Tuesday, June 5th, 2018

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

It has been a wild and wooly 2017-2018 at the Disability Policy Consortium (DPC). First, let me start by thanking you for joining us in celebrating our accomplishments over the past twelve months.

It is with both profound sadness, and yet unbridled joy that I tell you that after four years, Amy will be leaving us at the end of this month. Amy has done so much for us during her tenure. She is the glue that has held us together as an organization. Her ability to keep our staff and operations organized is unparalleled and she will be missed.

At the same time, I am thrilled to welcome back an old friend. This is Colin Killick’s second day as the new Deputy Director of the DPC. For the past two years, Colin has been completing his Master’s in Public Policy at the Kennedy School of Government. Even at Harvard where it is difficult to shine, Colin found a way by winning the Robert F. Kennedy Public Service Award for pushing Harvard to improve accessibility and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The big news is that, in February, we were notified by MassHealth that the DPC had been chosen to serve as the Ombudsman for consumers in managed care programs. This four-year contract (which could eventually be for seven) places a strong foundation under the DPC for the foreseeable future. It means we can plan and invest in efforts which may take time to bring to fruition.

We have spent a large chunk of our time over the last two months hiring new staff for this project. We are so honored to have been chosen to undertake this challenging task. We have quite a legacy to match. Over the last year, in telephone surveys, 95% of
respondents were satisfied with the results of working with our Ombudsman staff. More importantly, 100% said they were treated with respect. I will take those results any day.

The fact that the DPC was awarded this contract is a testament to the hard work that our One Care Ombudsman (OCO) program has been doing since 2013. I want to acknowledge the hard work of Scott McManus and Amanda Shea of our OCO staff. Sadly, Burt Pusch, the OCO Program Manager, has moved on to a new opportunity. When Burt left in March we knew that finding a new Program Manager would not be easy. I am pleased to announce that we have hired Jennifer Morazes as the new Program Director. Jennifer is in Washington D.C. this week meeting with other Ombudsman Programs from around the U.S. I hope you will get to meet her soon.

We have changed the name of our Ombudsman program to My Ombudsman and you can learn more about the program at our new website MyOmbudsman.org. Please do not hesitate to contact us at 617 307-7775 if we can be of any help to you or your friends, neighbors or fellow consumers if you are in a managed care program under MassHealth.

This has been a very busy year in advocacy. Lenny Somervell has spent long hours working with BCIL and our joint efforts with the HALT Committee to increase funding for the Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP). This program pays for vouchers that people with disabilities can use to afford apartments in the community. Last year, the line-item was increased from $4.5 to $5 million over the Governor’s veto.

This year the House Ways and Means Committee increased the proposed funding to $6.1 million from the Governor’s requested $4.5 million. The Senate has funded it at $5 million. We are hopeful the Conference Committee will come out close to the House number. Great work Lenny.

What can I say about Charlie Carr? On the issue of Electronic Visit Verification (EVV), he has been a tour de force. He not only has been organizing here in Massachusetts but leading a Committee for the National Centers for Independent Living (NCIL) on this issue.

Our Maggie Sheets has done more research on this issue than any other advocates in the nation on this issue. I believe she has spoken to advocates in all 50 states. She has also produced four other issue briefs this year.

In the areas of research and advocacy, Dennis Heaphy and Pili Kanenju continue their solid work. They are wrapping up our work with the Mongan Institute at Massachusetts General Hospital. They have also conducted two surveys. The first was on EVV and the second one looks at the roll-out of managed care by MassHealth and consumers’ knowledge of these changes.

Our research team has now been joined by Annika Grassl, a graduate student at Brandeis, who is looking at Long Term Support Services and Children under 18.

Last year in October we held our fifth Annual Event. We increased our revenue by more than 30 percent to more than $39,000. Liz Hardy led that effort, and she will coordinate this year’s event as well.

We also have been building an infrastructure at the DPC. This will allow us to pursue other grants and contracts. We know have Alice Gatua working one day a week as our financial officer and Peter
St. John as our Director of Data and IT. They are both very qualified and outstanding in the work that they do. Later this summer, we will complete our fourth financial audit, allowing us to demonstrate that consumer led organizations can be professional, well run organizations.

Thank you to the DPC Board for allowing me the privilege of serving as the Executive Director of this great organization. Thank you for all you do and please stay active. Thank you for being a part of the DPC.

Sincerely,

John E. Winske

John E. Winske
Executive Director
June 5, 2018

“ABOUT US. BY US.”

DPC ANNUAL RECEPTION & AWARDS CEREMONY
Origin of the Disability Policy Consortium Annual Awards

The **Mary Lou Maloney Award** is given to an individual who utilizes the system to bring about social change to further the rights of persons with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Presented to Mary Lou Maloney 2013, Brian & Kim Charlson 2014, Denise Karuth and Fred Pelka 2015, Lydia X. Z. Brown & Finn Gardiner 2016 and Jim Kruidenier 2017.

The **Bill Allan Award** is given to a disability rights advocate or organization that has empowered our community. The winner of this award is not afraid of ruffling feathers or using unconventional tactics in pursuit of their goals. Presented to Bill Alan 2013, Dennis Heaphy 2014, Allegra Stout 2015, Ruthie Poole 2016, Heather Watkins 2017.

The **Thomas M. Menino Award** is awarded to a public official who has used their office to empower people with disabilities. The recipient has demonstrated a commitment to increasing the inclusion of people with disabilities in the community. Presented to Mayor Thomas M. Menino 2013, Dr. Beverly Scott, MBTA General Manager 2014, Dr. Robert J. “Bob” Master & Mary Glover Commonwealth Care Alliance 2015, Audrey Shelto & Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation 2016, Christine Griffin 2017.

*All have used their skills and talents to bring about systems change*