

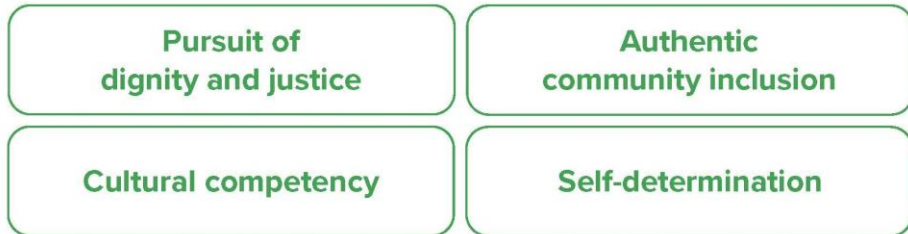
NH Council on Developmental Disabilities easy read annual report 2023



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Our Mission

The NH Council on Developmental Disabilities
is dedicated to



for all New Hampshire residents with developmental disabilities.

 **Dignity**
the right of a person to be valued and respected for who they are

 **Justice**
fairness, equality

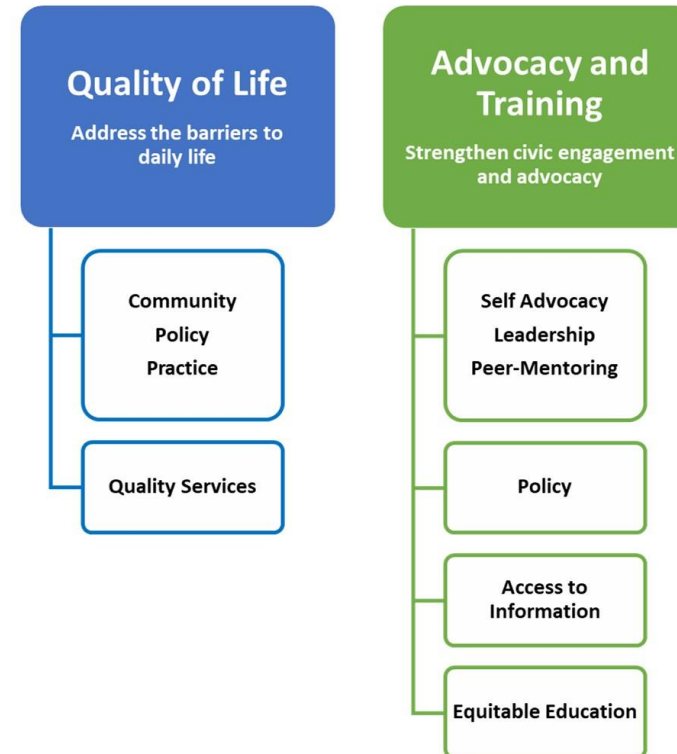
 **Authenticity**
to be true, real

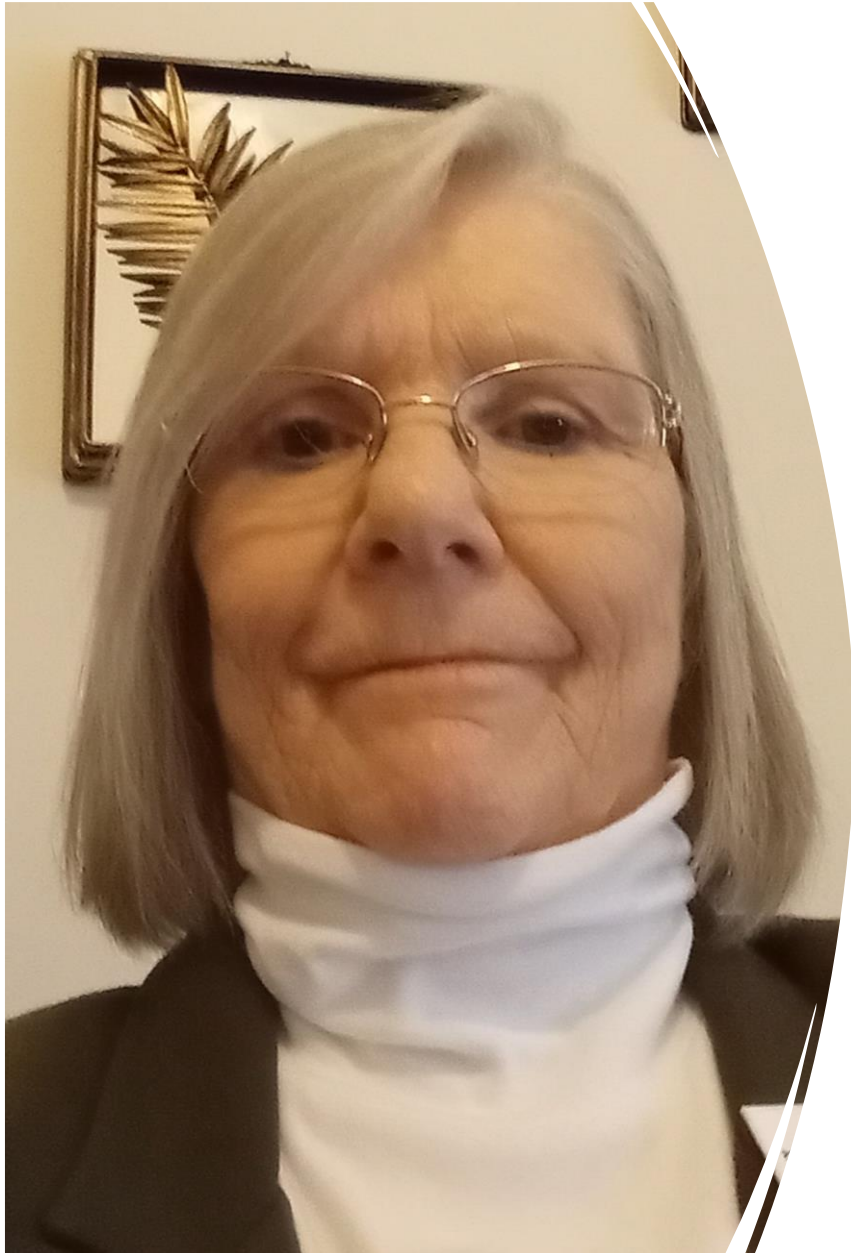
 **Inclusion**
providing equal access to opportunities and resources

 **Cultural competency**
the ability to understand, appreciate and interact with people from cultures or belief systems different from one's own

 **Self-determination**
free choice to make life decisions

Our 5-year plan





A message from our Chair, Jean Crouch

It has been a great pleasure, over this past year, to serve as chair of NH Council on Developmental Disabilities. As well, it has been an honor to service the council and the community side by side with Tim Houle, council's vice-chair.

We have had a great year working with the community on inclusive projects that promote equal opportunity for NH residents with lived experience. Another area we have expanded is in the world of social media including a variety of interviews with are many talented council members.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of our Executive Director and the council staff. I would like to give a shout out to the council's committees and thank them for all their hard work over this past year. Thank you to the Finance Committee, Policy Committee, Member Relations Committee, Program and Planning Committee, and Executive Committee all our 5 year-plan workgroups.

Council Committees

Finance - Jim Piet, Chair

Policy - Deborah Opramolla, Chair

Member Relations – Jean Crouch, Chair

Program and Planning – Jennifer Pineo, Chair

Executive Committee – Jean Crouch, Chair

Council staff

Executive Director

Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre

Director of Policy and Planning

Vanessa Blais

Policy Assistant

Chase Eagleson

Executive Assistant

Pamela Stiles

Senior Account Tech

Elizabeth Page

Office Clerk

Miles Trier

Social Media Outreach Assistant

Blake Tyler

Council members

Community Member Seats

Tim Houle, Vice Chair

Joshua Madison

Alyssa Antman

Tammy Mills

Deborah Opramolla

Frank Vinceguerra

Carrie Duran

Michele Petersen

Krista Gilbert

Michael Phillips

Sara Gray

Denis Greenwood

Patricia Vincent-Piet

Agency Seats

Jean Crouch, Chair, NH Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services

Stephanie Patrick, Disability Rights Center NH

Jim Piet, NH Voc. Rehab

Jennifer Pineo, NH Family Voices/Title V

Danielle Pelletier, NH Dept. of Education

Abigail Conger, Bureau of Developmental Services

Alexis Wayland, Private Provider Network

Sarah Sadowski, Institute on Disability/UNH

Suzanne Austin, Center for Life Management

Policy

Civic Engagement and Advocacy

The council aims to build stronger relationships with policy makers by engaging in legislative and administrative education. The council provides training and information in best practices to inform policies that have a positive impact on the lives of all individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families across the lifespan.

The council supports advocates with lived experience in testifying to legislators and other policy makers on the impact that policies have on their lives.

Legislative Successes

- **Public playground accessibility**

This bill requires new public playgrounds to have solid surfacing for better access to equipment and playground areas.

- **Participation in the education freedom accounts program by students with disabilities**

This bill ensures that parents of students with disabilities understand their rights when using an education freedom account voucher in non-public schools.

- **Establishing a contact person notification program to assist law enforcement personnel who have contact with a person with mental or physical disabilities**

This bill encourages law enforcement personnel to use resources available to impact safer outcomes to engagement with people with disabilities and mental health challenges.

- **Budget flexibility for services for the developmentally disabled**

This bill prohibits the health and human services department from establishing or enforcing salary limits on the salary or hourly wages of direct support staff.

Supporting Advocacy

NH Leadership Series



The Council continues to support the Institute on Disability/UCED and its leadership program through scholarships and as a resource for attendees.

The training series uses the Partners in Policymaking model.

The program helps to develop and strengthen advocacy skills for people to bring about systemic change in their communities.

Advocacy Groups

[People First of NH](#) (PFNH) and [Self Advocacy Leadership Team](#) (SALT)

- The Council, members of SALT, and other collaborators spent the year supporting SALT in moving from a Council task force to an action group of People First of NH.
- The Council joined the IOD and DRC-NH in hiring a facilitator to evaluate the membership needs of both groups and help to transition SALT to People First. They also helped to set up fiscal agency with Community Bridges, a NH DD service provider organization.
- The Council's support includes grant funding for facilitator compensation, programs, trainings, and activities. Other support includes transportation for advocates to attend meetings at the council office and making office space available for meetings and work.
- The Council sponsored and supported advocates attending the PFNH retreat.

ABLE NH

- ABLE NH was established through the efforts of the Federal DD Act partners to meet the need for an organized state-wide advocacy presence.
- The council provides sponsorships for ABLE's annual membership event and other initiatives. The council also provides office space, meeting space, and occasional administrative support to the group.

Grants and Sponsorships

Community grants

The council provides funding to support **inclusive** community projects or educational programs including:

- Technical assistance to people interested in developing a media presence to promote advocacy
- Train the trainer opportunities to teach advocacy skills
- Inclusive playgrounds and equipment
- Inclusive trails



Grant information can be found at:

<https://www.nhcdd.nh.gov/grants>

Community Sponsorships

The council sponsors **inclusive** community programming including:

- Caregiver's Conference
- Transition Conference
- People First/SALT annual retreat
- Go Baby Go cars for tots with mobility issues
- DSP Appreciation Awareness Events
- Pride Events
- NAMI NH Suicide Prevention Conference
- Employment Leadership Awards
- Family Support Conference
- Concord Multi-Cultural Festival

Grants and Sponsorships

\$37,500 Large Grants/Contracts

- DRCNH: Supported Decision-Making Training

\$30,000 Emerging Needs Grants

- Music Therapy
- All Access Playgrounds
- Accessible Website Development

\$92,745 Public Health Workforce Projects*

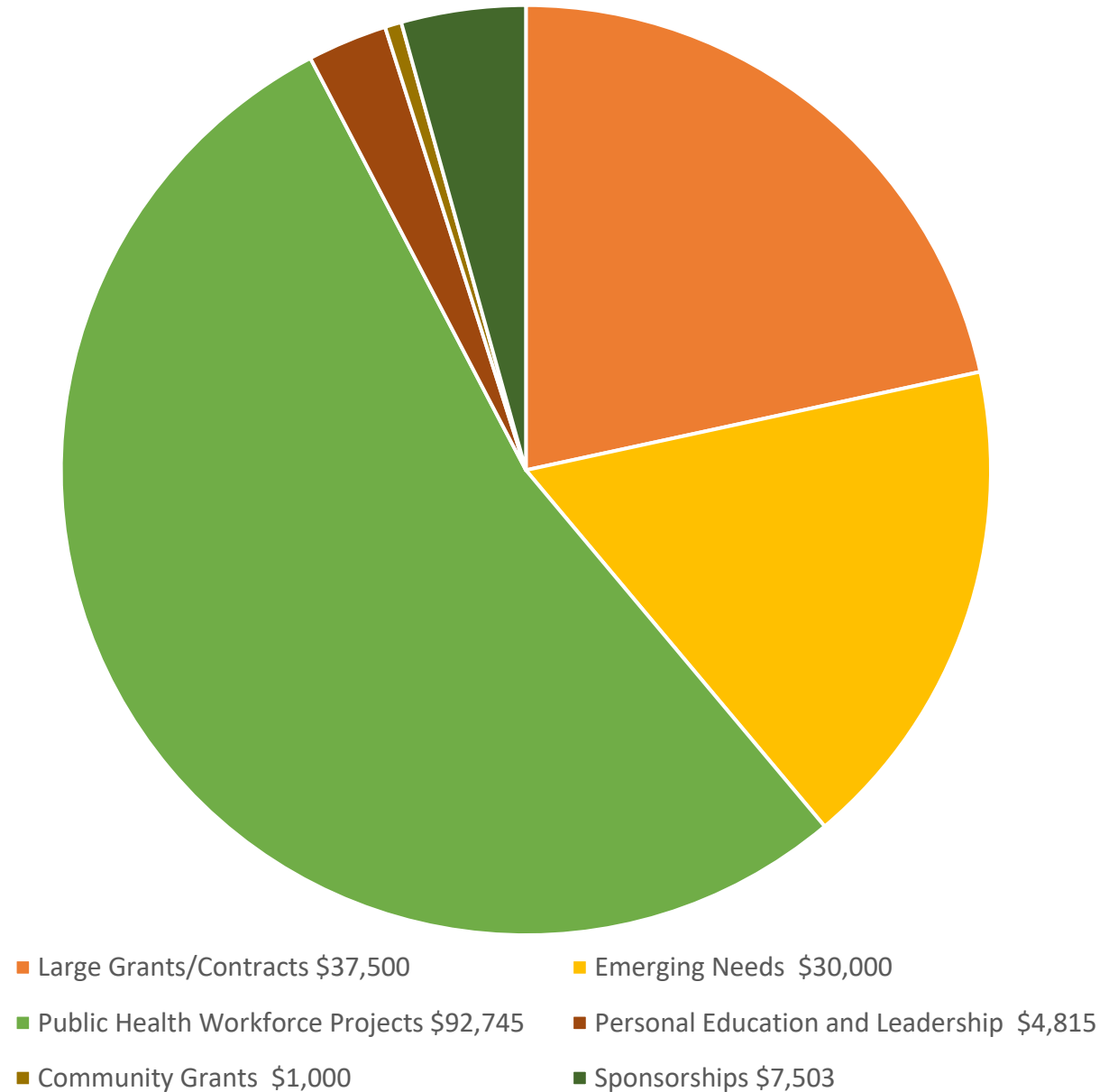
- UNH IOD: DSP Training
- Great Bay Community College: DSP Recruitment, Training, and Retention Project

\$4,815 Personal Education and Leadership

\$1,000 Community Inclusion Grants

\$7,503 Sponsorships

*One-time federal grant funding provided specific to expanding the public health workforce.



Grant Spotlight

Expanding the Public Health Workforce

The NHCDD was chosen to distribute federal Public Health Workforce Funding specific to addressing the public health workforce shortage. Through the request for proposal process, the NHCDD decided to grant funding to Great Bay Services and the University of NH/Institute on Disability to support their expanding public health workforce initiatives.

- **UNH/IOD** is developing and implementing a direct support professional apprenticeship training program.
- **Great Bay Services** is recruiting and hiring direct support professionals to work on public health needs.



Supported Decision Making

Disability Rights Center NH [Supported Decision-Making](#) initiative.

- Increase awareness of guardianship alternatives among the judiciary, New Hampshire Bar, service providers, school personnel, and families.
- Increase the use of supported decision-making agreements or other less restrictive alternatives.
- Promote integration of supported decision making into the system of service delivery and planning.



Task Force Project Highlight

The council supports state-wide initiatives aiming to bring about **community awareness** to direct support professionals and all paid and unpaid caregivers. Special thanks to the DSP Appreciation Taskforce, chaired by Michele Petersen.



Manchester DSP Appreciation Week Event

- Cross Street Banner displayed in downtown Manchester
- Proclamation by Mayor declaring DSP Appreciation Week
- Recognition of all statewide nominees for DSP and Home Provider of the Year Awards



The Moore Center
Creating opportunities for a good life.™



Sponsorship/Collaboration Highlights

Bringing Direct Workforce Awareness to Caregiver's Conference

The Council has been integral to bridging the gap between DSP workforce and paid and unpaid caregivers by facilitating the DSP Awards Planning Committee sponsorship for a DSP relevant workshop during the annual Caregiver's Conference.

This past presentation was The Dream Big training, developed by The NHCDD, ABLE NH, and People First of NH to address ableism in the workforce.



Employment Leadership Awards

- In collaboration with NH Vocational Rehabilitation and Business NH magazine.
- Awards 5 NH businesses who show initiative in developing inclusive workforce.

Dartmouth Health

Ma's Café

McLane Concord

Port City Pretzels

Potters House Bakery and Café



That's Inclusive! Podcast

Where we talk about disability and what it means to live a full life, engaging in our communities. What does that look like? And how can we work together to make our world a more inclusive place?

Topics include:

- Being a parent advocate
- Living with disability in NH
 - Growing up with parents with disabilities
- Healthy aging intersection of aging and disability
 - Relationships
 - Ableism and inspiration porn
 - Access to outdoor recreation
 - Taking part in our democracy



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Supported Publications

Disability RAPP

[The Disability RAPP - The latest in Research Advocacy Policy and Practice DRCNH](#)



In this issue we look at how the language we use when talking about disability affects the way we see ourselves and each other. Learn how the systemic use of ableist language has cultivated exclusionary policies and how the evolution of language can help us break down barriers to inclusion and foster a sense of dignity for people with disabilities.

The council collaborates with the Institute on Disability and the Disability Rights Center-NH on Disability RAPP magazine. This magazine encourages conversation around the barriers to inclusive living and how to address those barriers through retrospection and innovation.

Stepping Stones Magazine

[SteppingStones 22-23 \(zmags.com\)](#)



Stepping Stones Magazine is our annual publication that aims to show what authentic, integrated community living really looks like. This is done in collaboration with Business NH Magazine.

Key Partners

[Disability Rights Center-NH](#)

protects, advances, and strengthens the legal rights and advocacy interests of all people with disabilities

[ABLE NH](#)

advocates for the civil and human rights of children and adults with disabilities

[NH Family Voices](#)

works to assist parents and professionals in navigating the systems of care that deliver services

[Granite State Independent Living](#)

assist people with tools for living life independently, so they can change their lives for the better

[Institute on Disability/UNH](#)

provides a university-based focus for the improvement of knowledge, policies, and practices related to the lives of people with disabilities

[NH Governor's Commission on Disability](#)

provides technical assistance relative to the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and other disability laws

[Parent Information Center](#)

guides and encourage families in supporting the unique learning potential of their children, including children with disabilities

[Brain Injury Association](#)

works for a better future through brain injury prevention, education, advocacy, and support

[People First of NH/SALT](#)

multi-cultural champions of equality who advocate for people with disabilities to achieve their full potential

[NH Department of Education](#)

committed to helping students, parents, and educators meet the educational needs of each student

[Community Support Network, Inc.](#)

supports agencies that serve individuals with developmental disabilities and acquired brain disorders

[Private Provider Network](#)

represents private agencies that provide community-based supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and acquired brain disorders