

SILC Executive Director Report

March 10, 2023

2023 SILC Congress – Little Rock, Arkansas

Michigan's delegation to the 2023 SILC Congress returned home this week after attending very informative sessions and listening to keynote speakers. Sessions covered a variety of topics including creating effective DSE, SILC and CIL relationships; Utilizing your state's Ms. Wheelchair; regional breakout networking and peer sharing; NASILC annual meeting; NYSILC – history and value of SILCs; partnering with local colleges to foster change; independent living and emergency planning; success through collaboration; ILNET SILC 101; transition outside the box; and HCBS rules and updates to name a few. Key note speakers included Regina Blye – former ACL program officer and current Chief Program Officer of the Christopher Reeve Foundation and ACL Commissioner Jill Jacobs.

2023 1st Quarter Meetings/Trainings

So far in the first quarter, I have participated in the following trainings and meetings:

- Peer to Peer Interactive Workshop for CILs and SILCs
- Two SILC Speak Peer Discussions facilitated by ILRU
- Region V Quarterly Peer meeting
- Michigan Council for Rehabilitation Services Quarterly meeting
- Two meetings with Dr. Fayana Richards regarding the MPHI Grant

2024 – 2026 SPIL Writing Team

ACL announced late last year that a 4th year will be added to our current SPIL making the next SPIL due to ACL in June 2024. As such, the SPIL writing team will begin public meetings again in the spring of 2023. In the interim, the team will receive monthly SILC IL community needs assessment survey response updates. The survey has been open since September and will remain open for the remainder of the calendar year. So far, we have received 69 responses. The survey is being promoted through SILC's social media channels and by other partners.

CIL Director Meetings

Quarterly meetings with the CIL directors have been scheduled where we share collaborative updates. I will be meeting with them again on April 21, 2023 in Lansing. I have also scheduled the "Lunch and Learn" meeting series with each CIL director at their CIL. These meetings are designed to learn more about each unique CIL and how SILC can better partner with them. So far, I have met with Lori Hill, Alex Gossage, Jon Hart, Will Wilson, and Kelly PeLong. The balance of these meetings are scheduled for the end of March and the first few weeks of April.

Statewide Outreach Services

We are making great progress with statewide outreach as we promote Independent Living and the CILs across the state through our monthly newsletter, online blog, and weekly social media posts. We also have two summertime inclusive community arts events that will take place in Madison Heights and Traverse City. More to come on those. We are also gearing up and registering for many summer community events across the state where SILC will distribute our informational brochures. We are also reaching out to be guests on various disability related podcasts. Finally, we are excited to announce that Gaelynn Lea has agreed to do a live Facebook round table with SILC next week.

Appointments

I am pleased to announce that SILC has recently had two new members appointed to our Council. Erica Coulston was appointed to the Council on December 22, 2022 along with Jan and Frank being reappointed. Jan is moving into Will's seat based on the representation category in the Executive Order (Will termed off on December 31st and did not want to seek reappointment at this time) and Erica is moving into Jan's seat (this does not change our elected officer positions).

Shawan Dortch was appointed on July 28, 2022 along with Aaron Andres. Shawan is an Ex Officio representing the Michigan Department of Education and she replaces Janet Timbs. In April 2022, Theresa Metzmaker, Stephanie Deible and Anne Urasky were also reappointed to the Council. We now have a fully seated Council.

SILC Strategic Planning

SILC wrapped up the strategic planning process in August 2021 which resulted in updated vision and mission statements. SMART goals have been created for strategic plan goals that align with our current SPIL. After the Council held our annual retreat at the end of August 2022, it was decided that the balance of strategic plan goals will be aligned with SILC goals created in the next SPIL. A SILC goal writing team has met twice to develop SPIL goals specific to Council activity.

SILC Financial and Member Reimbursement Policies

Since the summer of last year, Stephanie, Mindy, Jan, Tracy, our accountant Brad, and I have been working on revisions to SILC's financial policies and created a new member reimbursement policy based on eligible federal reimbursement categories. The financial policies were informed by the current policies of five other SILCs in Region V and we feel confident that the drafts you are being presented with today are sound and thorough.

Michigan Council for Rehabilitation Services (MCRS)

I continue to represent SILC on the MCRS. MCRS's mission is to improve public Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services delivered by the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) and Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS).

Michigan Vaccine Partners

I continue representing SILC at the Michigan Vaccine Partners meetings where we discuss strategy and long-term advocacy around vaccine access for people with disabilities.