

Final Report for Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council About Self-Advocacy Mentoring Grant

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Submitted to the Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council
Barbara Monaghan, Chairperson
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From July 2016 to June 2017, the Developmental Disabilities Council contracted with Wolfe Consulting to provide mentoring support to the Delaware chapter of People First, a self-advocacy group that is led by individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities. The grant was developed because this group hit a few barriers moving forward, utilizing state and federal funds, and dividing the line between staff responsibilities and member responsibilities. Wolfe Consulting was selected because the CEO has been a self - advocate for over 35 years, and has had 30 years of professional experience in disability advocacy and research. Below is an outline of what occurred between Wolfe Consulting and Delaware People First.

- Number of meetings provided mentor support: ten
- Number of instances when of individual support provided support outside of meeting:
 - I provided outside support six times during the grant process. The areas are as follows:
 - There was not a method of communication between staff and treasurer. This made it very difficult to complete Financial reports to the proper funding authorities because there's always two different balances in the account.
 - We attempted to work out a communication system; however, the staff of people first was not available for the meetings between the treasurer, President, and myself.
 - When the staff purchased items for people first, there was never a communication between people first members and staff.
 - Attempts made to meet with the staff outside of meetings, but staff never attempted to return emails or phone calls.
- Dates and locations of meetings:
 - July 26, 2016 – Easter Seals
 - August 23, 2016 – Easter seals
 - September 26, 2016 – Easter seals
 - October 25, 2016 – Easter Seals
 - November 29, 2016 – Easter Seals
 - December 20, 2016 – Easter Seals
 - January 24, 2017 – Easter Seals
 - February 28, 2017 – Easter Seals
 - May 23, 2017 – Easter seals
 - June 27, 2017 -- Easter Seals
- Number of individuals who attended meetings:
 - July 26, 2016 – 25 people attended the meeting. This was my first meeting so I was not sure who was new and who not new.
 - August 22, 2016 – 20 people attended the meeting. Four were visitors.
 - September 26, 2016 – 20 people attended the meeting. Two were new members.
 - October 25, 2016 – 23 people attended. One was a potential new member.
 - November 29, 2016 -- 17 people attended. No new visitors or members
 - December 20, 2016 – 10 people attended. There were no new members or visitors.
 - January 24, 2017 – 25 people attended. Four visitors and one new member
 - February 28, 2017 – 24 people attended. No new members or visitors.
 - May 23, 2017 – 15 people attended. No new members or visitors.
 - June 27, 2017 – 10 people attended. Go do members or visitors
- Diversity of group:

- Approximately 75% of the members were Caucasian There was one Hispanic American and the rest were African-American. In addition, about half the membership was female. The leadership roles changed. In July, Bill Monoghan was the president; Tommy Fields was the vice president; Tina Fields was the secretary, and there was no treasurer. Leadership changed in January. Tommy Fields became president, Bill Monoghan became treasurer, Joseph Merritt was vice president, and Barbara Monoghan became secretary. All The meetings were in New Castle. There was not much emphasis on cultural or linguistic training. Everyone called home New Castle County. Everyone his or her own apartment or home.
- There were no new policies created. We did try but the staff member would tell the president between meetings that the policies will not help. We did use Roberts’s Rules Of Order. The training materials will be sent to you next.
- Challenges encountered
 - The largest challenge we faced was working with the staff person. She controlled the meetings and did not give the members a chance to make decision. She would either talk over the members or discuss it with the president between meetings. Another challenge was getting people to pay attention. People will talk over each other and not listen to the president, or they would be using their phones, etc. nothing really got done at the meetings.
 - The secretaries took minutes by tape recorder and there were no written minutes. The staff did not take notes either. I emphasized the importance of written notes. I was the only one that took notes.
 - Easter Seals provided conference room space for free for several months. In November, they wanted to charge People First \$60 per month. When I inquired why, they said they couldn’t keep providing free space. It was suggested to find another venue, but no one could agree. In addition, the treasurer and staff could not agree on the final monthly balance. Paying 60 dollars per month is a risk until the communication between staff and officers is resolved.

The contract ended July 2017. According to members and officers, they want the mentoring contract through Wolfe Consulting to continue. Because many issues are unresolved and there is a relationship of mutual trust and respect between Wolfe Consulting and Delaware People First, this is highly recommended. There are many issues that need to be resolved so Delawareans with disabilities can have the same access as their nondisabled peers. The most effective method to achieve this goal is a well - trained group of self-advocates, a major goal of Wolfe Consulting.