>> Okay, good afternoon, I'm Tim Fuchs. I want to thank you for your patience. I want to welcome all of you to systems advocacy. This is the second episode and CIL net on effective services. This is presented by CIL-NET part of IL-NET. It's operated through a partnership among ILRU, NCIL and APRIL with support by with the US department of operation. Today's call is being recorded so we can archive it in ILRU's web site. Went break several time. Our webcast participant Kalamazoo ask questions by using the text box under the emoticon and that's the same for the folks on the CART screen.

If you are participating by CART today, you can use the CART chat. I'm in there, and you can ask your questions and I will voice them during our Q&A sessions.

The materials for today's call including the PowerPoint presentation and an evaluation form are located on the training web page. That training web page, the URL, the web address for it was sent to you in the confirmation you received from NCIL. If you are on the teleconference today and you haven't opened for printed the PowerPoint, excuse me, you will want to do it now. It will make today's presentation a lot easier to follow along with. If you don't have those materials or can't find the confirmation email, you can email me Tim@ncil.org. I have my email open right now. You can let me know and I will send you the web address that you need to access that. Again, if you already have the PowerPoint or if you are on the webinar, don't worry. But if you can't find it, you will let me know and I will email it to you. That's Tim@NCIL org.

Okay. I want to remind you all, if you please I will have out the evaluation form at the end of today's call, we would really appreciate it. If you are participating in a group, that's great but I would ask if you can please fill one out as an individual. It lets us know what everyone thought of the call. It only takes a minute to complete and it's really important to us. And we will remind you of that at the end of the call. With that, those are all of my announcements. I want to get started and introduce our presenter, Chris Hilderbrant. He's the chief operating officer at the Center for Disability Rights in Rochester New York. CDR is one of the most effective CILs in the country and it excels at systems advocacy and systems change in Rochester and throughout the state of New York.

I want to thank Chris for all of his work for preparing this presentation. I know you will enjoy it. So let's get started. Chris?

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: Hi. Thanks. So good afternoon, everybody. Thanks for joining us today. If we can advance to slide two, we will get right into our introduction. So today we're going to talk about systems advocacy as a core service within Independent Living Centers, some the questions that we are going to be answering today, what is systems advocacy K. we as Independent Living Centers do systems advocacy? Why would we do such a thing? How would we go about going systems advocacy and probably most importantly for me at the end, what exactly are we going to do as a result of this conversation today?

And as a note, and not actually on the listed questions, one of the famous questions I think that was left hanging the last time I did this presentation is: Am I the presenter actually doing this presentation in pajamas. Last time we discussed my relative discomfort with this format. I'm used to working with an actual audience so I can interact with people and see your response and know when I'm resonating well. And the tradeoff, however, is that while I can't see you and can't interact with you, also can't see me. So I can do whatever I want to make myself comfortable. So let's go with the theory that I'm wearing pajamas for this conversation.

So you can advance to slide three. Our learning objectives, explain the philosophy and the role of systems advocacy as a score service that builds community and changes people's lives, describe the five elements of an effective systems advocacy model.

Slide four, please. Describe how social media can be used as a highly effective advocacy tool for communication. I explain strategies for measuring success of a center for Independent Living Centers advocacy efforts and our last learning objective, what exactly is the first thing that you will do to get this started. Stories important for me that everybody come away from this presentation with a good solid idea of what exactly is it that you are going to do. But this learning into action. If we don't come out of here with actions to take and don't put it into action, then, you know, unfortunately I really feel that we wasted our time and I don't want to do that to you all.

Next slide, please.

So who is Chris Hilderbrant and why would you care? So I started my disability experience at the age of 14. I had a spinal cord injury at that point. It was March 13th of 1990, which a lot of you folks would know is just a couple of months before the first President Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act. I started working with the Center for Disability Rights as I was finishing college. It was March of 1999, also coincidentally it was shortly before the Supreme Court issued its decision in Olmsted. So I think that my life journey with disability, my experience with disability had a lot of fortuitous timing in terms of coinciding with some of the most monumental occurrences for our community.

My first jobs working at the Center for Disability Rights was providing direct service. I worked one-on-one with individuals with developmental disabilities and traumatic brain injuries doing what is essentially independent living skills training, another one of those IL core services. My job was through New York state's Medicaid waivers but it's very much the same ILS that we do as a core service. It was really in that job and in joining the Center for Disability Rights that I became a part of the disability community. Prior to that I was sort of in the -- the isolated journey of being that one kid in a wheelchair at school and then that one kid in a wheelchair at college, and I think that's very familiar story for a lot of us having no real idea that there is a disability community, a culture, an independent living movement and it wasn't until I was actually looking for jobs that I found the disability community in Rochester.

So I got started just doing the direct services. I wound up being a supervisor of those programs. I got more involved in services. I got more involved in advocacy and advance to slide six, please.

Around March of 2003, we have assessed that I'm better at breaking rules than following them. And advocacy is a home for those of us who are rule breakers and it's better than Medicaid where they expect to you follow every last letter of the law. I moved from our programs and into advocacy to really -- more so more importantly to enhance CDR system advocacy efforts.CD R. has been involved in local advocacy statewide and national advocacy. We participate with NCIL, with ADAPT a number of other nationwide disability advocacy organizations as well.

And a little over two years argue, I took on the role of chief operating officer and while it sounds important, I think one of the most important jobs I still have is that I'm an advocate. We're fundamentally a civil rights organization and it doesn't matter what your title is here, you are an advocate.

Slide seven, please.

So a few of the things that I have done in my time. I met with a number of governors. We had -- there's actually a fairly locally famous picture of me at a press conference with then Governor Eliot Spitzer. Unfortunately with the angle of my picture, my mouth was agape from whatever I was saying at the moment. It looks like I'm singing opera in front of the governor, and he's looking at me with disdain. It was a cooperative press conference talking about the need for more home care services within Medicaid.

So I worked positively with Spitzer and worked positively with David Patterson when he took over but I also shouted down some governors, notably Governor George Pataki but then we had our contentious moments with Governor Patterson and more recently now New York state is on to Governor Andrew como.

Most recently I was in Washington, D.C., with ADAPT and Ronnie Patrick from Chicago and I, we jacked our chairs into a door, holding open the door to the congressional hearing that was being held about the ADA and the access to pools. A lot of you guys I'm sure are familiar with what's going on with that right now.

One of the locally pretty famous activities with advocacy and education, we took our mayor about five years ago, we took this mayor who is this big tall, like 6'5", former chief of police, we got him to go out in a wheelchair and go through the sidewalks in the winter with us to experience how bad snow removal is. And we got some policy changes out of that activity.

And then the target of our county executive, when I wrote about a few years, ago, little did I know how it would get. There are reminders, that when you are an advocacy organization and you bite the hand that feeds you, there can be consequences. I have been part of our work to pass legislation creating community-based services. New York state we passed a -- well, they created an additional waiver to do nursing facility transition diversion as part of ADAPT and doing civil disobedience, I have been arrested somewhere in the neighborhood of a dozen times. I haven't bothered to recount, so 12, 13, 14, 15, somewhere in that neighborhood. And I have been involved in a lot of media and public education work and local and state and national issues.

If we can advance to number eight.

Answering a few of our questions. Systems advocacy is a core service it's okay to do. Not only is it just okay to do, but it's required of all of us as centers for independent living. Systems advocacy is really a critical means for changing the world. How else to organize people and get out to do this work will we really eliminate the barriers that our people face on a daily basis. I think importantly for me systems advocacy should be fun. I think that most every activity, certainly not every activity this' some legislative meetings that I could have done without, but most everything that I have done in our systems advocacy has been fun in one way shape or form.

Systems advocacy is not the same as lobbying. I know there's concerns at some centers regarding lobbying and the requirements around lobbying and reporting and the restrictions and I'm not here to answer those today. But know that systems advocacy is different. You can do a lot of advocacy and it's not the same as lobbying and even lobbying is okay to do and there are different restrictions on that that we don't need to get into today.

I think very importantly, systems advocacy advocacy and individual services really go hand in hand, that they are symbiotic. I think you can't be efficient on one without working strongly on the other.

Next slide, please. So why do systems advocacy advocacy? If you can all humor me and do a show of hands in the room that you are in, if you ever had a problem with securing accessible, affordable, integrated housing, raise your hand. If you ever had a problem securing needed home care services, raise your hand. If you or the people with disables you work with have ever had a problem getting or keeping a job, raise your hand. If you had trouble getting in a public venue, store, government offices, raise your hand. If you had trouble getting an interpreter, finding accessible parking, getting transportation, raise your hand, raise your hand, raise your hand. I imagine that every hand in the room is up.

So the point being none of our experiences are isolated anomalies that we have these experiences and when we are just one person, sometimes it feels like you are the only one, but when you get together with other people, living in similar situations or even very different disabilities that across the disability spectrum, housing, jobs, community services, transportation, those are very challenging issues, very -- a lot of barriers within all of those issues that our people face on a day-to-day basis. And we need to do systems advocacy in order to work together to overcome those, you know, universally experienced barriers.

Next slide, please.

So we have talked about the barriers. We all know they are out, there but what can you do about it? I think that this -- the answer to what can you do about it goes on two basic paths. There's the suck it up and deal with it. Struggle as an individual, try to conform to the demands of an able-bodied world. Associated with, that you can reject your disable. You can pretend that you are really not disabled like those other disabled people. You can feel isolated. You can internalize society's oppression. You can feel like you are the problem, that it's not actually the lack of interpreters or the lack of ramps and elevators that is the problem, but you and your broken body are the problem.

So that's one path. Or the other path of what you can do about these barriers, you can mobilize a community-wide effort to remove the barriers. You can get involved if somebody else is mobilizing. You can work with others like you, pick your priorities and fight for those priorities and you can educate the -- particularly the non-disabilities but other people with disabilities to know what it means to a disability and society's barriers are actually the problem. Make it clear that disability is natural. It's a natural part of the human experience.

Next slide, please.

Additionally, why do systems advocacy? I think that we here have the obligation to make this world better for others. We are in the position of privilege where we have the opportunity to be the voice for a lot of other folks who can't at least not yet be their own voice, to be their own advocate. We're the lucky ones. How cool is it that we have jobs where we can get paid to advocate?

I mean, I was lucky enough coming out of college to land with CDR and to have been here really my entire adult life and can't really imagine doing anything else and can't imagine the boredom that I would have doing something else, where how -- just to come back to it and beat a dead horse, how cool is it that we get paid to advocate? So I think we are just very lucky in that regards.

And then, you know, my fourth bullet, we have the independent privileges and independent privileges is in quotes there, and there's a story for that. A few years ago, I got a call, actually at my house, where a -- you know, member of a suburban town board had looked me up and contacted me at home. She was concerned because she also -- her day job was working in a nursing facility. And she couldn't have done much research about me, because why she was calling is she was looking to get support for, you know, an initiative or a piece of legislation that would require the residents of the nursing facility who were -- who had -- and I quote, their independent privileges, which meant that they were able to go out for part of the day, that when they go out, her -- her idea, her legislation was that they had to wear big orange flags swinging up in the air off their wheelchair to keep us safe. You know to make us easier find, et cetera, but I was really horrified by the conversation but the term has stuck with me forever, that -- that in the minds of many, it is a privilege to people with disables to be independent.

I'm pretty sure it's a right, but I think it smacks as a reminder forever that there are many, many people that view it just as a privilege. So I think that we have to take advantage of that privilege and fight for the rights of everybody else to be independent as well.

Slide 12, please. Also why do we do systems advocacy.

If we don't have speak for ourselves who will be speaking for us? There are lots of experts would want to talk for the people with disabilities. So we have parents who are supposed experts, doctors, unions, staffs, social workers, service provider associations, transit providers, the list goes on and on of people and groups would feel that they are the experts on disability. Next slide.

What are those experts going to say? When it's not us speaker for ourselves, the experts say, well, the group home needs more funding. The staff need more vacation. The staff needs to be less burdened by this person-centered paperwork that is so often in the way. Experts are often talking about how disables are the problem and how we need to focus on cure, focus on eliminating the disabilities. Experts talk about how quality of life with disability really isn't all that good, so why do we provide healthcare? If anybody -- if you guys are familiar with the work of not dead yet, opposing physician-assisted suicide there are folks against our movement and really against disability who talk about things like qualis and dollies, and it's quality adjusted years. Life with a person with disables just isn't as good as a person's life without disabiliti

So unaimous a quadriplegic and maybe my quality of life is 50% of what an able bodied perp is. So if I live to 100, he only had as much good time as an able bodied person who lived until 50. These are the type of things that the experts say. That's why we are out and being the voice for ourselves and our community.

Slide 14, please. So systems advocacy is not something that those other people do. Our powers and our numbers, we all have to be unified in this. It doesn't matter what your role around the community is. You need to be part of systems advocacy to make it effective. So it's really interdependent. Direct services are, you know, the one on one direct experience of what people are going through every day. I think that's always been vital for me to know what the staff and what the people of -- people with disables in our communities are experiencing every day and that then informs what our systems advocacy needs to focus on. So the systems advocacy works to he will those barriers which then makes it easier to do direct services and improves the lives of people with disabilities in the community. And with that, we obviously need to support one another wherever possible. It's not what those other people are doing. It's what we are doing to, you know, overcome barriers and improve the world.

Next slide, and that brings us to our first question and answer period.

>> OPERATOR: Certainly. The floor is now open for questions. If you do have a question, please press the number seven on your telephone keypad. Questions will be taken in the order they are received. If at any point your question has been answered, you may press seven again to disable your request. If you are using a speaker phone, we do ask that while posing your question, you pick up your handset to provide a favorable sound quality.

Please hold while we wait for the first question. Our first question is from Rafel Ottway from the center for independent living. Go ahead, Rafel. Rafel, your line is unmuted. You may state your question.

Okay. Let's move on to the next question, Janice Boyd of ADRC. Janice? Janice, your line unmuted. You may state your question.

>> Hello?

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: Hi.

>> Hi, my name is Janice and I'm with the new program called the aging and disability resources for the Link program here in Pennsylvania. And I'm actually new but I'm a pretty big advocate for persons with disable. I have a family with disabilities but I also wanted to ask just some barriers, what if like the very places you deal with are the barriers with inside of it.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: Physically or attitude barriers?

>> Attitude barriers.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: I think attitude barriers you chip away in a lot of the same ways, depending exactly what the attitude is. Certainly there's bureaucracies that just have the attitude that they are not going to serve us, and you try to narrow it down and focus it. I call them out.

I mean, you call them out collectly.

If it's not effective, talk to the boss or the CEO of the organization or whatever, then I'm certainly not shy about taking it to other powers and, you know, taking it into the media and calling them out for what they are.

>> Okay. It's not -- not my place, it's just sometimes when I go out, I actually do outreach and presentations now. The people are very receptive to it, it's other people. So I wasn't sure if it's just a barrier removal I have to help with and that's where you advocate to actually educate. That's how I do it. I just want to ask if there's some barriers how you can get through them and a lot of times I advocate through education.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: That makes a lot of sense.

>> They just don't know.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: Is there another way to reach the people that you are trying to reach and you just go around the folks that are the biggest barrier.

>> Okay.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: Thank you. Thank you.

>> TIM: Let's take one more question from the phone and then we'll see if we have any questions on the webinar.

>> OPERATOR: There are no questions at this time.

>> TIM: Great. Thanks. We only have one question from the webinar, and it's -- it's not really within the scope of this first section, but, Chris, I know you can answer it quickly. Let's see if we can help out. Hector Ochoa from California asked regarding donations from companies who state they do not donate to nonprofits who lobby. Are ILCs considered lobbyists?

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: Okay. You are not necessarily considered a lobbyist but certainly some centers do choose to engage in lobbying. I think generally what -- you know, some organizations like you are talking about may Natalie just not contribute to an organization that lobbies at all. I think more often the case is that -- that they don't want their funds used for lobbying. And that just becomes an accounting issue for the center and keeping your funds separate from one another, and using funds that are okay to lobby, use those funds to lobby and funds that are supposed to be user for a specific program, then obviously you use those for a specific program and don't put them towards lobbying.

>> TIM: Thanks, Chris. That's the only question I see on the webinar or the CART screen right now. Let's check in with Amanda one more time quickly before we continue the presentation.

>> OPERATOR: There are no questions at this time, but, again, as a reminder, if you do have a question, please press the number seven on your telephone keypad.

>> TIM: Thanks, Amanda, and as a reminder, we will break two more times to take your questions. So you have plenty more opportunities if you think of anything. Chris, go ahead.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: All right, on to slide 16. So systems advocacy, what is it? How do we do systems advocacy? I come from more of an ADAPT model of doing systems advocacy and within ADAPT we talk about our pitch fork and we talk about the pitch fork as an emphasis on using multiple prongs, multiple tin es, different symbolism. It's not just poking somebody in the butt with the pitch fork. So no particular order, ADAPT's prong falls into five categories, public education which can be working with the media. We will talk about that a little bit more in a second and the three basic branches of the government are parts of the pitch fork doing the legislative work, using the judicial system and working with the executive branch of government as well. And then direct action.

So the point being that the more prongs on your pitch fork, the more effective you can be. Anybody or any organization that is only using one or two of the prongs will find that they are limited in their effectiveness, that you can only be so successful, you know, sort of the one trick pony and if all you do is rely on strictly meeting with legislators or strictly only doing protests, you will find that the targets and the people that you are trying to influence will definitely grow to understand that that is your only trick and your only tactic and they will, you know, counter. They will develop a callous and know if they put up with it for a little bit, you will go away.

I think that's why it's important to use a multiple prong approach. You can flip to slide 17.

To get into these prongs, talking about media and public education. It's often using the media to influence public policy. You want to educate the public, explain how the policies and the issues that you are talking about affect the lives of people with disables. A lot of times you want to connect it to how that affects the public in general, how closely connected the public is to disability. I mean who doesn't know somebody with a disable and if you can get the general public to become passionate about their issues, they then become persuasive in helping to make sure that elected officials don't resist our demands.

In terms of this prong, it's not just about media. It's about education. So any outreach that you are doing, like the caller we were just talking with, in terms of doing outreach, sometimes for us, it's about being inside subsidized tower and apartment buildings and talking to the residents there. I do a lot of lecturing in college classes and trying to move students in the direction that I want them to move. So it's all of these opportunities to educate the public, you know, an elevator speech when you are wearing one of our buttons or T-shirts and you are some place and somebody said, what are you doing? Being ready to explain what it is that we are about and educate that person and bring them over to our side of an issue.

Judicial process, this prong obviously deals with using antidiscrimination laws, and doing lawsuits to challenge discriminatory practices, et cetera. The judicial process is very powerful but it can be very slow and very costly. The additional concern with using lawsuits is that if you bring a bad case, sometimes when it gets ruled against you, it sets a bad precedent and makes it that much more challenging for anybody else to bring a successful lawsuit. It's certainly something that we at the Center for Disability Rights have done a couple of lawsuits, but for us the lawsuit path is generally the last option, just because it is so time consuming and costly.

Slide 18, please.

Legislative branch. Obviously working with elected officials. It can be your state legislators. It can be your Congress people. It might be town board or county legislators depending on how your government is structured where live, but obviously it's the legislative branch. You want to work with them to develop new good legislation. You also want to be working with them and educating them so you can kill any bad legislation, any bad bills that are coming out, and they certainly are out there. So it's both a positive and a negative. You need to be working with your legislators to advance the good and beat back the negative.

The next one, the executive branch. Sometimes working with state staff, the city staff and working with the executives in those roles to develop policies or regulations that affect our folks. Sometimes that might be your state housing organization or state housing department and trying to get them to do more than the simple 504 required 5% set asides because there's opportunity to do more than that.

You might be working with that kind of organization to do better or the agency, not as much organization.

And fifth bullet, direct action. Nonviolent direct action, including civil disobedient, street theaters, rallies, et cetera, all can be used to bring about systems change. This for me is very important, because the venge of our movement is the number of people who are fiercely committed that we don't have a lot of money. We don't have a lot of political clout necessarily. Sometimes we do, sometimes we don't. We don't have a lot of the CEO, the big corporation that you have in your back pocket. Probably not your strongest suit but we have a lot of people and when we can get our people mobilized and doing some kind of public direct action, that can be a very public tool for us.

Moving on to slide 19.

So putting that pitch fork into action. When you are approaching an issue, you really need to define what the issue is. Making sure that you are staying close to what's important to people. Defining what your goals are. You want to make sure that you are accomplishing something, that I think that sometimes we set our standards a little too low or we just go through the motions of doing the advocacy. Okay. So we had a bunch of meetings. You know, what was your goal? What did you want to accomplish with those meetings? Your goals should be winnable. You want to make sure that you have some victories that you can achieve. But also that you are setting goals that are both short and long term. Sometimes you are setting short term pretty winnable goals just to make sure that you can show your group some progress along the way, but keeping -- keeping your eyes on a bigger goal on the horizon, sort of these long-term goals.

What are your strategies? That goes back to the pitch fork. Is it a primarily legislative issue? Is it something that you have to do a lawsuit about? Do you want to do a protest? Or is it a march. You need to discuss that with your group and see what makes the most sense considering your goals and the issue.

I think importantly and sometimes it seems like it's obvious, but how do you know that you won. That's part of setting your goals and measuring them as you go. What's your exit strategy? Whether you are winning or losing on an activity, or a particular goal, you need to know how to move on. Sometimes you may win, and you just don't really quite know what you are going to do after that. I think that we need to know whether we win or lose on a particular issue or activity, how do we move on to the next thing? Do you want to always keep some momentum up even if you don't win with a certain strategy or a certain activity know-how, you are moving to the next.

And then very important is celebrating your victories. That big deal in keeping people motivates is the positive reinforcer of yay we did a grit job. Here's how, you Bob Smith, helped to contribute to that, just to keep people motivated and going.

Next slide, please.

A little bit more about how to do your systems advocacy. This comes from a book called "Organizing for Social Change." This is about selecting an issue. A good issue matches most of these criteria. Results in real improvements. It will give people a sense of their own power. It will alter the relationships of power. It's winnable. We were just talking about worth while, and worth while means that when you get to that win point, that you have actually changed something for people, that setting -- setting goals so small that you can win but it really doesn't make a difference to anybody, then you really haven't accomplished anything. I think making sure that the issue and your goals are worth while. A good issue is widely felt. I will put a caveat. Sometimes when we are organizing, we are organizing on something that affects a more narrow band of people and that's okay. You just need to know why you are doing it.

But if you are trying to mobilize, you know, and have 5,000 people demonstrating in the middle of your town, then you need an issue that's very widely felt, but if your community is saying that there's this one really specific burning issue and it's only affecting a few people, but it's important, then that's fine. I mean, in Rochester, one of the -- an issue that we work on that I think reflects that is getting more services to people who are deaf-blind. It's not a large population, but the need is very significant. So I think that, you know, making sure that you know when you are going for a wide, large number that you need a wide issue, but it's okay to organize on smaller issues too.

21, please. Continuing on selecting issues. You need the issue to be deeply felt. You need it to be easy to understand. Again, caveat on that. You don't -- it doesn't have to be an inherently easy to understand issue. I'm seeing slide 20 on mine, if you could advance to 21. The issue doesn't have to be easy to understand. You can make it easier to understand. And I think that we have done a lot of that within ADAPT and if you just try to explain Medicaid policy at its face, it's very difficult to understand, but if you bring something into more simplified terms of, you know, our homes, not nursing homes and the institutional bias that we spend too much money on nursing facilities and not enough on home care, you can make issues more easy to understand.

You need to have clear targets, clear time frames, generally an issue, if you are trying to organize a lot of people should be non-divisive, but, again, I think sometimes we have to say things that are hard to say and sometimes it's a challenge even within our own community, and some of the not dead yet, physician assisted suicides is an example of that. I've had a time when within our community it was divisive to talk about disable pride. For me, it's inherent. Being a quad, you know, there's no separation between me and my disability. You know, I'm it and it is me, but there are some folks of other types of disabilities who took some offense when we were just talking about doing a disability pride event.

I think sometimes the divisiveness is hard to avoid if you are trying to do what's really right and what's really needed.

As you are picking issues, make sure that you are building leadership, laying ground work for your next campaign and obviously your issues should be consistent with your values.

Advancing to 22. Sampling of the rules from -- rules for radicals from Sal Alinsky. So we have our late '60s, early '70s leftist radical. Rule number two, never go outside of the experience of your people. The result is confusion, fear and retreat this goes for issues, as well as tactics. As we talked about a couple of times here you need to pick issues that people are familiar with. Sometimes you can move a group from what is initially very important to them and as they work on that, you can build up awareness of, you know, the next issue that may not be as immediately familiar but is just as important ultimately. So I think that you can build towards that but you don't want to just jump from your basic what people feel and understand to something more complicated and convoluted and the same goes for tactics.

If your group has not done a protest before, trying to persuade them to go handcuff themselves to the mayor's desk and get arrested is probably a big jump that you -- there's a process of getting people comfortable with different types of tactics and obviously protest is sort of a radical example, but even just putting people up to speak in front of legislators.

At one time I had a legislator come to us about how we can better talk to legislators and the guy that I invited in was -- I mean, he's just not a very daunting looking guy and so I think it helped our group overcome some of the fear of the legislator, the big, tall, white guy in a suit who has fancy titles and earns a lot of money. I guy I invited in was all of 5'6" and he's pretty dumpy and chunky and he's bald and he's just a good guy. And I think that that helped our people connect on a human level that legislators at the end of it, are just humans.

And I think that you can use that type of tactic to build people up about using different tactics. Alinsky rule number six, a good tactic is one your people enjoy and if your people are not having a ball doing it, there's something very wrong with the tactic. One of the very fun things that we did a lot of years ago, we were working on transit, and we were working with the paratransit and we were going to do a march and a small demonstration at the county transit. A bunch of us were doing posters the night before and we were doing these posters with very strong markers an a resume that didn't have nearly enough ventilation. And we were essentially high on marker fumes. That led us to actually -- it was one of our deaf guys who said we should write a song and what we did is we took the "12 Days of Christmas" and turned it to be "The 12 Days of Lift Line" and we went through and talked about the reason why somebody wouldn't be able to get their paratransit ride, whether it's the scheduler or the driver or et cetera, et cetera. That was a lot of fun just in the process of writing it.

Then we took it and we taught our people the lyrics an we Christmas caroled oil the 12 days of lift line." And we did inside of the county office building where they had this giant atrium with a Christmas tree that was three floor highs and you have a group of 40 or 50 individuals with various disables in front of this three story tree and singing about the problems with the paratransit. It's just a very unique thing. It's keeping it mixed up and different which really brings us to rule seven and a tactic that drags on for too long becomes a drag.

You want to keep some variety in what you do and that will help to hold folks' attention.

>> TIM: Hey, Chris, if I could ask a favor. We had a technical issue with the audio on the webinar. So if you own the folks on the phone could be patient, you would mind if we reviewed slide 21 quickly again?

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: Sure thing.

>> TIM: I will flip back there it is.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: So by we, you mean me review it.

>> TIM: That's right.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: As you select issues being make sure that your issue is deep dealt and it's something very important to the people. We talked about it being easy to understand. I carved in it doesn't have to be immediately easy to understand, but you have to make it easier to understand so that your people can sort of grasp it, but definitely already a lot of issues that we work on that on their face are very complicated, but they are important so we make them easier to understand. Making sure you have a clear target, a clear time frame, that will work on the issue, selecting issues that are non-divisive. Again, sometimes as an advocate, it's important to work on what needs to be worked on and say what needs to be said and if that is divisive to a group, then you need to encounter that, communicate it as best you can and try to maintain strong relationships. But if you are working on issues sometimes that's important and it will drive some members away.

I want your issue to help you build leadership so you are always developing the next wave of leaders and laying ground work for the next campaign and obviously being consistent with your values.

Back to slide 23, I think.

>> TIM: You got it. Thanks very much.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: Say. So slide 23 and rule number eight. Keep the pressure on the persistence is huge here. I don't think we will ever accomplish anything by trying one time, asking one time nicely that it's a lot about persistence and keeping pressure and using a variety of different tactics on one topic, and different targets. It's really to stay focused and keep pushing.

Rule number nine, the threat is more terrifying than the thing itself. Alinsky and his cohorts had an action where they had simply spread the rumor that they were going to have a bunch of homeless people occupy the bathrooms at O'Hare Airport in Chicago, and just the threat of it happening brought the airport authority to the table to start talking about what the issues were. And I think it went beyond the airport authority and some of the people around the treatment of homeless people.

We had a new director come into the state's housing -- division of housing and community renewal, and after we got to know her over a period of probably a year or two, you know, she was very decent human being. She actually had connections within the independent living movement, you know, was working pretty positively with us, and shared a story of how when she first turned the -- took the job, she was warned never to talk to us. Don't trust us. Don't be seen in public with us. We will pop up in places where she is and we'll just throw random protests. So we had quite a reputation running in advance that was, in this case, absolutely more terrifying than the real thing. Once she actually got in and was working with us, she found that we were very reasonable and quite easy to deal with when we were all pointed in the same direction.

And rule number 11, pick the target. Freeze it. Personalize it. Polarize it. Don't try to attack abstract relations or bureaucracy. Identify a single individual or shift the blame. I think it's important. It keeps things understandable. It's difficult to blame an entity like a corporation or a bureaucracy. I think the other thing, especially if you are working in smaller communities -- if smaller communities you run into these folks in the store. So if you really put pressure on an individual about a situation, there are a lot of ways that you can get to and break down an individual. I mean, sometimes it's going to their church. Sometimes it's just that your folks are on the lookout for them. When you see them at the grocery store, you confront them. And sometimes that constant pressure that persistence can have a lot of impact.

If you are just talking about the concept and the bureaucracy, you miss that opportunity.

Slide 24. So now for something entirely different. Where we were talking about sort of a set of rules from the leftists, I pulled some information a while ago from a more modern military philosopher who had derived a number of principles of war from Sun Tzu's art of war, the ancient Chinese military document, I think, you know, roughly 3,000 years old. So some of these rules I thought had good impact on how we do systems advocacy. So win all without fighting and achieve the objective without destroying it.

I think what it's talking about here is relationships. If there's a simple solution to whatever your problem is, go ahead and try that first, that there's no reason that you have to do a big public campaign or an email blitz if you haven't, you know, asked first. I think sometimes -- I can't say that we do this a lot as folks, but certainly sometimes people feel like, you know, let's go. Let's protest them. Have you done a letter first? That there are some steps to getting to it, that can help you achieve your goal without really having a big gory, drawn out battle.

Principle 2, strike where the enemy is most vulnerable. For instance, a lot of times the entities that we are going against have a lot of money. We can't out spend them. So having -- like, trying to get into a spending battle and running a lot of commercials on TV is not going to work for us, whereas, you know, in New York state we have -- you know, sort of the perennial TV battle between the governor and the healthcare union. So they go at each other. They spend, you know, millions of dollars on commercials slamming each other and that's not a battle that we can get into. We are not going to be able to be effect live. We have numbers. We have passion -- effective there. We have numbers. We have passion. We have stories to tell. How do we use that in a way that takes advantage of where somebody like the governor may be more weak. So that's good to keep in mind.

Number three, deception and foreknowledge. Winning the information war. I think important here is to make sure that we know our issues, to know them forward and backwards, know the other side of the story. What are our opponents going to say about our issue. If we know the issue and the players and the weaknesses of the other players that that kind of real study and knowledge will help, you know, get to our goals of systems change.

Slide 25. The last couple of principles here. Speed and preparation, moving swiftly to overcome resistance. I think this is about seizing opportunity. Sometimes you may be in like a really prolonged campaign about transit, but the transit authority, you know is subject to some other political scandal or a financial scandal and if you are ready and you move quickly, sometimes you advance your issue in that moment of opportunity. I think speed and preparation is about being ready to grab that opportunity. Shaping the enemy, preparing the battlefield. I like to -- I like to whenever I can sort of think about our systems advocacy as a chess game, that you are never focused just on, you know, what is -- what is my next move? That you need to to be thinking several months down.

If I do this, then my opponent is likely to do and then I will probably do this and then this opportunity will be there. So I think that we need to be thinking in a long, term, strategic sense, not just about what's immediately in front of us.

And then I think very inherent to the independent living movement, number six, character-based leadership and leading by example. This is so perfect for IL, and that, you know, we are people with disabilities. We are leading each other. And just demonstrating from our successes that it can be done. When you see someone that's like you doing it, you know, being successful, it's really a mentality of I can do that too. And I think important within that is that we never ask our people to do something that we wouldn't do ourselves.

So always making sure that whatever it is that we are asking of, we have already done it or we will absolutely do it when asked. So I think that's important there. Slide number 26.

Just some other tips to remember. Anybody can be a leader. Some folks maybe aren't there right now, but given some opportunity, given some support, given some training, anybody can turn into a leader and we need to recognize where people have strengths and put them in leadership roles that take advantage of their strengths and, you know, you -- you will see that five years from now and ten years from now, that person who came in quiet and meek and couldn't make a decision on their own, five and ten years from now will be very powerful and there's a couple of women in our roster group, they are identical twins with developmental disabilities and I remember last fall with ADAPT, the subway worker gave us guff about being there and wearing the Medicaid matters T-shirts. We left the second time he talked to us and we were upstairs outside the subway stop and Pam came over to me and said, oh, the police were here. I talked to them and they went away.

So she had done a very successful police negotiation without me ever knowing that the police had even arrived. That's something that a few years before I would have never thought could happen, but as we have given people some responsibilities and giving people the opportunity to use their strength and become leaders, you really see that they can take off and be very effective with that.

So we talked about using strengths. Most important victory sometimes is the group itself. You need to make sure that you don't under estimate it. That I think sometimes just having people that are excited to work together on issues is a big deal. And even if you don't win on getting your city right now to change how it implements the community development block grant money, if your people are still pissed and still ready and willing to work on it, then in that much, you have succeeded and obviously the Margaret -- the famous Margaret Mead quote that drives that home, never doubt that a small group of thoughtful individuals can change the world. Indeed, this is the only thing that ever has.

And the next slide brings us to our next set of questions and answers.

>> OPERATOR: Certainly. The floor is again open for questions. If you do have a question, please press the number seven on your telephone keypad. Again, as a reminder, if do you have a question, please press the number seven on your telephone keypad. Our first question is from Ruth.

>> PARTICIPANT: I have a person in my community that owns a theater and he has not finished putting the gravel around it. I can't not even get out an emergency door without assistance. I live in a wheelchair. I have another young lady here that's lived in a wheelchair all of her life. I haven't. I've gotten to that point with MS. And this man is also on our city council and I have asked him time and again please fix your theater. You know, we really need it. And his complaint -- I mean, his excuse last year was the people that have the gravel business were all busy doing work while this spring I noticed an ad on the bulletin boards around town that one of our main suppliers of hauling services for gravel and things was looking for people to sell gravel to. And I haven't run into this person to say, could you please -- and I have seen these ads -- I could be very abrupt with people -- so I'm trying to ask how I can do it politely.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: I think starting polite is fine and then escalating from there is fine in my book. I think that sending him a letter that's almost like -- sometimes we talk about kill them with kindness, like being so sugary sweet that they know it's insincere, but a stranger reading would potentially buy your sincerity. So a letter saying, listen, I understand the difficulties that you reported last time, and I came across this ad and thought that you would be excited to see this and please let me know when you are calling them. Would you like me to call them for you?

So starting with something like that, maybe escalating to having any number of other individuals who are affected by the issue or just care about the issue to send similar letters or fax his city council office or the theater office and then, you know, if those things pursuit -- or proceed along, if that's not effective, there are all sorts of fun ways to increase the pressure. Setting a few power chairs and blocking off the doors always works well too. Whether it's --

>> Well, we could do that. We could do -- we have one main entrance. I think -- I have help and I need, right now just for me to get in the theater, I need someone to get gravel that is washed away by the rain and the snow, has put the gravel there and then I don't have to hop on to the -- on to the cement walk into the -- you know, access into the building.

I prefer not to do that, and I go yee-ha! And after we go. And I just -- you know, it just gets real aggravating. My brother also lives here and he says, I will get much more with honey than I will with what -- with all the things I do use and I go, well, my honey has run out.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: Right. Right. Absolutely. I mean, there's other means. You can file a complaint with the Department of Justice. If you have lawyers around town that might be interested in talking about it. I have done those things as well.

>> PARTICIPANT: Yeah, I think I want to get my partner that's in a wheelchair and also a board member of Arctic Access, I recruited her as soon as she turned legal age, over 18, and -- and go and just go and try -- both of us try to get into the theater and not be able to -- also it's a subway. You know, we could just go for a sub. And try to get in and have someone there from the newspaper with a camera.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: Yep, absolutely.

>> PARTICIPANT: It's being a real good way to do it in a positive way. Thank you.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: Thank you.

>> OPERATOR: Your next question is from Rebeal sabal of Options of Resource. Your line is unmuted, Rebeal. Please state your question. Rebeal Sabal, your line is unmuted. Please state your question.

>> No question.

>> OPERATOR: Okay. It appears they have no questions. There are no further questions. Tim Fuchs, the floor is back to you.

>> TIM: All right. Thank you. We haven't had any come in on the webinar. Chris, you can go ahead. I will go to the next slide.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: Moving on to 28, talking about social media. I think a couple of the comments that are received are funny, though. That gal from Image Center says more flies with honey, but who wants all of those flies anyway. And I saw above we had a person comment say he's a short dumpy county legislators and I need to mind myself as I talk about them. Thanks for those comments, guys.

On slide 28, talking about social media and how social media can help us out with advocacy. What the heck is social media? Hopefully by now most folks are at least familiar with Facebook, most folks are probably already on. I guess we can again do the show of hands. Is everybody on Facebook? Hopefully most of the hands are up.

Some of the other social media opportunities that are a little less common, using Twitter, using LinkedIn. Most folks know what YouTube is, but may not have used it for advocacy yet, and some of the emerging social medias like Instagram and things like Google Plus will take off in the next couple of years. I haven't used Instagram, but I'm very interested in seeing how it can be applied to advocacy, just looking at the power of a picture and how our movement really has a lot of strong images and how can we use something like Instagram to promote our movement, our message, our issue in just a picture.

So very importantly, social media is interactive, and then my question at the bottom, can you really change the world in 140 characters or less? So Twitter is limited to 140 characters, that's the basic test message, Facebook and the others don't have as explicit a limb, but they are definitely short message links and that in order to be readable, you keep things short.

So can you really change the world in 140 characters or less? Moving on to slide 29.

Just because I'm a woman who uses a wheelchair does not mean that anyone should be patting me on the head. That's so 1950s and that is a quote from Debbie Bonomo here in Rochester.

That was regarding John Edwards when he was first running for president. That quote was used in a press release that I will get to in a second and it's all of 124 characters including the spaces and quotations. Can you change the world in 140 characters or less. This one was 124. Let's see what it did.

So slide 30. John Edwards was doing a campaign appearance here. A lot of us mobilized to go. We wanted to see what he was up to, see what he had to say about everything, but particularly disable. We arrived and the campaign volunteers were directing our wheelchair users around to the front, which was an inaccessible entrance. It was February, and February in Rochester generally means snow. So we were directed through snowy, cruddy sidewalks around to an inaccessible entrance. The building had an accessible entrance but the volunteers had not been trained on directing folks. So strike one for Senator John Edwards.

The local democrats had worded a sign language interpreter, had scheduled a sign language interpreter. The national campaign canceled that interpreter saying sort of it was an unneeded expense. This is Rochester and this is the deaf Mecca. If you are holding an event open to the public and you are expecting more than a handful of people, there's a very good chance that you will have deaf folks this. So strike two on canceling the sign language interpreter.

So then the senator finally arrives. We have jammed into the event. You know, probably 2,000 people are in the building. We've arrived early and wedged ourselves up front. So as he's making his way around the room doing his handshakes all around, handshake, handshake, handshake, he gets to two of our members who are women who use wheelchairs and he does head pat, head pat and then moves on to the next people, hand shake, hand shake, hand shake, handshake. So very clearly strike three at this point with the head pat.

We did a press release following the event in the morning and included in the press release was the quote that I just read to you from Debbie Bonomo. Moving on to slide 31.

So the local paper picked up the story and ran an article about the story, and included all three of our concerns. So, yay, we've educated the public a little bit there. The next day the local Fox news TV affiliate came over and interviewed Debbie and ran a story during their evening news. At that point they focused pretty much solely on the head pat.

The next day, Fox national cable news picked up the story. My then girlfriend, now my wife, was at the gym on the treadmill and she saw across the room my agency's logo pop up on the national news with the quote from Debbie Bonomo and fortunately she did otherwise I would have had no idea that it happened until probably the next morning but at that point our story about at least the head pat piece had gone national. We were on national news because we were criticizing this presidential candidate for his treatment of these women in wheelchairs.

The day following that, we were in all sorts of different newspaper articles, opinion sections. It was, you know, 20 04. So it was sort of the beginnings of the blogosphere. There were blogs going this way and that way dealing in all of those and the newspapers and the blogs and radio shows. We were dealing with some folks who were condemning us, saying that we were overly sensitive, some folks that were agreeing with us, saying that his actions were unacceptable, and outdated. So that was first few days and then the last bullet on that slide. By the end of the week, the article -- the story appeared in "The Guardian" a newspaper in the UK and what is ironic, I guess, when they ran the little paragraph, talking about the senator and his presidential campaign and how a number of individuals who were wheelchair bound were criticizing him for the head pat and insensitivity. "The Guardian" had to one for their use of insensitive language with the wheelchair bound term, in the coverage of his insensitive behavior. We got two hits in "the guardian." And we had triggered an internation a objection.

Specifically, I remember reading -- international conversation.

Specifically, I remember reading a democratic blog. I for get the name of it. They were condemning the story, saying it was fabricated by the republicans and John edwards would never do such a thing. I had to say, I'm probably as liberal as any of y'all. He really did it and he was really that insensitive and that much of a tool.

Some of the editorial boards were coming us. In Rochester being one of the local shock jocks was criticizing and condemning us. He pointed out in his initial talking about the story, that, you know, he has a son with developmental disables and he pats him on the head all the time. It's like, well, that's okay. That's your son and he's seven. This is different than house you would go -- different than how you would go about treating a 38-year-old woman. We went on his show being able to engage in some conversation about the treatment of people with disabilities. And ultimately that 124 character quote that I read you to created a really international dialogue about the treatment of people with disabilities.

Thinking about over it, probably literally millions of people saw some piece of that story whether it was on a local paper, in a blog, in the UK, the local shot clock, and it was just us seizing that opportunity and having a good, strong message. That was before Facebook and Twitter. With the social media tools we have now, that type of propagation really just becomes monumentally more easy.

Slide 33.

So a little bit about our social media that's out there. Probably most folks are familiar with Facebook. The Facebook page for the Center for Disability Rights. Right now we have over 4,000 fans and I was looking on their little inside stuff, and those 4,000 plus fans add up to over 1,800,000 friends of those fans. So if -- if CDR does a status update about an action alert and a sizable number of our fans going -- send that out to their friends, I mean, the reach really can be amazing.

On Twitter, we have 1600, probably 1700 people following us on Twitter by now. We put our action alerts out there, you know being call the governor. Call the president, whatever, it is and you see a lot of people who follow CDR on Twitter, retweet it to their followers.

It helps to exponentially increase the number of people involved.

The last point, the cool evolution, people are starting to report to us on Facebook and Twitter the problems that they face. So right now we are actually engaged with a local grocery store because a person who uses a scooter complained on our Facebook page that there's no longer any checkout aisles that she can get down through at the store and then a couple of us as staff went over and visited and not only is there a problem with access to the checkout aisles but their bathroom also doesn't have an accessible stall in either the men's or the women's. So that's been a neat evolution that people are now reporting to us on Facebook. So in terms of gathering input about what's an important issue, that has become a cool tool.

Page 34. Just a little Facebook success story. This' a time, Sunday a number of months or a year ago, and a number of local reporters are my Facebook friends and follow me on Twitter and Google Plus and I will point out that in the grand scheme of the world, you have friends and you have acquaintances and somewhere well below that are your Facebook friends. In terms of how closely connected you necessarily are to the Facebook friends, but nonetheless, you can get word out. One Sunday morning, I posted a status update about something that was going on at work, and one of the local reporter who had worked on some projects on the past. My day off, her day off, but she was asking for an interview and it generated a story that night. So just that little status update on Facebook was effective in going back to one of the prongs of public education.

Next slide. So think of Twitter as tiny bits of information for the short attention span generation, sometimes it's called the microblog. It's good to news propagation, you see a news story and retweet it.

You see things that spread out very quickly. Sometimes things will trend. I haven't been successful at getting anything to be a national trend on Twitter yet, but look forward to accomplishing that. Tips with Twitter, follow people and generally they follow you back. So your local reporters, your politicians, staffers and legislative or administrative offices. If you find them on Twitter and you follow them, a lot of times they follow you back so that when you are posting an alert or a status update or complaining about access at the grocery store, they are likely to see it.

Slide 36. YouTube this' a couple of zillion videos already on YouTube that can be very short. They can be very lengthy. You can create your own channel. Center for Disability Rights we have a YouTube channel that individuals can subscribe so any time we post a new video, they get notification and somebody can visit and see all the videos that we uploaded. It's an opportunity to again do some public education. I call it propaganda there. And sometimes we use it just to snip a video from a public hearing where our folks are testifying, but sometimes we have created our own. So to go back to some of our key points that we were talking with earlier, keeping things -- shaking things up, doing things different. New York state was dealing with budget talks that were stalled. Our budget was well past overdue. People were sick of doing the same old thing and we got creative and we had a couple of guys that were experienced with doing videography and we created some stick puppets and, you know, we were working on a bill to establish an additional Independent Living Center through state funds.

The bill's sponsor we put him as a champion looking guy riding in on a white stallion, and the governor and three men were in a smoke-filled room and how they were going to take advantage of public by increasing the credit tax and funding a new gambling Racino. That took off and got pretty good attention, if we nip to slide 37. Our video was a different way for advocating for the independent for living center. 2600 some odd people had viewed it back in 2010, which is when we were working on it. A number of political blogs linked the video and helped to get those fewers, those 600 people were not -- viewers, those 2600 people were not us. They were legislative staff and political writers and I think a lot of that effectiveness is we had comically portrayed the problem that everybody knew was there.

We took a shot at them because we were sick of doing the usual public hearings and whatnot.

We simplified the issue to be understandable but if we talked about bill number blah, blah, blah, and how it establishes Independent Living Centers. We used very common -- spaghetti western symbolism with the champion on the white stallion. We had the opposers that rode in on the dark horse and they were faceless and it led to a lot of views and heightened awareness about our issue.

Slide 38. One of the things that CDR has is a system called cap wiz. There are a couple of other tools out there that do the same thing. It's basically an eadvocacy tool. We set up the action alert and draft the letter and then individuals are drive tone our web site to a link that we send out. It's a high quantity, low quality contact. So it's a great way to get, you know, a lot of form letter context to your -- your representatives. People can modify it. Some people very much do personalize it, but most folks sort of do the click and send. But it's a very cool tool regardless.

The final point about social media, and if you remember one thing from me about this, remember that social media is dialogue. I think a lot of us that dove into social media, a lot of people initially looked at it as just a way to send out their own propaganda to do a one direction talk to the world, but that's not what social media is. Social media needs to be a dialogue back and forth. You need to engage people. You need to be interesting. You need to ask them questions. You need to answer questions. So when people are, you know, mentioning my organization and their tweets or Facebook page, I'm always prowling for that stuff so that I have the opportunity to address it.

You want to make sure that you are in a conversation and that's how you can really blow things up big with your social media.

On to page 39. And our last learning objective, we are talking about explaining strategies for measuring success for your center of independent living success strategies.

Some states require systems advocacy success to be reported. Why are we measuring it? States require it. Your board is going to want to know. I think most importantly, the -- the people that we serve, the members of our community, we are responsible to them, to try to make the systems better, to overcome the barriers. So I think that part of holding ourselves accountable is measuring that and making sure we have some progress to report to folks and, I mean, ultimately don't you want to know? If you are doing this systems advocacy, don't you want to know where you are successful and how you are successful and the means of measuring that?

Slide 41. So part of measuring success, you need to establish those attainable goals, things that you can measure. The goals need to be in line with your community priorities, your board priorities, et cetera. Quantify what can be quantified. I think sometimes qualitative measures are great but I think that there are some things within advocacy that we can do and quantify. Sometimes that's the number of volunteers that came to an event, the number of volunteers that are generally involved. It might be the number of email centers or the number of ramps that you got built. So there are some things to quantify. Open your mind around that and make sure that you are quantifying what you can. Part of measuring success is knowing your goal. Make sure that they relate back to your community's priorities within your 704 reporting, you would have the systems advocacy priorities. I kind of like to say that those are pin up material, that sometimes we do these reports and we talk about priorities and then, you know, the giant 704 report just gets filed away somewhere and sent off to the feds and we hope they don't come, you know, wanting to do a review on us this year.

But I think there's some important material in there and we talk about important, issues and we should keep those to the forefront so that we are staying focused and there's some progress that we can be monitoring or reporting on regularly. And then final bullet this again is celebrate the victories when you have accomplished something, when you are seeing that you are successful, make sure to pause for a moment and really acknowledge that victory and celebrate it with the folks that helped you achieve it.

Slide 42. And our final question and answer session.

>> OPERATOR: Certainly. Again, as a reminer if you have a question, press the number seven on your telephone keypad. Again, as a reminder if you do have a question, please press the number seven on your telephone keypad. It appears we have no questions at this time.

>> TIM: All right. Let me check on the web. We have a comment from Willy at the Image Center. Be prepared to answer to the media at any time.

Here's another question, Chris, from the web, what education and training did CDR do for your consumers, presumably open systems advocacy?

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: Okay. We do basically monthly meetings about -- we sort of frame it within our ADAPT organization, our ADAPT chapter but we meet monthly talking about, you know, sort of the what's the burning issues? A lot of times that's transportation. You know, some housing, some home care type issues, and then talking about our response strategies. A lot of times it's updates of what we have done in the last month, who is going where? Who is going to what meetings? Sometimes we do other more formal trainings, like I was mentioning earlier, having the one legislator come in and effectively communicating with legislators. We have done trainings about how to use the electronic advocacy system, the cap wiz system. You know this' other examples like that but we try to do something at least monthly to help enhance people's skills and awareness.

>> TIM: Okay. Thanks. I have a question from Tom Green from Paraquad in St. Louis. How do we develop our legislative priorities with direct services and our policy team? I assume he means direct services staff and our policy team. Tom, if I have that wrong, just let me know.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: I think it's important that we have the systems advocates and the direct service folks communicating on that. You know, if we're not communicating, then the danger is that, you know, the limited experience of two systems advocate staff who think that the biggest deal right now is housing because they personally are facing a lot of housing problems, but if you are in touch with the direct service staff, and you have the experience of, you know, hundreds and maybe thousands of other individuals that are out in the community and the real problem is not so much housing, it's transportation, or it's not being able to access voting sites, that that kind of communicate needs to happen so that you need to make sure that your systems advocacy is focused on what's most meaningful to your community.

>> TIM: Good. Okay. That was two questions from house. Let's check back in with Amanda and see if any questions have come in on the phone.

>> OPERATOR: There are no questions at this time, but, again as a reminder, if you do have a question, please press the number seven on your telephone keypad.

We have a question from Russell Williams, Jr., of Arctic Access. Russell?

>> PARTICIPANT: Yes. One of things that I have been thinking about since I have been listening, is you know, the people in the villages and rural Alaska, you know, a lot of times, you know, we don't have roads or anything that we can go from one village to the other. We have to fly out and things. And I'm not sure what my question is, but I sure would like to know how, you know, to get the word out that, you know, there is help for people, elders and people with disabilities in villages and a lot of them are flying to a hub.

So you know, just to say that, you know, there are people out there that do need help and one of the things that I do is try to find resources for people in the villages so that they can stay home and, you know, live in their villages. And so that's where I'm at.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: That's a great point. I mean, I think there are definitely inherent differences between doing, like, urban and suburban organizing versus rural and, I mean, as you are talking about very, very rural! And I think within of the things that we have to do is we need to be adaptable. That we can't expect that the things that we do in one location are going to work perfectly in other locates. You know, I was on a call recently and I was just thinking out loud that we keep having -- you know, and this is even in sort of the, you know, suburb and rural areas where we -- we complain about transportation and then we set up meetings that we expect people to come to these meetings to talk about what we are going to do about transportation. And then we are surprised that nobody comes.

Well, but silly us, the problem is transportation! We have to find a different way to organize because we can't expect people to get a ride to come to a meeting about getting a ride and you can't get rides. So that in a really rural area, I don't know if there's opportunity to, you know, develop individual contacts where you can call them up or if there's regionalized -- like, I grew up in a farm area and not -- we have roads and a couple of stop signs but there was just like one small newspaper that served a large area and I don't know if there's tune for that kind of paper or targeted Internet ads to try to reach folks.

But I think it's a good point.

>> PARTICIPANT: All right. Thank you.

>> TIM: Okay. We have time for one more question. I don't have any on the web. So let's see if anybody has a question on the phone before we break.

>> OPERATOR: There are no questions at this time.

>> TIM: Okay. That's good. We are at 4:31 eastern here. So I will click over to the next slide and that's Chris' contact information. He's been nice enough to share that. And that's in the PowerPoint. And I'm going to move ahead here to the evaluation slide. Slide 44. And if you are on the webinar today, this is a live link. You can click right on this link and it will take you to the evaluation form. It really is not long. It's very easy to complaint. And we take them very seriously. So please do let us know what you thought of today's presentation so we can continue to provide what you all need and improve our webinars.

With that, I want to thank all of you for being with us today. And, of course, this is only the second episode in the series. So if you signed up for the whole "Get to the Core of It" series, keep in mind that next Wednesday, a week from today, on May 9th, we will continue with Marcia Sweet to do the individual advocacy pie

I have a question here, what was Chris' contact information. That's childerbrant@cdr.org.

If you have a question that you think of in two hours or two days, you can send it to me Tim@NCIL.org. My email address is pretty easy to remember. If you have a question, send it to me, and if I can't answer it, I will send it to Chris.

Chris, I want to thank you so much. It was an excellent presentation. We really learned a lot and thank you so much for preparing it and presenting it today.

>> CHRIS HILDERBRANT: You are very welcome today.

>> TIM: This webinar westbound archived on ILRU's web site. You can watch it as it happened, review the transcript, check out the PowerPoint, whatever you like. Everyone have a nice afternoon. Thank you for being with us.

>> OPERATOR: Thank you. This does conclude today's teleconference. We thank you for your participation and you may disconnect your line at this time.

(end of meeting 3:33 p.m. central time)

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