



Self-Advocate Grassroots Community Organizing

In 2014, the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for one group of self-advocates to work with others to make changes so that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are included in their community. When the self-advocacy movement began in the 1960s, many people did not listen to what people with intellectual disabilities said that they wanted for themselves or their communities. Although many people still do not view people with intellectual disabilities as equal partners and leaders, people who have intellectual disabilities have ideas and opinions that are important and need to be heard.

TCDD expects that this grant will help self-advocates with intellectual disabilities:

- Learn advanced leadership skills;
- Work together with a trained community organizer and other experts to identify and change a program, policy, or practice so that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are included in their community; and
- Keep working together to make the community better after this grant is over

Community organizing means people coming together to talk about and find ways to solve issues in their community that are important to them. An example is when neighbors work together to make their community safer for people to walk or bike by convincing the city to build sidewalks or trails. With this project, people who have intellectual disabilities will make decisions about what issues to work on and how to work on them.



Texas Advocates | Self-Advocates Grassroots Community Organizing

Texas Advocates will speak out for ourselves and organize a powerful group of self-advocates in the Greater Austin Area to create change in their community, at their direction, so people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are included in their community. Texas Advocates continues to recruit and engage self-

advocates to learn about their goals for their lives. Texas Advocates helps the self-advocates group organize, plan meetings, and participate in community meetings and events.

Texas Advocates identified, recruited, and engaged over 50 self-advocates in the Austin Area to participate in the Self Advocate Community Organizing Group. The grant staff reached out to numerous local organizations and did presentations for groups such as Austin Community College, the Austin Resource Center for Independent Living, Austin Travis County Integral Care and Austin Advocates. The grant staff initially interviewed a total of 54 self-advocates about their goals, lives, and issues. The participants identified the following issues for the group to learn more about: housing, transportation, activities, jobs, and access.



Grantee Information: thetexasadvocates.org

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