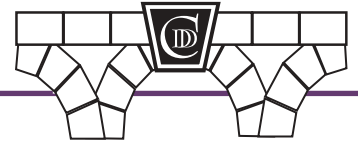


# BRIDGES

*to the community*

April 2002



## DD COUNCIL ADDS NEW MEMBERS

Governor **Mike Easley** appointed three new members to the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities: **Pat Adams, George McCoy** and **Stan Slawinski**.

Mr. McCoy is the director of the N.C. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. He is responsible for managing programs for people with disabilities on a statewide level. The primary programs include vocational rehabilitation, independent living, assistive technology and disability determination. Over the years, McCoy has held other positions within the division as an assistant director, program coordinator, computer consultant and rehabilitation counselor. Prior to becoming the division director, McCoy served as the director of the N.C. Division of Services for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing for three years.

Dr. Slawinski was appointed the chief of the Developmental Disabilities section in the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services in January, replacing **Pat Porter**. Slawinski has been with the division for seven years, the last four as deputy chief of the section. Prior to joining the division, Slawinski spent 25 years in various positions with New York's public mental health system where he was intimately involved in reorganization, community development and quality assurance. Slawinski also holds master's and doctoral degrees in counseling.



from left: **Ashley Bell, Holly Riddle, Carol Hubbard, Mark Ezzell, Stan Slawinski, Pat Adams** and **Judge Wanda Bryant**

Ms. Adams has been the area director of the Edgecombe-Nash Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities/Substance Abuse Center since 1973. As area director, she is responsible for policy development and implementation, a staff of 212, oversight of a \$14 million budget and overall planning and program development. She has also held positions as a developmental disabilities specialist where she supervised eight programs for people with developmental disabilities and as a social worker, working with children with disabilities and their parents in the areas of child abuse and neglect.

### Funding Opportunities

See RFA on **Page 8**

Applications are due to the NC DD Council by **July 1, 2002**.

# At a crossroads: Which way will we turn?



North Carolina's disability communities are at a major crossroads that could finally take us from being a program-centered state to being person centered. We have some exciting leadership changes as well as policy changes and budget ramifications that could lead to important reforms in our service delivery system.

In the past few months, there has been turnover in several key positions. Dr.

**Rich Visingardi** has been named director of the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services. Dr. Visingardi was instrumental in meaningfully partnering with people with disabilities and family members in changing Michigan's service delivery structure. He has a genuine, down-to-earth approach that places people, rather than programs, at the center of service delivery activity.

In the Developmental Disabilities section, Dr. **Stan Slawinski** was named the section chief. Stan has been with the section a number of years, and he shows a willingness to work with the DD Council to bring about exciting changes. Finally, **George McCoy** is leading the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. George has been active in front-line disability advocacy for many years and is the first former client to head the agency. He has the wisdom, vision and personal experience to reform VR to make it a truly positive force in the lives of those who want this service.

There are an unusually large number of changes in disability policy being discussed this year. North Carolina

is taking steps to comply with the Supreme Court's Olmstead decision, which requires the state to provide services to people with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate. Hopefully, this will mean that more people with disabilities will be integrated into a community that provides the services they want. The state is also revamping the way the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services conducts business. Finally, the state's budget crisis is going to force both state and local governments to re-evaluate the way they deliver all kinds of services. This could mean that service systems get a needed change for the better—or a change for the worse.

How will these developments—all dealing with the internal workings of state government—REALLY affect people with disabilities across North Carolina? Well, for many years, the DD Council has often been a lone voice promoting the simple concept that programs should center around people, not the other way around. Now, people who, through professional and personal experience, have demonstrated commitment to that simple idea are heading some of the major programs serving people with disabilities. We'll also see people with disabilities, who have previously been in institutions of all types, living, working and thriving in our communities PROVIDED the communities are ready to integrate. And hopefully, we will see people with disabilities organizing and working for our basic civil rights on every level to insure that these new exciting changes aren't just temporary.

**Mark Ezzell**

# JACK HEFNER

**Jack Hefner** served the state of North Carolina as a member of the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities from 1982 until his death in 1994. He was a parent of a child with a developmental disability and an inspiring leader, traveling thousands of miles without complaint to advocate for people with developmental disabilities. He was, in his own words, willing to do "anything and everything to help identify and understand the needs" of people with the most significant disabilities.

On October 27, 1994, in an effort to keep the spirit of Jack Hefner alive, the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities established the Jack B. Hefner Award to honor an individual who exemplifies the characteristics of compassion for and commitment to people with developmental disabilities. The award is presented annually.

# OLMSTEAD Request for Applications

**T**he North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities is pleased to announce funding for an Olmstead initiative. Organizations are invited to respond to the Request for Applications (RFA) described in this document on page 8.

The North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities (NC DD Council), authorized under Public Law 106-402, the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, is one of 57 entities of its type in the United States. The NC DD Council is an independent agency located in the NC Department of Health and Human Services. Its activities are governed by a 34-member body, appointed by the Governor and comprised of 60% people with developmental disabilities and their families. Other members include legislators and policymakers from various agencies and organizations having a vested interest in persons with developmental disabilities. The quarterly meetings of the Council are open to the public. The mission of the NC DD Council is to assure that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of

and have access to culturally competent services, supports and other assistance and opportunities that promote interdependence, contribution, self-determination, and inclusion in the community. The NC DD Council achieves this mission through advocacy, capacity building and systems change activities. It also serves in an advisory capacity, under state law, to the NC Department of Health and Human Services.

The NC DD Council makes funds available in a variety of areas for initiatives, in accordance with its state plan, to fulfill its mission. Funding is made available primarily through competitive bids or RFAs. A general description of this initiative for which proposals are requested is on

page 8 of this newsletter. An application containing more detail will be sent upon receipt of the completed Notification of Intent to Apply, located on the back page of this publication.

In May, the DD Council will be releasing several new RFAs. RFA information will be distributed in a newsletter and posted on the DD Council's web site [www.nc-ddc.org](http://www.nc-ddc.org).



**“Living in the community is critically important to promoting maximum independence and to integrating individuals with disabilities into community life.”**

President **George W. Bush**  
New Freedom Initiative  
February 2001

## ER AWARD

### Criteria for Nomination:

The award will be presented to an individual who has made significant contributions to enhance the lives of people with developmental disabilities. Nominees should serve as a role model and provide inspiration to others. Applications for nomination must be received in the Council offices by July 8, 2002 to be considered for this year's award.

To nominate a person for the 2002 award, you can complete a nomination form online at [www.nc-ddc.org](http://www.nc-ddc.org).

For more information, or for a hard copy of the form, call **(919) 850-2833** or **1-800-357-6916**.



# ORGANIZING FOR CHANGE

"People with disabilities are the single largest minority group in North Carolina, but we don't have a unified, statewide voice to express our concerns," stated **Mark Ezzell**, chair of the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities. To address this imbalance, the DD Council is funding the "Grassroots Development Initiative."

The goal of the project is to bring people with disabilities and local advocacy groups together to create a well-coordinated, statewide network of people who are informed about issues, are knowledgeable about effective methods of grassroots organization and advocacy, and who take actions that result in specific and systemic changes.

The focus of the first phase of this initiative is gathering information from people with disabilities across the state about what their issues are and how they think the DD Council can help get those concerns addressed. "The roles of the DD Council on this project are convener and funder, not organizer. We want people with disabilities to drive this effort," said Mark.

The DD Council will hold six to ten regional meetings designed to discover issues of concern, to educate participants about effective grassroots organization around those issues, to determine what issues are of common concern to groups in other areas of the state and to solicit participation in a statewide meeting. This initiative will also facilitate networking by assisting local groups to connect individuals with existing grassroots organizations, connect leaders of organizations around common issues and establish communication networks through information technology such as e-mail and chat rooms.

Now is an especially good time for people with disabilities in North Carolina to work together for effective systems change. With the Olmstead decision, North Carolina will have to make some changes in its disability policy. There is also considerable talk about reorganizing disability services in North Carolina. And with the state's current budget crisis, the state may be more willing to make changes in the basic way it does business.

"People with disabilities need to get their voices heard. We're seeing that if people with disabilities don't speak, others speak for us, and that's not acceptable," said Mark. "This project has the potential to transform the state. Twenty percent of the state's population has a disability. Mobilizing a group this large can make a difference—politicians have got to listen."

## Grassroots Development Initiative Job Announcement

The North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities is seeking a coordinator for its "Grassroots Development Initiative." The purpose of this initiative is to enable North Carolinians with disabilities to have a greater voice in the public policy processes of their cities, counties and state. The first phase of the Initiative will include mapping the disability communities in North Carolina and holding regional meetings in several North Carolina towns to discover areas of concern and facilitate first steps toward collective action with local disability community members.

The first phase of the project is for an 8-month period (June 1, 2002 to January 31, 2003). The coordinator will serve under the supervision of the assistant director for Project Management at the Council and will work closely with the project planner and Project Advisory Committee.

The salary for the position is negotiable, depending on qualifications of the applicant. (The position is funded for 30 hours per week. Salary range will be determined based on experience and education, but most likely in the range of \$12 to \$16 per hour.) The person selected for the position must live in North Carolina while working on the project—preferably in the Raleigh/Triangle or Greensboro/Triad areas.

Interested parties should contact the Council at (919) 850-2833 to obtain a complete job description and should submit resumes by the deadline of **April 30, 2002** to: Larry Swabe, NC Council on Developmental Disabilities, 1001 Navaho Drive, Suite GL-103, Raleigh, NC 27609. Resumes may be faxed to (919) 850-2895.

# Support Brokers: Keys to the Community

For many people with developmental disabilities, the key to self-determination is a support broker. Support brokers help people with developmental disabilities access the support they need in order to create the life they want. Hired by and working for the individual in pursuit of his/her dreams and goals, the support broker's focus is life based, not service based. Therefore, all available and potential resources in the community are explored and maximized by them.

Support brokers facilitate relationships and partnerships between people that might not otherwise have met. They work on developing community—helping individuals and groups see possibilities that promote both individual growth and a more inclusive, active community. Where opportunities are lacking, support brokers work in concert with the individual and others to develop them.

"Self-determination is the surest path to inclusion, and inclusion enriches the life of a community as a whole," said DD Council Planner Richard Reho. "It creates opportunities for the community that weren't there before—inclusion benefits everyone."

While support brokers are used successfully in other states to help people with developmental disabilities build their own lives in the community, they are a new concept in North Carolina. Through the DD Council's Self-Determination Pilot Projects, support brokers are emerging as effective advocates and facilitators for people with developmental disabilities.

A support broker does not have to be a person who does this full time for a living. It can be a person in the community with specific skills and experience that match the needs of a particular individual. For example, if a person needs help securing housing, a real estate agent with connections throughout the community can act as a support broker.

"A support broker understands that the most important work they can do for those they support is to work themselves out of a job," said Richard. "The goal is for the support broker to step back as the individual becomes connected and develops personal and ongoing relationships with others in the community."

## Who makes a good support broker?

According to Ellen Cummings at the Center for Self-Determination, a support broker should have the following characteristics:

- Has a strong sense of social justice
- Is committed to an understanding of self-determination, freedom, and human and civil rights
- Has the ability to develop close relationships to those who receive support and all those who are important in that person's life
- Is a clear, concise communicator and facilitator
- Believes in the value of every human life
- Understands through personal experience the nature of human relationships
- Has the courage to take a stand on behalf of the person supported
- Has respect for the cultural values of others
- Is willing to transfer control
- Has authority and power in the system on behalf of those receiving support
- Is optimistic and has a pervading sense of joy
- Has common sense
- Has a sense of humor
- Can work well despite ambiguity



# Lara Jane Parker

April 1, 1971 – April 1, 2002



The NC Council on Developmental Disabilities mourns the loss of Council member Lara Jane Parker, who died on Monday, April 1, 2002, her 31st birthday.

Upon her appointment to the Council by Governor Jim Hunt on April 28, 1994, Lara became actively involved in a variety of advocacy initiatives. When appointed, she was the youngest member ever named to the body. At the time of her death, she was serving in her second term as the Council's vice-chair and was also a member of the Systems Change Committee.

From the start, Lara knew what she wanted. With her family's strong encouragement, the life she envisioned for herself became a reality. At nine months of age, Lara was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, which significantly limited her ability to walk, speak or use her hands in a purposeful way. The disability did not, however, stop her from communicating her dreams. As a young girl, she and her physical therapist, bored with traditional approaches for stretching and strengthening muscles, practiced ballet. She had realized a dream and gave her family and friends treasured memories of dance recitals.

Later, Lara proudly moved into her own apartment. In an essay she authored about her life and the emerging, international self-determination movement, Lara wrote:

“Living independently wasn't and isn't without some incredible challenges. But I am independent and I am in charge of my own life. I have choices. While not every day has been easy, I would not want to live a more sheltered existence. I am able to stand up for myself and my rights. My life is what I choose to make of it.

“I have been fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to have choice and control in my own life. I can personally attest that dignity and personal satisfaction come from making substantive choices. My reality makes it necessary for me to depend on others to lift me, feed me, clothe me; yet I am not dependent. I am in control.”

In December 1999, Lara graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a Bachelor's degree in psychology. Always an ardent advocate, Lara served on numerous state and local committees, advancing issues of concern to people with disabilities.

Lara was a pioneer. The way she lived her life made the principles of self-determination real for others with disabilities. She asserted her right to live the life of her choice; insisted upon the authority to direct that life; and secured the supports she needed to be the person she wanted to be. Lara keenly felt her responsibility to give back. And she did! What she gave to all of us—an exemplary life in leadership, vision, friendship and love—was far more than we could have ever given her.

She will be greatly missed.

## Council Seeks

# Applications for Membership

The NC Council on Developmental Disabilities is soliciting recommendations for endorsement of qualified candidates for Council membership. The Council is a statewide body of 34 members, appointed by the Governor, dedicated to the promotion of a person- and family-centered system and coordinated array of services, supports, and other assistance for people with developmental disabilities and their families. Created under federal law (P.L. 106-402), the Council funds and advocates for culturally competent services, supports, and other assistance and opportunities that promote self-determination, interdependence, contribution, and inclusion into the community for all North Carolinians with developmental disabilities and their families.

The Council is seeking to endorse a slate of members for four-year terms, beginning July 1, 2002 and ending June 30, 2006. Interested individuals are being sought for consideration in the following categories:

- Individuals with developmental disabilities/self-advocates
- Parents or guardians of children (0-21) with developmental disabilities
- Immediate relatives or guardians of adults with developmental disabilities
- An immediate relative or guardian of an adult with a developmental disability who resides or previously resided in an institution or an individual with a developmental disability who resides or previously resided in an institution

Membership on the Council offers the opportunity to work with people with developmental disabilities, parents, other advocates, local service providers and state policy makers as part of a distinguished, gubernatorial-appointed body, dedicated to enhancing services and supports for people with developmental disabilities and their families. Interested individuals or groups seeking endorsement for membership on behalf of an individual should submit an application by Friday, June 7, 2002. All applications will be kept on file and new endorsements made to the Office of the Governor as vacancies occur.

**Note:** Endorsement does not guarantee appointment. Final selections of members to the Council are made at the discretion of the governor.

For information about Council membership and for completing and submitting an Application for Endorsement on line (also available in alternative formats), please refer to the DD Council web site at <http://www.nc-ddc.org/>. For additional information, you may also contact **John McCallum**, Assistant Director for Quality Management, NC Council on Developmental Disabilities, 1001 Navaho Drive, Suite GL-103, Raleigh, NC 27609; 919-850-2833 (voice/tdd); toll free 800-357-6916 (voice/tdd); fax **919-850-2895**; or email [John.McCallum@ncmail.net](mailto:John.McCallum@ncmail.net)

# Job Announcement

The North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities is seeking a manager for its Participant Involvement Fund (PIF). The purpose of the PIF is to provide funds for people with developmental disabilities, their family members, or their guardians to participate in conferences, training events, and other similar activities to empower them with opportunities, experiences, resources and information they need to make informed choices and to enhance their lives.

The PIF manager coordinates materials and information, which is presented to the Participant Involvement Fund Committee. The PIF Committee determines the distribution of funds to PIF applicants based on recommendations from the PIF manager.

The PIF manager distributes PIF Guidelines and Applications throughout North Carolina to individuals, agencies and organizations and fields questions about the Participant Involvement Fund on an ongoing basis. This position is 10 to 12 hours per week.

Interested parties should contact the Council at (919) 850-2833 to obtain a complete job description and salary information. Resumes must be submitted by the deadline of **May 6, 2002** to: **Larry Swabe**, NC Council on Developmental Disabilities, 1001 Navaho Drive, Suite GL-103, Raleigh, NC 27609. Resumes may be faxed to: (919) 850-2895, or as a Word document attachment to [Larry.Swabe@ncmail.net](mailto:Larry.Swabe@ncmail.net)

**Individuals with developmental disabilities and family members are encouraged to apply.**

RFA #1

4-02

**State Plan Objective: QA #3** Promote statewide reform of the systems designed to protect people with developmental disabilities from abuse and neglect and to promote their civil rights and quality of life.

## Intent:

The intent of this project is to promote systems change based on a contemporary standard of excellence for quality of life—inclusive communities in which individuals with developmental disabilities exercise the rights and responsibilities of full citizenship, live, go to school, work, play and retire, side by side with others.

## Overview:

"The Supreme Court's decision in Olmstead over two years ago has renewed the intensity of the debate about the appropriateness of institutional services for individuals who would prefer or are capable of living in the community."

*"Today's Choice: Tomorrow's Path"*  
Human Services Research Institute  
Report to NC Legislative Oversight  
Committee

November 23, 2001

In June 1999, the United States Supreme Court issued a landmark ruling in Olmstead v. L.C. The Court based its decision on Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires public entities to administer services, programs and activities "in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of qualified individuals with disabilities." The case was brought on behalf of two Georgia women diagnosed as having mental retardation and mental illness. Both women were receiving services in state institutions, although the state's professionals said that they could be appropriately served in the community. The women sued, alleging that the state's failure to provide services and supports in the community constituted discrimination under the ADA.

The Supreme Court held that unnecessary institutionalization is discrimination under Title II of the ADA. The Court's opinion requires public entities to place people with disabilities in the community when:

- The state's professionals have determined that living in the community is an appropriate option;

- Transfer from an institution to the community is not opposed by the individual; and
- The desire to live in the community can be reasonably accommodated, taking into account the resources available to the state and the needs of others with mental disabilities.

The June 1999 Supreme Court decision and North Carolina's work to implement that decision is the impetus for this Request for Applications (RFA).

The Court's opinion encouraged states to develop a comprehensive, effectively working plan for creating and evaluating community services for people with disabilities in the setting most appropriate to their needs. With respect to waiting lists, the Court urged that such lists move at a reasonable pace, not controlled by the state's endeavors to keep its institutions fully populated. North Carolina responded to the Supreme Court's decision in Olmstead by initiating a planning process, inclusive of people with developmental disabilities, in mid-2000. In 2001, the state produced a plan that received accolades from the National Conference of State Legislators. A final Olmstead plan is anticipated in the spring of 2002.

In early 2001, the North Carolina Legislative Oversight Committee for Reform of the Mental Health/ Developmental Disabilities/Substance Abuse Services System engaged in extensive deliberations regarding key governance, finance, service array, hospital, and DD issues. A request for proposals for a comprehensive study of Developmental Disabilities services was released and awarded to the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI). The resulting study, "Today's Choice: Tomorrow's Path," was presented to the Legislative Oversight Committee on October 9, 2001.

"Today's Choice: Tomorrow's Path" states that, relative to state population, the number of individuals served in North Carolina's Mental Retardation Centers is 43% above the

national average. While North Carolina has scaled back the census in the Mental Retardation Centers (MRC) over the past decade, it has done so at an appreciably slower rate than has been the case nationwide. The report recommends that "North Carolina should reduce the long-term residential census of its Mental Retardation Centers by 50% by 2007." To secure a 50% reduction, North Carolina would have to transition 700 to 750 individuals with developmental disabilities to the community over a five-year period.

Presently, the State of North Carolina faces serious fiscal constraints. Additionally, the report identified the need for a series of complex system design reforms. In light of these challenges, if North Carolina goes forward with the prospective MRC transition (see above), the state will need to employ significantly different strategies for community development than it has used in the past. The NC Council on Developmental Disabilities (NC DD Council) encourages the state to move forward with this recommendation and is offering its resources to assist the state in doing so planfully and consistent with best practices.

The NC DD Council is releasing funds to support systems change consistent with the Olmstead decision and the principles and practices of person-centered supports and self-determination<sup>1</sup>. The NC DD Council seeks applications for projects that result in measurable, systems change outcomes guaranteeing individuals with developmental disabilities covered by Olmstead the right to live a life of his or her choosing in the community. Systems change and quality assurance activities should neither duplicate nor supplant existing federal or state programs and must, minimally, be coordinated with the Department of Health & Human Services Long-Term Care Cabinet, Division of Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities/Substance Abuse Services State Plan, state Developmental Disabilities Section activities, Division of Medical Assistance, and Local Management Entities' business plans. Any project conducted under this Request for Applications (RFA) must have the meaningful involvement of people with developmental disabilities and their families.

The NC DD Council is seeking applications that mainly incorporate the following ideas consistent with the intent of this RFA:

- Provision of technical assistance to support the continued development of the Home and Community-

Based Waiver environment such that it meets the needs of (1) people presently residing in MRCs and (2) people opting for self-determination/participant-directed services and supports

- Demonstration of strong, person-centered planning (e.g., individual budgeting, circles of friends) with identified individuals who are moving from large public or private Intermediate Care Facilities-MR to homes in the community
- Demonstration of strong, person-centered planning (e.g., individual budgeting, circles of friends) and transition to the community for identified persons with developmental disabilities residing in Adult Care Homes
- State-of-the-art technical assistance for the development and implementation of a comprehensive, statewide, coordinated planning process for transitioning individuals with developmental disabilities from Mental Retardation Centers to the community, over the next five years.
- Demonstration, in the context of person-centered planning, of the use of "case management"/support brokerage to link individuals to resources (inclusive of local, state, generic and informal resources)

The NC DD Council will award one grant, up to \$100,000 per year for five years, for this initiative. Preference will be given to a collaborative approach inclusive of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families and key state and local policy makers. Applications are due to the NC DD Council by July 1, 2002. Year one of the grant to commence September 16, 2002. ***The Council reserves the right to renew funding on an annual basis based on achievement of expected project outcomes.***

<sup>1</sup> See "Person-Centered Supports- They're for Everyone," National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services, Inc., Dec. 2000.

# NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO APPLY

I am interested in submitting a proposal for:

\_\_\_\_\_ RFA #I 4-02 **Opening Doors to Community:  
OLMSTEAD Request for Applications**

- I plan to attend the bidders' workshop for RFA #I 4-02 in Raleigh, NC on the week of June 3-7 (specific dates and location TBA)
- Send grant application packet and information about the bidders' workshops
- I will download the grant application packet and information about the bidders' workshops from the web site: [www.nc-ddc.org](http://www.nc-ddc.org)

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX #: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Completed grant applications for this RFA must be received in the NC DD Council office by 5pm, July 1, 2002.**

*Mail or fax this form prior to May 31, 2002.*

## **North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities**

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**Website** [www.nc-ddc.org](http://www.nc-ddc.org)



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### **Mark Ezzell**

Chairman

### **Holly Riddle, J.D., M.Ed.**

Executive Director

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