beyond conversation: it’s about action.”

Lisa Tesler started the conference by helping to mentor new executive directors at their orientation session.

PADDC grantees, *Integrate for Good*, *Transition Discoveries*, and *Values Into Action*, presented at the conference. Their willingness to share their knowledge and expertise with representatives from the other 56 DD Councils is appreciated!

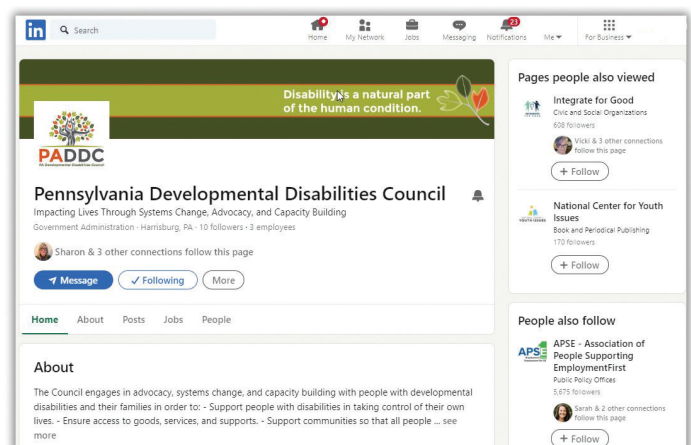


Pictured above, left to right: Lisa Tesler, Dr. Joan Kester, Erin Black, and Dr. Matthew Flanagan. The Transition Discoveries team presented about their work to change transition experiences for students in PA and across the nation.

New Information and Advocacy Tool!

PADDC has a [LinkedIn page](#) where you can follow the activities of our grantees and stay informed about advocacy opportunities.

We have also created a [LinkedIn group](#) where members can discuss topics, collaborate, and raise awareness about issues that affect the developmental disability community. We envision this as a space where advocates can share information, ask questions, and share one another’s activities.



COUNCIL LEARNS FROM PANEL OF EXPERTS

FOCUS: EDUCATION



At the July 2023 Council meeting, attendees had the chance to learn from a panel of experts. Pictured above, front row: Lisa Tesler and Carol Clancy. Back row: Nicole Turman, Hetal Dhagat, Mary Hartley, and Amy Fisher.

Amy Fisher, Parent/Individual with a Disability
[Special Education Advisory Panel](#)

The Special Education Advisory Panel has five committees working on least restrictive environment, family engagement, crisis intervention and restraint prevention, and mental health.

Nicole Turman, Program Director
[Include Me](#), Arc of PA

Include Me works to include students with disabilities in general education classrooms, overall school culture, and school community. They support teachers, school districts, and families. Include Me also offers several student programs.

Hetal Dhagat, Senior Attorney
[Education Law Center](#)

The Education Law Center has three areas of focus: ensuring equal access to education, fair funding in public schools, and breaking the school to

prison pipeline. If you have a legal question about education, they have a helpline. The phone number is 215-238-6970 in eastern and central PA or 412-258-2120 in western PA.

Mary Hartley, Executive Director
[Parent Education & Advocacy Leadership Center](#)

The PEAL Center (Parent Education & Advocacy Leadership) is a federally funded health and special education parent training and information center. They help families and individuals learn to advocate for themselves.

Carol Clancy, Director
Department of Education
[Bureau of Special Education](#)

Today, there is increased collaboration among state agencies and advocacy groups, and the state is providing individualized technical assistance that is leading to system change.

After the panel presentation, Council held group discussions. We continue to think about applying what was learned regarding trends and challenges. This information is very valuable as Council considers advocacy activities and next steps for our work.

INTRODUCTION TO NEW COUNCIL GRANTS

Housing Myth Busting Grants



Families CCAN will develop a series of presentations about housing options to be delivered to adults with disabilities, family members, staff, and other allies. These presentations will be developed and led by peers. Training specifically for Supports Coordinators and Supports Brokers will also be developed. An advisory council composed of non-disability housing experts will convene to both advise the project and learn more about housing options for adults with disabilities.



Information is power! Through educational opportunities, outreach, and demonstration, **Vision for Equality** will give people with IDD and their families the information they need to seek out creative housing solutions.

Community Inclusion for Young Children Grants



Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living (LVCIL) will tap into the knowledge of young adults/adults with disabilities who became empowered because their parents became informed advocates when they were too young to do so themselves. Through training, mentorship, and providing resources, LVCIL will help empower parents to advocate for their family's future.



Temple University Institute on Disabilities will encourage families of young children with disabilities to focus on options for inclusive living and learning, rather than assuming that a segregated setting is the best or only option. FRIL participants will learn more about inclusion in educational settings, the right to services for children in inclusive settings, and self-determination for their child.

Employment Grants



Arc Human Services, working with The Arc of Pa, will hold focus groups and webinars to educate local employers about job coaching/employment services in the state of Pennsylvania. They will share knowledge with employers about the benefits and incentives that come along with hiring people with disabilities. The project will gather data to better serve our clients and business partners in the future.



Through a statewide collaboration among agencies, **Temple University Institute on Disabilities** will increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The PA Workforce Coalition will work with local Workforce Development Boards leveraging their connections to help educate businesses and support and mentor their membership. The project will help fill the great need for talent in PA businesses through education, collaboration, and mentoring.

Technology for All Grants



Blue Fire, Inc. will teach people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to use technology to enhance their lives and increase independence. The overarching goal is to help people overcome the digital divide through six online sessions. Additionally, there will be bi-monthly webinars and an annual virtual Tech Summit.



Tech OWL at Temple University Institute on Disabilities will empower Pennsylvanians with developmental disabilities to learn to use generic technology to meet their personal goals. This will be done through demonstrations, workshops, and at-home Do-It-Yourself projects. Participants will also create video and graphic content about technology and learn the skills needed to spread this information throughout their community.

Disability Is Not A Crime Grant



Autism Connection of PA will inform the law enforcement community about the characteristics and medical issues related to autism. They will teach why people speak, cannot speak, act in ways that may appear unusual, or are unable to respond quickly to commands. The project will focus on training people to use new ways to communicate that may not be taught in traditional police academies. Delivery will be via the voice of a seasoned police officer, a long-time autism professional counselor, and with the personal, lived experiences of autistic instructors.

Civic Engagement Grant



Integrate for Good will empower people with disabilities to identify what matters to them and co-create pathways to community engagement. At the same time, we will empower civic organizations with the confidence and knowledge they need to capitalize on the untapped talent of people living with disabilities.

Preschool to Prison Pipeline Grants



Temple University Institute on Disabilities will conduct an environmental scan of early childhood discipline in Pennsylvania, using surveys and interviews with families and school staff; design a self-evaluation measure that school staff can use to assess classroom and school policies and practices; develop accessible plain language tools and resources to empower preschool-aged children, families, and providers; and collaborate with a project advisory board of key community members.



Delaware County Advocacy and Resource Organization (DCARO) will collaborate with school districts and early learning facilities, to implement recommended interventions and increase awareness of the Preschool-to-Prison Pipeline. The goal is to prevent youth from entering the Pipeline. The project's approach includes continuous collaboration between parents, families, self-advocates, educators, and other advocacy organizations to ensure the success of all students.

For more information about all current PADDCC grants, visit: paddc.org/about/current-grantees.



PADDCC

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