



# 2021 Annual Report

## ELEVATING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



**Michigan  
Developmental  
Disabilities Council**



**“Through the awarding of grants and working with self-advocates and allies around the state of Michigan, we continue to be a force for positive change in the lives of people with I/DD. Our work supports new and meaningful opportunities for growth and capacity building for people with I/DD and their families to create experiences that lead to greatly enriched lives.”**

***~Vendella M. Collins, Executive Director***

**“While in the middle of a global pandemic it has been more important than ever to assure that the council remains focused on serving individuals with I/DD as well as their support systems. Through training, grants, and advocacy, the council has focused on items such as access to medical care, voting rights, positions on masking and vaccination efforts, as well as, the intersectionality of disability, racial, economic, and gender equity. The Council will continue to move forward on topics that can impact the quality of life for those with I/DD.”**

*~ Jeremy Murphy, Council Chair*



# COUNCIL ACHIEVEMENTS

## SUMMARY

This past year has been one of ongoing challenges. While the COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect our work, the Council not only continued, but expanded its initiatives to elevate people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) in our state. In doing so, much emphasis was placed on helping people get information, and in supporting traditionally marginalized populations while addressing systemic disparities. The focus was to elevate people with (I/DD) to lead the way to a more inclusive, integrated Michigan. Our new five-year plan will continue that work as we journey through the next five years.



## ACTIONS

**The council grantees and staff continued to meet goals and objectives throughout the fiscal year. It continued to get information out virtually on the following topics:**

**COVID in Michigan**

**Anti-Racism**

**Sexuality Education**

**Intersectionality**

**Supported Decision-Making**

**Direct Support Professional Advocacy**

**ABLE Accounts**

**Improved Person-Centered Planning**

**Voting Rights**

**Healthy Equity**

**Taking Self-Advocacy to a National Level**

**Employment Tools**

**CoP Learning Forums**

**Family Summit**

**Increased Collaborations**

**Information dissemination continued with new educational opportunities and fact sheets:**

**Vaccination Information**

**Staying Mentally Healthy During the Pandemic**

**Spanish Translation of three documents**

**ADVOCACY**

**CAPACITY  
BUILDING**

**SYSTEMS  
CHANGE**

# GOAL 1: EMPLOYMENT



**“The workshop entitled, A Future That Includes Employment, gave participants comprehensive coverage of the subject. The worksheets and the breakout sessions were the best part. I not only gained information, but also the confidence to effectively advocate on behalf of my child”**

*~Bijaya Hans, Participant of A Future That Includes Employment*

- **159 individuals with I/DD participated in activities this year**
- **150 people were educated through Council systemic change initiatives**
- **9 Council efforts were implemented to transform fragmented approaches into a coordinated and effective system**
- **1 promising practice supported through Council activities**
- **1 best practice supported through Council activities**

## GOAL 2: TRANSITIONS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN



**“The healthy relationship class has helped me make choices in my own relationship. It makes me feel good to teach others.”**

***~Rachel Gerutta, Peer Educator***

**“I'm so overwhelmed with how much this has assisted Rachel with advocating for herself, making very difficult choices in her own relationship, and the enjoyment she has with teaching others in healthy relationship classes.”**

***~Debbie Gerutta, Rachel's Mother***

- **699 people trained or educated through Council systemic change initiatives**
- **353 individuals with I/DD in project activities for the year**
- **102 persons with I/DD who reported increasing their advocacy as a result of Council work**
- **53 family members in project activities for the year**
- **1 best practice supported through Council efforts**
- **1 promising practice implemented**
- **1 Council efforts that transformed fragmented approaches into a coordinated and effective system**
- **1 promising and/or best practice implemented**

## GOAL 3: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



**"As an African American woman with a developmental disability, it has been a pleasure working with the Michigan Developmental Disability Council. It is imperative for Developmental Disabilities Councils to, consider the issues that affect ALL I/DD communities in their state and offer leadership opportunities to residents who know the challenges first-hand."**

*~Tameka Citchen-Spruce, Activist*

- **80 people trained or educated through Council systemic change initiatives**
- **22 total number of individuals with I/DD in project activities for the year**
- **16 total number of family members with I/DD in project activities for the year**
- **8 people participating in advocacy activities**

## GOAL 4: PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY



**“The State Self–Advocacy Action Team meetings bring together self-advocates from around the state to act on policies and legislation that would impact people with disabilities. Our efforts include letters to lawmakers and policy officials as well as drafting position statements. As a person with a disability and lived experience, I love to advocate for people with Developmental Disabilities and Mental illness. I enjoy writing to, meeting with, and talking with Representatives to address problems and barriers we face. It is our right and only fair that people with Developmental Disabilities and Mental Illness are treated the same as people.”**

*~Sharon Hall, SAM Board Member*

- **1253 family members in project activities**
- **1002 family members participating in advocacy activities**
- **696 people trained or educated through Council systemic change initiatives**
- **130 individuals with I/DD in project activities who say they are better able to say what they want, and are participating in advocacy activities**
- **15 Council supported systems change activities with organizations actively involved**
- **8 policy, procedure, statute or regulation changes improved as a result of systems change**



## GOAL 5: SELF-DETERMINATION



**“Peer Mentoring gives those served a sense of hope and possibility that, ‘if my mentor has met similar challenges in their past, and overcome them, maybe I can as well’.”**

*~Adam Furhman, Peer Mentor Coordinator, MORC Inc.*

- **1031 people trained/educated via Council systemic change initiatives**
- **131 individuals with I/DD in project activities; 74% report increasing their advocacy as a result**
- **131 family members in project activities for the year**
- **7 individuals with I/DD and 17 family members report being a member or leader of a cross disability coalition, policy/advisory board, or governing body**
- **12 Council supported systems change activities with organizations actively involved**
- **6 promising practices created, 7 supported through Council activities**
- **3 policy and/or procedures created or changed**
- **2 policy, procedure, statute or regulation changes improved and 2 implemented as a result of systems change**
- **1 best practice created and 2 supported through Council activities**

# GOAL 6: SELF-ADVOCACY



**“Getting this Betty Williams Champion of Equal Opportunities award is important to me because self-advocates need to be more persistent when it comes to fighting for issues that are important to them. I think more self-advocates with disabilities need to be in the driver’s seat when it comes to issues that face them because we know how the issues affect our lives. We can give personal stories to our lawmakers which shows how issues affect us.”**

*~Sarah Carmany, Vice Chair of Self Advocates of Michigan*

- **SAM Public Relations Committee launched a new website and revamped their social media presence**
- **SAM hosted virtual Community Conversations which were open to attendees statewide**
- **SAM Public Policy Committee worked on numerous policy and legislative initiatives**
- **SAM Board Members participated in national Self-Advocacy calls**
- **SAM Board adopted a new 5-year Strategic plan**
- **SAM Membership Committee updated all membership materials and the Board By-laws**

## GOAL 7: COMMUNITY INCLUSION AND EDUCATION



**“First, I would like to thank you for putting together this program. I personally, have learned so much from you, the speakers and, the other participants in this class. You are an amazing advocate for all disabled people. As a father of a disabled son, I have always felt I was in the background to my wife, Penny, when it came to our son’s Drew’s care. These last 8 months have given me a sense of direction on how I can find my own niche to help Drew, other disabled people, and their families. Thank you again for your strong guidance and support.”**

*~Kyle Canada: Participant in Fathers and Other Male Role Models Initiative*

- **1771 persons trained or educated through Council systemic change initiatives**
- **609 individuals with I/DD and 248 family members involved in project activities**
- **14 individuals with I/DD and 10 family members are leaders of a cross-disability coalition, policy board, advisory board, or governing body**
- **3 policies/procedures created/changed**
- **4 promising practices created, 8 supported through Council activities**
- **3 best practices created**

**“It has been a pleasure to collaborate with the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC). They work hard, get the job done, and are continuing to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities. The self-advocacy movement’s saying, “Nothing about us without us” is embedded in the Council’s values and actions. Every part of their three-year sexuality education initiative in collaboration with Elevatus Training has had self-advocates involved. They have been part of planning and implementation, to teaching on teams as peer educators. This has improved the lives of people with disabilities. These peer educators continue to grow in their own knowledge and skills as well as reach other people with developmental disabilities with information. What better way to elevate people than to support them to become leaders in their own movement?”**

**~Katherine McLaughlin, CEO of Elevatus Training**

**ELEVATUS TRAINING**

LEADERS IN SEXUALITY AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY



# COLLABORATIONS

**“Advocacy Matters! Thanks to a recent collaboration with the DD Council, MMI was able to offer training for members of our team to learn more about the importance of advocacy. This training provided the opportunity for MMI to learn about creating a system of change within our industry and better support those that we serve. The DD Council and MMI have met monthly over the course of the last year to share ideas and focus on ways we can all continue to lead the way to inclusive communities. MMI is grateful for this training collaboration, and we would encourage others to partner with the DD Council to offer this opportunity to participate in this thought provoking and interactive training.”**

**~Sue Hendrix, Director of Services-MMI**





**With my Allies for Change colleagues, Dessa Cosma and Dionardo Pizaña, I have had the honor of facilitating racial equity trainings for Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council members and staff as they deepen and strengthen their commitment to serving a racially diverse population of people with disabilities in every realm of their organizational mission. It has been a privilege to be on this journey with MDDC for the past four years and to witness MDDC's courageous, steadfast commitment to addressing the needs of underserved communities and to nurturing leaders who are passionate about racial equity and disability justice.**

**~Melanie S. Morrison, Allies for Change Executive Director**



# COLLABORATIONS

Multiple groups statewide participated in collaboratives to advance the rights of individuals with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. A group of advocacy organizations and individuals advocated publicly for vaccine priority for people with disabilities who were especially vulnerable to COVID-19 infection. The state organized a “Protect Michigan Commission” subgroup, which the DD Act partners participated in to address messaging issues for supporting vaccination for PWD. They attended regular meetings of the Protect Michigan Commission and offered information and advice to state officials on helping people with disabilities. The partners also worked with advocates to quicken access to vaccines for PWD, moving eligibility up two weeks statewide in the spring of 2021.



**Sharon Milberger, Director  
Developmental Disabilities Institute**



**Michelle Roberts, Executive Director  
Disability Rights Michigan**

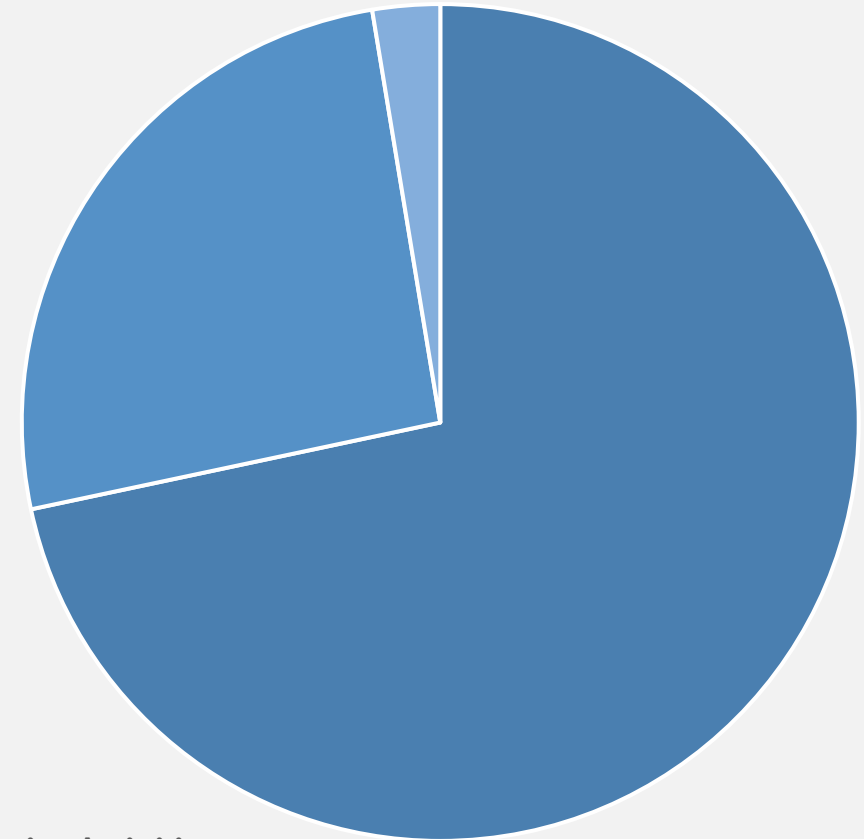


**Vendella Collins, Executive Director  
Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council**



# COUNCIL 2021 SPENDING

<b>Community Activities: (72%)</b>	<b>\$1,375,207</b>
<b>Program Management: (26%)</b>	<b>\$493,511</b>
<b><u>Federal Share to Designated to State Agency: (2%)</u></b>	<b><u>\$50,000</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$1,918,719</u></b>



- Community Activities
- Program Management
- Federal Share to Designated State Agency



# COUNCIL MEMBERS AND STAFF

## Current Council Members:

<b>Jeremy Murphy</b>	<b>Chairperson, Family Member</b>
<b>Jeanne Anderson Tippet</b>	<b>MDE, Office of Special Education</b>
<b>Lonnie Barnett</b>	<b>MDHHS, Children's Special Healthcare Services</b>
<b>Ericka Fletcher</b>	<b>Self-Advocate</b>
<b>Bonnie González</b>	<b>Self-Advocate</b>
<b>Steve Johnson</b>	<b>Family Member</b>
<b>Jaime Junior</b>	<b>Self-Advocate</b>
<b>Beth Kholer</b>	<b>Family Member</b>
<b>Dennis Matthews</b>	<b>Family Member</b>
<b>Mark McWilliams</b>	<b>Disability Rights Michigan</b>
<b>Sharon Milberger</b>	<b>WSU, Michigan Developmental Disabilities Institute</b>
<b>Blake Perry</b>	<b>Self-Advocates of Michigan</b>
<b>Melissa Potter</b>	<b>LEO, Michigan Rehabilitation Services</b>
<b>Suzanne Proctor</b>	<b>Color of Autism Foundation, Non-Profit</b>
<b>Price Pullins</b>	<b>MDHHS, BHDDA, Title V &amp; XIX</b>
<b>Bradley Rivard</b>	<b>Family Member</b>
<b>Kelly Rockwell</b>	<b>MI Work Matters, Non-Profit</b>
<b>Sheryl Stumbaugh</b>	<b>Self-Advocate</b>
<b>Marisa VanZile</b>	<b>Family Member</b>
<b>Scott Wamsley</b>	<b>MDHHS, Aging and Adult Services</b>
<b>Sarah Winslow</b>	<b>Family Member</b>

## Staff Positions and Contact Information:



<b>Vendela M. Collins</b> Executive Director	<a href="mailto:collinsv1@michigan.gov">collinsv1@michigan.gov</a>
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<b>Renee Hall</b> Advisor to Self-Advocates of Michigan	<a href="mailto:hallr24@michigan.gov">hallr24@michigan.gov</a>

# MORE WAYS TO ACCESS THE COUNCIL

*Our community includes everyone, reach out when you need information about or for, people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*



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**TDD - (517) 335-3171**

**Website: [www.michigan.gov/ddcouncil](http://www.michigan.gov/ddcouncil)**

**Facebook: [www.facebook.com/MIDDCouncil](http://www.facebook.com/MIDDCouncil)**



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