### Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities Winter Council Meeting

February 1, 2024-February 2,2024

Thursday, February 1, 2024

**Attendees:** Tianna Faulkner, Maria Pinkelton, D'Arcy Robb, Fanta Mitchell, Charlotte Densmore, Jeff Allen, Ryan Shindler, Tonya Fair, Felicia Dillon, Dorothy Harris, Melissa Barwick, Lisa Eaves, Starr Bruner, Isabel Knofczynski, Eric Foss, Sharia Stripling, Wesley Ford, Lisa Newbern, Amy Trunnell-Morris, Brian Dowd, Lori Campbell, Harry Nelson, Joi Greco-ASL Interpreter, Evan Nodvin, ASL Interpreter-Rey Martinez, Charlie Miller, Nandi Isaac, Mark Crenshaw, Rena Harris, Bessie Williams, Devika Rao, Zolinda Stoneman, Shannon Turner

Lisa Newbern begins the meeting and welcomes everyone, making sure everyone has the meeting agenda and materials. She read the GCDD welcoming statement and asks everyone to introduce themselves.

Evan Nodvin mentioned that he will be with the Habima Theater and had a question about going to the state capitol. Charlotte Densmore shared with the group about Advocacy Days. GCDD staff introduce themselves to the group. Mark Crenshaw introduces himself to the group.

D'Arcy announced that CMS will do a visit to Georgia this year regarding the implementation of the HCBS settings rule. D'Arcy said GAO has also been very involved. Nandi shares that this is her last year serving on the council and that she is going to Advocacy Days.

Lisa Newbern gives a quick overview of the days' agendas.

D'Arcy Robb, Maria Pinkelton, Harry Nelson, and Fanta Mitchell present. D'Arcy Robb goes over the council business update. Topics include membership, Dottie Adams subcommittee updates, new federal questions, the April council meeting, and the DEI committee. Fanta Mitchell talks about the membership campaign and changes to the membership application and shares with the group to recommend anyone who they think may be interested. The application is translated into English and Spanish. GCDD is accepting applications now through mid-March 2024. Applications will be reviewed, and recommendations will be made at the April council meeting and sent to the Governor's office for appointments, and they hope to have new members by the summer council meeting. There are those like Nandi Isaac who will be rolling off the council and there are open spots to fill.

Harry Helson talks about the Dottie Adams Subcommittee. The first meeting was held in November 2023. The purpose of the meeting was to review the current process. Subcommittee members were given information about the process of how applications are accepted and how awards are given. Instead of meeting virtually, the subcommittee members will make suggestions via email. The goal is to have a review of all the suggestions and to present any updates. They will present what they find at the April meeting. D'Arcy talks about the new federal questions. GCDD is a federally mandated agency and is required to ask questions of its participants. The federal government wants to see who is participating in GCDD projects and what participants thought about our projects. All of the questions are optional for people to answer and helps GCDD to collect data to see how the agency is doing. The questions are about people's sexual orientation and gender identity and are optional for people to answer. D'Arcy Robb goes over the questions. Maria Pinkelton made a comment and update about the data collection in the future. D'Arcy Robb talks about the April council meeting. The April council meeting will be in person in Atlanta April 25<sup>th</sup> and April 26<sup>th</sup>. Maria Pinkelton shares that GCDD is seeking council members, as well as members for the DEI committee. Last week she was on an ITACC call for Diversity, Inclusion, linguistic, and cultural competency and equity committee. Also looking for individuals to join the public policy and state plan committees. There are currently 5 people and ACUPPI committees and only 3 people on the DEI committee. Maria Pinkelton goes over what the DEI committee does and best practices on reaching people in Georgia and including others. The current DEI work will be at the spring council meeting. D'Arcy Robb opens the floor for questions and shares the names of people in the different committees. Lisa Newbern speaks again about the open spots and the membership campaign and opens the floor for questions. Nandi Isaac shares that she is on a committee about the rate study and makes a comment about being on the committee and shares that Mark Crenshaw shares a comment. Lisa Newbern and Mark Crenshaw share that they share GCDD social media posts. Mark Crenshaw asked if there were any language or posts about the membership application and campaign. D'Arcy Robb shares that there were issues with the membership application. Now there is an online digital form, and the PDF forms are working. The membership application just passed the quality test last Thursday and Friday. Maria Pinkelton speaks about membership campaign and talks about a bullet pointed list that can be shared with council members that they can share in their own language. Mark Crenshaw makes a comment about ways to promote it and for GCDD to put something together that council members can use to talk about the campaign, including plain language, bullet points, cheat sheet.

Rena Harris joined the meeting and introduced herself to the group. Lisa Newbern circles back to Nandi Isaac's comment about the rate study. Nandi Isaac talks about her plans to speak to her state representative during waivers and wages Advocacy Days and how she will continue her advocacy after she leaves the council. She wants to advocate and have a huge impact in her advocacy before she rolls off the council. She wants to share her story and she will strike to get her point across. D'Arcy thanks Nandi Isaac for her comments. Lisa Newbern opens the floor for D'Arcy Robb to give the corrective action plan update. Then the group will go on a short break.

The CAP dates back a few years from the Administration on Disabilities and the Office on Developmental Disabilities. Work has been going on throughout 2022-2023. Eleven items have been satisfied, with 4 left to go. D'Arcy Robb spoke about the membership CAP and updates. D'Arcy Robb gave update about the staff CAP and gave an update on the DEI CAP, and grant/RFP

CAP. D'Arcy Robb opens the floor for questions and comments. Lisa Newbern shares that the team has done a fantastic job addressing the corrective action plan.

## 15 Minute break

Lisa Newbern speaks about the conflict-of-interest policy, an item that has not been completed for the corrective action plan. Several council members have worked on it. The updated version is presented today. Lisa Newbern has worked with ITACC regarding this process as well as get comments from committee members to update the conflict-of-interest policy to ensure there is no unfair advantage or appearance of one. It is something that needs to be voted on and approved and completed on CAP. She opens the floor for conversation, questions, and comments about this. Mark Crenshaw shares his comments about the policy. Lisa Newbern responds to Mark Crenshaw's comments.

Lisa Eaves talks about the Spirit of Kim proposal/Award. Lisa Eaves discusses the purpose and objectives of the award. GCDD endeavors to establish the Spirit of Kim, Unsung Hero Award. Lisa Eaves shares a little history about Kim Hudson Person who worked for GCDD 19 years and the qualities that embody the Spirit of Kim Award. The goal is to honor Kim Hudson Person in a meaningful and tangible way, not to be duplicated by other awards, geared toward administrative support and behind-the-scenes work. The staff discussed an application process and that a selection committee needs to be established, as well as guidelines to ensure that GCDD is in compliance. Lisa Newbern opens the floor for any questions and comments. There are a lot of comments in the chat about the presentation.

Next on the agenda is discussion of the items for voting tomorrow: October meeting minutes, the quarterly financial report, the programmatic dashboard, and the Spirit of Kim Award.

Charlotte Densmore, Charlie Miller, and Starr Bruner present. Charlotte Densmore gives updates from the Public Policy Team, including Advocacy Days, Equitable Dinners, the current Policy Agenda status from last fall. GCDD is asking legislation to pay for the program fees this year. Legislation was written for fees and tuition to be paid. DBHDD wants to fund 100 waivers. 28 million has been set aside by DBHDD to cover the rate study. They are pushing the legislature to approve more waivers. There were a few policy priorities around employment including ending subminimum wages. GCDD has support from Representatives Cooper and Scott Hilton. State as Model Employer is supported by Billy Hickman, Senate Bill 384. GVRA has taken on Project Search. The transition is going to take place from GCDD to GVRA this summer.

Charlie Miller talks about Advocacy Days, including the January Advocacy Days that focused on Inclusive Post Secondary Education (IPSE). Next Advocacy Days is waivers and wages scheduled for February 7, 2024. There has been a lot of support around the wage issue. There will be a press conference will be held during waivers and wages Advocacy Days. The third Advocacy Day focuses on employment scheduled for February 20<sup>th</sup> and February 21<sup>st</sup>. Charlie Miller speaks about GCDD's Equitable Dinners, which coincides with Advocacy Days, scheduled for February 6, 2024. Charlotte Densmore shares how people can get involved with Advocacy Days. Virtual Equitable Dinner is scheduled for February 27, 2024. Charlie Miller has been putting in great work with the Phone to Action platform for people to reach out to their legislatures. The National Disability Seminar is scheduled for April 8-10, 2024. The IDD Commission Bill was passed yesterday, and it will be moving on to the Georgia House of Representatives. Charlie Miller said the bill passed unanimously with his support and support from self-advocates. Lisa Newbern opens the floor for any comments or questions. She will be at Equitable Dinners and Advocacy Days next week. D'Arcy Robb speaks about GCDD having a great year at the state level, with a lot of good relationships and progress, including the rate study. Legislation is moving forward on three GCDD critical issues, ending 14C, creation of the IDD commission, and the state as model employer. D'Arcy Robb thanks the GCDD staff for their work and she thanks the council members. She asks council members to attend one of the events. D'Arcy Robb and other state agency heads were invited to the Governor's Mansion for breakfast with Governor Kemp and his administration. She got an opportunity to thank Governor Kemp for approving the 79 million. She was grateful for that experience and opportunity.

Starr Bruner goes over her presentation and shares highlights of the IPSE Advocacy Days last month. Starr Bruner goes over what happened last year at the capitol for ISPE Advocacy Days and talks about the asks for IPSE this year. \$200,000 was put in GCDD's budget for IPSE and \$800,000 in state funds given to GCDD to spend on IPSE. The ask this year is to increase the amount of money behind the IPSE scholarships and grants. The IPSE grants to colleges pay for tuition for students to attend IPSE programs. Last year \$955,830 was given towards IPSE grants that goes to the Georgia Finance Commission. Yearly program fees range from \$3,400 to \$10,000 a year. They expect an increase of about 50 IPSE students this year. GCDD wants to see \$1,444,170 this year to help IPSE programs. There is a Phone to Action link about IPSE advocacy to contact your legislature. Starr Bruner goes over the IPSE one page document. Starr Bruner opens the floor for questions. Lisa Newbern had a question about IPSE program fees and programs. IPSE grants pay standard university tuition. There are currently 10 IPSE programs throughout the state of Georgia. More programs mean, there will be more asks to fund the programs. The University of West Georgia is the only IPSE program that opened and closed due to administration problems and issues. D'Arcy Robb shared that the GAIPSEC Coalition created a formula to distribute the state funds equitably among IPSE programs.

#### Lunch Break

Harry Nelson gives a presentation on the budget update. In September 2023, a continuing resolution was passed and another one was passed in January to continue through March 2024. There have been no budget cuts yet. \$1,466,009, 890 was released by HHS. The estimate from last year was \$2,151,840. State appropriations was \$780,000, with an unencumbered \$370,000. There are matching funds which GCDD's projects are providing. Total revenues was \$3,632,004. The operations budget was \$85,808. \$88,000 was spent on education. Diversity and equity costs came to \$48,000. Public information costs was \$113,000. System changes were at \$103,000 and self-advocacy was \$59,000. GCDD is at 14% on the budget that has been spent. Harry Nelson

ends his presentation and Lisa Newbern opens the floor for questions and comments. D'Arcy Robb put a link in the chat about the disability policy seminar.

Maria Pinkelton talks about the Storytelling Project and Equitable Dinners. GCDD, L'Arche Atlanta, Equitable Dinners, and Story Muse. Equitable Dinners initially began to talk about issues around prejudice and other sorts of discrimination and disparities in the community based on race. The Equitable Dinners in person event is Tuesday, February 6<sup>th</sup> at Georgia Public Broadcasting and a virtual event on February 27<sup>th</sup>. At the equitable dinners event is a call to action of legislative advocacy and is the first event that focuses on disability and will have a general overview about Georgia's direct support professional's crisis. The group will watch three short films and then have conversations about these issues. Dinner will be served at the inperson event. State legislators have been invited to the event. Attendees include people with disabilities and parents of people with disabilities who are interested in being involved in the conversations around disability.

Charlie Miller and Charlotte Densmore talk about "Navigate before You Advocate" to get people to understand the importance of going to the capitol and advocating and how to advocate and work with Unlock trainees as well on this initiative. People with Project Seta and Unlock participated. They got a lot of feedback and learned about people who had never been to the capitol before. The Project Seta began at the beginning of the day until noon and Unlock went from noon until 4pm. He says he believes they will do the project again next year bigger and better. Lisa Newbern shares feedback and comments and opens the floor for other questions and comments.

Isabel Knofczynski talks about Project Search. She will talk about it from the GCDD side and Jeff Allen from GVRA can also talk about the project. Project Search is a transition program that GCDD has funded for many years. There are 30 programs, including adult sites. Some of the sites serve high school students and adults in the same program. Not much funding comes from GCDD but from the sites. GCDD's current annual funding is \$70,000. As of now, GCDD will no longer fund Project Search. A graph in her presentation shares where the funding will now come from. GVRA will take over the Project Search funding. The goal is to maintain the program as it has been over the years in Georgia. GCDD is no longer able to fund Project Search, but the program will continue, and it will not go unfunded. She talks about the benefits and challenges of the transition. She opens the floor for any questions and comments. Lisa Newbern shares comments and opens the floor for any additional comments or questions. Shannon Turner talks a little about Equitable Dinners and the Storytelling Project. Lisa Newbern introduces Devika Rao to the group. D'Arcy Robb shared that Jeff Allen has been a Project Search advocate and has been involved for years. GCDD funded the program going on 20 years. She gives Jeff Allen an opportunity to speak about it. Jeff Allen said he has been involved with Project Search since 2011 and he is excited that GVRA can take on the work beginning this summer.

Maria Pinkelton gives a presentation about a new project, Equity in Technology Careers grant that went live yesterday. Promotions have begun. The project is looking to educate African

American males in the field of technology inspired by former council chair Nick Perry. This project is a part of GCDD's current strategic-five-year plan. The project will generate research and environmental scan=s that illustrate barriers, trends, needs, national comparisons, and recommended solutions for how GCDD can increase career pipelines and employment access for African American men with developmental disabilities in the field. The grant has a \$30,000 fund and a \$3,000 match. The deadline to apply for the grant is March 6, 2024. Although Nick Perry is no longer on the council or involved with the council, he is aware of this project. D'Arcy Robb acknowledges Maria Pinkelton for her work on the project. Lisa Newbern shares her comments about the project.

D'Arcy Robb gives the programmatic dashboard update and opens the floor for questions or comments about GCDD projects.

Jeff Allen with GVRA is giving his report today. GVRA will take over Project Search. And He talked about GVRA's subminimum wage to competitive integrated employment. Grant that they received is mounted to enter into its second year and this year service delivery will begin. They are closely monitoring the state as model employer and are starting to have conversations around working with other state partners about it so that Georgia can become a state as model employer. One of the biggest focuses is to look at supportive employment or customized employment. They are having conversations about making the move to go from subminimum wage into actual integrated employment. The goal is to move away from 14C. They have a complete overhaul of their policy manual. They completely removed financial need criteria.

Lisa Newbern shared with the group that the consent agenda will be voted on tomorrow. Nandi Isaac adjourned the meeting. Evan Nodvin seconded the motion. Lisa asked if anyone opposed or abstained.

The meeting is adjourned.

# Links shared in today's meeting:

https://urldefense.com/v3/ https://disabilitypolicyseminar.org/ ;!!HWVSVPY!mJq6LupkY4cy-2 xtT7ytACBKJZ6K7f2e5vWz19ULbXHBZ FPAq9PydQQET74U1U-Zt3mVOd7YqU6fI34H08g0rfF1sz\$

https://urldefense.com/v3/ https://gcdd.org/fundingopportunities/nofas.html ;!!HWVSVPY!mJq6LupkY4cy-2 xtT7ytACBKJZ6K7f2e5vWz19ULbXHBZ FPAq9PydQQET74U1U-Zt3mVOd7YqU6fI34H08g0-ZU1vF\$

https://gvs.georgia.gov/

#### Friday, February 2, 2024

### Attendees:

Tianna Faulkner, Tonya Fair, Lisa Eaves, Evan Nodvin, Dorothy Harris, Nandi Isaac, ASL Interpreter Joi, Fanta Mitchell, Felicia Dillon, Charlotte Densmore, Harry Nelson, Eric Foss, Charlie Miller, ASL Interpreter Terri, D'Arcy Robb, Amy Trunnell-Morris, Starr Bruner, Brian Dowd, Lisa Newbern, Mark Crenshaw, Ryan Shindler, Isabel Knofczynski, Rena Harris, Melissa Barwick, Wesley Ford, Lori Campbell, Maria Pinkelton, Zolinda Stoneman, Devika Rao, Shannon Turner, Sharia Stripling, Brittany Daniels

Lisa Newbern welcomes everyone to the meeting. The consent agenda vote is today, as well as agency updates, committee meetings who will then come back and report out, public comments and then closing shout outs. The Consent agenda vote topics consists of the October Meeting minutes, quarterly financial report, and the programmatic dashboard, the conflict-of-interest policy, and the Spirit of Kim Award. There was a motion to approve the consent agenda. Evan Nodvin motioned to approve the consent agenda. Nandi Isaac seconded the motion. The vote took place, and nobody opposed or abstained from the vote. The vote passed. The floor has been opened for individuals interested in serving on the committee for the Spirit of Kim Award committee Lisa Newbern asked that they follow up and email her or D'Arcy Robb about their interests and the details at this time were to be determined. Lisa Newbern and D'Arcy Robb will get a plan in place for those interested in serving on the serving on the committee and get things moving forward. Individuals in the group shared that they wanted to serve on the committee.

### State Agency Updates:

Lori Campbell with DBHDD. Touched yesterday on rate study being appropriated in the Governor's budget that has to through both houses during session. They are currently working on the amendment that will need to go through DCH and to CMS. The goal is to have the rate study presented at the March DCH board meeting to keep moving toward a working wage not only to move more people into services, but to have people to support them when they are awarded those services. They are wrapping up the commissioner's I/DD work group. There is one more meeting left and there are three objectives with that work group, one being to eliminate the waiting list (planning list). The goal is for anyone who need services to get services, which means DBHDD would need the funding resources and staffing resources. They have gotten a lot of good feedback but need to expand that to more stakeholders, families, and self-advocates. The second goal was to address individuals who have been left in private hospitals without services and supports. It is something they really need to address so they have been working and will continue to work on how get temporary housing that would lead to long term supports. They have two homes in region two that will currently be opened up statewide for people who have been left in the hospital. DBHDD will do their assessments and

family contracts and natural support contracts to figure out the long term needs of individuals and plan should be in place by the end of this month. The third goal is the DSP workforce. They has been a workgroup who has focused on this for the past year and a half. Three pilots have been developed that will all start this month. A career ladder has been created to offer training opportunities to develop competency. The goal is to have 200 participants. There is a third party to evaluate its effectiveness. Lori Campbell opens the floor for questions and comments. D'Arcy Robb asked a question about the workgroup regarding the waitlist. Rena Harris had a question about the two homes in region two.

Melissa Barwick Department of Human Services, on the DFACS side one of the bigger pushes is qualified residential treatment program implementation, Senate Bill 377. In 2017 the Federal Families First Prevention Services Act was passed, and legislation is being done around that. Child abuse prevention and family support services, and abuse and neglect prevention services have been underway. They are getting the data that these are evidence-based practices in order to get approval from the federal government to provide those programs statewide. The qualified residential treatment program they hope to address the missing level of care in both DFCS and home care. Systems across the state in how they serve children dealing with behavioral and mental health crisis and needs. They are dealing with and addressing those barriers to services through their service delivery system. They have been working with sister agencies, including community health to work through implementation of what that looks like. They are looking at a pilot program to implement a program. DHS and DCH have been processing Medicaid redeterminations and doing a lot of outreach. On aging services side, last year DCH received an appropriation to put dementia care specialists at every area agency on aging. They are also closely following three bills, which would include a study committee. They are looking at some proposal for caregiver tax breaks and another program for all inclusive care for the elderly benefits. There are also job opportunities at DCH.

Rena Harris GAO said they are working on attempting to address the problem of unlicensed care homes and the harm they are causing people with disabilities. They convened a meeting along with some people with forensic special initiatives unit, from adult protective services, aging from Georgia, Health policy center, Turf, which is a temporary emergency relocation center. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation was also at the meeting. They are addressing the most unsafe of the unsafe. The prosecuting attorneys council is involved. Everyone came together to talk about these issues, including DBHDD and they are waiting on a response from them.

Brian Dowd DCH New Medicaid Director, Stuart Portman comes from DC. He starts Monday, February 5. There is also a new deputy executive director Maxine Elliot. Taisha Ward is also a new hire. She came from the Atlanta Regional Commission. CMS doing a site visit specific to DCH statewide transition plan to do an overview of where they are in compliance to the settings rule. They will also be meeting with providers throughout Georgia and partner agencies. The visit will take April 22, 2024. There could be a correction action plan. It is basically a federal audit. Rate study will go to the board in March. They are doing rate increases for NOW and COMP waivers, elderly and disabled waiver, the independent waiver, the first rate increase since 2008. Redetermination information can be found on the DCH website. There is a monthly dashboard on the DCH website and that information is available to the public. People who were on the Katie Beckett program were kept on during the public health emergency. These people need to be transferred to a waiver. PACE program is a managed care plan, a site that has an adult day health center that center is responsible for all of a person's medical and waiver services. Brian Dowd opened the floor for any questions and comments.

Zolinda Stoneman IHDD A lot going on College of Family Consumer Science has a series of awards that the college gives out, The College Appreciation Award is going to Houston Gaines in supporting across the state the IPSE program. One of the Destination Dawgs students will be awarding him with the award. The award ceremony will take place this March. IHDD Farm Again Team is working with the National Equability Office to put on in March the National Agriculture Conference. She talked about the issues that farmers face. IHDD has a longstanding ability program within their institute throughout the state of Georgia who are affected by disability.

Mark Crenshaw Center for Leadership in Disability. They are looking for a new executive director. They are in full grant writing mode at CLD. He has talked to partners about support and commitment. He is going to send out an email to all of the council members, the application for the leadership education and neurodevelopmental disabilities program is live for 2024-2025 and will start August of 2024. They choose 24-26 students for the program. They are looking for physicians, nurses, speech language pathologists, social workers, physical therapists, community professionals, and individuals with disabilities. There is an information webinar about the program on February 12, 2024. Mark Crenshaw opens the floor for any questions and comments.

Lisa Newbern continues the meeting for committees to meet for 30 minutes and then come back to the main room. Everyone is back in the main meeting room.

### Committee Updates:

Brian Dowd gives the state plan update. The group talked about the evaluation work that has been going on and that it is going to continue and basically do a renewal of the initial work, which will run from April to November. The evaluation work will develop a tracking tool and do a survey which will initially start a pilot. There have been quarterly staff calls on the implementation of the evaluation tool as well as training for grantees. They want to figure out how to incorporate the evaluation tool into DD Suites. He talked about the equity in tech NOFA and ways to get new grantees versus the same people applying for grants.

DEI committee. Mark Crenshaw discussed modules related to training, then focused on and proposed as a committee to focus on internal training delivered by DEI committee at the next council meeting. Maria Pinkelton has diverse resources regarding DEI training. They have also proposed doing training on GCDD's history and having DEI training with National Center on Civil and Human Rights. Lisa opened the floor for any questions for Mark Crenshaw or Brian Dowd.

ACUPPI Committee: Charlie Miller spoke and said the group talked about the IPSE advocacy day. Eighty-Nine people signed up to be in-person at the capitol and for team lead training. He encouraged the group to get involved and participate in Advocacy Days. He talked about Senate Bill 198 and Senate Bill 384. They talked about national updates and talked about the disability policy seminar which will take place April 8-10 in Washington DC. Lisa Newbern opened the floor for any questions and comments.

Now is the time in the meeting for public comment. No one had any public comments. Lisa Newbern shared with the group that it is time for shoutouts. There will be another time for public comment at 11:30am.

Brittany Daniels joined the meeting to give public comment.

Lisa Newbern closes the meeting, and the meeting is adjourned. Evan Nodvin motioned to adjourn the meeting. Dorothy Harris seconded the motion. Lisa Newbern asked if anyone abstained or opposed to adjourn the meeting. No one did. The meeting is adjourned.