

CAN Community Council Notes
 Monday, November 13, 2023, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
 Zoom Video Conference

<p>Call to Order Introductions, Announcements, and Citizen’s Communication</p>	<p>Attendees: Kelly Crook, Patricia Longoria, Donovan DePriest, Rachel Hampton, Nora Comstock</p> <p>Guests: Ara Merjanian, Olivia Gutierrez (ARC)</p> <p>Staff: Raul Alvarez, Carlos Soto</p> <p>Summary: Donovan called the meeting to order at 6:05pm with no quorum</p>
<p>Approval of minutes from the September 18, 2023 Meeting</p>	<p>The minutes were unable to be voted on due to lack of quorum. The September minutes will go up for a vote during the January meeting.</p>
<p>Community Council Chair’s Report</p>	<p>Summary: Donovan shared appreciation for Nora’s time on the Community Council as this will be her last meeting and she was presented with a certificate. He shared that we are going to hear a presentation from a person from ARC during today’s meeting. He stated he wants to get an ask from the speaker for the CAN Partners. The chairs are working to make sure that the Community Council still supports the CAN with their mental health initiatives. Donovan announced that this is his last meeting as chair and Patricia will take over as chair in 2024. He also stated that they are still in search of a vice chair and towards the end of the meeting there will be a discussion about recruitment and about what changes could increase attendance. He announced that we will be having an in-person retreat on December 15th from 1-3 pm at Austin Energy on Mueller and he encourages everyone to attend. We do not have a Community Council meeting in December to reserve time for Community Council members to attend the CAN Board Retreat.</p> <p>Questions and Comments: Kelly suggested asking Community Council prospects to attend the retreat to let them meet people and learn about CAN. Donovan suggested that Board members nominate people for the Community Council.</p>
<p>Executive Director’s Report</p>	<p>Summary: Raul stated that we didn’t have a board meeting this month but there will be a planning team meeting for Mental Health First Aid and the Regional Summit Planning Team. Those groups will develop questions for the CAN Board Retreat. The summit will be next year, at the end of February or March, depending on availability of venues and speakers. We will be looking at earn-and-learn opportunities and how that may help out the workforce and upskilling. We are going to create profiles of local organizations that have earn-and-learn opportunities. In terms of the Mental Health First Aid Initiative, we have trained 952 people in Mental Health First Aid. We launched the Spanish Mental Health Toolkit called “Pathways to Mental Healing” and Social Media Campaign. We brought in Leonor Vargas with Wisdom en Familias to create an interactive engagement module around the toolkit to do presentations on the toolkit. It has been well received. We finished the development part of the Arabic toolkit and are working to lay it out on a website. We haven’t found a lead</p>



	<p>partner to lead the development of a Vietnamese toolkit, so we are shifting gears and going to work on translating an existing Mental health toolkit into Vietnamese.</p> <p>Questions and Comments: Ara suggested publicizing the recommendations in the past mental health reports and since peer support was such a huge topic, maybe it could be one of the focuses during the retreat regarding workforce interest.</p>
<p>Building a Person-Centered Community Framework Update Presentation - ARC, Olivia Gutierrez slide deck</p>	<p>Summary: Olivia Gutierrez is a Director at the ARC and oversees the employment services program, adult education program, and marketing program. One of the main focuses of ARC is that they envision a future in which people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have the same opportunities as others to pursue full and productive lives. As a nonprofit organization they are committed to empowering people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families through compassionate care and innovative programs. They look to be the community’s most trusted and comprehensive resource for IDD services. The ARC is one of the oldest non-profits. They serve over 1000 individuals each year covering multiple counties. They have art, employment, family/ juvenile transition, class case management, guardianship, and adult case management programs.</p> <p>HOW HAS THE ARC UTILIZED STRATEGIES FROM THE PERSON-CENTERED COMMUNITY (PCC) FRAMEWORK?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We prioritize the safety and well-being of all individuals. 2. We provide a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment for employees and the individuals and families we serve. 3. We strive to identify and eliminate existing inequities, especially by race, ethnicity, and income. 4. We consider the impact that language and culture have on the effectiveness of programs and services. 5. We listen to our employees and the individuals and families we serve, and we give meaningful consideration to their input. 6. We base services on the needs, resources, lives, and schedules of the individuals and families we serve. 7. We build on a person’s strengths, resourcefulness, and capabilities and ensure that they are in the driver’s seat of determining what services or assistance they receive. 8. We help people find their voice so that they can advocate for themselves, their families, and their community. <p>WHAT PCC STRATEGIES DOES THE ARC UTILIZE THAT ISN’T REFLECTED IN THE FRAMEWORK?</p> <p>The ARC places a strong emphasis on fostering autonomy and independence among the individuals we support through their programs. Independence is paramount for those who are frequently marginalized or denied the chance to lead self-directed lives filled with purpose. Their programs not only promote autonomy but also impart the essential tools and strategies individuals require to effectively exercise their independence.</p>



OF THE STRATEGIES LISTED IN THE FRAMEWORK, WHICH ONE COULD WE HELP YOUR ORGANIZATION IMPLEMENT?

The Arc depends on contributions and community fundraising events to make these affordable services possible and to extend scholarship opportunities to community members in need.

HOW DID COVID IMPACT HOW YOU CAN FOCUS ON YOUR SERVICE POPULATION? WHAT KIND OF INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES DID YOU DEVELOP THAT YOU CAN CONTINUE USING?

The pandemic posed numerous challenges for the IDD community. Providing essential support became difficult because the majority of our services relied on in-person interactions. One of The Arc's innovative solutions was the transformation of the Art & Education Program into a Virtual Program for our studio attendees. For those who lacked the necessary technology, we supplied them with computers and art materials. This Virtual Program allowed individuals to maintain their social connections during this trying period which is crucial to maintain for the population we serve. To this day, The Arc continues to adapt and improve the Virtual Program to accommodate those who prefer not to leave the comfort and safety of their homes.

Comments and Questions: Kelly asked where they serve? Olivia answered that the class waiver is a Texas funded medical program. They can go anywhere where their services are needed in Texas.

Kelly stated that even amongst the kids that don't have IDD, it's hard getting them mental health services, she can imagine it's hard to get IDD kids and adults to verbalize what they are feeling. Olivia stated that that was a pre-pandemic challenge they encountered. Their employee's certification is important in identifying signs of mental health issues and advocating for their clients.

How do you work with the homeless population with IDD? Olivia answered that they have plenty of populations that have IDD. They work with ARCH that is a homeless center in Austin. They share referrals. There is room for development in that partnership.

Ara asked if there are employment barriers? Olivia answered that making sure the employment process is integrated is a huge key. Employers tend to want them to work in the warehouse or as custodians, which isn't ideal. People with IDD also tend to need job coaches and that can sometimes be a barrier. We also need to ensure that they are getting paid above minimum wage.

Nora asked how many IDD individuals are in Austin? Olivia stated a little above 100,000 or 1 in 4 individuals.

Nora asked how what they do work with what integral care does regarding IDD? Olivia answered that individuals go to Integral Care for IDD services and Integral Care will outsource services to organizations such as the ARC.



	<p>Nora asked how to improve the visibility of IDD individuals? Olivia answered that that is something they work on constantly through education. The more people know and understand, the more people accept. They may have a disability, but they don't have inability.</p> <p>Donovon asked how CAN would be able to support the ARC? Olivia answered that CAN could help through providing funding and event support and attendance (3-4 events a year and bringing people to the event).</p> <p>Donovon asked what resources would be beneficial? Olivia answered that transportation is a barrier in Austin and wheelchair accessible low-cost venues. Volunteers to come out to day programs and big events.</p>
2024 Community Council Recruitment and Meeting Structure	<p>Summary: Jelina shared the 2024 roster with demographic information. We will be starting with 10 people. Current Community Council members updated their demographic info. Jelina shared a recruitment flyer that shares what the Community Council is, what type of person we are looking for, what the community council has done in the past 8 years, time commitment, and the 2024 focus. Members helped edit the recruitment flyer by adding a link to the application, adding contact info to the application itself, and providing examples of what the Community Council does. Jelina shared a list of past brainstorming about who we would like to reach out to and how to do the recruitment.</p> <p>Regarding meeting structure, Kelly asked if we could change the meeting time. 6-8 gets late and 5-7 may be more palatable. Raul explained that since the Board went down to an hour, in person always makes quorum and virtual is always close to making quorum. Raul said 5:30-6:30 could be possible and doing some in person meetings, hybrid, like the board structure may be helpful. Donovan suggested doing in person and scaling down to an hour-hour and half and the virtual can be 2 hours. For in person meetings, Austin Energy could be a venue with good parking.</p> <p>Comments and Suggestions: Kelly asked for people to indicate a person that could come to meetings when they aren't able or who could replace them when they fall off. Donovan stated there is an age gap and a lack of men on the council. Kelly suggested reaching out to college advocacy groups.</p>
	<p>The meeting was adjourned at 8 pm</p>