



2023 Impact Report



PENNSYLVANIA
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES
COUNCIL

PADDC MISSION, VISION, VALUES

MISSION

The Council engages in advocacy, systems change, and capacity building with people with developmental disabilities and their families in order to:



- Support people with disabilities in taking control of their own lives
- Ensure access to goods, services, and supports
- Support communities so that all people belong
- Empower people with all disabilities
- Promote the understanding of the life experiences of people with disabilities
- Pursue equity for all people

VISION

We envision a commonwealth where all people are valued and thrive.



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.



ON THE COVER

Integrate for Good was recognized as the featured nonprofit organization by the Main Line Chamber of Commerce, Society of Professional Women. Behind the desk are Dr. Bev Weinberg, Integrate for Good's Founder and Executive Director, Heather Michaelson, Integrate for Good's Corporate and Community Educator, PECO Energy Force Ambassador, and host of Integrate for Good's Facebook Live show, "*Hanging with Heather*," and Natallie Montanez, Integrate for Good's Program Coordinator. Heather previously led an Integrate for Good corporate engagement event for Monarch Staffing. In this picture, she is pointing to Lisa Verzella, one of Monarch's recruiters. This photo captures the moment they recognized each other. Lisa said, "You were my leader!" Read more about PADDC grantee, Integrate for Good, and the impact they are making in Pennsylvania on page 2.



NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Impact of Advocacy Efforts



I'm excited to share this Impact Report with the community. It shows how our grant partners are creating change and improving the lives of people with developmental disabilities and families.

We are making progress in each of our four goal areas. In addition to grants, one of our key roles as a Council is to lead and influence others. We promote our mission, values and successes so that others are motivated to change and inspired to action.

Our housing work is a great example of Council leadership. PADDCC, grantees, and grant participants presented a webinar for the National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems. We shared Council's innovative approaches to supporting individuals to live in their own homes and talked about our advocacy efforts. This elevated our work to a national audience to encourage transformational change.

In PA, we promoted independent housing and advocated for resources to support individuals to achieve it. As a result, the Office of Developmental Programs convened experts and advocates to design a plan. This led to the approval of a new pilot to provide housing stipends to individuals. The pilot project addresses one of the most challenging barriers people face – the financial stability needed to live in their own homes or apartments. When implemented, many more individuals will have the opportunity to find a place of their own to call home.

Council is recognized as a leader in promoting accessibility and meaningful engagement for meeting participation. I was invited by

PADDCC Council member Nikki Adams to present at the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators SEED Summit in Arlington, Virginia. I spoke about advisory board recruitment, retention, and investment. Additionally, I presented to the National Community of Practice Self-Advocate and Family Innovation Roundtable. At both events, I was proud to share how the Council strives to effectively include and support diverse members with developmental disabilities and families to lead system change and advocacy efforts.

Leadership also means working with others to advocate for change. I routinely meet with statewide organizations, coalitions, and self-advocate and family groups to discuss policies that impact people with developmental disabilities. As a result, Council is more effective in advocacy and systemic change efforts.

Sometimes leadership opportunities are unexpected, and the Council steps up to respond. This happened when I learned about Joshua Taylor, a Black man with disabilities, who died in August, 2022. The family believed that racism and anti-disability bias played a role in his death. I organized other disability leaders and organizations to rally behind the victim's family. Council members spoke at a march to honor Josh and fight for justice. I continue to support his family and advocate for the rights of people with disabilities.

I am proud of PADDCC's accomplishments and leadership, and the extraordinary work our grant partners have achieved. We are having an impact on people's lives. I look forward to building on these successes and reaching the goals set out in our State Plan.

Lisa A. Tesler, Executive Director



Civic Engagement Grant

Integrate for Good's civic engagement grant is working to help people with disabilities identify what matters to them and co-create pathways to become engaged in their community. At the same time, Integrate for Good is empowering civic organizations by providing the knowledge they need to capitalize on the untapped talent of people living with disabilities.

Cara's story is an example of empowerment and of Integrate for Good's commitment to generic social and systems change. A student at Gwynedd Mercy University's Integrated Studies program, Cara also volunteers and works for Integrate for Good.

Cara's workload with Integrate for Good includes:

- Volunteering as a leader for the Opening Doors on Campus program
- Serving on the Young Professional Advisory Council
- Working as a paid corporate and community educator

How's Cara doing? Last fall, Cara attended her first chamber of commerce networking event - and went alone. Throughout the evening, she introduced herself to the other attendees, exchanged business cards, and made connections. When she got home after the event, she emailed



Opening Doors on Campus volunteers Natalie, Cara, and Nadia take a moment to enjoy a sunset after setting up for their weekly inclusive volunteering event.

Integrate for Good's Executive Director, Bev Weinberg. Cara reported that she collected 16 business cards and planned to follow up with each of them. It's clear that Cara has become a master at networking.

Integrate for Good is helping people with disabilities become meaningfully involved in civic life and that is a win-win for individuals, their communities, and Pennsylvania!

1,388 Pennsylvanians
*were trained through participation in **Social and Systems Change** projects.*

✓ **46 participants** report holding positions on **cross disability coalitions, policy boards, advisory boards, governing bodies and/or serving in leadership positions.**

Community Living Community Grant

The **Association for Adults With Developmental Disabilities** used a community grant from PADDCC to:

1. Help people with developmental disabilities feel empowered to become volunteers
2. Help the community see adults with developmental disabilities as being capable of making valuable contributions as volunteers

In July 2023, a group of 17 self advocates, along with 300 of their fellow community members, volunteered at Jewish Relief Agency in Bala Cynwyd, PA. The group helped assemble boxes of food for delivery to their neighbors who are food-insecure. This was the first of four planned events.



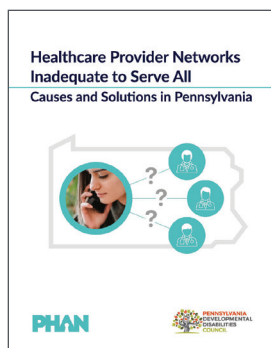
321 individuals with developmental disabilities and family members reported they **are better able to say what they want or say what is important to them** because of **PADDCC Self Advocate Leadership** activities. **284** also report **participation in advocacy activities.**



Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation created the Smart Homes Made Simple project to raise awareness about how people with disabilities can gain control over their environment and live safely and more independently in their own homes using generic smart home technology. In 2023 they **reached 4,151 professionals, allies and interested parties** and **3,403 individuals**

with disabilities and family members. Through the work of this grant, **over 7,000 Pennsylvanians** are more aware of best practices and uses of assistive technology, including smart home technology. To access resources about this issue, visit the [Smart Homes Made Simple blog](#).

Rural Healthcare Grant



PA Health Access Network

(PHAN) produced a new report, [Healthcare Networks Inadequate to Serve All: Causes and Solutions in Pennsylvania](#), which discusses what happens when health plan networks are inadequate to serve their members,

why this happens, and what the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania can do about it.

In addition:

- **25 people were supported** to file grievances/complaints with state agencies
- PHAN's [virtual story map](#) includes **over 85 consumer healthcare access stories**
- **22 lawmakers from the PA house and senate** attended an information session on healthcare network adequacy. It featured a healthcare provider, a community member with a disability, and a representative from one of our partner organizations. Each described the urgency of issues with access to care. After, lawmakers **raised the possibility of holding a hearing on network adequacy**

60 individuals with developmental disabilities *reported they are better able to say what they want or say what is important to them because they participated in Self Determination activities.*



Quality Healthcare Access Grant

Thomas Jefferson University is working to improve training for family medicine residents to better serve people with disabilities in their communities. In their first year of the project, they hired a team of **20 people with lived disability experience to help write, design, and co-teach the curriculum for family medicine residents.**

The project also asked **five patients to film videos of their daily lives** to share with medical residents. One young man with cerebral palsy shared that he was so excited for people to see what his life was like. He happily showed off his power chair, the lift in his bedroom that helps him get to bed, and other adaptations around his home. He stated it has given him confidence and a feeling of importance to know that someone is interested in what he had to teach them.

In another video, a patient named John shared the ableism his family experienced when he was diagnosed with Down syndrome as a baby. When Dr. Mary Stephens, project director (pictured left and mom of a child with Down syndrome), was invited by the National Down Syndrome Society to [testify to Congress on behalf of the Charlotte Woodward Organ Transplant Discrimination Prevention Act](#), she was able to tell John's story and point out the differences between the expectations doctors gave his parents versus the life he is living now where he works, plays sports, and enjoys his life.

2023



IMPACTS

Person Directed Housing Grant

Values Into Action produced a [Housing Transition & Tenancy Sustaining \(HTTS\) Service Training Guide](#). Organizations can use this guide to help their employees learn how to access, inform, and refer people to housing programs and resources, helping people with disabilities control where and with whom they live. Having employees who understand how to provide a broad range of housing supports helps providers meet the qualifications to deliver the HTTS service in Pennsylvania to individuals funded through Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) waivers. **In 2023, 103 additional participants gained access to the training and knowledge necessary to meet PA ODP qualifications.**



Transition Discoveries Grant

The [Transition Discoveries Learning Center](#) is a website that was created to help empower youth with disabilities and increase learning about transition to life after high school. At the end of the grant, there were **730 website users, including 184 youth, 53 family members, and 493 professionals.** The Transition Discoveries Learning Center provides an online, interactive platform primarily for youth through the Youth Learning Center. Additionally, resources are available to families, adult allies, and professionals.

The Transition Discoveries Framework has been universally adopted for all Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) secondary transition initiatives, ensuring a consistent and comprehensive approach. Illustrating its dedication, the **PA Bureau of Special Education has channeled over \$1.35 million towards implementing Transition Discoveries across 50+ grantees.**

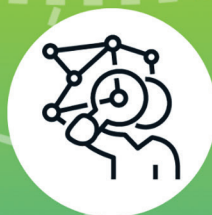
Community Impact



**9 Key
Transition
Topics
Identified**



**500+
Youth, Family, And
Community
Participants
Contributed**



**1
Infographic Road
Map Developed**



**150+
Tools And Resources
To Share**



**50+
TD Implementation
Sites**



Golden Opportunity Projects 2023

Golden Opportunity Projects support organizations and people with disabilities to respond to an emerging need or unanticipated opportunity – to develop and provide education, bring people together to discuss current disability issues, or increase accessibility to information for individuals with developmental disabilities and their family members.

In 2023, **PADDC provided funding totaling \$79,512.87** to Golden Opportunity Projects. At least **509 people with developmental disabilities; 220 family members; and 701 other Pennsylvanians such as Direct Support Workers, educators, employers, and other professionals** were able to participate and benefit from the projects. Following are a few project highlights:

Crisis Preparedness & Outreach Community Day *Westmoreland Casemanagement and Supports, Regional Integrated Human Services, and Westmoreland County Behavioral Health/Developmental Services*

People with disabilities and family members were supported to plan, prepare, and hold a resource fair in their community to educate people with disabilities, family members, and emergency-related professionals about preparing for emergencies.

Attendees met with local sheriff's department representatives.



Listen, Include, Respect

Keystone Human Services

Teams of people with disabilities and their direct care staff worked together to plan and create a curriculum to educate direct care staff to support people with disabilities in a way that is led, directed and informed by people with disabilities.

These teams provided training sessions to others to pilot and refine the curriculum for future use.



Destiny Smith shares her experiences and ambitions with the workgroup after learning more about her rights during the 2-day workshop.

Joe Salamon, Education Manager, Keystone Humans Services and self advocates Mikequan Govan and Matthew Williams participated in the workshop.



Their Own Voices

The Arc of Venango & Clarion Counties

People with disabilities formed a planning committee that created training materials and videos on topics important to them. They were also actors in the videos explaining topics such as supported decision making, having choice, freedom of/right to risk, speaking up for myself, leadership, healthy relationships, etc., and what they wanted family members and others who support them to know about those topics.

LEAF Scholarships 2022 - 2023

PADDC LEAF Scholarships supported individuals with disabilities and their family members to attend conferences and workshops that included trainings and education focused on disability topics. In 2023, **40 people with disabilities and/or family members received scholarships** to help offset costs for travel, lodging, food, and conference registration fees. A total of \$14,195 was awarded to attend the following events:

- 2022 Arc's National Annual Convention in Denver, CO
- Charting the LifeCourse Ambassador Training, virtual
- 2023 7th Charting the LifeCourse Nexus Annual Showcase in Kansas City, Missouri
- Empowering Independence Workshop, virtual
- 2023 51st National Down Syndrome Congress Annual Convention in Orlando, FL
- 2023 National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities Conference in Orlando, FL
- American Public Garden Association Annual Conference in Fort Worth, TX
- Person Centered Ways to Build Community w/PATH & MAPS, virtual
- 31st Annual My City, My Place Brighter Futures Awards in Philadelphia, PA



How PADDC Funding Works

All PADDC grant activities are governed by the Council's federally approved state plan and by the procurement requirements of the Department of Human Services and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

To achieve the goals in the plan, the Council funds grant applications from groups and organizations through a competitive bid process. The Council participates in creating a better future for Pennsylvanians with disabilities by:

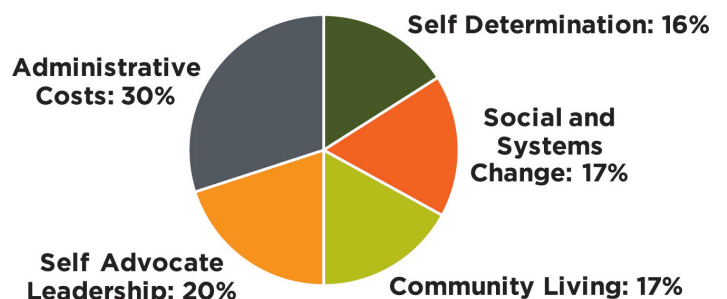
- Funding short-term projects that show new and innovative ways for people with disabilities to participate as respected and valued members of our communities
- Empowering people with disabilities and their families to have a strong voice on Pennsylvania matters that affect their lives
- Advocating for improved public policies and services so that people with developmental

disabilities may benefit from the opportunities and resources available to other citizens and community members

- Encouraging change in communities that embraces the diversity of the disability experience and confronts the stigma encountered by citizens with disabilities

This chart below shows how our resources were allocated to each goal and work area in 2023.

PADDC Expense by Category



NEW COUNCIL CHAIR



The Butler Family (left to right): Alan, Deven, Sophia, and Lisa

In January, Lisa Butler assumed the duties of Council chair. Lisa began her work with Council in 2016 as a committee member. Through the years, she served in many leadership positions.

Lisa has dedicated much of her professional life to serving people with disabilities. For Lisa, the work is personal as her daughter, Sophia, lives with developmental, intellectual, and physical disabilities, along with complex medical conditions. Lisa is driven by her desire to ensure that Sophia, and all those with disabilities, have the same opportunities to experience an everyday life just like everyone else.

During her time as chair, Lisa hopes to elevate the image of Council as an organization that helps to bridge gaps between people with disabilities, the agencies that serve them, and the legislators who make laws that affect them. Lisa also wants people to realize that Council can be a force for change, elevating the voices of people with disabilities, so they receive what they need to live their best life. Her program priorities include supporting families as a whole, promoting universal accessibility and design, and making better use of technology.

Lisa is excited for the opportunity to lead and extends her thanks to all who have supported her along the way. In turn, she wants to lend her support to others who serve on Council. As a U.S. Air Force Veteran, Lisa is action- and results-oriented. She plans to work with her Council colleagues to help make a big impact through tangible project outcomes that will improve lives across Pennsylvania.



GRAHAM MULHOLLAND VISIONARY LEADERSHIP AWARD

To honor Graham's memory, the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council established the Visionary Leadership Award.



Lisa Butler (left) and Chris Grandy (right) present the Visionary Leadership Award to Nancy Richey (center).

In November 2023, PADDCC presented the first **Graham Mulholland Visionary Leadership Award** to **Nancy Richey**. Nancy is a visionary who sees the world as it should be, not as it is now. She is a champion for transformational change and motivates others to act and embrace new ways of thinking. She communicates with passion and authenticity. She works in alliance with communities who share our ideals and helps to change other people's perspective on what is possible.

[For more information about Nancy or to learn more about the award, please visit the PADDCC website.](#)

2024

PADDC Council Members

Lisa Butler, Chair • Amy Mathewson Nieves, Vice Chair

Christina Abernethy

Nicole Adams, *Representing the Secretary of the Department of Health*

Dana Barone, *Representing the Secretary of the Department of Labor & Industry*

Renee Benise

Heidi Champa, *Representing the Secretary of the Department of Aging*

Mary Kay Cunningham, *Representing the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University*

Beatriz Frometa

Jennifer Garman, *Representing Disability Rights PA*

Domonique Howell

Poornima Khare

Ann Marie Licata

Maria Martin

Rob Oliver

John Orr, *Representing Art-Reach, a Private Non-profit Organization*

Karen Plummer, *Representing Voice and Vision, a Local and Non-governmental Agency*

Melissa Ringold

CJ Rine

Lea Sheffield, *Representing the Secretary of the Department of Human Services*

Lisa Sportelli

Koert Wehberg

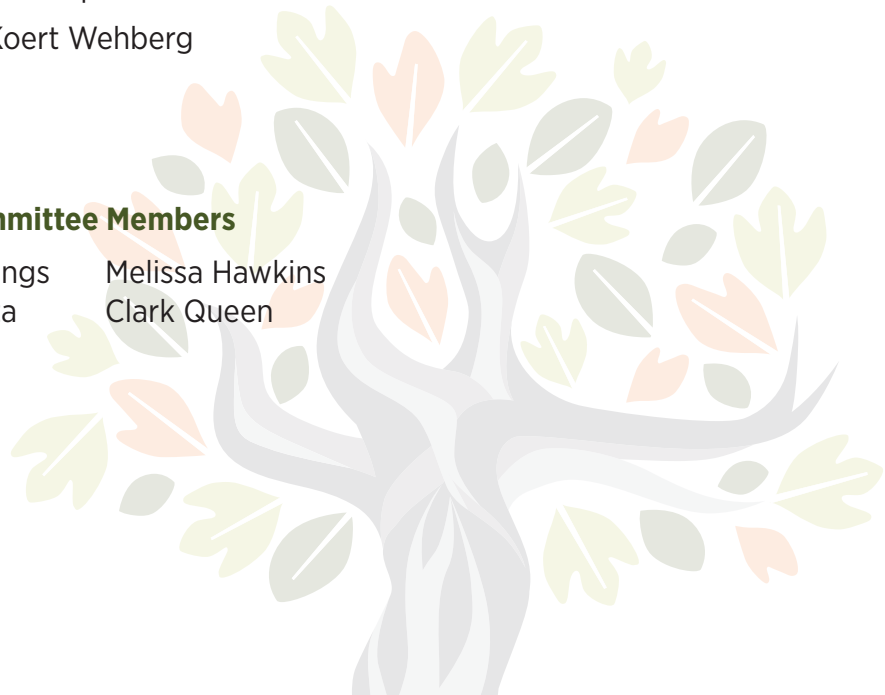
Committee Members

Robert Cummings

Rachel Frometa

Melissa Hawkins

Clark Queen





PADDCC

PA Developmental Disabilities Council

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**PENNSYLVANIA
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LEAF Scholarships Available

LEAF Scholarships provide support for self-advocates and families to attend events that promote leadership, education, and self-advocacy,

Visit paddc.org for instructions and the application.