

DDS WEST REGION ADVISORY COUNCIL

MINUTES

NOVEMBER 8, 2012

Ella Grasso Center, Stratford, CT

In attendance: *Cindy Stramandinoli, Mickey Herbst, Karleen Cradock, Arlene Steinfeld, Gil Kellersman*

Absent: *Lisa Schwab, Laurette Shrage*

Fritz Gorst - Regional Director Announcements

Budget - Fritz did a review of the FY13 budget; going over our current status and would be waiting to see if any of the deficits would affect the West Region and DDS overall.

We discussed the effects of Hurricane Sandy and how DDS and providers fared through the ordeal. Not surprisingly, with this storm hitting harder on the shoreline, we actually had less power outages and less relocation of consumers than we had last fall for Hurricane Irene in the late October snow storm. The one major casualty in the West was the Martin House in Norwalk. The consumers were evacuated the Sunday before the storm to an apartment at the Lower Fairfield Center. The home was flooded with the whole front lawn and seawall washed away. We are assessing the damage and have no determination when the men will be allowed to return to their home.

Living the Mission – Fritz extensively went over the detailed plans for this historical DDS event. Because of Hurricane Sandy, the event was moved from its original scheduled date of November 1st to Monday, November 26th. Central Office and each region have planned exciting Kick-Off events to the noon countdown with ribbon cuttings and celebration of the Department's new vision and mission. Governor Malloy will be joining Commissioner Macy at Central Office to kick-off the event while all regions and ancillary sites will view video conference.

Robin Wood – Guest Speaker

Robin Wood, DDS Director of Support Strategies and Advocacy, joined to meeting to introduce herself and explain what her new role is. Part of her role will be to improve communication with families, provide more timely responses to families, and enhance lifelong planning. Her goals will be to provide simple and consistent information, satisfy stakeholders and provide lifespan vision and plans to families. Robin's office is located in Central Office. She can be reached at 860-418-6035.

Robin also provided the council members with some very helpful and beneficial handouts. They were: Great Expectations: Preparing Your Child with Developmental Disabilities For Employment Success. Real Work for Real Pay: A Beneficial Guide for Individuals Served by DDS. Understanding the Connecticut DDS Home & Community-Based Services Waiver: Making Good Choices about Your DDS Supports and Services; and a summer employment fact sheet. All members of the council felt these were very good information to have.

Next Meeting: January 10, 2013, Rowland Building, 55 West Main Street, Waterbury, CT