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Date: 10/4/2016 3:33:19 PM

Subject: Two New Grants to Advance Business Acumen of State and Community-Based Organizations
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October 4, 2016

Two New Grants to Advance Business Acumen of State and Community-Based Organizations

Grants totaling \$3.75 million over three years were awarded to the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD) and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) to build business capacity in the aging and disability services networks. Both projects will work together to build on the previous accomplishments of ACL's [business acumen work](#) and to complement other publicly and privately funded technical assistance resource centers addressing this critical issue.

"ACL is pleased to advance our business acumen efforts to support the success and sustainability of community-based organizations that provide important services across the nation," said Edwin Walker, Acting Administrator for ACL.

ACL's [Administration on Disabilities](#) awarded The National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD) a "Business Acumen for Disability Organizations" grant of \$750,000 per year for three years. Their project will:

- Develop baseline knowledge about current disability CBO involvement and ongoing needs to engage in development and implementation of integrated care systems;
- Provide training and technical assistance for the disability networks to build their capacity for operating effectively in integrated care systems;
- Convene and provide targeted technical assistance to 10-15 state teams using a learning collaborative model; and
- Engage with integrated care organizations, managed care plans, and other health care entities about the needs of consumers and the role of CBOs.

"Building the business capacity of disability service organizations and networks is important for providing home and community-based supports that are growing in demand," said Aaron Bishop, Commissioner of the Administration on Disabilities.

NASUAD will partner with the American Association on Health and Disabilities, American Network of Community Options and Resources, Autistic Self Advocacy Network, MERCER, National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services, National Council on Independent Living, National Council on Aging, National Disability Rights Network, Community Living Policy Center at the

University of California at San Francisco, and Research and Training Center at University of Minnesota's Institute on Community Integration. The team includes a variety of perspectives and experience on disability, along with NASUAD's experience leading collaborative projects and providing training and technical assistance support.

In addition, the new "Learning Collaboratives for Advanced Business Acumen Skills" grant awarded to n4a will provide more in-depth learning opportunities for CBOs. In coordination with other technical assistance providers and national resource centers, n4a will:

- Organize and conduct three to five topically-based learning collaboratives to address advanced business issues, such as continuous quality improvement, infrastructure and technology, generating and maintaining volume, data pooling, and more;
- Provide targeted technical assistance to networks of community-based aging and disability organizations; and
- Advance knowledge and capture insights through the learning collaborative to incorporate into future curriculum for national dissemination.

The grant maximum is \$500,000 per year for three years. n4a brings deep expertise in building business capacity among CBOs, including their National Aging and Disability Business Institute. Partners in the project are the American Society on Aging, Evidence-Based Leadership Council, Independent Living Research Utilization, National Council on Aging, Meals on Wheels America, Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley, and Partners in Care Foundation.

About ACL's Business Acumen Initiative

The expansion of delivery system reform has presented new challenges to local organizations such as Area Agencies on Aging, Centers for Independent Living, and other providers that have historically delivered home and community-based services to older adults and people with disabilities. The move toward integrated systems has major implications for aging and disability networks, formal and informal networks of organizations at the local, state and national levels that assist and empower people with disabilities and their families, and the populations they serve. It offers both opportunities and challenges in terms of advocating with and for individuals receiving services regarding the design and implementation of systems, and changes or expands business lines for community-based organizations that wish to market and sell their services to health plans and other integrated care entities (such as health plans, accountable care organizations, health systems, and others). Responding to delivery system reform requires organizational changes at many levels. In particular, partnership and network-building among CBOs providing long term care supports and services of all kinds will be critical as integrated service systems develop.

Since 2012, ACL has provided national leadership to help state and CBOs build networks and respond to delivery systems reform happening around the country. This work includes technical assistance to deploy evidence-based programs and to build the business capacity of state and CBOs in order to promote successful contracting with integrated care entities and pathways to sustainability for CBOs developing private-public partnerships.

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