



A family-based organization

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Chapter Bulletin

Number 4

TO: Board of Governors
Chapter Presidents
Chapter Executive Directors

FROM: Laura J. Kennedy, President
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DATE: September 7, 2016

RE: Summer Update

As summer comes to a close, we would like to update you on the myriad of activities since NYSARC's Spring Board of Governors meeting. Our Strategic Workgroups made up of Board of Governor members, Chapter Executives, and State Office leaders have been working through the summer on these initiatives that will be discussed in greater detail at the Fall Regional Meetings.

Many of the projects that we are working on this year come in response to the continued shifts in the economic and public policy environment impacting NYSARC. Rate rationalization, the onset of value based payment systems, managed care readiness, and shifts in models of service delivery necessitate that we combine the strength of our family-based values with operational systems that ensure our future viability.

Our family-based leadership drives important imperatives. For example, our Governmental Affairs Committee is focused on expanding family involvement in our grassroots advocacy and our litigation workgroup continues our pursuit of a lawsuit that will mandate the fair treatment of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. At the same time, we are leaders of the statewide bFair2DirectCare Coalition that is fighting for better wages for our staff.

Even as we fight for these vital changes, we must build the systems that help NYSARC become more cost effective, identify efficiencies, and enhance the quality of our services. This has driven our workgroup projects in Chapter Visioning, Governance Reform, Chapter Viability, and Branding.

We hope this short bulletin is helpful in keeping you informed and hope you can join us for one of the Fall Regional meetings. Given the enormous challenges our

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organization faces and the various approaches being developed to position us well, now, and for the future, it is hoped that many local Chapter board of directors, NYSARC Board of Governors members, and Chapter family members can attend one of the four Fall Regional Meetings. The Saturday meetings will all be held from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm.

Central Region – Saturday, September 17 – Onondaga County Chapter

Southeast Region – Saturday, September 17 – Westchester County Chapter

Northeast Region – Saturday, September 24 – Saratoga County Chapter

Western Region – Saturday, September 24 – Monroe County Chapter

Here is an update on the Strategic Workgroups:

Chapter Visioning Workgroup - The Chapter Visioning Workgroup, led by Senior Vice President Dr. John Kowalczyk and Senior Associate Executive Director for Chapter Relations Bhakar Singh, has developed a Chapter strategic assessment tool. This tool is a way for a Chapter to evaluate its strengths and vulnerabilities. Complementing the assessment tool, the workgroup has developed an environmental assessment of the economic and policy climate that we face in 2016. Together, the environmental assessment and Chapter strategic assessment tool give Chapters engaged in strategic planning new resources to help develop future strategies. The workgroup continues meeting to discuss how the future environment will impact NYSARC and potential strategies for success and a pilot program with several Chapters is underway.

Governance Workgroup - The Governance Workgroup, led by Immediate Past Chair Jack Schuppenhauer and General Counsel Kate Jerian, has surveyed the Board of Governors and Chapter Executives as part of developing recommendations for changes in NYSARC Governance.

The workgroup presented its recommendations and the reasons for change to the Executive Committee, which were supported. A webinar was held on August 24 and is available for board members to review. We encourage everyone to review the proposal and forward questions you have to Kate Jerian.

The proposal will be further discussed at the upcoming Fall Regional Meetings. The recommended changes are consistent with the results of the survey and include adjusting the size of the Board of Governors, having the Board of Governors meet more frequently, increasing the number of regions to foster regional participation and advocacy, and other significant reforms.

After receiving feedback on the draft recommendations, final recommendations will be presented to the Board of Governors for consideration at NYSARC's Fall Meeting.

Chapter Viability/Turnaround Funding Workgroup -- The Workgroup, led by Treasurer Lori Martindale and Chief Financial Officer John Sherman, has been working to establish a framework to evaluate the success of Chapter financial sustainability plans. The framework should establish quantitative limits

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and goals and timelines for financial viability/turnaround of challenged Chapters. The challenge for the workgroup is, as always, acting early enough to reduce or limit unrecoverable structural debt. The recommendations will include principles for evaluating the investment (debt) required by NYSARC or a unifying Chapter into a challenged Chapter turnaround. Finally, a methodology for allocation of any NYSARC responsible debt is being developed.

Branding Workgroup -- The Branding Workgroup, led by Executive Committee member Pat Campanella and Assistant Executive Director for Member Services and Special Projects Susan Brandt, has surveyed the Board of Governors, Chapter Presidents, Executive Directors, and Public Relations Directors as part of developing recommendations for either maintaining or updating the NYSARC brand. Under consideration is adopting the DBA of "The Arc of New York" or "The Arc NYSARC." Ten NYSARC Chapters have formally rebranded with The Arc brand, with more in various stages of rebranding using the national organization's brand. Currently, twenty-eight Chapters use ARC/Arc/The Arc in some way as part of their local branding. The discussion will focus on whether NYSARC should move forward with linking New York's brand with The Arc of the United States. Recommendations on how Chapters link with the State Organization brand will also be discussed. Final recommendations will be presented to the Board of Governors at the fall meeting.

Litigation Workgroup - The Litigation Workgroup, co-chaired by Angelo Aponte (NYC) and Randy Schaal, (Madison-Cortland) and led by NYSARC General Counsel Kate Jerian, has met several times to develop potential pathways for litigation. This has proven to be a complex task, with many alternative courses of action to be considered. The Workgroup has made great progress in finding interested parties and allies and have since formed the "Keeping the Promise Family Coalition." This coalition has secured pro bono legal counsel with a large New York law firm. The Workgroup will update the Board of Governors at the Fall Meeting, but will not be ready to present specific litigation for consideration at that time.

Governmental Affairs Committee -- The Governmental Affairs Committee has developed a Legislative Platform for 2017, which will be presented at the Fall Regional Meetings. The platform continues NYSARC's short-term advocacy on all fronts, as the organization develops its long-term strategies necessary for success. The agenda is anchored by the need for additional residential opportunities, workforce funding, and reforms to rate rationalization. In addition, NYSARC continues advocating for preschool funding, transformational investment, Justice Center reforms, and workshop/employment transformation.

In addition to increasing NYSARC's advocacy strength, the Governmental Affairs Committee has been charged by the NYSARC President with leading family and member outreach to broaden stakeholder engagement.

#bFair2DirectCare – The Governor and State Legislature need to make the workforce and wages a priority and they need to hear why they must act from thousands of New Yorkers. You should have already received the #bFair2DirectCare Toolkit containing sample letters to the editor and Gov. Cuomo, a Direct Support Professionals Week resolution, social media tips, message points for visiting with your local legislator, and other helpful documents. We are asking each Chapter to participate in six grassroots activities between now and the end of October so that the voices of families, staff,

volunteers, and program participants -- more than 100,000 strong -- are heard. We need your help so the Governor and State Legislature know that they must act on behalf of thousands of New Yorkers.

Monday we celebrated Labor Day and with that, our organization salutes the thousands of staff members throughout NYSARC that help people with developmental disabilities live the lives they chose. With that in mind, we as a family governed organization will need to make the right decisions at the right time to ensure the resources needed to support the great mission of this great organization.

We look forward to seeing all of you at the Regional Meetings this month and the Fall Meeting in October. There is much work ahead of us.

LJK/SK/baf

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