

# CALIFORNIA COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



**C&EPD**

CA COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT  
OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



# OVERVIEW

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In 2023, the California Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (CCEPD) updated its mission, vision, and guiding principles, to reflect its goals for California's workforce and to more accurately reflect the work of the CCEPD.

**Vision:** The CCEPD's vision is through equitable access to services and employment, people with disabilities bring diversity, experience, talent, skills, and value to California's workforce and communities.

**Mission:** The CCEPD evaluates, develops, promotes, and influences policies, systems, and implementation efforts to increase employment and training of people with disabilities.

The vision and mission will help guide policy discussions to advance disability equity, inclusion, and access in all programs and systems serving people with disabilities.



# NEW MEMBERS

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The CCEPD also welcomed two, new Members, Dani Anderson, an Assembly Speaker's appointee, and LaCandice Ochoa, a representative of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

Dani Anderson is the County of Ventura's Disability Access Manager. Prior to this role, she served as Access and Functional Needs Manager at Southern California Edison and Executive Director of the Independent Living Resource Center. In addition to her lifelong lived experience, Ms. Anderson has twenty years of involvement in the disability field including the state and federal government, and non-profit arenas. As a Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) alumnus, she has agreed to chair the YLF Governance Committee.

LaCandice Ochoa is Dean at the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) since June 2022, where she oversees and evaluates career technical education programs and initiatives, such as Perkins and Strong Workforce. Prior to her work at CCCCCO, she was Operations Manager of the California Commission on Disability Access and a Program Manager of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. As representative, she will help the CCEPD collaborate on career technical education and other initiatives.



Dani Anderson



LaCandice Ochoa

# POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

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Throughout 2023, the CCEPD held a series of listening sessions with local workforce areas statewide to collect information on their highlights and challenges when serving people with disabilities. From these listening sessions, the CCEPD compiled a best practices toolkit to help promote and replicate service delivery practices and policy recommendations that support employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

In May 2023, the CCEPD approved a workforce best practice toolkit, and it was submitted to Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) and the Employment Development Department (EDD). In August 2023, the CCEPD approved the workforce best practices policy recommendations and submitted them to the DOR and the EDD for informal feedback. The CCEPD held a webinar on November 8 to present an overview of the toolkit designed to encourage workforce areas to adopt best practices in serving people with disabilities, and more organizations to develop partnerships with workforce and disability-focused organizations.





In late 2022 and early 2023, in collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), the CCEPD developed a cross-advisory workgroup to identify barriers to employment for people with disabilities who are on public benefits and how benefits planning can support employment outcomes. This workgroup is comprised of representatives from the CalABLE Act Board, the California Behavioral Health Planning Council, the Commission on Aging, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, and the State Independent Living Council. Members of the Workgroup heard from people with disabilities and families, transition-aged youth, benefits planning counselors in multiple systems and from the Department of Health Care Services on asset limit changes. Members are working on policy recommendations with efforts to continue into 2024.

The CCEPD will be reviewing the California Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan to provide feedback based on the best practices toolkit. Other implementation efforts and policies from the Governor's Executive Order to Prepare California for the Progress of Artificial Intelligence and to launch a Master Plan on Career Education will be monitored to ensure these initiatives are responsive to the needs of people with disabilities and to maximize the opportunity for people with disabilities to be served across education and career development systems.

# YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM (YLF) HIGHLIGHTS

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In 2023, YLF welcomed a new YLF Project Manager, Matt Baker. The transition to new leadership provided the opportunity for YLF partners to evaluate and modernize the program. YLF partners worked to update the curriculum and created a new logo.

The program was held through a hybrid virtual and in-person format, July 13-19, 2023. Following three days of virtual programming, participants journeyed to California State University, Sacramento, for the remaining three days of the program. The program in 2024 will be fully in-person.

In addition to the six-day summer program, additional activities have been developed for YLF alumni in recent years. YLF hosted a pre-YLF mixer for delegates and families to get to know one another, answer questions and get excited about YLF. Virtual alumni workshops are also held following YLF covering topics such as transition after high school, money management, apprenticeships and internships, career planning and work based learning. Social activities and peer mentoring opportunities have also been offered.



YLF introduced an online application for 2024 YLF delegate and staff applicants. In addition, new approaches are being taken for marketing and outreach for 2024, including presenting to existing partners, such as DOR counselors and various disability-related advisory bodies, and through social media campaigns.



# REGIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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Beginning in 2022, discussions with local partners led to development of three regional YLF pilot events in Los Angeles, Sacramento, and San Diego. These weekend programs include many of the same curriculum topics covered in the traditional summer program.

Sacramento held the first regional YLF event in October of 2023. The goal was to have a regional cohort of high school students participate in the event at Sacramento City College. The event included 17 youth with diverse backgrounds and experiences. Local partners included the Alta Regional Center, the Disability Student Services Program at Los Rios Community College, the Department of Rehabilitation, Resources for Independent Living, and Sacramento Employment and Training Agency. CCEPD appreciates the work and dedication of the local partners in developing the first regional YLF event in California.

Los Angeles and San Diego is planning a regional event in 2024.

The YLF annual report is located on the CCEPD website.





# MORE INFORMATION

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For more information, including current developments and meetings, visit the CCEPD's website or call the Executive Officer, Maria Aliferis-Gjerde, at (916) 558-5698.



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