

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Nebraskans with disabilities, especially those who are most vulnerable, will be free from harm and able to exercise the same rights, opportunities and choice available to all citizens in order to live fully integrated and culturally valued lives.

TO REALIZE THE VISION

Disability Rights Nebraska uses a combination of legal advocacy, public policy advocacy, citizen advocacy, self-advocacy and advocacy education to protect vulnerable people with disabilities, especially those who learn, live or work in isolated, segregated or congregated settings.

SUCCESS STORIES

School-to-Prison Pipeline Interrupted

Noah is a young boy with disabilities who was often restrained or secluded when he became disruptive. Teachers called the police when he acted out and a local judge sentenced him to nine years probation. We worked with Noah's mom and a probation officer to advocate for testing and a behavior plan, and to educate the people working with Noah about his disabilities. After testing was completed, the judge agreed to drop the probation. Noah is now attending school successfully.

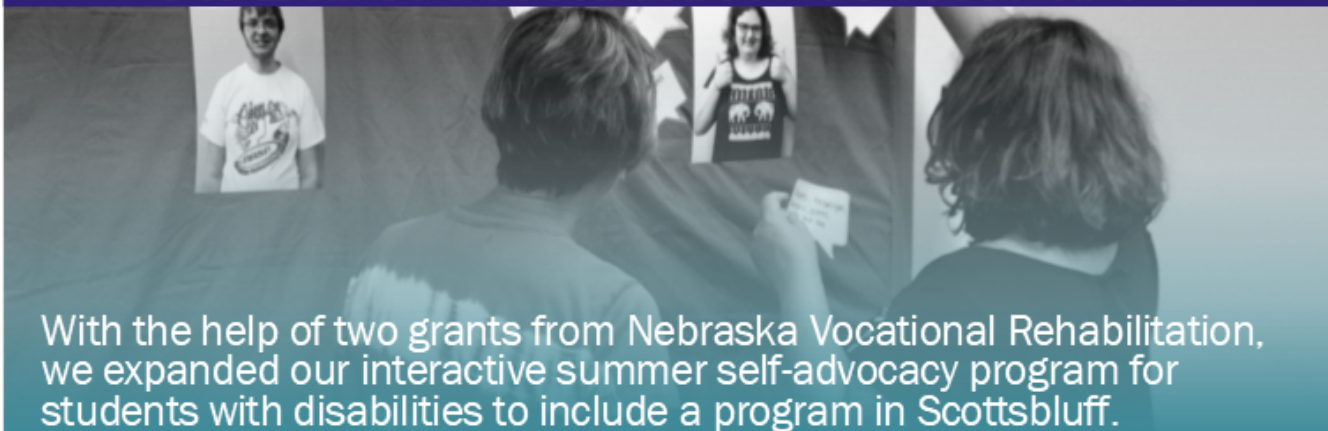
Janine Regains her Independence

A concerned staff person from the facility where Janine lived called to report that her guardian was stealing from her. Our investigation confirmed the allegations. We represented Janine in the guardianship proceedings and reached a settlement. The guardian resigned and agreed to pay back the stolen money. In addition, Janine's psychiatrist wrote a letter, stating she no longer needed a guardian and the guardianship was terminated. The money was put into a trust for her to use and Janine was able to live in the community again on her own.

VALUES-BASED PHILOSOPHY REVIVAL

Disability Rights Nebraska co-hosted the first PASSING workshop to be held in Nebraska in over 20 years. PASSING (Program Analysis of Service Systems' Implementation of Normalization Goals) looks at the quality of services and supports for people with disabilities according to the Social Role Valorization (SRV) theory. SRV theory aims to support marginalized people in gaining access to the same good things in life that people typically enjoy. The PASSING training encourages participants to think about how to improve services toward that end. The teams evaluated four sites in southeastern Nebraska: two adult day care programs, a group home, and an assisted living facility primarily for people with mental illness. Some Participants credit the training with helping them to see the lives and rights of people with disabilities more clearly.

SELF-ADVOCACY TRAINING FOR TRANSITIONING STUDENTS



With the help of two grants from Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation, we expanded our interactive summer self-advocacy program for students with disabilities to include a program in Scottsbluff.

LAY ADVOCACY FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Based on interest generated by the 2016 Inclusive Education Institute, we convened a work group of parents, providers, and advocates and crafted a proposal for an Inclusive Education Lay Advocacy Project. The project will provide education and information that empowers advocates and

families to understand their educational rights, negotiate the special education system, and effectively advocate for inclusive education. The proposal was submitted to the Woods Charitable Fund to begin the program in Lincoln. We also were approved for funding from the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities to extend the project into the Kearney area.

PUBLIC POLICY SUCCESS

In FY 2017, Disability Rights Nebraska tracked 9 High Priority Bills, 15 Medium Priority Bills, and 2 Medium Priority Resolutions.

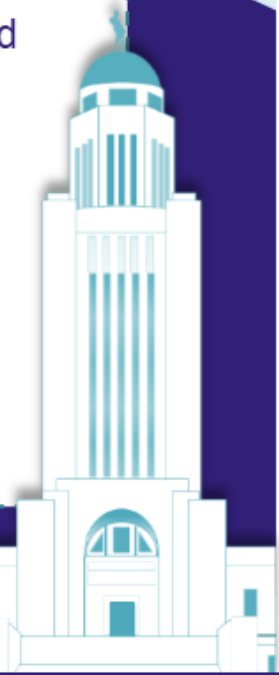
RESULTS

Three of the bills that Disability Rights Nebraska supported were adopted:

LB 147

LB 495

LB 333



LB 333

ELIMINATE THE STATE DISABILITY PROGRAM (OPPOSE)

LB 333 proposed to eliminate the State Disability Program, which is used to support people with disabilities during the last 6 months of their 12-month waiting period to qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance. We submitted a letter in opposition, arguing that this bill ultimately removes medical services and financial supports from people with disabilities. We also co-authored an editorial with the Arc of Nebraska and the Nebraska Association of Service Providers about these issues. The editorial was published in the Lincoln Journal Star and brought greater visibility to the disability community's concerns.

The bill was amended to remove the elimination of the State Disability Program and to add portions of LB 417 and LB 495, two bills designed to update language regarding supports for people with disabilities. We submitted a second letter on LB 333 when it was on General File, reiterating our opposition to eliminating the State Disability Program yet supportive of the amended portions of LB 417 and LB 495. LB 333 was successfully amended as we suggested and ultimately passed.

HIGHLIGHTS BY THE NUMBERS

839 Service Requests for Fiscal Year 2017

747 were information and referrals



11,370 Publications distributed by mail and through public venues

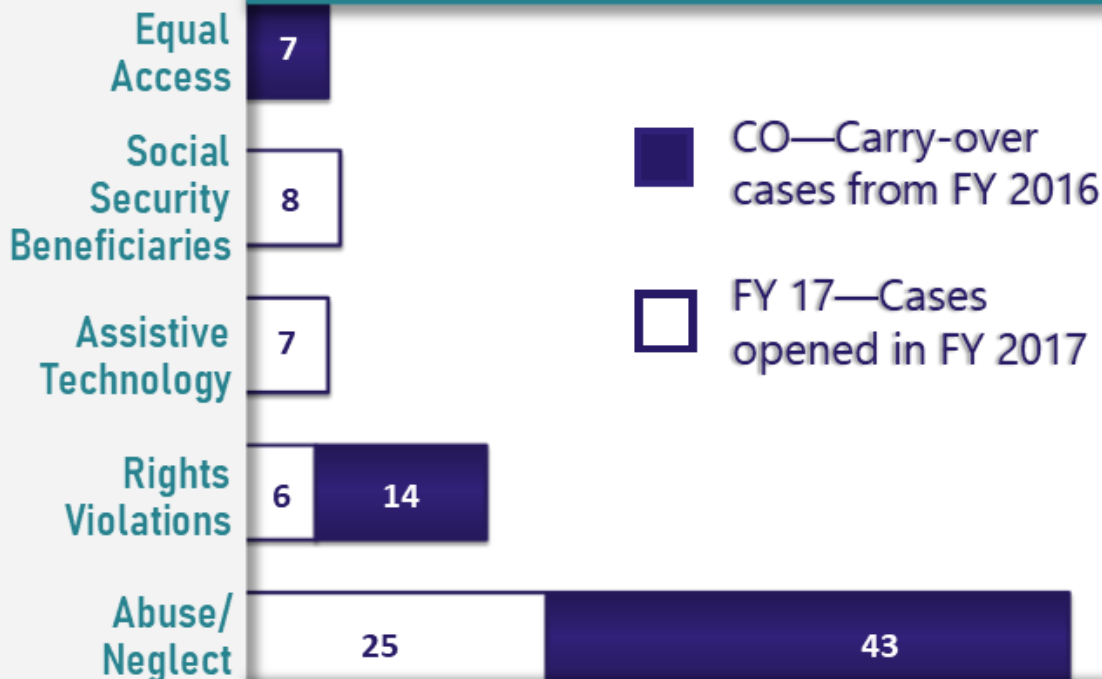
427 Spanish publications distributed by mail and through public venues

757

Individuals who received our training



92 TOTAL CASES



TRAINING & OUTREACH

Two trainings on least restrictive alternatives to full guardianship were presented to over 120 attorneys and law students.

Two trainings on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) were presented to 138 students at the Transition Conference sponsored by Educational Service #13 in Scottsbluff. The trainings were "Identifying My Rights Under 504" and "What Should I Disclose in the Workplace?"



Two webinars, produced in conjunction with PTI, gave information regarding the use of restraint and seclusion in Nebraska schools. They explained how restraint /seclusion affect students with disabilities and what families can do when restraint/seclusion are used on their students.

Gave a presentation about SSI, SSDI and retirement benefits to an audience of 67 people at the Intercultural Senior Center in Omaha. The presentation was delivered in three languages: English, Spanish and Karen. The Center provided interpreters, and our staff answered questions individually after the presentation.

Participated in the planning committee and staffed a booth for the Circle of the Bluffs Pow Wow in Scottsbluff.

PROTECTION & ADVOCACY FOR VOTING ACCESS

Conducted a voter registration drive among mental health consumers at the Lincoln Regional Center (LRC) prior to the November 2016 general election. We registered a total of 26 new voters, including two LRC staff members.



Visited and analyzed 69 polling places in Sarpy, Douglas, Adams and Lincoln counties to determine if they were accessible to people with disabilities on Election Day Nov. 8, 2016. Issues identified included: lack of privacy for the AutoMARK voting machine; a locked wheelchair lift; a sporadically -working elevator; and a lack of signage for the accessible entrance to the polling site. The information was reported to the Secretary of State's office.

Took part in Mock Elections hosted by consumers at Opportunity House in Hastings and Goodwill in Grand Island prior to the regular election. Two volunteers from the Disability Rights Nebraska Board of Directors acted as mock candidates promoting their views on different issues. Forty-eight attendees learned how to find more information about candidates and issues in order to make decisions in line with their own values through the interactive event.

MEDIA BY THE NUMBERS



10,472 visitors to website

16 new blog entries posted

1,000 followers on Facebook

5 video vignettes produced

Board of Directors

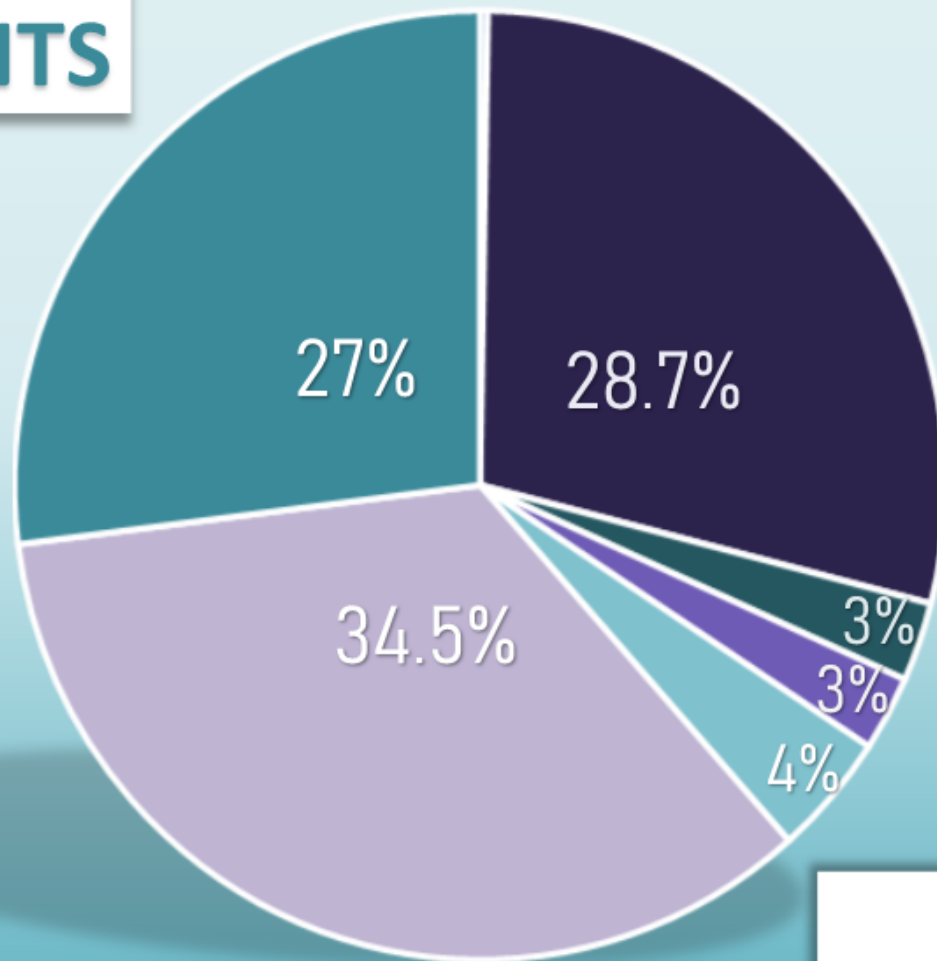
Mary Angus, Chairperson, Omaha • Carla Lasley, Vice-Chairperson, Lincoln • Lisa Alexander, Secretary, Lincoln • John Lakey, Treasurer, Kearney • Pat Cottingham, Lincoln • China Dixon, North Platte • Seamus Kelly, Omaha • Candi Koenig, Kearney • Claude Louishomme, Kearney • Mary McHale, Omaha • William Voss, Scottsbluff • Michael Warner, Omaha

Staff Members



Eric Evans, Chief Executive Officer • Judy Sinner, Fiscal and Human Resources Director • Tania Diaz, Legal Services Director • John Murphy, Values-Based Program Director • Brad Meurrens, Public Policy Director • Jennifer Monjaras, Public Policy/Consultative Services Secretary • Sharon Ohmberger, Communications Director • Jillian Ward, Fiscal and Operations Assistant • Tess Barnes, Administrative Secretary • Dianne DeLair, Senior Attorney • Mike Elsken, Attorney • Brian Craig, Attorney • Molly Klocksins, Case Advocate • Mindy Baird, Community Outreach Disability Advocate • Yorleny Diaz-Sullivan, Intake Specialist • Karen Masterson, Case Advocate • Pat Nicholson, Legal Assistant • Adrienne Loutsch, Law Clerk • Stephany Maness, Law Clerk

TOTAL CLIENTS



**FY
2017**

PAVA	PAIMI	PABSS	PAAT	PATBI	PAIR	PADD	Other	Mult*	Total
2	213	20	19	31	256	200	0	-9	723

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

PADD: Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Developmental Disabilities

PAIMI: Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness

PAVA: Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access

PATBI: Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Traumatic Brain Injury

PAAT: Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology

U.S. Department of Education

PAIR: Protection and Advocacy for Individual Rights

U.S. Social Security Administration

PABSS: Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security

State of Nebraska

Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health

FINANCIAL REPORT

Support and Revenue	
US Dept of Health & Human Services	\$ 913,465.00
US Dept of Education	\$ 151,763.00
Rehab. Services Admin of the US Dept of Ed	\$ 44,845.00
US Social Security Administration	\$ 133,878.00
NE Dept of Health & Human Services	\$ 484,750.00
Dept of Justice	\$ 2,500.00
Local Grants/Individual Donations	\$ 9,793.00
Nebraska Commission on Public Advocacy	\$ 59,718.00
Interest & Other Income	\$ 6,715.00
Total Revenue	\$ 1,807,427.00

Expenses	
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 927,554.00
Operating Expenses	\$ 148,858.00
Travel Expenses	\$ 17,795.00
Educational Expenses	\$ 49,508.00
Contractual Services	\$ 73,832.00
Citizen Advocacy Support	\$ 292,274.00
Total Program Services Expenses	\$ 1,509,821.00

Fundraising	\$ 20,387.00
Management & Administration	\$ 255,381.00
Total Support Services Expenses	\$ 275,768.00

Total Support & Revenue	\$ 1,807,427.00
Less Total Expenses	\$ 1,785,589.00
Change in Net Assets	\$ 21,838.00

Net Assets, beginning of year	\$ 82,675.00
Net Assets, end of year	\$ 104,513.00