National Disability Mentoring Coalition Strategy Team

Meeting, Feb. 20, 2015, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Meeting Summary and Minutes

Attendees

**Rayna Aylward,** Co-chair, Mentor Advisory Committee, PolicyWorks Inc.

**Jeanne Argoff,** Consultant

**TaKeisha Bobbitt,** Managing Director, American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)

**Margaret Campbell,** Consultant

**Patricia Gill,** Senior Program Associate, Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL)

**Kristen Humphrey,** Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD)

**Emily Malsch,** Program Coordinator, US Business Leadership Network (USBLN)

**Mark Perriello,** CEO, American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)

**Alan Muir,** Center Opportunities for Students with Disabilities (COSD)

**Derek Shields,** Co-chair, Mentor Advisory Committee, PolicyWorks Inc.

**Regina Snowden,** Founder & CEO, Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD)

**Tari Hartman Squire,** Career Opportunities for Students with Disabilities (COSD)

**Marie Strahan,** Consultant

**Jessica Swirsky,** COO, Abilities Inc. at the Viscardi Center

**Genelle Thomas,** National Center Director, Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD)

**Ebony Watson,** RAMP National Coordinator, Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL)

Summary

We expanded our team with the addition of COSD (thanks Alan and Tari!) and two consultants, Jeanne Argoff and Margaret Campbell. The immediate participation from all four was wonderful…and helpful!

A Coalition Mission Statement was discussed and useful feedback provided. An updated version and Member Roster will be provided for final review.

The Hall of Fame planning Work Groups provided reports. The focus for this meeting was on the Recognition Criteria. A detailed discussion provided useful guidance to the Work Group to consider several enhancements to the draft criteria. The Work Group will take the input and provide an updated version to the full Coalition for final consideration in March.

In the review of PYD’s second draft proposal to establish the platform for both the Hall of Fame nomination capability and the downstream National Disability Mentoring Pipeline, feedback was provided for edits.

Comments and feedback during and after the meeting included:

* Include a first class of 25 winners (to match 25th Anniversary)
* Consider recognizing winners from each state every year
* Discuss with USBLN ability for Coalition team members to have a pre-conference meeting and planning session. Also request if USBLN would be interested in a Coalition workshop to discuss the Coalition, Member Mentoring Programs, the Hall of Fame, and our work to intersect with mainstream mentoring organizations. (Austin, TX Sept 28 – Oct 1).

MINUTES

**Welcome**

* Rayna convened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the third NDMC meeting
* New attendees were introduced:
  + Alan Muir and Tari Hartman Squire from COSD
  + Jeanne Argoff
  + Margaret Campbell

**National Disability Mentoring Coalition (NDMC) Charter**

* Mission Statement Discussion

A draft was provided and discussed.

DRAFT

The National Disability Mentoring Coalition has been formed to increase the awareness, quality and impact of mentoring for individuals with disabilities across the nation. Member organizations share core values and align with the Coalition's mission to streamline communication, standardize and systematize data collection, reduce duplication of efforts, increase mentoring opportunities, and improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The Coalition integrates mentoring into its own operational model to transfer historical knowledge, generate innovation, and develop new opportunities for individuals with disabilities across their lifespan.

Suggestions from the discussion included:

1. Change first sentence to be active to represent a Call to Action
2. Change first sentence to be the mission statement
3. Integrate reverse mentoring
4. Add goals (increasing number of mentors, make this more concrete)
5. Are we trying to include Employee Resource Group type models?
6. Include what we mean when we refer to mentoring (Two-way, Group, Peer, etc)
7. Change from Charter to Mission Statement

REVISED BASED ON DISCUSSION

The mission of the National Disability Mentoring Coalition ~~has been formed~~ is to increase the awareness, quality and impact of mentoring for individuals with disabilities across the nation. Member organizations share core values and align with the Coalition's ~~mission~~ initiatives to streamline communication, standardize and systematize data collection, reduce duplication of efforts, increase mentoring opportunities, and improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The Coalition integrates mentoring into its own operational model to transfer historical knowledge, incorporate reverse mentoring to generate innovation, and develop new opportunities for individuals with disabilities across their lifespan.

* Members Roster

Margaret Campbell requested her affiliation be removed as she does not represent any organization while she participates in Coalition activities. A new roster will be provided monthly. Please forward any edits to the roster contact information to Derek Shields @ [dshields@axiom-rm.com](mailto:dshields@axiom-rm.com).

**Susan M. Daniels Mentoring Hall of Fame Planning**

Hall of Fame Objectives (included here for reference)

* Recognize individuals and organizations for mentoring impact
* Identify effective practices
* Capture replication models
* Establish shared data-gathering platform
* Highlight recruiting tools
* Strengthen Coalition’s collective mentoring pipeline
* Recognition Criteria Work Group
  + Co-Leads: Marie Strahan, Kristen Humphrey
  + Members: Rayna Aylward, Jessica Swirsky, Emily Malsch
  + Tasks:
    - Determine nomination criteria
    - Determine if the awards are for individuals and/or organizations
    - Include ways to identify innovative programs and ideas in transition and mentoring
    - Determine multiple categories, mentee-based nominations with the focus on impact, and inclusion of informal mentoring that includes voluntary relationships
    - Consider apprenticeship type programs, should they be included?
    - Include ways to identify effective practices and capture for sharing with others
    - Determine the focus of the mentoring: whole life, transition, employment/careers
    - Ensure HOF finds ways to recognize “not the usual suspects”
    - Determine model for replication by other organizations / locale level – including model for informal awards
    - Other tasks to be identified
  + Timeframe: January – March
* Recognition Criteria Workgroup Report

Marie Strahan reported this group convened for two meetings and made great progress since the last Coalition meeting. Marie emailed the team’s Criteria draft to the Coalition for input (this product is provided below as Appendix A).

Kristen Humphrey and Jeanne Argoff reiterated the workgroup’s desire for specific feedback. They discussed the focus on Formal vs Informal Criteria and the decision to start the first year’s focus on Employment and expand afterwards. Jessica Swirsky reinforced this point based on Susan Daniels’ focus on employment.

A discussion was sparked for the Workgroup to consider the definition of disability. If the definition of disability is coming from the ADA, then the Coalition wanted the full definition to appear. Mark Perriello suggested adding some examples, similar to how Section 503 references examples.

Other suggestions and comments:

* Patricia Gill suggested that the Workgroup consider Age and Groupings, such as Work, Disability, Results.
* Mark Perriello recommended a Word Count be placed on open text fields.
* Mark Perriello also stated a concern about the language for Parents/Advocates to help individuals fill out the form – requested that be changed to suggest Parents/Advocates focus on helping individuals plan their submission but not actually do the submission. The Workgroup is asked to think that through and provide a recommendation to the Coalition.
* Margaret Campbell recommended included a Results-oriented question: “What have you accomplished because of mentoring?”
* Jeanne Argoff asked if we should include Mentor-Initiated relationships? We can change the approach if the Coalition desires – it is not currently structured that way.

Comments and feedback after the meeting included:

* Include a first class of 25 winners (to match 25th Anniversary)
* Consider recognizing winners from each state every year

From previous meeting:

* Proceed to announce winners this July. Establish basic criteria, ask for recommendations, and award to someone this year. Choosing someone that represents our values and is a good role model should be relatively simple and we can manage the process amongst the Coalition members.
* Technical Work Group
  + Co-Leads: Derek Shields, Steve Slowinski
  + Team: AAPD Rep to be added; Seeking more team members
  + Tasks:
    - Capture nomination criteria in an online submission process (PYD)
    - Create system for screening and sorting nominations (PYD)
    - Create showcase for HOF inductees (AAPD)
    - Ensure platform can capture qualitative data about what is working over time (PYD) and highlight those practices at HOF site (AAPD)
    - Other tasks to be identified
  + Timeframe: January – July

Derek Shields reported that he and Steve Slowinski met on February 18 to begin early discussions regarding receiving the requirements from the Recognition Criteria Workgroup and planning the hand-off to the developers for creating the NDMC Susan M Daniels Hall of Fame Nomination Web Page and supporting database.

* Communications and Public Relations
* Co-Leads: Anna Cunningham, Genelle Thomas
* Team: TaKeisha Bobbitt, Seeking more team members
* Tasks:
  + - Finalize Name: Susan M Daniels Mentoring Hall of Fame
    - Increase awareness to targeted audiences of Coalition, HOF and our shared objectives
    - Link to JFA Awards/Event planning criteria (with AAPD)
    - Discover and align with media partner/s
    - Other tasks to be identified
* Timeframe: Mid-March – July
* NDMC / PYD Proposal
* Rayna Aylward and Genelle Thomas introduced the updated draft proposal for elements of the Hall of Fame nomination and database requirements. The draft was updated based on feedback during and following the January meeting.
* Everyone was complimentary and appreciative of the draft proposal. Feedback from discussion included:
  + Patricia Gill. Where’s the “So what?” Add more meat to increase the value proposition.
  + Mark Perriello: Incorporate other budget elements to cover costs (video, awards, travel for recipients).
  + Several individuals discussed how to best handle the connection between the Criteria and the concept of segmenting populations and how they are represented in the Proposal (Youth, Students, Adults).
* Genelle will continue to solicit feedback on the proposal through March.

**Monthly Meetings (Dates to be scheduled)**

Derek and Rayna discussed ideas for the upcoming NDMC Meetings. Proposed topics included below – we are open to Coalition member’s ideas, feedback and input!

* + March: Meeting Focus on Hall of Fame - HOF Work Group Reports, Proposal Update
  + April: Meeting Focus on Hall of Fame and Setting up a NDMC Planning Meeting (Beyond HOF)
    - Coalition January Meeting Notes: Coalition focus from the start should include Mentoring Programs sharing best practices. Explore meeting possibilities during the next USBLN Conference (Austin, TX Sept 28 – Oct 1).
  + May: Meeting on MENTOR Inc. Presentation, HOF Updates, Annual Planning Updates

**Next Steps / Meetings**

* HOF Work Group Meetings: To be set up by Team Leaders and will report back at next Coalition Strategy Team meeting
* Next Meeting: March 18, 2015 1-2:30pm via teleconference

Tentative Timeline:

March Coalition Meeting

Final Recognition Criteria

April Coalition Meeting

Technical Funding Secured (For Platform and Website)

Video Plan Finalized

Annual Planning Meeting Decision

May Coalition Meeting

Media Partner Secured

June Coalition Meeting

MENTOR Inc Partnership Planning

July Coalition Meeting

\*7/22/15 Hall of Fame Announcement AAPD JFA Awards

August Coalition Meeting

Annual Planning Meeting Discussion

September Coalition Meeting

Annual Planning Meeting

October Coalition Meeting

Hall of Fame Nominations Launch

November Coalition Phase 2 (beyond Hall of Fame activities)

December Coalition Phase 2

January 2016 Happy New Year – Mentoring Month and Conference

**Appendix A: Recognition Criteria Workgroup Product**

**Hall of Fame Criteria**

**Who can Nominate?**

* Nominations may come from mentees or organizations/companies.

\*Parents may provide support to assist students/young adults in completing their nomination forms but the nomination must come from the mentee.

* Individual mentees must be 16 or older and must have a disability.
* When companies or other organizations nominate a mentor, they must include independent testimony from one or more mentees with disabilities.
* Mentees who have experienced either natural (i.e., informal) mentorship or who have participated in a formal mentoring program may submit a nomination.
* Mentors who have mentored one or more mentees may be nominated.

**Defining Terms**

***Mentoring*** is a structured and trusting relationship that brings (young) people together with caring, more experienced individuals who offer guidance, support and encouragement aimed at professional/workplace development. "Natural" mentoring is an informal relationship between mentor and mentee.

***Mentor*:** A mentor is an experienced and trusted advisor, advocate, motivator, and role model who can help the less experienced mentee to develop specific skills and competencies, provides constructive feedback in developing and advancing the mentees educational and career goals, and serves as someone who has qualities and skills that mentees can aspire to have.

***Mentee:*** a person who seeks a relationship with a mentor who is a more experienced person that serves not only as a role model but can provide guidance, over a period of time, on developing and advancing the mentee's educational and career goals.

***Disability:*** The ADA defines a person with a disability as an individual who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

**Guiding Questions and Criteria for Nominating Individual Mentors**

* How long have you known your mentor?
  + Criterion: Duration of mentoring relationship will be taken into consideration.
* Please describe your relationship with your mentor. How has it grown?
  + Criterion: Mentor's follow-through and demonstrated impact will be evaluated.
* To your knowledge, how many mentees has your mentor worked with?
  + Criterion: number of mentees will be considered as a criterion but will not prejudice the nomination of a mentor who has had a deep and lasting impact on one or two mentees. Depth of impact and breadth of impact will both be considered.
* What is the nature of your mentoring relationship (e.g. natural mentor, site-based, community based, workplace etc.)?
  + Criterion: Style of mentoring will be considered to provide context but will not prejudice the nomination.
* How has your mentor helped you prepare for employment or positively impacted your job or career?
  + Criterion: Evaluation will consider mentor's impact on mentee's employment status through networking connections, guidance in improving skills, encouraging or participating in job shadowing and internships, advice/acting as a sounding board for workplace issues etc.
* How has your mentor helped you to identify and address disability-related employment issues?
  + Criterion: Mentor has helped mentee to identify the need for and obtain accommodations, provided the opportunity to discuss disability disclosure as it relates to the workplace in a safe and trusting environment, address disability-specific housing, transportation, family or other issues directly affecting job performance.
* Are there any challenges not related to disability that your mentor has helped you overcome?
  + Criterion: Mentor has helped mentee work on goals and/or solve workplace problems.
* What personal qualities does your mentor have that made him/her a strong mentor? Be sure to provide examples.
  + Criterion: Mentor demonstrates a high level of commitment, communication, empathy, and resourcefulness and has demonstrated high levels of support over time.
* Does your mentor have a disability? Do you think that has that made a difference to you personally? If so, how?
  + Criterion: Mentor's disability status and its impact on the type and quality of mentoring s/he has provided will be taken into account but this will not prejudice the evaluation of a non-disabled nominee.
* How has your mentor changed your perspective on your current or future job/career aspirations and on your ability to live independently?
  + Criterion: Mentor has introduced mentee to new resources, ways of thinking and opportunities in the realms of employment and independent living.
* To your knowledge, has your mentor learned anything from you? What?
  + Criterion: Mentor actively listens to mentee and is open to learning from him/her; evidence of reverse mentoring (?).

**Guiding Questions and Criteria for Nominating Companies/Organizations Note: Nominations in this category must be accompanied by a letter from a mentee who is either a company employee or an organization's program participant.**

* How does your organization/corporation support mentoring? Does this support include people with disabilities?
  + Criterion: Organization has or participates in a formal mentoring program or actively encourages informal mentoring. Mentoring programs or policies actively include people with disabilities as mentors and mentees. Organization provides formal training for mentors.
* How long has your organization/corporation supported mentoring?
  + Criterion: Duration of mentoring activity will be taken into consideration together with duration of disability-specific mentoring.
* Is your mentoring program/activity site-based or community based?
  + Criterion: Style of mentoring will be considered to provide context but will not prejudice the nomination.
* How many mentoring relationships does your organization/company support? How many involve mentors and/or mentees with disabilities?
  + Criterion: Number of mentorships and proportion of those focusing on people with disabilities will be taken into account.
* Has your company's/organization's mentoring program addressed the particular needs of mentees with disabilities?
  + Criterion: Organization trains/informs mentors about the needs/issues of people with disabilities; mentors are aware of disability accommodations and how to obtain them.
* What recent changes has your organization/corporation made in mentoring practices; what goals do you have to encourage its growth?
  + Criterion: Organization has demonstrated a commitment to expand and improve its mentoring policies and programs.
* What best practices in mentoring can your organization/company share?
  + Criterion: Organization collects best practices, shares these internally and externally, and utilizes them to improve its mentoring activities.
* In what new or innovative ways has your organization/corporation incorporated mentoring?
  + Criterion: Organization has introduced new mentoring tools and methods with specific attention to or inclusion of people with disabilities; has creatively adapted mentoring innovations developed for other populations to support mentors and mentees with disabilities.
* How does your organization/company promote awareness about mentoring?
  + Criterion: Organization promotes mentoring internally through recognition ceremonies and awards, coverage in organizational newsletters and other internal documents; promotes mentoring externally through presentations at conferences and meetings, press releases, etc. Organization makes an effort to reach out to its peers to demonstrate and model disability-specific mentoring activities, programs and practices.
* How does your company promote inclusion of employees with disabilities?
  + Criterion: Organization altered their hiring practices and/or hired greater numbers of persons with disabilities and/or provided opportunities for individuals with disabilities’ growth in the companies

**Guidelines for Selection Committee**

A passionate advocate for facilitating meaningful employment connections for youth and young adults with disabilities, Susan Daniels was a lifelong mentor herself and a creator of numerous mentorship programs. She sought out and attracted young people who showed a desire to achieve independence through employment and encouraged them to have high expectations of themselves. While the Susan M. Daniels Mentoring Hall of Fame will not be limited to mentors of young people, the selection process should aim to discover and honor mentors with Susan's passion, commitment, vision, sensitivity, and inspiration and who view their mentees with respect and trust. Although she lived and Washington, DC for the last 25 years of her life and played a powerful role in national policy and practice, she traveled extensively and was not limited by the view from inside the Beltway. The SMD Mentoring Hall of Fame will honor Susan's broad vision and experience by seeking out inductees from across the country--many of whom, we hope, will be as-yet unknown outside their sphere of influence. The goal is not just to honor nominees but also to expand awareness of the benefits of mentorship for mentees, mentors and the organizations that support it.

The evaluation committee will evaluate nominees on the basis of both these subjective qualities and the more objective factors outlined in the nominating criteria. Each evaluation form contains both a space for your subjective evaluation and a chart listing the nominating criteria with a rating scale for each criterion.

Remember that a nominee can be a superlative mentor/organizational nominee without necessarily fulfilling all the criteria.