

## **GMSA Board Meeting held on June 28, 2021**



**GMSA Officers (3):** Randy Lizotte (president/Next Step), Danielle Viau (vice president/BSAC), Chad Cleverley (treasurer/VT Choices)

**GMSA Board Members (9):** Taylor Terry (Capitol Advocates Together), Hasan Ko (Champlain Voices), Tesha Thibodeau (Winds of Change), Jenny Rainville (BRAG), Erik Johnson (VT Choices), Caroline Gillen (SABE of Rutland), Marjorie Burns (BSAC), Jon Fitzgerald (Next Step), Skye Peebles, (Ally)

**Self-Advocates (8):** Shae Martin (Capitol Advocates Together), Jill Collingswood (BSAC), David Frye (Champlain Voices), Christopher Michael Bernier (BSAC), Marshall Denutt (VT Choices), Levi Gardner (VT Choices), Michelle Habernin (Winds of Change), Nicole Villemaire (Champlain Voices)

**Allies (5):** Lee Reilly, Wendy Summarsell and Mary Ruffing (Winds of Change), Jacob Weber (BSAC), Emily Anderson (Champlain Voices)

**GMSA Staff (3):** Karen Topper, Max Barrows, Karen Noone

### **Agenda:**

**10:00** Quick go around to say hello.

**10:15** Decide: should we have a Gala? When? Who will help plan?

**10:30** Decide: Who wants to be on the committee to plan V & C?

**10:45** Board Elections of Secretary to fill Vacant Position through e in December.

**11:00** Feedback on Person Centered Planning Training.

**11:15** Project Updates: SARTAC, Peer Mentoring & Podcasts.

**11:30** Review of GMSA priorities for ARPA funding

### **GMSA Fundraising Gala**

Randy led a discussion about our annual Gala. It was canceled in 2020 due to Covid-19. #1 - Should we have it? #2 - When? We did it on a weekday last time

and it worked. #3 - Where? If there are the same amount of people, then Montpelier works. If there will be more, we need to find another place. #4 Who wants to help plan? When should we meet?

Skye Peebles made a motion to have a gala this year. Tesha seconded. It was passed unanimously.

- Consensus is to have only vaccinated people attend.
- Location: still undecided. Will have to be central. Try for an outside venue.
- Consensus is to have it on a weekday.
- Volunteers to take part in a planning committee: Nicole Villemaire, Skye Peebles and Tesha

### **Secretary Election:**

Election for ALL Officers will be in December. Right now, we need a secretary to serve until December.

The secretary does 4 things:

- 1 - Come to board meetings .
- 2 - Do an officer meeting on zoom once a month.
- 3 - GMSA writes the notes. You look them over.
- 4 Sometimes go to meetings to represent GMSA.

Levi Gardner and Tesha Thibodeau were nominated. The board voted 7 to 5 in favor of Levi Gardner.

### **Person Centered Planning Training - UPDATE**

This project is training self-advocates about person-centered planning. Person-centered planning helps people talk about their dreams and goals. It helps you think about what a good life means for you.

In 2014, the government made a new rule. It said everyone who gets services must have a person-centered plan. Very few states are training people with disabilities about person-centered planning. Many people are not ready to

talk about what a good life means to them at their meetings. It's hard to talk about your dreams when you aren't ready!



**This training helps self-advocates:**

1. Get ready for their person-centered planning meeting
2. Think about what a good life means for them
3. Invite more people to come to their meeting
4. Get ready to lead their own meeting
5. Be a mentor for other self-advocates who want help at their meetings.

**The 12-session are divided into 3 parts:**

- 1) Part 1 – Learn about Person Centered Planning.
- 2) Part 2 – Learn how to run your Person-Centered Planning meeting.
- 3) Part 3 – Learn how to be a peer mentor. Learn how to help someone speak up at their Person-Centered Planning meeting.

Feedback on Person Centered Planning Training: It was very helpful; I'm learning to speak up for myself more; I learned a lot about being a leader and stepping up for myself.

**Project Updates: SARTAC, Peer Mentoring & Podcasts.**

- a) The proposal to hire a team to make podcasts for GMSA is still being developed.
- b) SARTAC – GMSA staff are extremely busy working with partners to re-apply to do it again for 5 years.
- c) Peer Mentoring - The state received millions of dollars of one-time money to improve HCBS. We understand that they will be asking ask for proposals on how to make improvements. GMSA submitted a basic idea.

## **Review of GMSA priorities for ARPA funding**

Congress passed the American Rescue Plan Act. It included an increase of funding to State Medicaid Programs by 10% for one year. Vermont will receive about \$48 million to improve Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). **Green**

**Mountain Self-Advocates from 10 self-advocacy groups met to decide how to invest this money. Here are our priorities.**

- 1) Hire people with IDD to support people who get Developmental Services to get ready for their Person Centered Planning meetings. These peer mentors will also attend Person Centered Planning meetings.
- 2) Give a one-time bonus to direct support staff. We want to pay staff more. We are worried about using one time funding to raise wages. When this funding ends on March 31, 2022, we do NOT want to lose services to cover raises for staff.
- 3) Pay for internet bills for people with disabilities.
- 4) Buy tablets and laptops for people with disabilities.
- 5) More training for staff by self-advocates with a focus on how we want to be treated and the quality of our services.
- 6) Better training for job specialists. Use sources outside of the VT provider system. Teach how to create employment opportunities by “carving out” pieces of a job to better match the skills and desires of workers with IDD.
- 7) Across the country in response to the "awakening" about racial justice after George Floyd's murder, we have an opportunity to really reshape the direction of our disability system. Provide resources for education and strategic planning to address racial justice.
- 8) Provide training to self-advocates:
  - a) to be sexuality educators and pay them to do training.

- b) to recognize and deal with abuse and bullying.
- c) To recognize and respond to racism and ableism
- d) to be shared living providers.
- e) on home ownership.
- f) to work with elders like shopping for elders who can't get out

9) Recruit and train a number of people to be independent case managers so we can have self-management be a real option.

10) Money for people with disabilities to go to conferences and take classes. For example, Voices and Choices Conference.

11) Provide some basic services to people who do not meet a funding criteria for developmental services.

12) Reform who decides who is hired to work with us. People with disabilities need to be at the interview. We need training in how to be actively involved in hiring and supervising our staff.