**Strategic Partnerships and Relationships with Other Disability Organizations**

**Presented by Mike Bachhuber and Maureen Ryan on July 30, 2013**

(A CART provider is present and standing by.)

>> OPERATOR: Good afternoon, ladies and
gentlemen and thank you for joining the
"Strategic Partnerships & Relationships with
Other Disability Organizations"
teleconference. I would now like to turn the
conference over to our host for today,
Mr. Tim Fuchs. Please go ahead, sir.
>> TIM FUCHS: Good afternoon. Thank you,
Patricia. I'm Tim Fuchs with the National
Council On Independent Living. I want to
welcome you all to SILC-Net webinar
"Strategic Partnerships & Relationships with
Other Disability Organizations." I want to
thank all of you for your patience and for
coming back and joining us again today. I
really do appreciate that, and I'm excited
that we will be holding the call.
So today's call is being presented by the
SILC-Net which is a program of the IL-NET
training and technical assistance program for
CILs and SILCs. It's separated through a
partnership among ILRU, NCIL and APRIL with
support provided by RSA at the US Department
of Education.
So as with all of our presentations, today's
call is being recorded so that we can archive
it on ILRU's website. So whether it's for
you or one of your colleagues, you can go
back within just about 48 hours you will be
able to access the webinar as it happened
with audio, captions and PowerPoint online.
So that's a really nice feature and you are
welcome to share that with others. You can
get that through the archive, the on demand
archives on ILRU's website.
So we will break several times during today's
call. We have three Q&A breaks, slide 10,
slide 17 and slide 24. You can ask questions
in the chat feature under the list of
participants on the webinar. Of course, if
you are on the phone, you will be able to ask
your question live over the telephone.
And if you are on the CART screen today, you
can ask questions in the chat there. I don't
see anyone logged in right now, but I am on
there. So if you are using the captions on
webinar platform, that's great. If you want
to use the CC Products.com link that was sent
to you, you can join the chat there and I
will monitor those questions as well.
So you will definitely want to follow along
in our PowerPoint presentation today.
If you are only on the telephone, and don't
see the PowerPoint displayed on your screen,
you will want to have that. It will help you
follow today's content. That PowerPoint was
sent to you in the confirmation email and if
you don't have that handy, if you would like
it for any reason, you can email me, my email
is just Tim@NCIL.org and I will send it to
you.
So, again, if you don't have a PowerPoint
displayed in front of you, say you are only
on the telephone, you can email at
Tim@NCIL.org. Also please don't forget to
fill out our evaluation form today. It's
very easy to complete. It's brief, but very,
very important to us. So please do complete
that. There's a live link in the PowerPoint
or, again, you can access that in the
confirmation email that was sent to you.
Okay. Well, that's it for my announcements
and housekeeping. I want to introduce our
presenters for today, Mike Bachhuber and
Maureen Ryan. Mike has been in the
independent living movement since 1997. And
he's been the executive director of the
independent living council of Wisconsin since
2007. Maureen Ryan is the executive director
of the Wisconsin Coalition of Independent
Living Centers for the past 14 years and
prior to that, she was director of IL at one
of Wisconsin CILs for nine years.
Mike and Maureen are both -- they are
outstanding advocates and they are adept
coalition builders as well. I have really
enjoyed putting the presentation together
with them and they have put a lot of careful
thought and a lot of experience into building
this presentation, both what to do and what
not to do. So I know you will enjoy hearing
from them and with that, why don't we get
started. So Mike, do you want to go ahead?
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: Sure, thanks, Tim.
We thought in light of the title here, that
we would start by talking about what kinds of
partnerships are authorized under the Rehab
Act and the regulations and then go into what
would make it strategic. So I'm going to do
the first part here and then you will have an
opportunity to ask any questions.
The Rehab Act has actually a fair amount to
say about partners with respect to the SPIL
and the SILC. Starting -- the starting point
is probably who is on the SILC itself. The
idea being that the SILC is supposed to be a
place where partners can come together and
have discussions related to the state plan
for independent living and other issues
related to IL programs.
So, you know, one of the most important parts
of the SILC composition is that the network
of centers in each state gets to select an
executive director of one of the centers to
represent the network on the CIL. The DSU is
also represented ex-officio on the SILC and
as for states would have Native American
vocational rehabilitation programs, a
representative of the Section 121 project is
also included on the SILC.
In addition to a number of other people, the
number of people will vary from state to
state.
One of the -- one of the things that you are
probably going to want to consider is how is
the SILC going to work with the folks who are
on the SILC? Certainly in meetings, that
will be determined by your agenda, but how
are you going to build that relationship in
between meetings? How are you going to get
information and share the information that
you need to share with agencies serving
people with disabilities in between the
meetings?
We meet with the state agencies pretty
regularly, and since one of the state
agencies represented on our SILC is a huge
state agency, we make sure that we meet with
other folks within that department who may
not be directly on the SILC but we want to
share information with.
We talked about the goals in the SILC that we
have in common. We find out what their goals
are and how that might relate to independent
living and basically how their programs can
serve consumers better.
In the next part of the SILC statute -- can
you move the slide to number three, please?
The next part of the SILC statute is SILC
duties. It's Section 705 (C) (3) of the
Rehabilitation Act. It talks specifically
about partnerships and what we might want to
do with them. So it talks about coordinating
activities with the state rehabilitation
council, and other disability councils under
federal law that work on -- with disability
populations or issues.
So every state is going to have a development
disabilities council. Every state is going
to have a mental health planning and advisory
council. Every state is going to have an assistive technology council, and almost
every state is going to have other councils.
There's often an advisory council for the
birth to 3 program in your state, and then
you may have state disability councils as
well. We have quite a number in Wisconsin.
And I know some other states do too.
We try to work with them in conjunction with
the state plan objectives and how they can
work with us, but the fact that the
Rehabilitation Act sets this out as a duty
under 705 (C) (3) means you can use your
basic SILC funding to build and maintain
these relationships.
As do all the SILCs, we have a representative
on the state rehabilitation council. We use
that representative to interest the
rehabilitation council in some of the
objectives that also show up in their state
plan. If you ever had an opportunity to look
at the state plan for vocational
rehabilitation, there's a section that talks
about the rehabilitation needs of the
consumers they serve.
And oftentimes the designated state unit
isn't doing a lot to address those needs and
oftentimes those needs are showing up in our
state plan for independent living as well.
The developmental disabilities council, in
all the states have a significant allotment
of funds from the federal government that
they can use to serve people with
developmental disabilities. Everyone in our
network ought to be aware that developmental
disabilities under that law includes anyone
with a significant disability, whether it's
mental or physical in nature, that require --
that's permanent or long term in duration,
and requires a plan of support to address the
significant disability needs.
One piece I left off, if the disability had
arisen before the 22nd birthday of the
person with a disability. So there should be
quite an overlap between the people at
Centers for Independent Living are serving,
that we're addressing under our state plan
for independent living and what your state
developmental disabilities council is doing
and that provides an opportunity to maintain
a dialogue with them and find out what we
have in common and how we can work better,
share our resources better.
The mental health planning and advisory
council has an obligation to do advocacy.
That is going to differ a little bit from
state to state in how much that happens, but
I think it's important to recognize that they
are out there, that there do have on some
consumers on that council, although not a
consumer majority, and there may be
opportunities to work together with them.
For centers that are involved with -- excuse
me, for states where centers are involved
where assistive technology, the assistive
technology advisory council can be an
important partner, and you may want to check
in with them and determine how you can work
with them.
Next slide, please.
Oh, well, I jumped ahead. The statewide
assessment of the rehabilitation needs of
individuals with disabilities is one part of
the state vocational rehabilitation plan. If
you haven't looked at that assessment for
your state, you might want to do that because
you will probably find that there are issues
in there that you have in common. How does
the state rehabilitation council address
these rehabilitation needs? And that's where
we might be able to provide some suggestions
for how we can work together.
And eventually, one of those things that we
can often get out of this kind of partnership
is funding for perhaps, at the state level,
perhaps at the center level for projects that
address the rehabilitation needs of the
vocational rehabilitation consumers.
Another issue that the state rehabilitation
council and the SILC is going to want to look
at is staffing. Two of the sources of income
that can be used to fund the SILC are the
I & E funds, innovation and expansion funds,
under Title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act as
well as Social Security reimbursement funds,
both of which can be used to fund the SILC,.
The Social Security reimbursement funds can
also support projects under the state plan
for independent living and the innovation and
expansion funds can fund work of centers in
areas that they want to expand into that have
a relation to the vocational rehabilitation
plan.
Assistive technology, hopefully in most
states, the assistive technology project
works with IL centers, but that's certainly
the kind of dialogue you want to have with
the assistive technology advisory council.
Slide 5, please.
The developmental disability council in your
state, all of them offer, operate under a
five-year plan. You might want to seek their
input when you are involved in the SPIL
planning, as well as provide input when they
are developing their plan, and work together
on common goals.
All the state DD councils are required to do
systems level advocacy and, again, that
provides opportunities for consumer
empowerment and working together on advocacy
issues.
The state planning and advisory council
operates off of a basic three-year plan with
annual updates. That plan should identify
community mental health services within the
states, and that ends up oftentimes taking a
great deal of the time and energy 69 mental
health council, but they also do have a
responsibility to engage in advocacy on
behalf of mental health service needs within
the state and to the extent possible, you
want to make sure they're working on behalf
of consumers in the mental health systems,
and that you can coordinate your work to the
extent possible.
Slide 6, please.
The requirements for the state plan for
independent living are listed in Section 704
of the Rehabilitation Act. You probably
don't need to know that because when you fill
out your SPIL, the issues that you are
required to address in the SPIL are generally
speaking the issues that are required under
the statute and regulations. Both the
statute and the regulations do make it clear
that the state plan that will maximize the
cooperation, the coordination and working
relationships among the state independent
living services program, that's the part B
program, the SILC, and the Centers for
Independent Living.
And I have listed the regulation reference
there as well, if you are interested. The
steps should include descriptions of how
funding for centers and IL services are
coordinated within state and the state CIL
funds. So if your state CIL funds go through
a different state agency than the designated
state unit, as they do in Wisconsin, that
means we all have to have a dialogue with the
state agency that's administering the state
funds.
The other working relationships are that have
to be addressed in the SPIL are the DSU and
other state agencies represented on the SILC,
and other councils that address the needs of
specific disability populations and issues.
As well as other public and private and
determined to be relevant. The councils that
we can work with aren't limited to federally
funded councils. It can also include state
councils.
Then it goes to other public and private
entities determined to be appropriate by the
SILC, and that leaves it pretty much open so
that the SILC can be working with almost
anyone that you determine to be an
appropriate partner to help you achieve the
goals that you have set out.
The regulations also require that there's
involvement from the Centers for Independent
Living in development of the SPIL, the SILC
and the DSU are required to consider the
plans that the Centers for Independent Living
have set out to address the needs in their
service areas.
It leaves open questions about at what level
are these working relationships to happen, to
what extent should they happen at the staff
level? To what extent should they happen at
the council or the board of directors level?
To what extent should it involve volunteers
or consumers.
It also leaves open the question about how
the relationship with DSU is developed over
time and since we are going to talk a little
bit more later about making the relationship
strategic, I don't think we will say a lot
more about that right now.
Next slide, please, slide 7.
The SPIL requirements also indicate that
we're supposed to describe how independent
living services will be coordinated with and
compliment other services to avoid
unnecessary duplication with other federal,
state, and local programs, including the OIV
program -- OIB program of Chapter 2 of
Title VII of the Act. Oftentimes, you know,
this provision and the one I just went
through are Section 1.5 and 1.6 of the SPIL,
oftentimes people fill those out without
giving a whole lot of thought to it, and I
would suggest that you might want to give
more thought to it, especially in light of
the kind of guidance that we have gotten from
RSA in the last few years.
RSA indicates that the use of our SILC
resource plan funds is limited to the
statutory duties and among the most important
of the statutory duties are development of
the state plan for independent living and
reviewing the implementation of the state
plan for independent living.
Since these relationships with other agencies
and entities are part of that state plan for
independent living, describing that
relationship and how you are going to make
sure that they are working together with the
independent living program to accomplish our
goals to the maximum extent possible, as well
as avoiding duplication of services, gives
you an opportunity to have a regular
dialogue.
While advocacy is not one of the SILC duties,
in the -- when you maintain a relationship
with agencies that are serving people with
disabilities, you are going to naturally be
talking about the needs of the consumers we
serve and that's something that so far RSA
has encouraged.
Slide 8, please. Another -- or part of that
1.6 is describing how independent living
services will be coordinated. The agency are
including those that provide independent
living or vocational rehabilitation-related
services provided by state and local agencies
administering special education and
vocational education, developmental
disability services, public health and mental
health, housing and transportation, veterans
programs and the programs authorized under
titles XVIII through XX of the Social
Security Act within the state. And since
that's Greek to most of us or Roman to most
of us who read those numerals, it's actually
talking about Medicare, Medicaid, and the
Social Security -- or excuse me, the social
services block grant that each state gets.
Note that the Rehabilitation Act talks about
including those agencies not limiting you to talking about those agencies. So any agency
that is providing independent living or
vocational rehabilitation related services is
one that you can describe in your state plan
and maintain a relationship with.
Slide 9, please.
In this slide, I underline the fact that the
regulations specifically say we can describe
working relationships with other public and
private entities, using broad language.
Organizations that can be critical partners
for SILCs in the IL network to strengthen
services, and affect systems' change are the
ones that you may want to develop
partnerships with and that can include
academic organizations. Maybe they can help
you assess information about people with
disabilities in the state, their needs, how
centers serve them, et cetera.
Business, how you can partner with businesses
that might help fund the services that folks
need, foundations for similar reasons, the
protection and the advocacy system, which has
admission for both system advocacy and can
often be a great partner. A disability
advocacy coalition. We have a great
coalition in Wisconsin on which most of the
major disability advocacy organizations
serve. Your aging community. After all,
they are serving a large number of people
with disabilities over the age of 60 and
include area agencies on aging or AAAs, the
American association for retired people or
AARP, or many other agencies within that
community.
That's it for slide 9. Move on to slide 10,
please.
Now we have an opportunity, if anyone has any
questions, you have an opportunity to ask
them and we can answer them. You can use the
chat feature on the webinar or use the
feature on the phone system.
>> TIM FUCHS: Perfect. Thank you, Mike.
That's all I was going to say. And I will
just let you all know that you can press star
pound if you have a question on the phone or
if you want to type your question, on the
chat features in the webinar or the closed
captioning screen, you are welcome to do
that.
I don't see any questions yet on the webinar.
So let me ask Patricia if there are any
questions waiting on the telephone.
>> OPERATOR: And there are no questions on
the phone line at the moment.
>> TIM FUCHS: Okay. We will give you all
just a moment in case you want to type out a
question before we start again.
Okay. Excuse me. Let me pick up my handset.
First question comes from Karen, she asks,
what do you do if the governor won't appoint
the individual chosen by the CILs to
represent them?
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: That's probably an RSA
question. The language of the rehabilitation
act is pretty clear that the CILs should be
able to select their own representative, but
RSA has traditionally said that all of the
SILC members need to be appointed by the
governor. So once the CILs have selected
their representative, it should be a
mechanical process to just have the governor
appoint that person. If they don't, I don't
know what the leverage is. He's not
following the Rehabilitation Act and I think
sometimes RSA has gotten involved -- in those
issues. Do you have anything you want to
add.
>> TIM FUCHS: Good. Thank you, Mike.
It looks like we might have another question
coming. I am check with Patricia to see if
anyone is waiting on the telephone.
>> OPERATOR: There are no audio questions at
the moment.
>> TIM FUCHS: I see one of their participants
is typing. I will just remind the rest of
you that we do have a relatively small group
today, so it's a good opportunity if you want
to ask a question, please don't be shy.
We've got plenty of time for our Q&A break
and that's what the call is for.
Okay. I wanted to wait. It looks like
that's it for the questions in this Q&A
break. We will break another two times at
slide 17 and at the very end of the call. So
let's go back to the presentation. We can go
to slide 11.
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: Okay. I'm going to do the
next few slides and then Maureen is going to
join in and, of course, she can feel free to
join in if she has anything to add.
So once have defined who are the potential
partners that you can work with, then you
need to look at why you have partnerships.
The first step might be to define and
identify who is in your IL network in your
state. Who do you feel are the core players
in delivering independent living services and
achieving the objectives in the state plan
for independent living.
I think in every state that should include
the SILC. In every state, hopefully, that's
including all of the Centers for Independent
Living. The DSU is nominally included, but,
again, this is a question of to what extent
are they involved? To what extent do you
want to change that? Or are they involved at
the appropriate level for your state?
For states that have an association of
centers, they are going to be involved in
your independent living network. That's
probably the basic independent living network
and if you kind of look at the world as a
series of Russian dolls, where one fits
inside the other, that would be the smallest
Russian doll. The center of the network.
If you think that other agencies within your
state are going to work with you, are going
to help ensure that consumers get the
services we need and help achieve objectives
in 9 state plans for independent living, you
can go and have bigger and bigger Russian
dolls, including more and more organizations
and people around your state.
You probably are going to want to consider to
what extent any agency or person supports the
independent living philosophy, and the
mission of the independent living program.
Slide 12.
The importance of developing independent
living networks into strong, cohesive
partnerships that serve as a springboard to
shared goals -- boy, that doesn't sound like
I wrote that or maybe it does.
The idea there is we really need to be
thinking about what you want to get done and
in each of your state plans for independent
living, you are going to have a number of
objectives. It's going to differ quite a bit
from state to state. In Wisconsin, I think
we have a dozen objectives. For each of
those objectives, you should have defined in
the process of developing that what
organization, what partners you think can
help you achieve that objective. And if you
have gone through that process, as part of
the development of your state plan, that
gives you something to work with to develop
this strategy around partnerships.
We find that on some of our objectives, we
have an objective around visibility.
Independent living centers are key partners
but so is our state council on physical
disabilities. On other objectives, our
partners might be more of state agencies
providing services or maybe a developmental
disabilities council. Who can help you
achieve what you want to get done? What is
success? You need to know and to learn what
kinds of things are important to your
partners for input to the SPIL. You need to
know or learn what kinds of things are going
on that could affect the implementation of
the SPIL. And you ought to be considering to
what extent pushing the goals of your SPIL
are how you measure success or do people have
something else in mind? If they do, you need
to be real clear about that.
Move on to slide 13, please.
The key to having partnerships and developing
strategy around partnerships is shared goals.
How can we help them? How can they help us?
So within the network of -- within the
independent living network, narrowly defined,
centers can do resource development. CILs
are designed to be governed by local
consumers identifying the use in their
region, provide services to consumers. SILCs
are designed to be statewide organizations,
and identify patterns of need broader than
service areas. We are not allowed to do
resource development with our federal funds.
Leave it for another webinar to talk about to
what extent you can find other funds to -- to
do things that you can't with your federal
funds, but the point here is that sometimes
you can work with the centers.
If you have a mutual project you will work
on, they might be able to do the resource
development for that project. And the role
of the SILC might be something else. SILCs
and centers working closely together should
result in higher quality and consistency of
IL services and more accuracy 704 reporting,
meet more SPIL objectives.
That, we have in here as just a plain
statement. Maureen will expand upon that a
little bit. But one of the reasons that we
want to be sure to put in -- to put that in,
is for last several years, we came to realize
that centers and the SILC put in a lot of
time annually trying to compile information
about all the services we deliver, all the
people we are working with, and what our role
is within the state. And, yet, there was a
feeling that it just goes off to Washington
and no one actually looks at that. So one of
the things we have done as the SILC is go
through all of the numerical data in the --
all of the 704 reports and put together a
compilation presented to all of the centers
and to the SILC and, of course, the DSU is
present at the meetings so they see it as
well, and see this picture of the number of
lives that are touched by independent living
services within the state in a given year.
That's giving an opportunity for the centers
to talk more about how they report things on
the 704 report, to make things more
consistent and more accurate, and present a
greater picture, capture more of what we are
doing.
It also allows us to look at the SPIL
objectives on annual basis. We publish a
report card on our website annually about our
SPIL objectives and where we are with respect
to achieving them after each year of the
state plan. That also provides an
opportunity so that when we do the plan
development, people can see that they are
talking about something concrete and sometime
something actually happens positive with
respect to the input that you are giving on
the SPIL that becomes a SPIL and then
actually defines some of the actions that
happened and some of the results that occur.
>> Next slide, please. This is Maureen.
Thanks, like.
>> MAUREEN RYAN: I want to talk a little bit
more specifically about the way things are
working as far as partnerships in Wisconsin.
As Tim mentioned in the opening, we learned
some things that turned out to be successes
and we have tried some things that have
turned out to be failures. This may be the
same case in your state. So we want to share
some of those because we are all in this
together. Mike was talking about the IL
network and that's what I'm referring to when
we are talking about. In Wisconsin, we have
decided to call it the WILN, which stands for
the Wisconsin independent living network.
When we talk about what the SILC does versus
what the centers do and in Wisconsin we have
a state coalition, that was very confusing,
even internally to our members and definitely
externally outside the IL world.
So we decided to combine our efforts and call
it the WILN network and that's what I will be
referring to. SILC works really closely and
is a really big part of our WILN network.
Internally, there are key staff, key
councilmembers, volunteers, their board, they
are all a very intrinsic part of the WILN
network and when we talk about the network
externally, that would mean our WILN network
going out to other partners and I will
explain some examples of how we do both of
those work together as a network in
Wisconsin.
Mike referred to some of the shared goals and
one of the first goals we'll talk about is
the higher quality of independent living
services. Obviously that's a goal of SILCs
and it's a goal of our whole WILN network.
So some of the things we learned about
obtaining a higher level of services, was
that when we would get Part B contracts from
the SILC, all the centers get a contract and
so does the state association. And we would
end in reports quarterly on our Part B
activities and we weren't sure if everybody
was reporting the same thing or they just
weren't doing the activities or perhaps they
were reporting it differently. So we decided
we should dig deeper and look into that and,
yes, we found a big difference in 9 way
people were defining -- the way people were
defining terms and the way they were
interpreting different activities, wait they
were doing -- the way that they were doing
data collection and so we decided we really
need to look at some consistency amongst our
reporting.
So we formed what was called a program
committee that looked at things we do within
the ILCs and within the state association
and within our SILC. The SILC staff members
are on our program committee. The CIL staff
members are on the committee and so is the
state association. And we meet every other
month and we took a lot of time to determine
how we are defining the activities when we
would report on our Part B contracts. We
would agree on what was best practice and
language and then our data collection was
consistent.
In Wisconsin, we all use the same management
information system which really helped for
our consistency too. So when we would turn
in our reports, SILC got to look at apples to
apples and it really improved our overall
quality of our services for a few reasons.
One, when we were looking at defining terms
and how we were all doing it, we got to share
differences about the way we would capture
things are about the way we would do
activities which really led to some great
discussion about best practice. So we would
agree on how it was the best way to go
forward with this, and that really helped the
quality of services. It also led to more
accurate reporting, when we looked at the
consistency of defining terms and data
collection and all consistently used the same
information management system.
So up with of the things Mike referred to was
this report, and I'm not sure if any of the
other SILCs do this but it's really helpful
when the centers turn in all of their 704
reports to the SILCs that the SILCs can put
that all together in one annual report and it
really looks at the demographics across the
state. It looks at what we're doing. It
looks at how we are doing it and, yes, there
are differences and that can be okay, but,
again, that made us take a look at how we are reporting on our Part C contracts also. And,
again, we agreed on best practices and
defining the terms and our data collection.
And so we would put that into an annual
report that the SILC would share with the
SILC councilmembers, with all the independent
living centers, and if we had something that
seemed kind of rogue or way out there, an
outlier, we would ask the center about that
and there may be very good reasons why one
center would have three times as many
consumers that have CSR plans or three times
as many INRs than others but they would
explain that to us if that was the case.
Otherwise, it was probably an issue about
reporting.
So we think this really, really helped, this
whole effort where we worked together on
everything and that lead to higher quality
independent living services, and because we
would do that, many more the SPIL objectives
could be met and reported on accurately.
All of these things led to more increased
funding for the centers. And so if we can go
to the next slide, we'll talk a little bit
more about those.
When we talk about ways to do more accurate
reporting, that also really helped -- better
ways to implement the CIL. We all went to
outcome reporting and that was quite a leap
for all of us to figure out ways to really
try to capture what the CILs do and what the
SILC does. We all know that the 704 report
wasn't necessarily helpful to really be able
to tell our story. So when we all worked
together to gather our annual information, we
wanted to share this annual information with
other people that we work with and potential
funders and policymakers and legislators.
In order to do that, we had to make sure that
we have this accurate data and we were all
talking about the same thing.
But what we noticed was when we talked about
the number of INRs that we completed or the
number of independent living skills training
that occurred or the statewide number of peer
support groups that have met, that didn't
really resonate with legislators. It didn't
really resonate with potential funders or
policymakers.
So we took those statistics and really
changed it into a format that seemed to make
sense to people, and we talked about more
outcomes and we actually had products that we
were talking about, things like the number of
people who received assistance with locating
housing or the number of people who we
assisted accessing transportation. Those
things really resonated with our potential
funders and our legislators and told a better
story about what the Independent Living
Centers really do. And, again, we back those
up with good, hard statistics and facts.
So now we have quality and we have a product
and we really utilize that to show that the
centers were a great investment and the SILC
would use that, the centers would utilize
that and the state association would utilize
that and it really has helped our funding and
our quality of service and getting our
message out to people who really don't
understand the impact that centers have.
One of the things that we realized -- another
thing that we did that really was helpful to
us was we have what's called the QUIL, which
is the quality indicator for independent
living services, this is a copyrighted
product that Wisconsin developed with the
help of SILC. We wanted to look beyond just
compliance factors and really get down and
drill into what was best practice and we did
that again by addressing the standards and
assurances and our SILC contributes every
year to our state for some QIILs,
experiences to be conducted. These are peer
reviewed. They are done by peers for peers.
It really helps improve the quality of
independent living services, and SILC staff
can be on QIILs peer reviewed team. You
learn a lot and you give a lot back to
centers. We think that's another way that we
worked really well together on our goals to
try to improve the services in Wisconsin.
All of these have led to more funding.
Because we have got a great way to back up
our products and our message is great, and we
are out there demonstrating that we are a
good investment, we have received more
funding and that's been very, very helpful.
We have a lot of sources of funding in
Wisconsin. Fee-for-services and diversified
funding, all of this additional funding has helped us do better advocacy and helped us
further meet the SPIL objectives. We use the
additional funds that we got to train staff,
and councilmembers and really work on some systems advocacy. So that was a great way
that our partnership grew and developed and
worked together. And I want to talk more
about advocacy now on slide 15. If we could
go to that.
That's a big goal for our SILC, for our
association and for our CILs and we are all
working on this together. We've got a larger
pool of people that want to work on it, but
we have to have a unified message. So one of
the things that we worked on was getting
people together, to talk about our issues and
developing a unified approach within the IL
network first of all.
So within SILC, they've had some recent
interpretations from RSA that have somewhat
put some restrictions on their hard and fast
lobbying. So that's something that the state
association of Wisconsin has been able to
pick up. We have folks -- we don't have a
full time. We have a lobbyist, which happens
to be me, as part of my duties go ahead and
be able to be a registered lobbyist in
Wisconsin and lobbies just for the
Independent Living Centers and people with
disabilities in Wisconsin.
We get unrestricted funds to pay for the
lobbying expenses and we utilize a consumer
advocacy survey within all the centers and
any time a consumer comes in, they fill out
an advocacy survey, this goes on all year
long within the centers and then we collect
that and with the SILC staff tabulates it and
we use that as part of our guide that goes
forward for our statewide systems advocacy
plan.
It also is really good input for the SPIL. I
know a lot of the states will wait until
right before the SPIL is to be developed and
then they will do focus groups or have
hearings where they will have people come in
and talk about their crucial issues at that
time. And we found out that if we use this
continual advocacy, priority process and help
that going as feedback, that the SILC
actually has a better picture, when it comes
time to do the SPIL and they are more
familiar with the ongoing issues that seem to
resonate all throughout the three years.
So we developed the annual WILN system
advocacy man. We utilized a consumer
advocacy survey that I mentioned. We also
use our work groups and our input that we
hear throughout the year in the centers, with
SILC councilmembers and with the state
association.
And on our system advocacy plan, we usually
have five or six issues a year. Those issues
tend to be the ones that are typically in the
SPILs, have been in the SPILs for years.
They usually are around housing,
transportation, employment, mental health and
long-term care. They always seem to pop up
and rise towards the top as they always seem
to be included in our SPIL.
So we have SILC councilmembers and SILC staff
that are on our systems advocacy commit. We
have CIL staff and CIL board members and we
have our state association staff. So that
really keeps us all on the same page. We
talk about a unified message and we make sure
that everyone is familiar with that. So then
when we go out externally from our IL
network, we are talking in a unified voice.
And I think this is really beneficial and I
see a lot of states where this has not been
able to happen yet, and you will get someone
from one center talking about transportation
and a way that another center is talking
about it differently and it doesn't come
across as a unified message.
So this really helps to get us all on the
same page. We meet every other month to go
over those, and it's a big topic that comes
up in between, we will have calls in between
to discuss those issues. So it's been a
really great thing to work on together. It
keeps us all on the same page. It keeps us
unified. We also really work on leadership
development, which is always a SPIL
objective, and an objective for our overall
IL network. We can develop ways to get
people used to being parts of committees, how
to learn how to do advocacy and develop those
leadership skills.
So I think we are ready to go on to slide 16.
And, again, that unified message will deal
with state and national partnerships. The
CILs themselves will address their local
issues, but with the SILC and the national --
but the SILC and the association will work on
national issues. We look at agencies such as
APRIL and NCIL and make sure we have
representation on those. We also identify
all the key committees that we would like to
have representation on that we think are
important to have an IL message there and we
identify those and we prioritize those and,
again, we try to get somebody on the majority
of those committees and make sure to work on
them, work with them as mentoring them
before, during and after the meetings to make
sure they are prepared with their unified
voice, that they know the content of what's
going to be covered in the meeting and that
afterward, they can report back what happened
at those crucial committee meetings and that
information back helps keep our whole IL
network informed. I'm sure most of you have
heard the saying "if you are not at the
table, you are on the menu." That comes from
Senator Harkins. We are not here to find
fault with what's going on, but it's our
responsibility to provide recommendations and
make solid partnerships. So that really
helps with all of our work together, as a
larger consumer base and a larger network
that's unified. None of us have enough
staff, and more people that work together,
the more advocacy will get done.
I think we are ready for questions and
answers. If anybody has any, we are ready to
take those at this time.
>> TIM FUCHS: All right. Thank you, Maureen.
Just to remind everybody, you can ask
questions by pressing star pound if you are
on the telephone, and you can also type them
on the webinar or the CART chat. I see
there's a lot of activity on the chat screen.
That's great. That's what it's there for and
I will go back and voice some of these
questions out loud for you all. We will take
a couple of questions and then check in on
the telephone. If you want to ask a question
over the phone, that star pound to get into
the queue for the phone.
Okay. So a couple of people, Maureen and
Mike, on the chat have been talking about ways to empower SILC members, especially new
SILC members to advocate, to speak for
themselves and to really speak up and get
involved and make a difference. So any tips
there? I know you spoke of your leadership
programs Maureen, but any specific tips for
any SILC members?
>> MAUREEN RYAN: Yes, this is Maureen. I
think we will cover some more of that in the
next section but we do work really diligently
when a new SILC member comes on so they can
identify with part of the IL network, that
they know their local Independent Living
Center and they are connected to them. And
we'll go over some more suggestions specific
to that in the next section.
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: Yeah, I think we are
always excited when we have new blood and
they want to jump in on some issues. And
it's great when we have people who can help.
So one of the problems Maureen talked about a
unified voice and sometimes that kind of
diffuses some of the energy that people have.
So we do things through grass roots networks
that we have set up at each 69 independent
living cent -- each of the Independent Living
Centers in Wisconsin and funded through the
state plan.
At the SILC meetings, we try as much as
possible to cultivate a family atmosphere, to
go to dinners together, and things like that.
Even though we don't talk about SILC business
at those more social things, people have a
chance to talk about what is interesting to
them, what's going on in their lives. Other
people can share things that they are
involved with and how to get plugged in. And
so we really do try to encourage that
supportive atmosphere.
>> MAUREEN RYAN: And I will make one quick
comment because I know we need to get moving
on. We also can set up a mentorship for
new -- a mentor for a new SILC member, just
like we do for a new staff member in the
CILs. So if a SILC member has a passion for
advocacy but doesn't know how, we will
certainly provide them with the skills and
the training, but a lot of it is trying to
get them motivated and empowered to do the
advocacy and mentoring really seems to be a
good tool for that too.
>> TIM FUCHS: Okay. Thanks.
All right, let's see, I'm going to jump out
of the order here, but also in the questions,
I see a question for you, Maureen, where do
you get the unrestricted funds for lobbying.
Can you talk about some of the ways you have
leveraged funding and the distinction between
the coalition and the SILC.
>> MAUREEN RYAN: Sure. Excellent question.
The majority of the fees for my lobbying
expenses are obtained from the centers who
are a part of the state association. So the
state association, its membership is composed
of the eight centers, the eight independent
living centers in Wisconsin. So they pay
membership dues to the state association
every year, and a portion of the majority of
the centers have unrestricted funds that they
utilize to pay the dues. They have to
designate every year with their membership
fees what part of their funds are
unrestricted and then I track that. So it
gives me more than enough money to cover my
lobbying dues. There are a couple of centers
from time to time that don't have any
unrestricted funds and they make sure they
let me know that, but fortunately, we have
some centers in Wisconsin that pull in quite
a bit unrestricted funds through their
foundations and their other work that always
have more than enough to cover my lobbying
duties.
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: So even though it might be
difficult for SILCs to have unrestricted
funds for lobbying, I think that as part of
our role in developing the SPIL and
monitoring the implementation of the SPIL, we
need to monitor what's happening on policy at
the state level and I think we cannot only
then monitor that, but as staff, report that
to the councilmembers on what we are seeing.
And so while the SILC itself can't going to
do lobbying, that feeds into what other
people do. The reason that we do it is with
respect to our development of the SPIL.
>> TIM FUCHS: Good. Okay. Thanks. We've
got a couple more questions here in the chat,
but I want to check back in on the phone and
see if anybody is in the queue there.
Patricia anybody in line?
>> OPERATOR: There are no questions in the
queue at this time.
>> TIM FUCHS: All right. Thank you.
Let me see, someone else, let's see, Heidi
was wondering if we could give some examples
of what SILC members might look for in the
704 report. I think you mentioned, that
Maureen. What types of things are helpful to
glean from that?
>> MAUREEN RYAN: I'm sorry, I'm just reading
the question. What kinds of things are
helpful for the SILC members to glean from
the 704.
>> TIM FUCHS: Yes.
>> MAUREEN RYAN: Okay. Mike can actually --
SILC actually puts the report together for
us. I know they do a great report on the
demographics and SILC does a great job with
the pie charts and as a matter of fact, Mike
probably has a better handle on this since he
does the actual report than I do. So --
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: So for anyone who has
written or read a 704 report in depth, you
are probably familiar with the fact that it's
divided up into two parts, one for the state
program and one part for the centers program
and then each of the parts has several
subparts within it. The first subpart deals
with resources and I think everyone finds it
interesting to see how much money is really
available to support independent living
through our network. And so we can just take
the information that we get in the 704
reports and compile it. We use an Excel
spreadsheet for this, and the Excel
spreadsheet has a tool that allows you to
make really nice graphs real easily and then
we generally compile it into a presentation,
a slide show that we can use both for the
council on for the centers.
The second major subpart is the demographics
which allows us to look at the age, the type
of disability, the race and ethnic and other
demographic features of the people that are
being served. And that's something that
centers and the council always find real
interesting, not only just from the aspect of
who are we serving, but also it helps us
evaluate the outreach plan as part of the
SPIL and it helps the centers evaluate how
they are doing with respect to outreach.
Then the next couple of sections of the 704
report talk about the issues that consumers
serve. We do an analysis of that for folks
and the other part that we try to capture is the -- or it's issues or types of IL services
and then the last part that we try to
summarize is the community activities and
just like the centers find that putting their
community activities together into the table
and their 704 reports is a very cumbersome
process, we find summarizing that and putting
charts together sometimes is difficult and it
requires some judgment calls, but we have
been able to show a picture that there are
many different types of activities and many
different types of issues being worked on,
and that it -- excuse me -- and we can also
show that all of the centers are
participating in this too.
And so that -- those kind of charts also tell
a story that interests both the centers and
the council.
>> MAUREEN RYAN: And this is Maureen. I will
just add one quick thing. I think it's
really helpful when sometimes the
councilmembers are from a specific disability
population or specific age group and they
always think that sometimes -- sometimes they
could think that centers don't -- for
example, centers don't work really well with
aging folks. They usually work with people
that are 40 years old or centers don't do
much with people on mental illness and the
charts don't generate a true picture but it
does give a really good overview of the
demographics and we compare that with the
census statistics to have some good hard
facts that demonstrate our under served,
which will then trigger our outreach plan.
So it's a good analysis.
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: One of the things that
have come out in our analyses that I think a
lot of people have found interesting. It's
helped us work with the education folks, and
that's transitioning age, people with
disabilities are disproportionately served by
centers. There are a lot of kids in that 14
to 25 -- I think there's two different age
groups in the 704 report. And that's been
really helpful for everyone to know.
>> TIM FUCHS: Good. Well, thanks so much.
Those are helpful tips.
And let me -- we're at ten minutes on the Q&A
break. I want to get back to the
presentation to make sure we have time to
finish up here. I will turn it back over to
you all. Thank you for the good answers and
we'll go to slide 18.
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: Okay. Once you have
figured out why you want a partnership, which
should help you figure out with whom you are
going to want to partner, the next step is to
figure out what you are going to do, how you
are going to do it. One of the things we
realized early on is that we work together
all the time. We work together between SILC
and centers and coalition and we work
together between all of us in the CSU and
other state agencies and we work with other
agencies serving people with disabilities.
In essence, we are in partnerships whether we
recognize it or not. So the real question is
to figure out how we can make those
partnerships effective.
We focus on mutual goals. Our partners can
provide more than we can do alone. In most
states, the centers responsible for receiving
the majority of the SPIL outcomes. That
means that SILCs have to work closely with
centers to find out how we can make that
happen. Are there any barriers, if so, how
can we address those barriers.
I will turn it over to Maureen here for --
>> MAUREEN RYAN: A few slides.
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: Yeah, there you go.
>> MAUREEN RYAN: I think Mike kind of hit the
nail on the head. One of the things is that centers, SILCs, and CILs come from different
perspectives and it's all about IL and we
need to respect each other. We are and
should be automatic partners and if we don't
get along internally, it doesn't bode well
for us at all. And we have all definitely
known what it was like to have the farmers
get taken down by -- the dairy farmers
fighting with the cash crop farmers. We
don't want that in IL. We have to get
unified. It doesn't mean that we always get
along. We will really argue a point and not
be afraid to do that, but do it respectively.
We need to work on some positive things to
go. We found some things that worked really
well and some things that haven't worked
really well. I will go through the next few slides and talk about some of the examples.
One. Things that worked really well, Mike
mentioned is at our SILC meetings the SILC
meetings are held at the centers on location
for the most part, almost in every center we
have a room big enough to hold all the SILC
councilmembers. And we use a part of that
time for public hearings throughout the
years, for the SILC if they need or want to
have one. We have a time for people to come
in and talk about anything that they want to,
some public comment time. We use it for time
that the SILC councilmembers can learn about
that center, so the staff will come in and
talk about a unique project or a program they
are working on. They will get to meet face
to face and learn -- learn who the people are
from that center. They are part of our
community. We think that's really important
for people to at least meet each other and
they can start the dialogue and get to know
each other well.
It also saves the SILC money to have the
meetings at the centers, they can use their
copier and resources there. We have think
that's a good idea and that's worked really
well to have a SILC council meeting at thecenters as space allowed.
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: Can I just add there that
the CILs in Wisconsin have been very
hospitable to us, and oftentimes they arrange
for snacks and help us find places where we
can get lunch at a reasonable cost and when
compared to the cost of food at a hotel, the
savings are huge!
We used to have most of our meetings at
hotels and it's amazing how much we have
saved working with the CILs and that's really
been a great partnership for us.
>> MAUREEN RYAN: Other things we do are joint
trainings. We will -- as today, Mike and I
will do trainings together. Some of the CIL
directors will do trainings with SILC staff.
We also offer trainings up to SILC
councilmembers whenever possible and SILC
staff. If the centers are having a statewide
training, we always try to invite the SILC
staff and the SILC councilmembers and vice
versa. It's an opportunity to get training
in and it's also a face to face.
We have done the SILC development a lot of
different ways. We've had retreats. We've
done it throughout the year. We've had
committees. Whenever we have done it,
partners are always involved. We usually
have issue groups that is a composite of SILC
members, state association, and ILCs. So
we all work together on developing the SPIL
and, again, as I mentioned before, with the
advocacy priority surveys, the centers will
do that all year. I mean, they are coming
across thousands of people with disabilities
all year long and they feed that into a
database and SILC will compile that for us.
So it keeps their finger on the pulse to be
knowing what's going on throughout the year
also.
And then again, our -- our WILN advocacy
groups that work on our annual advocacy plan
is a cross group of SILC staff, board
members, along with ILCs and state
associations. So we are spending a lot of
tile together, all throughout the year and I
think that helps. Yes, we get frustrated.
Yes, we fight. But, yes, we stick together
and we keep at it.
A couple -- let's go on to slide 20. And the
other thing I want to mention is our
branding. As I talked about before, people
didn't really understand the difference of
what Mike did at a SILC council versus what I
do at a state association and how 9
Independent Living Center -- the independent
living centers all were a part of that. And
this is just about our IL networks. So we
worked hard to try to describe that all and
also to try to take that message on the
outside and we figured it was just
complicated for what it was worth, that we
knew what our roles and individual roles and
responsibles were internally, but we wanted
to just to present a united front to the
world on the outside. So we decided to call
it 9WILN which is the Wisconsin independent
living network, and that has really helped
for our branding. We utilize the same
website, the SILC and the state association,
and we have a section on there for the
centers. I talked a little bit about our
annual reports that we cowrite and share, and
about 9 trainings that we do. We have a
brochure that lists all the same ways. So
the whole message about the IL network and it
doesn't go into a lot of detail about the differences of what SILC does versus the
state association, versus the centers.
It talks about more about what we all do
together and I think that has been a very
successful branding.
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: I would just like to add,
if I can, that this is something that started
very early on, our involvement as a SILC
because we tried to describe what we would
put on a brochure, or a website to help
people understand what a SILC is. When we
are trying to get input for the state plan,
there were a few people who knew what the
SILC was or what we do or what the state plan
for independent living was about, but not a
lot and try to describe what the SILC is
without also describing what the Centers for
Independent Living are.
So working with the coalition and the centers
on this has been really helpful in presenting
members of the public just a little bit of
information. We have a theme to it. We
serve people with awe disabilities and all
ages and so it's really worked well to show
that there are local organizations, the
centers, and there are state organizations,
the coalition and the CILs. And we have a
similar message on both the website and the
brochure that we use.
>> MAUREEN RYAN: And a couple of the other
things that we feel have been successful and
helpful to us is, again, counting on at least
twice a year we will have two events that
overlap, and one of them is our annual
meeting. The Independent Living Centers
through the state association meet face to
face every other month, and the SILC means
quarterly. So once a year, we meet together
and overlap meetings and it's usually in
August. So we can plan for the upcoming new
fiscal year, together on the same page and
it's been a really helpful tool.
The other thing that we do every year are our
independent living days at the state capitol.
And we usually come in early and do a
training or the SILC has their board meeting
and then we do a training for all of us and
then we go to the capitol and meet with every
one of our legislators and then we have the
state association meeting. So we are up here
all week, the second week of February every
year together doing our annual IL days. And
it's a great time for learning, training,
socializing, and networking.

The other thing we have done well is
prioritizing our committee representations
and work on mentoring people from our IL
network to be on those. 9 state re -- the
state rehab council is our priority and that
has a lot to do with both of us and we work
really diligently to make sure that the
people on the rehab council can speak with a
unified voice about independent living and,
again, other councils where we will decide
who, you know, should this be SILC staff that
goes on this? Or SILC councilmembers? Is
this ILC staff? Is this a state association
staff?
So, again, there's not enough of us to go
around and we work diligently on prioritizing
that and getting membership to work well with
the unified voice amongst all the council.
On to slide 21. I know we are running out of
time. So I'm going to try to get through
this next few pretty fast. Things that
didn't work. That list is just as long,
believe me. We continue to screw up every
day. But we learn. And I think that's the
big thing, to not get critical about it, to
just learn from your mistakes, figure out
what parts worked and what parts didn't and
why. Some of the things that did work at the
same time had difficulty. The committees
that I was talking about, that are going on
about people with disabilities all over the
state, we can't always get people to them.
And we can't always do mentoring, and we
might just get a person that is up to speed
to do all of those and then they leave the
center or their staff turn over and we have
to start all over.
Or we might get somebody that just has a
different opinion and they are not always on
the same page as the unified voice or don't
communicate what happened at the meetings
back to us. There are pieces that do fall
apart sometimes about that.
Working with the DSU, as we all know can be
challenging at times. And we are all
somewhat equal in that, in the network
sharing that role and that part. I don't
think I will probably go into too much more
detail about that.
Logistics at the annual meeting, the
overlapping meeting I talked about, sometimes
we plan too much. Sometimes people just get
too tired out. They can't -- they can't do a
whole week of continual activities. So we
have learned to try to keep the days shorter
when planning events throughout that long of
a time.
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: And just with the DSU, I wanted to make it clear that it's not that we
don't like them or we don't work with them.
We have a pretty good relationship with our
DSU, but they administer this huge VR program
with all of this funding and that captures
their attention. We are consumers. We know
IL. We love IL and to the extent that we can
be the leaders of the IL program, that really
help the program to develop.
>> MAUREEN RYAN: I think we are ready for
slide 22.
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: Yeah. So how can the
impact of staffing and other issues be
supported even when we can't afford a lot of
staffing? We cooperate with partners. I
think the SILCs can't do everything. At the
beginning, I talked about you will aof the
different agencies with whom you could
partner, we can't do it all. And so working
with coalition and the centers and sometimes
working with the DSU and others, we can use
our resources. Having councilmembers do some
of this instead of just staff members doing
this, also helps to the extent that we can do
that. And we always need to ask what can be
improved, how can we make it a little bit
better the next time we do something?
Slide 23. I think both of us were going to
talk about this a little bit, but both of us
believe that involvement in our national
organization is important. It brings
something very valuable to the SILC. It
brings something very valuable to the network
of centers. It gives us a context and a
knowledge within which to develop a state
plan for independent living that's meaningful
and has a chance to be implemented.
>> MAUREEN RYAN: I think the SILC with its
members continually changing, you know, they
have councilmembers that come and go. They
turn over. I think we do a good job about
even when they go off the SILC, to stay in
contact with them and make sure they remain
part of the IL network. Hopefully some day
they will come back on the network. I think
that's a good step and a good piece that we
do. We don't want to lose track of those
good folks and they volunteer in the centers.
I think that's also very helpful. And we're
always working on the SPIL. We don't just do
that every three years. I think those are
things that really help all of us. I think
we'll --
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: That gives bus two seconds
for questions and answers.
>> TIM FUCHS: That's okay. We started a
couple of minutes late, while we sent out the
new link. So we'll continue for a couple of
minutes more to make sure that we answer all
the questions.
So, again, you can press star pound if you
have a question on the phone. And we can
actually start there while I read a couple of
these web questions. Patricia, anybody on
the phone?
>> OPERATOR: Not at the moment.
>> TIM FUCHS: Okay. All right. Well, one of
our participants just now asked, what do you
do as an executive when you want to assert
yourself and let staff work it out? How do
you know when to assert yourself and when to
let staff work it out? Sorry.
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: Well, our SILC has a staff
of two, including me. So --
(Chuckles)
It could be very different in an organization
with more staff. We -- with a small staff,
we tend to have to back each other up and be
prepared to fill in for one another when
necessary and that has lent itself to a much
more cooperative, less hierarchical staffing
model.
When would I assert myself as an executive?
I guess when I believe that the objectives or
other policies set by the council is pretty
clear or the IL philosophy leads to a
specific result. I think that's when you
need to assert yourself and make sure that
the direction to staff is pretty clear.
>> TIM FUCHS: Okay. Thanks, Mike. Let's
check back in on the phone and see if any
questions have come in there.
>> OPERATOR: And not at the moment.
>> TIM FUCHS: Okay. Well, let's see, I see
one other question that we haven't addressed
yet. Aerius was wondering, how did you get
the IL network started and what were some of
the obstacles that you worked through to
coordinate that?
>> MAUREEN RYAN: We started with U.S. our
coalition members going. We happened to be
in the city of our state capitol, which is
Madison, for a board meeting when there were
some potential cuts that were going to occur
to personal care services and because we were
in town, we took it upon ourselves. This is
back in 1994, I think. We took it upon
ourselves as -- in addition to our board
meeting, we would go up to the capitol and
raise some hell.
And so we were pretty effective up there
because a lot of the centers had a lot of
knowledge about what it really takes to
provide personal assistance services and so
we felt pretty empowered coming back from
that and thought, you know, when we have our
regular meetings, we should do this at least
once a year and let's just make sure we have
a board meeting in Madison and tie it to a
day at the capitol. And I think one of the
lessons we learned about that was trying to
get the consumer input as our message to the
legislators was really difficult because on
the day that we were there, there might be
something that came up that was brand new on
the legislator -- on the legislative platform
and it might not have been particularly what
the consumers had been providing as feedback.
And meanwhile, throughout the year, there was
no one really talking about independent
living funding. So we combined the two and
said, at a minimum, we are going to address
the -- the good investments that Independent
Living Centers are. We have to talk about it
because all the centers get some state
funding and we wanted to maintain that state
funding and increase it. And in order to do
that, we had to educate the legislators. So
we took it upon ourselves as part of an
annual event to be the ones to address our IL
funding, somewhat similar to what NCIL does
about the Rehab Act funding on the annual day
on the Hill.
We always incorporate independent living and
then we would incorporate whatever our
advocacy priority plan would be throughout
the year and develop position papers on that.
So the obstacles that we encounters were
getting everybody trained on that, having it
too large or too small, one of the -- the
timing of it. We always do it the second
week -- well, now we do it the second week of
February because that works well whether we
have a biennial budget coming out but it can
also be terrible, terrible weather in
Wisconsin. We had blizzards an snowstorms
where the legislators have not even made it
into the capitol. I think sometimes trying
to do too much within that short period of
time, have too much on our platform was a
barrier. I think the weather was a barrier.
I think coordinating the activity with SILC
council, again, trying not to load too much
up during that week, making sure everybody
was on board with our issues. And then also
we're consumer driven agencies and so that
wasn't really a consumer message that day.
That was an independent living network
message which is a little bit different. So
I think those were our three biggest
barriers. Think we are doing fine overcoming
those but it was a struggle.
>> MIKE BACHHUBER: Yeah, and I just wanted to
add that the council is less involved in the
planning and the implementation of this today
than it was ten years ago because the RSA
guidance kind of suggested that we ought not
be involved in a lot of the training
activity. We ought not be involved in the
advocacy but the council normally meets in
the second week of months quarterly, and the
network of centers normally meets the second
week of months every other month, and so
February just happens to be a time when both
of us make sure we have it on our schedule to
be in Madison. The council meeting ends up
being a little bit shorter but then
councilmembers can be involved with some of
the training activities, to hear more about
what the centers are doing and it helps
council in developing and monitoring the
implementation of the state plan. And then
some people including sometimes
councilmembers on a volunteer basis
participate in the actual legislative visits.
The council as a whole adjourned at the end
of the day on Tuesday, but then the -- it is
an opportunity and the councilmembers
encourage each other to participate in the
event.
>> TIM FUCHS: All right. Well, thanks, Mike.
That's really helpful.
And we're going to go ahead and begin to wrap
up here. I would like to thank you all, Mike
and Maureen for staying on. I would like to
thank our participants who stayed a little
bit longer to get through anything. I see
that we are flipping to slide 26. This is
the evaluation link. So that's a live link,
if you are on the webinar today. You can
click that and go directly to the evaluation
form. You will see, I was telling the truth,
it's very brief. If you are looking at
the -- a printed copy of the PowerPoint, you
can access the evaluation link at the link
that was sent to you. Please fill it out and
we review them all and we discuss them as we
always look to improve our programs.
I also want to let you all know I was typing
with Mike and Maureen during the
presentation, and they will make the SILC
survey available. So I want to thank them
for being willing to share that. I will
email all of that to you all, to all of our
registered participants tomorrow along with a
reminder about the evaluation forms. So be
on the lookout for that.
I want to thank you, Mike and Maureen. I
want to congratulate you on the strength of
the network you have built in Wisconsin and
for being willing to share it with everyone
today. And, again, to all of you, please
remember that this webinar is fully archived.
So by Thursday, it will be available on
ILRU's website. You can go to the webinar's
link and on demand trainings to access that.
And I just want to thank you all for being
with us today.
If you all think of any additional questions,
please feel free to send them to us. Mike
and Maureen were generous enough to share
their contact information on slide 24. But
you can always email me and I will pass them
along. My email is just Tim@NCIL.org.
That's Tim@NCIL.org. So be in touch if you
think any questions, whether it's in a few
hours or a few weeks.
All right. Thanks so much, everyone. Have a
wonderful afternoon. We will talk to you
soon. Bye-bye.
(End of meeting)
Event is not active

Copyright © 2013