

Disability Inclusion Advisory Council

State Disability Inclusion Advisory Council Now A Reality

The Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism Service (KCCVS) recently convened the first bimonthly meeting of the new state Disability Inclusion Advisory Council. The council marks another milestone in KCCVS' efforts to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in community volunteerism and national service.

The Disability Inclusion Advisory Council directs and advises KCCVS and its disabilities coordinator on issues related to physical access and other barriers to service encountered by people with disabilities. The council also advises AmeriCorps programs under the direction of KCCVS regarding accommodations for current and prospective AmeriCorps members with disabilities. The council also will address policy and resource development, outreach, volunteer strategies and training to further enhance volunteer and service opportunities for Kentuckians with disabilities.

The KCCVS disabilities coordinator works to recruit AmeriCorps members with disabilities and provides assistance and service referrals to support those members during their terms of service. The coordinator also provides advocacy and outreach to address access, awareness, and accommodation policies and issues as a means to further expand service opportunities.

“KCCVS and Kentucky AmeriCorps strongly support and promote volunteerism and community service as ways to help people with disabilities gain greater community acceptance and as a stepping stone to careers and increased independence,” said KCCVS Director Eileen Cackowski.

At the council meeting Dec. 12 in Frankfort, staff from the National Service Inclusion Project, a training and technical assistance provider for the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), facilitated the meeting. Attendees were presented with an overview of national service and the disability inclusion efforts currently taking place in Kentucky. Each representative identified unique strengths and knowledge they bring to the table and shared common goals for a unified mission to promote and encourage inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of life.

Attending were representatives from University of Kentucky's Interdisciplinary Human Development Institute, Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation/Office for the Blind, the state Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs, Kentucky Council on Developmental Disabilities, state Department for Aging and Independent Living, Kentucky Business Leadership Network, KCCVS and a former AmeriCorps member. Other agencies and organizations will be invited to join the council as they are identified.

For more information about the Kentucky AmeriCorps Disability Inclusion Advisory Council, contact Lanny Taulbee at (800) 239-7404. To learn more about Kentucky's AmeriCorps programs, visit their Web site at www.volunteerKY.ky.gov or call (800) 239-7404.