



SOUTH CAROLINA  
Developmental Disabilities Council

# 2024 Annual Report



## Priority Areas for 2024:

Employment  
Community Supports  
Self-Advocacy



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## Council Mission

The mission of the South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council is to provide leadership in planning, funding, and implementing initiatives that lead to improved quality of life for people with developmental disabilities and their families through advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change.

### How we work



Grant projects



Community Engagement



Leadership & Advocacy



Public Policy



## 5-Year State Plan

The SC DD Council receives federal funding for advocacy, capacity building, and systems change efforts. These efforts are designed to contribute to a coordinated system of services, supports, and assistance centered around, and driven by, individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Council's work is driven by a 5-year state plan covering federal fiscal years 2022-2026. The plan was developed with input from people with developmental disabilities, family members, and interested stakeholders from around the state of South Carolina.



# Employment

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities have access to competitive, community-based career opportunities throughout their lifetime.

## Programs

- Able South Carolina- Promoting Avenues for Community Employment (PACE)
- Project Hope Foundation- Hope4Work
- SOS Care, Inc. - Employment Instructors
- Community Options, Inc., - Customized Employment
- Babcock Center - Inventory Management Work Training
- University of South Carolina- Project Invest
- Coastal Carolina University- Coastal Carolina LIFE

4,562 people participated in program activities

197 people with IDD

1,017 family members

3,344 professionals

## Success

Hope4Work's paid self-advocate became a published author in 2024, successfully publishing her book, "Life on the Bridge" providing insights and strategies as a person with autism who provides autism services. She also has a massive social media following!



## Success

One program participant had severe sound sensitivities that led him to avoid areas prone to unpredictable noise, however, through small steps, he was able to discover his passion for working with the Humane Society.



# Community Supports

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities will have increased access to be fully included in the community of their choice.

## Programs:

- Community Options, Inc. - Circles of Support
- BRIDGED- Disability Resource Expo
- Able South Carolina- Developing Decision Makers
- SOS Care, Inc. - Walking Club
- Adult Enrichment Centers- The Art of Living Well
- SOS Care, Inc. - SC Housing Education
- Latino Community Development- Possibilities without End
- Brain Injury Association- Life with Brain Injury
- Institute for Child Success- Nurturing Developing Minds
- Upstate-Carolina Adaptive Golf- Project 1000
- USC Center for Disability Resources- Assistive Technology Expo
- Adaptive Pickleball- Project 500
- Family Connection of SC- Hopes and Dreams Conference
- Department of Disabilities and Special Needs- Autism Connect Conference

7,290 people participated in program activities  
2,491 individuals with IDD  
1,418 family members  
3,381 professionals

One unexpected outcome from the Housing Education grant is that families are now looking for more transitional services that focus on independent living skills that prepare teens and adults for living in independent communities.



A key outcome of the Walking Club is participants' ability to walk at their own pace for extended periods, engaging in meaningful interactions and reaping health benefits for both mind and body. Many have reported improved endurance, weight loss, and the formation of lasting friendships through their participation in the club.





# Self-Advocacy

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families are empowered to affect statewide leadership training opportunities that contribute to active participation in cross-disability leadership coalitions and systems change efforts.

## Programs:

- Able South Carolina- EQUIP
- Center for Disability Resources- IMPACT SC
- Able South Carolina- Youth Leadership Forum (YLF)
- Arc of the Midlands- Let's Talk
- Able South Carolina- Community Leadership Academy (CLA)
- Partners in Policymaking®

653 people participated in program activities  
402 people with IDD  
49 family members  
202 professionals



## Success

A participant from IMPACT SC and Calhoun County noted CLA helped him articulate his healthcare needs with his doctors and expressed his desire to have his old wheelchair refreshed and donated to someone who didn't have the resources for a wheelchair that he desperately needed. CLA is helping him serve on the Calhoun County Disabilities Board as the only disabled board member. He also serves as part of Advocates for Quality Life.

## Success

One outcome of the EQUIP program was in a collaboration with public transportation, GreenLink, in Greenville, SC. Participants learned practical skills for using public transportation, fostering social connections and community belonging. The positive response to this has increased interest in similar community events and has brought out new partnerships in other areas of the state.







We graduated our  
24<sup>th</sup> Partners in  
Policymaking class  
in March!

**Congratulations Graduates!**





# Conferences and Events

Council Members and Staff attended and exhibited at many events and conferences.

Autism Connect Conference  
Advocacy Day for Access and Independence  
Hopes and Dreams Conference  
Assistive Technology Expo  
Bountiful Harvest  
Accessibility Bootcamp



Youth Leadership Forum  
Disability Advocacy Day  
Disability Resource Expo  
IMPACT SC  
Limitless Purpose  
Disability Celebration Day  
Life with Brain Injury





# Meet our Council Members and Staff

The South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council, a 25-member body appointed by the Governor. It consists of:

People with Intellectual and/or other developmental disabilities (IDD)  
Parent/Family Member/Guardian of persons with IDD  
Representatives from State agencies  
Representatives from Disability Rights SC and the USC Center for Disability Resources

The Council represents all of South Carolina and is responsible for carrying out the provisions of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act) and making sure that the DD Council is a member-driven, effective, efficient, and accountable organization. Serving up to two four-year terms, the membership of the Council is 60% of people with intellectual or other developmental disabilities or family members, and the remainder as representatives from state agencies or professional organizations. The Council guides all initiatives and contracts.

## South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council

<b>Ms. Latoya Abney</b>	<b>Ms. Malerie Hartsell</b>	<b>Dr. David Rotholz</b>
<b>Mr. Justin Borrero</b>	<b>Mr. Demetrius Henderson</b>	<b>Ms. Allison Danielle Sartin</b>
<b>Ms. Kimberly Brock</b>	<b>Mrs. Amy Hibbs</b>	<b>Mr. Matthew Smith</b>
<b>Mrs. Trayci Brazell</b>	<b>Mrs. Melissa Hunt</b>	<b>Mrs. Elizabeth Smithson</b>
<b>Mr. Jacob Chorey</b>	<b>Mr. Bernard Johnson</b>	<b>Mrs. Ashley Stergar</b>
<b>Ms. Mary Beth Fields</b>	<b>Mrs. Angel Lee</b>	<b>Mrs. Kimberly Tissot</b>
<b>Ms. Beth Franco</b>	<b>Mrs. Tia Means</b>	<b>Dr. Kim Watkins</b>
<b>Mr. John Green</b>	<b>Ms. Kristi Moore</b>	<b>Mrs. Suzanne Wingard</b>



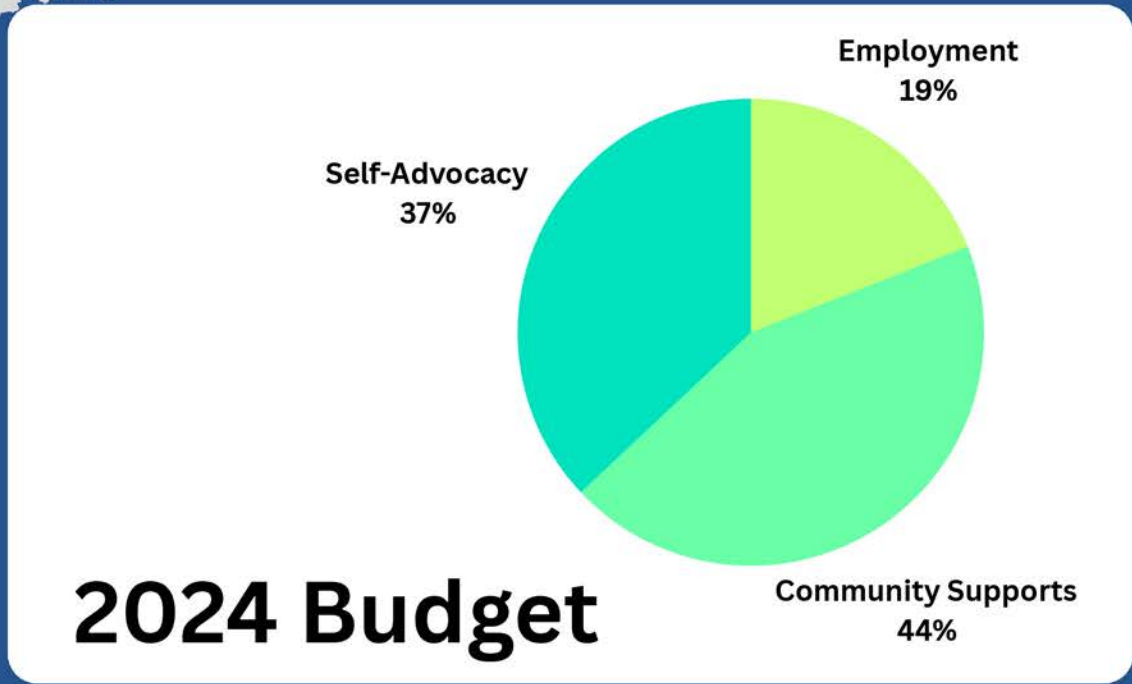




### Staff

**Valarie Bishop, Executive Director**  
**Lori Rodgers, Operations Manager**  
**Cheryl English, Community Relations Coordinator**  
**Wesley Woodman, Grants Administrator**  
**William Farrior, Self-Advocacy Specialist**  
**Esther Williams, Administrative Assistant**

Council staff brings experience in human services and the field of IDD. They work closely with Council members, state agencies, and other entities to make a difference on individual, local, state, and national levels to help better the lives of communities throughout South Carolina.



To request a copy of this report in an alternative format, please contact the SCDDC office at [lori.rodgers@admin.sc.gov](mailto:lori.rodgers@admin.sc.gov) or (803)734-0392

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