



VBPD Training Alumni Association



**Virginia Board for
People with Disabilities**

TAG TEAM



TOGETHER

EVERYONE

ACHIEVES

MORE



ROLE OF DD COUNCILS



- Advocacy
- Capacity Building
- Systems Change



ISSUES

- Early Intervention
- Education
- Community Living and Supports
- Housing and Transportation
- Employment
- Healthcare
- Abuse and Neglect



KEY FOCUS AREAS

- Medicaid Waiver redesign
- DOJ Settlement agreement
- Managed Care
- Seclusion & restraint in public schools
- Competitive, integrated employment opportunities
- Access to post-secondary college/training



T RAINING



A LUMNI ASSOCIATION

- New Board Program under the umbrella of Training Programs: The Alumni Development Program Goals are:
- To better engage Alumni of Board training programs (currently Partners and Policymaking (PIP) and the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF))
- To engage in grassroots advocacy and
- To maintain an ongoing relationship with the Board



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- **Alumni Development Program Goal:**
- At least 250 individuals with developmental and other disabilities, and their families, will advocate for themselves and others, influence policy, and exercise maximum choice, independence, and control in their lives.



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- **Program Description:** Board staff will develop structure, branding, and communication platforms at a level consistent with allotted resources and alumni interests. The program will be initiated slowly and thoughtfully to ensure success and identify barriers and solutions and ensure a prudent use of Board funds. This program will become an ongoing component of the Board's program portfolio.



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○ Objectives

- By 2021, at least 100 self-advocates will be actively engaged in public policy advocacy, participating on policy and advisory boards and engaged with their fellow training program alumni as a result of Board training and alumni initiatives.



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- By 2021, At least 150 family members will be actively engaged in public policy advocacy, participating on policy and advisory boards and engaged with their fellow training program alumni as a result of Board training and alumni initiatives



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- Four initial Regional Chapters will be developed with the intent of establishing a Statewide Association by January 1, 2018 (SFY 2019).
- The Board will coordinate inaugural meetings of the four chapters that will focus on **structure, communication avenues, support needs, and development of advocacy agendas.**



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- The purpose of developing chapters is to connect and network alumni and develop and implement advocacy agendas that are consistent with the federal DD Act.
- The development of the chapters will lead to increased and more unified advocacy on critical issues and provide additional support to the Board in meeting its goals in:



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- Regional Chapters will be required to hold at least one meeting per quarter, either in person or using available technology, provided by board staff.
- Regional Chapters will develop their own meeting structure and advocacy agendas with technical assistance from Alumni Program Staff.



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- Regional Chapters will be provided communication avenues (web, social media, issues forums, etc.) and support for skills development as needed.
- The Board will routinely provide information on statewide policy issues through mechanisms to be determined but which may include action alerts or requests for specific advocacy on a particular issue.



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- The Regional Chapters will demonstrate success in meeting defined outcomes, and exhibit the interest and commitment
- Regional Chapters will be required to evaluate every meeting, event or advocacy outreach effort so that the Board will be updated on concerns, issues or advocacy progress.



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- Graduates of the Board's Training Programs will be strongly encouraged to participate and take on leadership roles within the Regional Chapters
- There will also be a need for effective use of technology to bring alumni together.



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- **Advocacy:** directly or indirectly expand grass roots advocacy strategies for policies and funding for services to benefit those with DD and other disabilities to advocate for themselves.



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- **Capacity Building:** create and expand services and supports to individuals with DD and their families and enable enables access and availability to those in need in each region as well as statewide.



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- **Systems Change:** Effect legislative, policy, or other changes that improve the overall system of supports for people with DD and their families on a local, regional, statewide or national level.



COMMUNICATIONS



COMMUNICATIONS



**VBPD Training
Alumni Association**



COMMUNICATIONS



○ How are you going to communicate?

- Website
- Social Media
- Custom Web Community
- Mobile App



COMMUNICATIONS

Website

- TAA-specific “page” on the VBPD website
- Expanded advocacy content
- Learning Materials
- Document Templates
- Contact Information
- Permanent & Customizable
- Quick Roll-out



COMMUNICATIONS

○ Social Media

- Google Hangouts
- Facebook Groups
- Easy to use, most people already enrolled
- Temporary & limited customization
- Limits on what VBPD can do for you



COMMUNICATIONS

- Custom Web Community
 - Public & Private Forums (re: Reddit, e-learning forums, Craigslist “Chat”, Yahoo Groups)
 - Complete Flexibility
 - News, Document, & Information Hosting
 - VBPD will build it
 - Community Management
 - \$\$ & Development time



COMMUNICATIONS

- Mobile App could help!
 - Not a stand-alone platform
 - Web Community Access
 - VIP & Legislator contact directory
 - Updates on talking points & major issues
 - Other functionality?
 - \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ &
Development Time



COMMUNICATIONS

○ How are you going to communicate?

- **Website**
- **Social Media**
- **Custom Web
Community**
- **Mobile App**



HOW TO DEVELOP AN ADVOCACY AGENDA



TARGETING YOUR AUDIENCE

- **Local Systems:** Community Service Boards & Case Managers, Provider Agencies, School Divisions, County and Local Governments and Boards, Social Services, Department of Rehab Services and Department of Health
- **State Agencies:** Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, Department of Medical Assistance Services, Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education/Board of Education, Department of Transportation (and more)
- **Administration:** Secretary of Health and Human Resources; Secretary of Commerce and Trade, the Governor's Office (and more)
- **Legislative:** Virginia General Assembly, federal congressional delegation



HOW TO DEVELOP AN ADVOCACY AGENDA



Setting 3 Year Public Policy Priorities

- **SMART:** Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound
- **PARTNERSHIPS AND COALITION WORK:** What are other groups working on?
- **CONSIDER YOUR CAPACITY:** Some things might be monitored/supported as needed; while focus is on a specific issue of importance
- **ASK:**
 - WHAT DO YOU SEE AS BARRIERS IN THE SYSTEM?
 - WHAT ARE OTHER FAMILIES /INDIVIDUALS SAYING?
 - WHAT ARE PEOPLE'S BIGGEST CONCERNS?
 - WHAT DO YOU SEE IN THE POLITICAL WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY?
- **TARGET AUDIENCE:** (If Legislative-bill or budget amendment?) Budget language has the force of law!



HOW TO DEVELOP AN ADVOCACY AGENDA



PUBLIC POLICY LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

- 1 PAGE AGENDAS (be concise, succinct and focused on key issues)
- 1-3 MAJOR ISSUES: What are other groups working on? Work together don't duplicate

ADVOCACY MATERIALS

- Agree on Policy Priorities
- Develop a brief Legislative Agenda (current session)
- Fact Sheet or Brochure to Leave Behind (visually attractive and professional)
- Talking Points (internal). **NEVER PROVIDE INACCURATE INFORMATION. Tell the policymaker you will get back to them if you do not have the information they ask for.**



HOW TO DEVELOP AN ADVOCACY AGENDA



ADVOCACY MATERIALS

- Stories or Letters (brief) to leave behind
- Toolkits: How to for Advocates; Pre-Formed Letters (The [Arc of VA website](#) has great advocacy toolkit.
- Sign on Letters
- DIFFERENT AUDIENCES MAY NEED DIFFERENT INFORMATION OR MATERIALS



HOW TO DEVELOP AN ADVOCACY AGENDA



EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

- GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY: General public, not professional lobbyists, to contact legislators and other government officials regarding specific issues
- Letter Writing Campaigns (sign on and individuals)
- District and Richmond Office Visits
- Phone Call Campaigns
- Targeting campaign season to elevate issue and awareness (legislator forums)
- Advocacy Days at the Virginia State Capitol (other events)
- OFF- SEASON IS THE TIME TO ACT! You certainly need to be attentive and responsive during the legislative session but to have a legislator's ear to make a change, you need to be talking to them all year long.



HOW TO DEVELOP AN ADVOCACY AGENDA



EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

○ LOBBYING:

- Typically professionals attempting to influence decisions made by officials in a government, most often Legislators or Members of Regulatory Agencies. There are lobbying rules that must be adhered to. VBPD for example can educate but CANNOT lobby.

○ ASK LEGISLATORS TO INTRODUCE A BILL

- TYPICALLY PRE-FILING BEINGS MID-NOVEMBER TO THE START OF THE SESSION; AFTER SESSION BEGINS, HOUSE MEMBERS HAVE 5 BILL LIMIT AND SENATE MEMBERS HAVE AN 8 BILL LIMIT

○ ASK LEGISLATORS FOR BUDGET AMENDMENT

- GOVERNOR INTRODUCES BUDGET BILL IN DECEMBER
- MEMBER AMENDMENTS TO THAT BILL ARE DUE WITHIN FIRST WEEK OF CONVENED SESSION



HOW TO DEVELOP AN ADVOCACY AGENDA



2017 Session Convenes January 11, 2017

LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION SYSTEM WEBSITE

- **Bills & Resolutions:** *Status of individual bills and related information*
- **General Assembly Members:** *Member sponsored legislation*
- **Standing Committees:** *Legislation referred to committee*
- **Meetings:** *House and Senate committee meeting schedule*
- **Cumulative Index:** *Subject index of bills and resolutions*



SHARING ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE



GROUP DISCUSSION

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS AN IMPORTANT
PUBLIC POLICY GOAL FOR THE NEXT 3
YEARS AND WHY?

