



NYSILC NEWS BRIEFS

The New York State Independent Living Council (NYSILC) is a champion of systemic change promoting opportunities and full participation in all aspects of society for people with disabilities.

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State Independent Living Network Benefits from Stimulus Funding

By Brad Williams

The State Plan partners (VESID, CBVH, and NYSILC) spent the last several months engaged in the planning process to insure that the statewide Independent Living (IL) network could benefit from American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 funds.

The current IL State Plan was amended to accommodate the required changes so that approximately \$5.4 million in ARRA IL Part C funds could be distributed. A competition will be held in 2010 to establish three new centers (one upstate, one downstate, and the third upstate or downstate, based on the highest ranked proposal). The remaining funds were subsequently divided amongst the existing Federally-funded centers to address targeted unserved/underserved populations over a five-year period.



President Obama with Vice President Biden (at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science) signing the \$787 billion stimulus bill in February 2009

Approximately \$800,000 in ARRA IL Part B funds were identified for the 19 state funded Service Centers for Independent Living (SCIL) for two initiatives: housing education (\$30,000 each) and technology improvement (around \$7,100 each). NYSILC also received \$15,000 as well to improve its IT infrastructure.

Finally, two-thirds of the centers in the network will be participating in CBVH's ARRA Part B objective and funding that establishes a computer with adaptive computer technology to provide access for consumers, especially individuals who are legally blind ♦

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Progress Made on Draft SPIL 2011-2013

By Brad Williams

After a long public input process that helped to shape the formulation of the draft plan, the full council met on March 26, 2010 at the Troy Hilton Garden Inn to review and approve the Statewide Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) for 2011-2013. The plan approved at the meeting will be sent to both VESID and CBVH for their reviews. Any minor technical changes will be resolved before a final copy is generated and signed by the designees for the State Plan partners. The plan also has to be approved by the NYS Regents before it is submitted to the Federal Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) by July 1, 2010. RSA is encouraging states to submit their plans online to their Management Information System (MIS) site electronically as opposed to sending them as a hard copy or emailing them as an attached document.

In terms of the general details of the State Plan, it includes eleven objectives:

- NYSILC resource plan.
- CBVH IL fee-for-service.
- Statewide Systems Advocacy Network (SSAN).
- CIL consulting and coaching services.
- Youth leadership sponsorships.
- Nursing Facility Transition and Diversion waiver training.
- Get Out The Vote (GOTV) network.
- Statewide strategic media services.
- Statewide CIL consumer satisfaction survey.
- Outcome-based SPIL evaluation plan.
- Capacity building grant opportunities.

In terms of the State's unserved/underserved need, the SPIL prioritizes the upstate thirteen (13) unserved counties that currently do not have an Independent Living center presence, and downstate, the underserved New York City boroughs, and Long Island, which are without the presence of a Federally-funded CIL to address expanded service need.

The Part C criteria will be utilized to address changes in funding levels, as is typical for funding decreases, level funding, and the application of a COLA. Additional funds above the COLA of \$200,000 or more will look to fund a new CIL to self-sustain through a competitive RFP process. Any new center would be established in priority unserved or underserved areas. If any funds remain after the establishment of a new center, they will be divided up amongst the existing Federally-funded network. Additional funds above the COLA less than \$200,000 will be divided proportionately, based on current Part C funding amongst the existing Federally-funded network. Finally, if new ARRA Part C Funds are awarded, the full amount will be divided proportionately based on current Part C funding amongst the existing Federally-funded network to avoid a funding cliff ♦

Kahrmann Consumer Advocacy Coalition is Now on Facebook

By Patty Black

The Kahrmann Consumer Advocacy Coalition (KCAC) is a grassroots disability rights group founded by brain injury survivors, their families, friends and many others dedicated to supporting the equal rights of all people and the right of all people to live in the most integrated setting. Membership is free and open to interested individuals. KCAC does not accept companies or agencies as members, only individuals. If you are interested in joining or know anyone who would like to join, they can now do so by going to the [KCAC Facebook Page](#) or sending their names and contact information to kahrma1@gmail.com. This membership list is not given or sold to anyone and all information is kept confidential.

The most recent KCAC membership update from March reported some very good news! Not only is membership growing, but some positive and productive meetings have recently occurred between the coalition and the New York State DOH. Actually, the meetings are a continuation of a strong and positive relationship between these two parties. This good relationship actually grew out of a bit of discord when service providers for brain injury survivors on the TBI Waiver were directed by DOH to transfer some Home and Community-based services to providers that were licensed home care agencies. Some Providers initially complained about the short notice given to them by DOH, but follow-up meetings and research by the coalition revealed that the DOH gave the providers several deadline extensions to come into compliance. When KCAC reached out to some providers to ask for reasons they had been given by the DOH for not having their licensed home care applications, some of them became unresponsive. The coalition

found this silence troubling.

KCAC leadership and Provider Alliance Leadership met subsequent to this and KCAC founder, Peter S. Kahrmann, called the meeting very positive and productive. Like the DOH, the Providers Alliance (which is a group of 40 companies that provides services to brain injury survivors on the TBI Waiver) has agreed to regular meetings with the KCAC. Two things. It would be unfair to define all providers by the actions of a few and the groups we've met with so far know we are in this together, Kahrmann said, adding the KCAC leadership is scheduled to meet with the leadership of the Brain Injury Association of New York State.

It is indeed great news that a strong relationship has been established between the coalition, the DOH and The Providers Alliance. Future meeting dates will be announced to members on Facebook or by email.

Remember, with the KCAC **all** voices count so do not hesitate to join and to share your thoughts, feelings and ideas. Please do visit the Facebook page and become a fan. There is strength in numbers, so the larger the numbers the stronger the voice ♦

♣ **Readers may also reach the coalition at:** **Kahrmann**
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