



## **Missouri Statewide Independent Living Council (MOSILC)**

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### **Executive Director's August 2019 Report**

Can you believe it, we are drawing near to the close of the Federal Fiscal Year 2019 and there is still so much to do, so much yet to accomplish? But MOSILC has plenty to be proud of from where it came from some twenty months ago, to now being recognized as a leader in the independent living movement here in Missouri.

On occasion I like to look back and reflect on the independent living philosophy. The IL Philosophy is based in concept that "people with all types of disabilities should have the same civil rights as those without disabilities. They have a right to control their lives based on options that minimize their reliance on others." In the spirit of this philosophy Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are charged with these core services: Advocacy, IL Skills Training, Information and Referral, Peer Support, and Transition.

In May the MOSILC Council Members and others participated in part 2 of our council trainings on SILC Roles and Responsibilities, and History and Philosophy of IL administered by Paula McElwee via Zoom.us. During a four days excursion of Missouri's southeast, south, and mid-southwest I visited the IL Centers LIFE, SADI-SEMO, BAILS, ILCSEMO, and OIL. I learned a lot about the challenges of rural outreach. I had a telephone meeting with Graves and Associates, CPAs to discuss the process of our audit and 990. Then the unthinkable happened, Jefferson City and many other communities experienced the ferociousness of a tornado and flooding. We got through it.

In June I attended the **SOAR Regional Leadership & Advocacy Conference** in Independence MO. The conference was hosted by the Heartland Self-advocacy Resource Network (HSRN) which consists of People First of Missouri, Self-Advocate Coalition of Kansas, People First of Nebraska, and Iowa Self-Advocates. It was a wonderful experience to see so many cross disabilities come together to learn and fellowship. Other Council Members attended and are welcome to share their experience and insight. One message that came through loud and clear, the cross-disability community want to hold a caucus, whether by state or region to make their voices heard in the coming elections. CILs that support a local self-advocacy group I applaud you; those who are not I ask why not? This is advocacy at its grassroots.

From there I was off to Osage Beach for the **Missouri Rehabilitation Association Conference**. This time around instead of being a vendor, I

represented MOSILC as a participant and learned of employment agencies and supported employment organization that are looking for opportunities to collaborate with CILs to get people who want to work, working. Next I spent two weeks in St Louis to attend the ILRU/NCIL CIL-NET Conference: **How CILs Can Transform the Housing Landscape** where I learned a lot of great information, we will share with CILs through the MOSILC Housing Committee. From there we attended the 2019 National APSE1st Conference (for supported employment). Still much to learn and plenty of good and useful information. While in St Louis I had the opportunity to meet with Colleen Starkloff and her staff at the Starkloff Disability Institute and hear about the wonderful work they are doing to getting those who want to work, careers!

Also, in June I attended the MPACT Board Meeting and the Missouri Protection & Advocacy Board Meeting, both of which I serve on their boards.

In July I participated in ILRU's Rural Outreach and Engagement presentation, hosted a MOSILC Executive Committee meeting and Housing Committee meeting, and took part in the Missouri APSE1st Membership meeting. On July 20<sup>th</sup> I attended the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF) Closing Luncheon, Missouri has a lot of upcoming leaders in the IL Movement! On July 22<sup>nd</sup> the MOSILC Housing Committee held a very productive meeting. On July 26<sup>th</sup> I participated in the MO Self-Advocacy and Leadership Development Discussion Meeting held here in Jefferson City. The meeting was represented across disabilities.

So, much has been realized, but we understand we have more to achieve.

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