SILC Member Recruitment and Orientation presented by Shelly Emery & Robbie Barrutia on May 21, 2014

Services Provided By:

Caption First, Inc.
P.O. Box 3066
Monument, CO 80132
1-877-825-5234
+001-719-481-9835
Www.captionfirst.com
\* \* \*
This text is being provided in a rough-draft format. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings.
\* \* \*

>> TIM FUCHS: Hi, good afternoon, everybody. This is Tim Fuchs. I'm with the National Council on Independent Living and I'm going to welcome you all to our latest SILC-NET Webinar, Member Recruitment and Orientation. So today's Webinar is being presented by the IL-NET tech technical assistant project operated through a partnership among ILRU, National Council on Independent Living and APRIL and support provided by RSA at the U.S. Department of Education. We are recording today's call to archive it on ILRU's website. If you have not gone to their list of on-demand training I would encourage you to do so. Access any of these teleconferences and Webinars. They are posted within about 48 hours after the end of the call and you or any of your colleagues can listen and watch the presentation as it happened.
We are going to break several times during today's presentation to take your questions. On the tovl you can press star pound and we'll take them in the order they are received. If on the Webinar of course you can enter your questions in the chat screen at any time during the call.
I will voice those. Of course I'll remind you each time we break for questions.
If you are participating on the CART screen today, you can type your questions on that chat feature as well. And I am logged in there so I will voice those questions during the Q-and-A breaks as well.
Let's see. I also want to remind you you'll want to have the PowerPoint open. Now, of course, if you are on the Webinar, you are already looking at the title screen. But if you are on the phone and didn't realize that, send me an e-mail at Tim@ ncil.org. Of course that was sent to you in the confirmation e-mail you received yesterday for the call.
Okay. Just one more point. I want to ask all of you to please fill out the evaluation form at the end of the call. It is very short. It only takes a moment to complete. It is really important to us. The last slide that we look at today together will actually be a link to that eval form and also in that confirmation e-mail with connection instructions was that same link. If you are participating in a small group today, that's fine but we would really like for each of you to fill out the eval. We want to make sure trainings and conversations are working for you.
Well, anyway, that's all I had for housekeeping. I want to open the call. I am so thankful we have Robbi Barrutia and Shelly Emery with us today. Robbi is Executive Director of the Idaho SILC and Shelly is the Operations Coordinatoror for Oregon SILC. And we have had a good time preparing this presentation with them, Shelly presented a similar presentation with us a few years ago and Robbi has added Idaho's experience so it is -- had a good time putting it together and I know you will enjoy it.
I'll go ahead to slide two and turn it over to Robbi to get us started.
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: Thank you, this is Robbi Barrutia. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this Webinar today. We'll talk about introductions and objectives. Number one is gain ideas for getting the type of members SILC needs and number two is to identify effective elements of member or yeb taition and training that result in more confident members, more committed members, more engaged members and more effective members.
We don't want to assume you know background and experience all of you have. For some of this, it may be old news but we want to consider that there may be some folks really new to SILC life on today's call. We hope everyone can find at least one new helpful idea. We are certainly not experts on the topics. Our Councils struggle at times with recruiting. Some approaches work well for us at times. Others don't. The mix of members on the councils are always changing and seems we have to adapt our recruitment and training approaches from time to time.
We are here today to share things that worked, some that didn't work and some we may have only recently put into practice.
Next slide.
So the typical problems we probably have all experienced are members who may be uncomfortable in their roles and responsibilities; insufficient knowledge aMember Development Committee&to carry out SILC duties. I want to put a caveat in here especially with the insufficient knowledge, acronyms provide an opportunity for learning, for learning new things. What we do in Idaho is provide all our SILC members with an acronym list because they can be very confusing. Poor attendance, quorums not met. Member turn over and difficulty with appointment process.
>> Sorry, go ahead. Since you are done I had a little input.
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: Yeah, I have the -- just a little bit more. May be new members on the Council that are uncomfortable the first couple meetings. Comfort level can be attributed to many different things including lack of knowledge and roles and responsibilities and discomfort communicating ideas and thoughts during meetings as a result of their disability. I want to give you two Idaho examples. We have an individual who has a very difficult time verbally communicating. So allowing him to have the time and the patience for him to be able to voice his point of view leads to his frustration at times but keep in mind that we need to provide that opportunity for his input.
Some issues that we cover in our Council may trigger a prior experience where that individual may need to leave the room for a safe space and so we always provide a safe space for someone if they need to get out and just go kind of have a quiet moment.
Shelly? I'm sorry.
>> SHELLY EMERY: No, that's okay. When we were talking about insufficient knowledge I wanted to mention for us in Oregon, there is a really tiny pool of people with IL background who not are already working in a center or state employee. So this is a particular issue we have striing gelled with and we will continue to talk about that more as we go through the presentation but I imagine some of you have had that same situation depending on the size of the state and the IL program there.
(Pause)
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: Okay. Next slide.
Tim indicated to us earlier that since we have such a small group that we might be able to have a little bit more of a real interaction and so we'd like to know what challenges you are experiencing as far as developing engaging membership of your SILC.
(Pause)
>> TIM FUCHS: If you'd like to share what's going on in your state press star pound if you are on the telephone. That's star pound. And we do have to take them one at a time but you can share your comments and get some feedback and then also of course you can always type comments in the chat screen as well. That's the text box below the list of participants. Just type what you want to and click "Enter" so let us know what challenges are you experiencing to develop or engage your members.
(Pause)
I'll give you all a moment to respond.
(Pause)
So just so you all know, we do have a good group today but we have got about 20 people participating from 11 SILCs all over the country, so it's a smaller group for us, so please, no reason to be shy! If you have something to share, go ahead. If not, that's fine, too. We'll give everybody about 30 more seconds and if we don't get comments, we'll go back to the presentation.
>> SHELLY EMERY: Hopefully all of you have experienced something around a struggle for membership. What we're hoping to do is kind of find out a little bit with what is happening in your different states and hopefully we would be able to come up with some ideas or maybe assistance or maybe help us know how to focus a little bit as we go through the presentation.
>> TIM FUCHS: Thanks. So a lot of people are typing and I see Linda has said that for them it's having enough strong contributors to governance. Governance is not as sexy as the other committees.
(Pause)
Larry mentions that we are having difficulty recruiting a 121 representative and getting applicants appointed by the governor.
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: I can probably, if you want me to, give an experience we have had with 121.
>> TIM FUCHS: Yeah, that would be great.
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: May I? Hey, Larry, we have struggled for a very long time getting a 121 representative on our Council, probably because most of our 121 reps are so spread thin throughout the state because they have very few of them.
What we have been able to do is talk to the governor and once we did get a 121 rep on, that person did not have to go off the Council until someone else was available to replace them. We kind of got to wave that term process and so if that's a help at all you might be able to check in to having that be presented to your Council and governor as well.
>> TIM FUCHS: Good, good tip. Few more people have shared. Cindy says at their SILC they have trouble getting diversity among people with different types of disabilities on the Council.
Tammy shares in Missouri it takes a very long time to get appointments from the governor's office and people give up or lose interest before they are appointed and also says the application process is very long and involved.
Larry from Arizona says I was also told by RSA a consumer of a 121 can serve. We have the same problem with getting projects directors to serve because they are spread so thin, as you said.
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: Yeah.
>> TIM FUCHS: Well, thanks, everybody, for sharing. That theme will continue through our Q-and-A so, please, be open. We'll keep an eye on the chat and on the phone as well.
I'll go ahead to slide 5. Thanks for sharing your experience and I'll turn it back over to you al.
>> SHELLY EMERY: I want to talk about recruitment process and it seems to take a lot of effort so I'll just say that's a given at least from our experience. But I would really suggest taking some time to develop a strategy and I have in quote from Abe Lincoln posted at my desk that says if I had eight hours to chop down a tree I'd spend six sharpening my accident. To me that means get prepared
(Ax)
We have broken down the preparation steps today into like three processes and the first one, step one, involves doing your planning. Our recruitment process in Oregon begins with asking ourselves: What would be the ideal, well-balanced SILC? What would that look like for us? That might be different in different states but there are some common things and we may know what they are but I don't want to assume that everyone has thought these through. So of course the majority of people on our SILCs need to be people who have disabilities and who are not state agency or SIL employees so that is what keeping us consumer-led.
Then there are federal requirements for ex offiI don'ts and for us that means designated state unit which in Oregon we have both a general and blind VR agency so we have reps from each who are non-voting ex\_officios but there can be other ex officio I don't positions you reserve on the Council. Either voting or non-voting and you might ask yourself what does our Council really need to coordinate with other groups and councils? We have actually gone through and put together a list of who all the different councils and groups are from nvt the major area this bill identifies we should coordinate with. Maybe there is someone from the Medicaid system, housing services, transportation, veterans, et cetera. Depending on what's happening in your state and what things you see that really need more effective service for consumers, you can think about who those groups are and try to pull someone in to your Council. It might be someone from the business community that can represent business and employers.
Then we think about wra kind of diversity do we have on our Council? Do our members really rep the regions across our state?
What about the different disability types and I know one of you mentioned struggling to find people with different disabilities.
We think about age, too, and we struggled some to get younger folk because they are pretty busy in life. They are going to college. They are doing things, especially those that are going to really represent people with disabilities who have engaged in their communities and can help others do the same. We look at ethnic populations and what we started with was doing an analysis of the state demographic diversity and then we have that as a guide to kind of see what kinds of numbers do we need in these different areas so that our SILC we attempt -- we are not always successful -- but we attempt to represent our state the best we can.
Another thing we think about is skill sets. Sometimes it's really I think tempting to just, we find someone with a disability and they seem interested and it would be great to get them on the Council but when we have done that, we find that we just don't always get the right mix of people to get things done so we have had to be more methodical and purposeful about all that.
Some of the skills we have identified that we think are really important are people that having at least one person on a Council with some kind of background in program evaluation and planning. That's so much about what we do. So we have tried to look for those kinds of folks and sometimes we we couple that with some partnering we need so we have used at times, like, some of the program planners or evaluators from our area agencies on aging or -- sometimes they have just served on committees but sometimes they are actually Council members and that helps bolter that area when we don't have other members with those skills sets.
Of course you have to look for leadership skills. One person mentioned governance being an issue. I'm sorry, I don't know why my voice is a bit frogy today. But strong contributors to governance. That is really important so finding people that have demonstrated leadership skills, if I understood what you meant by that, and understand that governance is important to having effective work.
We try to look at those different areas, those kind of skill sets as well.
All righty. I think we are ready to go to the next slide.
>> TIM FUCHS: I'll ge to the next slide and want to share kickly I apologize. We talked about 121 without saying what it was, so if any of you aren't familiar, 121 of course is American Indian or Native American rehab programs. Just wanted to mention that. Thanks, Shelly. Go ahead.
>> SHELLY EMERY: If you look across the nation you will find that there is wide variance in the number of people on SILCs. Sometimes when I have gone to national events and been talking with other people and I hear how many people they have on their SILCs, I'm just amazed and I come back and I talk to people on our SILC about that, their eyes pop! They think how do you do that? How do they even fund that?
But different states have different sized budgets and different capabilities and different needs and so you have to look at, first of all, what are your resources and what can they support? There is other questions and one thing we've come to find out is that your governor or the appointing authority may have opinions about the size of appointed councils in order to make sure that they actually can have an impact and in Oregon, our governor happens to prefer lean and agile boards and commissions. He really loves six-member boards and commissions so we have had to talk about, well, but we have these certain needs and in order to have the diversity that we really need to have so that we have a degree of compliance and we are true to the spirit of the program, we need to have more people and you know we have had to try to get a balance. We need enough people to actually do the work. Yet not so many that everything becomes such a huge process that we can't move quickly and get things done. So that's an important consideration.
Next slide, please. All right. So step two of recruitment for us was to analyze things a bit after we determined what we want in our Council makeup. Then we needed to decide: Where are the gaps? So our SILC uses an Excel spreadsheet as a tracking tool. This picture in the presentation really simulates our tool. It's not our actual data. And it may be kind of hard to see and pick out but I wanted to have a representation of it. The spreadsheet basically has a column for -- that represents each Council positions and when that is full we put a name in it, we put in the term for that position and then under that we can check off the different categories of each member. In the first column, we identify the different demographic categories that are important for us to have. That includes things like state regions, the federally required SIL director, our SILC happens to have a couple more SIL rep positions listed in our bylaws.
We have seven SILs total, by the way, and then we have people with disabilities, people with disabilities who are not state or SIL employees. We list different disability types. Program and agency reps we want to have, advocates or family members of people with disabilities, and voting status. Then on the second column, it calculates how many members there are currently in each category.
The third column identifies a minimum targeted number of members for each category we want to have.
The fourth column shows comparative data we have gone out and found in the general population. So it shows perhaps what percentage of people in Oregon live in each region and that helps us determine what target numbers will be. The fifth column calculates how many members were lacking if we look at that category and compare what we have to what we have said our target is.
One thing you don't see here but we have it on the spreadsheet is a place where the spreadsheet calculates disability majority percentage so at any given moment we can look into that and see if we are at compliance or how far above compliance or what we need to do.
Any questions? I'll ask for any questions about that real quick before I move on.
(Pause)
>> TIM FUCHS: Okay. If you have a question about Oregon's analysis tool you can press star pound if you are on the telephone. So star pound or of course type in the chat screen.
(Pause)
No questions on the phone and I don't see anybody typing so I think you're good, Shelly.
>> SHELLY EMERY: All righty. Great.
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: So step three in the process is to target your recruitment. The Idaho SILC has used various methods of media, social media, Web-based. We actually as an example on our Facebook we had someone who had liked SILC for some reason and had never heard of who we were and actually we recruited that individual once they started getting more involved with what they did, what we do on a daily basis through Facebook.
You may find a lot of those types of media don't target recruitment and so personal recruitment in our opinion seems to make the best target audience. Then we come to where do we find these individuals?
Well, we've been very fortunate through our state plan focus group process as well as an aging and disability resource grant we were a partner with and our transition management and for transitioning with our partnership with health and welfare and with our Department of Justice grant for the office on violence against women conducting these focus groups for in put and found many, many members out of those focus groups that have become just outstanding Council members.
Then we also, who has a connection to some of those entities that advocate on behalf of the individuals with disabilities and we call those individuals and we say: Do you know someone you work with in this area that might be a great councilmember for us? So we communicate back and forth.
Then who has connections, again? It is very important. You may have SILC members or staff that go to different meetings or focus groups or informational opportunities that find individuals there and start talking about the SILC and they become very interested and ask additional questions and then we have been able to recruit that way. It's very different in every SILC and part of it has to do with the rural and urban areas and do we get out enough to rural communities to make sure that they are represented with the Independent Living Council as well.
(Pause) next slide.
>> TIM FUCHS: I'm on slide 9 if you want to go ahead, Shelly.
>> SHELLY EMERY: I just have to make sure I get unmuted each time. Excuse me if I take a moment.
Okay. So recruitment. Well, making it easy for members and partners to help recruit is extremely important. In Oregon, we used to get a lot of questions from members and partner whenever we would say we really need to be recruiting, can you help do that? And they just, well, what kinds of things, kind of people do you need? And where do you think I should look? It was interesting the kind of questions we got.
We tried to make it really easy and some of the people we have used a lot of course are centers for independent living but also we have outside program partners that we ask for assistance when we need to do recruiting.
So we developed this tool, we just call it recruitment tool and it's basically just a document that identifies our current targets for recruitment so we go back to that spreadsheet that I talked about earlier. We use that and then we list those targets in this document and then the document also describes places people might think about in finding members because sometimes people don't think about activities they do outside their regular work or Council activities where they can run into fantastic members. So the tool also explains when you are talking to someone to recruit for membership what do you tell them about membership? Well, you need to tell them what the SILC does, and it's important for people to be really clear about that because people are often confused. We've been sent folks at times to consider for membership and our governor at the time happened to if they found someone looking to serve on maybe a disability Council of some sort they might send that name to us to go through our vetting process.
Oftentimes those people were really looking for groups that can get involved and to be an advocate for certain kinds of issues. When we explained to them what the SILC does, they said well I'm not interested in that, I want to do this thing of mine, a pet project, so there wasn't a good fit. But -- so we list out what the duties are from the law, we talk about when the SILC meets. We give an estimate for how much time it often takes members to do their duties each month so people know what they would be getting into.
One SILC chairperson used to have trouble remembering what the SILC duties were and she could do them but if she had to actually articulate them it was a struggle so she asked us to put together a little fact card which we did and it is small enough for members to stick in their wallet in case they run into someone and think, man, this person might be a good recruit for the SILC and they can carry it all the time. That's some of the things we have done to make the process a little easy and actually when we started using that tool we started getting more responses from especially our SILs in saying, hey, I have someone that meets this target. How can you use them and I'll help connect you.
It's been pretty effective for us.
All righty. Next slide.
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: I forgot take my phone off mute this time. Recruiting successes. Talk about partnerships and for us that is a success of our SIL because the partnerships we've been able to create through various projects we have been working on, we have gotten referrals from our partner centers. We actually had a project working for Medicaid for people with disabilities through rehab so we have also had referrals from voc rehab branch offices and additionally with the blind agency as well. We have many different ability associations here in Idaho. We have SID or consortium for Idaho wans with disabilities and it's an advocacy group that meets once a month and from all entire disability community is represented so we have been very fortunate to Garner members out of that association.
Disability service programs are extremely important as well. We work with several different service programs including some nursing homes as we're transitioning individuals out to our centers for independent living we have been able to recruit some individuals who it's the first time they have been back into the community for maybe a couple months or maybe many years. You might also try inviting your state agency heads. I know that seems like a stretch but we've been very, very fortunate. We are administrator for the.
>> ADAM: Minute straighter of voc rehab just went off our Council due to resignation but we were amazed when we put the invitation out to the new administrator that he came onboard with the SILC. I think it was a fabulous opportunity for us really let him know what the SILC was all about. They are a designated state unit by the way. We have also been able to have some of the key decision makers that we invited and participated with the Department of Health and welfare on several partnerships and we were fortunate to get the long-term care bureau chief to agree to be on our Council and while we're making new decisions on Medicaid expansion and transition management and aging and disability resource centers it's been just an amazing opportunity to have her input on our Council and what it actually has done is it's made a stronger bond with Medicaid so when there are policy decisions coming down to political action, we have the opportunity to discuss with this individual on our Council the impacts and the potential problems we may foresee as a Council and it's really created a great working relationship. It is kind of an unusual relationship that we in Idaho have been able to enjoy.
We also recruited some very great Council members from specific grant work we've been doing. Our office on violence against women grant when we held survivor focus groups we were very fortunate to have one of those individuals ask to serve on our Council.
Disability support groups. Those can come through your centers for independent living or through other organizations. Then we just, we're always looking. Whenever we have a new opportunity we've always been able to potentially target. I don't mean that as it seems but target an individual that seems to show such a great interest and is really living the independent living philosophy.
Shelly?
>> SHELLY EMERY: So conferences and work groups. When you get outside of the office, if you ever do, actually, our Executive Director is constantly involved in various work groups with different program partners and we sometimes, we don't get involved with a lot of conferences but we usually do try to participate in the Oregon disability conference to conduct needs assessments activities there. Those are areas where we always have our eyes open and one example is helping with some department of human services program work groups. We ran into a member from the multiple sclerosis society who ended up being just a fantastic SILC chairperson. She has had a lot of different connections that have really helped us. One of our conferences, disability megaconferences, there was a presenter there who we got talking to, and came by our table and later they became a member and actually then went on to serve as a mentor for one of our SILs in a mental health transition project at one of the hospitals in their area. And so those are just examples. People you just happen to run into at conferences. We always try to keep, especially at conferences, we have air recruitment packet that tells about the Council and how someone can apply and that gets handed out when we find someone who seems promising and interested.
One thing we've noticed is people often overlook their friends outside of work. And we have a staff member who contacted a friend of hers from the eastern part of the state. Now, in Oregon, eastern side of the state, that half of the state, is very, very rural. We always struggle to find members in that area. So she contacted this friend of hers, personal friend of hers, and told her what we were looking for and said do you know anybody in your area? They happened to come up with someone who worked in hospital administration and that person especially being they were from an area that was really lean in IL services, it was important to have the voice of that kind of person on our Council to hear their perspective. What's it like to be in an area where the IL services are so thin? We always need to hear that voice because as funding becomes available we need to know what are the best places to put that funding? What is the interest in the different communities? Not that we have extra funding coming down the pipeline but that's something we always have to consider in state planning processes.
So we might have friends connected through their work through fields like healthcare, transportation, housing, education, business or whatever we're trying to recruit. So if we get everybody to think through our personal lives, and what people do we know there that we might be able to tap into, that has been productive for us.
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: Can I adjust one more thing I was just thinking about as well? For those of you who happen to have a Veterans Administration hospital or on any college campuses in your area a Veterans Administration representative, you might reach out to them. We have been fortunate as well, Boise State University here has a Veterans Administration representative who is a disability rep for VA on campus so we had reached out to him and he is actually our vice-chair right now and he brings a wealth of information and is really an asset on our Council.
>> SHELLY EMERY: So let's go to some questions and during this not only hopefully can we take questions but I want to make sure we don't leave the recruitment of 121 off, though I think this might be a good time to talk about that. As you are thinking about questions you may have I just want to mention because I know Larry said that RSA had said these could be consumers and the law tells us they should be representative of the directors so directors can choose who they want to represent them and that is something we have considered because we used to just have a couple of 121 projects in Oregon and in the last few years it's expanded to five but what was interesting is when our last 121 rep termed out on the SILC, we thought we had someone who was really great and then something happened with their position. That's something we noticed. There is always turn over it seems in tribal government. So that could be a real struggle.
When their position changed then we had to find someone else. So we thought we had someone else and then when they really took time to think about it they didn't feel like they had the time to commit.
There was a third person that was interested and so we're right now going through the process, have interviewed them. We're waiting to hear back from the governor's office on that. But we talked about the fact that if that didn't work out either we really need to talk to directors and ask them if they had a consumer of services that from their VR program that perhaps someone who might be interesting in representing the 121 projects.
The other thing that when our recrewment process is just remind them they don't just represent their own tribe, that we really think of them as someone who will share information with the other 121 programs. Okay. Any questions?
>> TIM FUCHS: Just as a reminder, give you all a moment. Do that in the chat under list of participants and of course one more time if you have a question on the phone, you can press star pound. I'll give you all time to type or press star pound and we'll take your questions.
(Silence)
I don't see any questions on the phone. We'll give about 30 more seconds before we move on.
>> SHELLY EMERY: I do have a question for one of our ateen December and I don't remember if it was Tammy or someone else who mentioned the issue of strong contributors to governance. I was wondering if you could give a little bit more information about that and specifically what that struggle is.
>> TIM FUCHS: That was Linda, maybe Linda can share more details about their trouble getting contributors to governance.
>> SHELLY EMERY: That would be great.
(Pause)
(Silence)
>> TIM FUCHS: Linda says one aspect I suspect is engaging through the lenses of a disability, better abing accommodations.
>> SHELLY EMERY: Okay. So are you saying, I'm going to wait for you to finish typing.
(Silence)
>> TIM FUCHS: Another aspect is attracting people who will contribute to the work.
>> SHELLY EMERY: Okay. na looks like you're adding so I'll wait for a moment more.
(Pause)
>> TIM FUCHS: The first scenario presents an obstacle in reading and responding to calls for information.
>> SHELLY EMERY: I'm guessing you are struggling with some of the same things we have and I know we have talked some here about really getting strong participation in the work because sometimes it seems that people are either busy or they are uncertain, they aren't quite sure how to contribute. We will throw out questions, trying to find out what their thoughts are, how we should move on certain things and we haven't always gotten a lot of feedback or information. And you are talking about maybe meeting with some of your current members and that is one thing we did. We had a group session. We actually broke up into small groups and started talking. We posed questions to the members to ask them a little bit about different things we do, and then we would ask them if they had -- first we'd ask them: Do you have questions about this thing the SILC does? And then we started finding that some of them just didn't understand what it was, why we were doing it, and what their role was. So we took those questions, we took the time to answer those questions, make sure everybody in the group had a full understanding of what the task was, what they needed to do, what kind of we were looking to them for, and then we also had a group that talked about member engagement and how to make them feel more comfortable or give them the tools they needed to participate.
We got great feedback from them and it was interesting that they immediately started actually participating more and they seemed to suddenly have a switch flipped that said, I have permission to step in and say things and ask things and do things, and so it was kind of an interesting process and not sure why they weren't comfortable with that before but they were, especially the group we have right now, tend to be a little Meeker personalities and so we need to find ways to draw them out.
We found sometimes smaller is better rather than trying to do things as a big mass group.
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: One thing we have found on occasion when necessary is to provide the new member with a mentor, a peer mentor who is on the Council. They may not live in their area but they may be making occasional contacts with them to ask them if they have any questions or concerns or if there's anything they can help them with as far as getting to know more about the SILC or even the independent living philosophy.
>> SHELLY EMERY: I'm looking at Tammy's comment about keeping the non--SIL, non-state members engaged over the long term and how they come on enthusiastic and then they kind of stop participating. I understand exactly what you are saying. I think sometimes they feel sort of maybe overrun by folks that work in this realm all the time and are so highly engaged and I think it does take a lot more effort. But I think as we go through the rest of this discussion we'll have opportunities to talk a little bit more about how we have tried to work on some of that and some of that comes from just strength thing those individuals. I'll end there and then we can go on.
>> TIM FUCHS: Great, thanks so much.
(Strengthening)
Linda shares her thanks, too. Again we have a few more minutes for the Q-and-A break. If there are additional questions, press star pound or type them in the chat box.
(Pause)
(Silence)
No questions on the phone and I don't see anybody -- looks like Larry is typing. We'll give him a second. Of course, this is not our last Q-and-A break so we'll have another Q-and-A break, too. So Larry asks: I know each state is different but do you have any general suggestions for moving applicants through the appointment process? Any tips there?
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: Nice segue because that's exactly what we are going into.
>> TIM FUCHS: Sounds good, good ah.
>> We know a lot of SILCs struggle to get who they need through the appointing authority and I think Robbi and I would both agree it is extremely important to build a positive relationship with the governor's office or the appointing authority, getting familiar with the individual that has been assigned to work with the SILC and building a relationship with them. For us it's been really helpful to take time to actually meet that person face-to-face so they know who we are and when we are communicating with them, they are communicating with a real person that they know. The appointments office we have found is typically extremely understaffed and overwhelmed. In Oregon it's basically two people and they have a ton of appointments that have to be made and quite a few of them have to be Senate-approved so that's a whole other layer of bureaucracy and work. We have found they really appreciate groups that have their act together because it reduces their workload.
We have asked first to have a meeting with them on different occasions and because there's always turnover, turnover of governors and then turnover of staff, perhaps, so we first go in with asking the question: How can we help you get this job done? We want to learn. We're going to ask them: What is important to the governor? I know both Oregon and Idaho stabtd that relationship and talks about those kind of things and asks for the current policy the governor has around appointments. If we don't know what those policies are, we can't work within them. As I said be tracking when there is turnover. That means a new relationship to establish so taking some time for that. We want to make things easy for them. We try to know all of our legal requirements and be up on that, all term limits, what the vacancies are and how things will flow so we aren't dropping things on them at the last minute if we can help it. We want to make sure paperwork is timely. Everything we can do like that that reduces issues that they have to deal with, we think, makes for better service on our end. It comes back to us.
Then we ask them how they can help us. So we educate them. There are so many different types of groups they have with different requirements they can't possibly keep track of it all so what we do is build a little quick table that lists our duties and composition requirements and take time to explain to them how those can lead to difficulties for us in achieving compliance and especially effectiveness. We really focus on talking to them about we want to be effective, we know the governor wants groups that get things done and make improvements. We want to be effective but that means we need effective members.
If you have a vetting process, which we do, it's important for the governor's office staff to understand what that is and to buy into that. Basically the reason why we do it is to make sure that members are going to appreciate their time on the SILC. They won't run into, oh, wow, this is not about what I thought it was, and I just don't feel like they're doing what I want to be doing. We get all that out of the way before theeven considers them. We kind of find out how they will interact a little bit with people. We can talk to some of the people that know them from other experiences. You can always ask them for references and we find out do they really understand the IL philosophy or not? Do they know anything about centers for independent living and then we make a recommendation of a Council and that gets send to the governor's office along with information about the person, how we think they would help us do our work, and that just is used by the governor to inform their decision. And so I don't know if you have been able to establish those kinds of relationships or not but it's well worth the time it takes. Robbi, do you want to add anything?
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: No, Shelly I think you covered it all. Main thing we do is make sure as you said to reiterate make sure you have your act together with the paperwork and nomination fovrms and have made contact with the governor. Know when your people are leaving the SILC. Know when their term expires so you don't have to get that call from the governor's office saying: Did you know that such and such term's IRS expiring? Send them a note ahead of time saying we understand this term is expiring and we are really at this point looking for an individual to fill the position. Give them a heads-up. The more amicable you can be with the governor's office, the better opportunities it presents for the swifter appointments about that's possible in some cases.
>> SHELLY EMERY: It's important to know, too, there are certain times of the year or biennium where things get really sticky. Even though we always seemed to have a good relationship with our governor's office in Oregon since I've been around the last 11 years, it's true that when there is a changeover in governors, everything slows down, and some of the governor's take time to go Lew and look all the processes and see what they want to do so appointments can come to a halt for a while and then they have maybe a whole bunch of Senate approvals of appointees to make and that takes center stage and then when that gets cleared everything gets moving again.
You might ask them when are your busy times and things like that, too, to kind of help fit into their timetable a little bit better and be understanding so when they are in those busy times that's not the time that you are pushing them a lot. Are there any questions about any of the appointment processes?
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: Shelly, let me add, too. In some cases you might look to see who -- governor is appointing authority but in some cases and states it's the lieutenant governor who actually is assigned that process. He gives his recommendations to the governor for appointments and so you might check to see how much another individual, one of the other constitutional officers, is involved. Although the governor, again, has the appointing authority he may have made those appointments at the suggestion of someone he's asked to look into it.
>> SHELLY EMERY: It's so important to recognize people's -- the service you appreciate rather than just go to them when there's a problem so try to remember that when the governor's office staff has been helpful to you, let them know how much you appreciate them and all the work they have to do and that they got this done for you. We just try to remember to thank them regularly.
Tim, questions?
>> TIM FUCHS: If you have questions, press star pound or type it in the chat. And I wonder, Shelly: Is the table you all use with the governor's office something you could share?
>> SHELLY EMERY: You know, I could probably pull that out and share it. I'm trying to think how unique it would be to our Council. I'll take a look at it to make sure it would be appropriate for circulation and certainly, I know there are parts of it we definitely could share.
>> TIM FUCHS: Okay. Thanks.
(Pause)
I'm not seeing any questions. We will have another Q-and-A break.
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: We'll talk a little bit about new member orientations and I'll describe the graphic that is on the slide. It's an individual standing at a crossroads basically with signs pointing in every direction and this completely overwhelmed and disoriented individual is trying to -- is struggling with which direction they are headed and where they need to go.
While Idaho and Oregon have different orientation approaches we agree these are some of the key topics that Shelly and I thought were important for new members to know. First of all you need to explain the purpose. What is independent living and why do they exist? What is its philosophy and history? How does that all come about and what part do I play in that?
Then you look at your key players. Who are the most important people that you know that have been such amazing advocates that are participating and working within the independent living program. What do they do? Who do they serve? Who are the key players within their organization. Rehabilitation services administration. That can be very complicated for new Council members to try to get their arms around and who is your designated state unit. Who is your voc rehab and who is the blind agency? What are your centers for independent living if you are not familiar and what is the role of the state Independent Living Council and why are they key players in the Independent Living Movement?
Then you need to look at laws and regulations. How do we exist? Where did we come about? Rehab act? Code of Federal Regulations. What parts govern the SILCs, what are their activities, what can they and can't they do by federal and state if both apply? What is the state plan for independent living? What is the purpose of the 704 report? Why are they put together? How do they correspond together to make sense on the entire independent living -- entire SILC.
We also for new member orientation, what is your job as a SILC member? What is my role? What is my commitment? That's also when we are recruiting new members. We give them a general idea of what the time commitment will be. How much do I need to do and how much can I take on? So knowing what their job as a member is, it is also explaining to them that you can take on what is necessary but you also can take on a lot more.
Logistics. Who makes travel arrangements? How do I get reimbursed? What if I go to a conference and I can't afford to go without getting reimbursed ahead of time? Who is the person I contact to make those arrangements for me and again you need to structure that around what your designated state unit, what their auditing and reimbursement policies are.
Sometimes there's a very gray line but sometimes some DSUs may have very strict reimbursement guidelines you have to follow.
Then again I had brought up earlier the acronym usage. Make sure each of your new members has an acronym list. What we have done historically in the past is prior to them coming to the first SILC Council meeting we have sent them a new member handbook that has, it's either in whatever alternative format they want it in but it also has that list of acronyms, it has the last several meetings we have had, minutes included in that so they can read over that information before they get there. We also send out a lot of new member orientation information so they have that prior to coming to the orientation.
That leads us into the next slide that I'm going to give you just an example of what we do at the Idaho SILC because we are an unusual animal in the SILC community. We are federally and state statutorily mandated. So we have different policies and procedures because we are a quasi- state entity we need to follow as well as the federal mandate that is guidelines for how we conduct operations.
At our July Council meetings we do a pretty intense training that covers all grant activities. Again, we are an unusual SILC because we do -- and previously had several, several grants that we were very fortunate to partner with different organizations.
We partnered with CMS, centers for Medicaid and Medicare services on a Medicaid information grant. Very kochl mri indicated grant that promotes employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities and that was because Idaho is a Medicaid for workers with disabilities state. That may differ in other states. We give a brief overview of what that grant is and what those activities are. We also partner with health and welfare, division of medication, to be the fiduciary for the transition management project which our centers for independent living partnered with us and those individuals went to a training sponsored by Medicaid to be tran sish shown managers for transitioning individuals out of nursing homes and institutions.
So we explain how we can be the fiduciary.
The reality of that whole opportunity is because as a state entity, we were allowed to go and work and partner with Medicaid and that way they didn't have to put out a request for proposal to start the project that could have taken anywhere from three to six months. It was a unique opportunity there. We also give an update on where we are with our quality of life surveys which are mandatory after transition management so we have a lot of grants that are really we generalize the projects we do and get them oriented in what that mean, what they are and then when they get more information at the next Council meeting it seems to all fit together. We do an extremely intense, full afternoon training on the intersection of disability and abuse. I think it's extremely important for all SILCs to be able to keep that word out that these things are still happening and we need to come together as the Independent Living Movement to make sure this remains at the forefront of our discussions so we have that whole afternoon of the intersection of abuse and disability so our Council members know that they at least have become enlightened on the issue.
So we go through SILC policies and procedures. It's a two-day training. We take several breaks during the day because it is so much new information to put on the table. But in motion cases, prior to the July orientation those new members that had opportunity to attend two meetings prior to that, so at least they have air little bit of background prior to going into those two days that are pretty overwhelming at times.

Next slide.
>> SHELLY EMERY: So the Oregon example of the orientation process, well, I mentioned we tend to have a really small pool of people with disabilities in the state who have knowledge about SIL services or who are not employed by SIL or a state agency, so we have to do lots and lots of training to make sure our members have the level of knowledge they need to be successful. They understand how to live independently but they just aren't that familiar with the programmatic issues. To tell you the truth we have done a lot of trial and error over the years. We used to do a day-long complete orientation where members were walked through a handbook of materials, massive handbook of materials, but members didn't retain a lot and didn't seem to refer back to those handbooks. We kept thinking they have all this information so they are not aware of it. We tried doing something different and what we did different was to develop a real basic these are the basic facts you need to know to start with, it was a self--paced orientation they could work through on their own and then they filled in question nairtion that helped identify areas where maybe more one-on-one information might be needed and we could hook them up with a particular person that knows that area well to talk about it.
What we found was not a lot of people absorbed a lot from those materials either. When they did their self-assessment, they weren't really good at knowing what they knew and what they didn't know. So the information we got back didn't seem to fit with reality.
Then we did that member engagement process we talked about earlier. Out of that and also something, it was a presentation that I participated in where they talked about consumers of medical services, and how consumers of medical services seemed to feel that they had better healthcare if they had time to talk one-on-one with folks in that system. Their physician or a nurse or someone else involved. If it was a hospital setting, some staff that really took time to answer their questions. So we got to thinking about that and decided that really a more one on 1:00 approach is probably needed and also the part of the problem was just too big a bite of information.
People you know what it's like to have too much food at once stuvtd into your mouth! You can't enjoy it! It's getting through it. It's not about noticing the texture of the food and whether you like the flavor. It's just the process and I think that is what was happening to some members. So we wanted to provide ways there could be a lot of interaction. I also noticed when I did travel sometimes 0 an event like SILC Congress or Nick National Council on Independent Living was along, we just talked and answered questions they had, suddenly they were a reengaged SILC member.
That's what we tried to work into our orientation process. Now we are doing an initial in-person session the day before their first SILC meeting and we just overview those key topics for new members Robbi talked about earlier. Then we set up some one-on-one -- one hour or less follow-up session by phone or web conference or if they happen to be on-site do it in-person. Each session goes more into depth on one of those key topics so these get spread out and then they are scheduled for whatever works for the member; weekly, monthly, semi- monthly, they can have more than one person in it but we really think there's value especially when members are new, depending on their personality of letting them feel comfortable and not have to be concerned with how other members or other people are thinking of their questions. Tammy mentioned members being excited and then falling off. One thing is I feel after watching this for a lot of years that it's so important to help build the confidence of members. For some it's a huge thing, lot of responsibility and they are engaging with people who have worked in program systems for a long time. They know although jargon. Jargon is a quick way to turn members off. They were sitting there listening to people talk and thinking I have no idea what they are talking about. I just don't get this. These smaller one-on-one sessions allow for people to talk, get familiar with terms, ask any questions they want. Make sure they know there is no question that is foolish because this whole thing is pooeling an onion, you have to really understand those things so don't leave a question on the table. Make sure and ask it. We give them a handbook of materials that have a section that we'll cover in the next follow-up call and ask them if they want they can look through that and come prepared with questions they want to ask.
Not everyone actually goes through the materials ahead of time so you have to be prepared to walk through them during that session, and I think it's really important to ask them questions that will gauge their understanding of something tell me what you understand about this topic. How would you describe it to someone? Then you can kind of see whether they understand it enough to handle it or not and add anything so having someone to work with that, that is important. Then they have those materials they can go back to later and refresh and review if they want, I think they are more likely to do that when they have had that discussion and a chance to have questions answered and really grasp and understand it and it seems that this has made quite an impact on folks. I think that getting, giving them opportunities in real small groups or one-on-one is crucial in order to build that confidence and then when they go out into the larger group and hear a discussion they understand it better and they are more likely to give their opinion and interact. Next slide.
The actual structure, when you talk about structure of orientation, we want to talk about what we have learned in Idaho and Oregon so we will kind of talk turns talking about different things. The first thing is training before the task. If you can come on the front end, no one likes to feel lost when they are supposed to have a responsibility so providing them with some basic orientation before that member attends their first meeting or we also go this when you will do a new SILC task, some only happens once every three years so there's always someone new to it.
If we are going to start talking needs assessment we try to do a little mini training about why are we doing this? What are the key things to think about and start with those basics, little retraining before we start to do the task and that really helps members start to engage a little bit better.
Robbi?
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: Providing a safe zone. As I talked earlier about, because of our project on the violence against women and the intersection of disability and violence we provide a safe zone for members and regardless of that anymore even if we're not doing that training or even having that topic discussed we still provide a safe space for individuals who may be uncomfortable at any time during the meeting. It may be just being able to go out and kind of catch your breath and so we have always been very fortunate in the locations that we have conducting meetings to ask for them to provide a safe space or quiet space for our Council members to go out and kind of take a breather during the orientation process.
Shelly, looks like Tim said we are running pretty short on time.
>> SHELLY EMERY: Sorry, I was coming back from mute.
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: Looks like Tim has indicated we are running a little short on time so we might see how quubing quickly we can move through these and move forward so we have times for questions and answers.
>> SHELLY EMERY: Okay. So real quick, making things person-centered, members seem to engage more. In one-on-one orientations or small groups, it may take a little bit longer to get down, but it's well worth it. Understanding members have learn style and needs can really help you provide what they need and provide information in the way they will absorb it better.
We mentioned earlier small doses are really important because there is so much to learn about the IL program. I have heard it said around here na the IL program is probably one of the more complex little programs that the state sees.
Robbi?
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: Okay. So next slide. We're going to just let these be a reference point, resource point for you that give our example of additional ongoing training and training opportunities. The one thing that I will go to the next slide, please, Tim. And then the next. The one thing I really want to hit on, and I think Shelly will agree, is that your training budget is extremely important in the success of the Council members. If you really look how much dollar you have to invest in that councilmember on training it is a crucial part of how your SILC operates and how engaged your Council can be.
We'll leave the rest of that for review and I think Tim wanted us to go on to questions.
(Pause)
>> TIM FUCHS: Sure. If there are questions about those slides we'll be happy to go back. Let me go to the Q&A slide. If you have questions, press star pound. Or type them in the chat. First question comes from Tammy McSorley who asks: Something we have done is while having an exhibit booth for the SILC we invite new members to join and listen to conference attendees ask questions. They said they learned answers to questions they didn't even think of at that point.
>> ROBBI BARRUTIA: That is an excellent opportunity. I think it's in a slide we skipped through for resources for our audience that we covered conferences and how important those are for new opportunities.
>> TIM FUCHS: Yes, thanks, that's slide 17. I don't see any other questions on the phone.
Again, you can type your question in the chat or press star pound if you have a question on the telephone.
(Pause)
>> SHELLY EMERY: Can I mention one thing?
>> TIM FUCHS: Please, yeah, I hope I didn't rush you all. Wanted to make sure we have time for questions so please, Shelly, go ahead.
>> SHELLY EMERY: I just want to mention that the SILC's work is often focused on paperwork, planning, and evaluation and sometimes when you get involved in those things it's hard to stay energized and feel like you are making a difference.
Way have noticed is that it is really important to periodically go back and review with our members some of these things that of why we are doing them and connecting it to how we have done certain things in that area and the outcomes it's led to for consumers and centers and the accomplishments made.
This training process can really be an opportunity to motivate if you think of it that way. Reviewing your purpose occasionally, making sure members engage with consumers because that's one of the fastest ways to get motivated again. So think about that and how training connects to motivating your members.
>> TIM FUCHS: Good, great point.
(Silence)
Okay. I'm going to begin to move through these slides. I don't see anyone typing or questions on the phone. I will give instructions in a minute for how to share follow-up questions and remind you about the archive, too, so you can share this information with other SILC members that are helping you all with recruitment, coworkers or other staff not available today. But if you have a question don't be shy we still have another minute or two left. If I see anything I will pause and take them. Here are additional resources. The link to ILRU's on-demand training I mentioned as well as the Smithsonian's virtual exhibit as well as a link to the conference pages for both National Council on Independent Living conference and the other conference. Moving on to slide 23, we have the link to that evaluation form. I will come off this a second to point out that Robbi and Shelly have been generous enough to share contact information. If you have follow-up questions, say, in a few months you begin to do some of these and you have a clarification, I really appreciate them offering that. I'll do the same. My e-mail is very simple, Tim@ ncil.org. And so if you have a question about other training programs or a question for our presenters or any of our renters and you would like me to pass it along I always offer that. I'll go back to the evaluation page. If you are on the Webinar, this is a live link. It will take you away from the Webinar so don't do that until we are done. But this is a live link so you can fill out the evaluation form. If not, it was sent to you in your confirmation e-mail and will come again to you tomorrow with a thank you for participating so a separate note.
Anyhow I don't see any additional questions so I'll close the call. It's 4:30 now Eastern Time. Robbi and Shelly, fantastic presentation. I want to thank you so much for putting this together. Really outstanding information and good tips on a difficult topic. I want to thank you all for being with us today, been a ingredient presentation. Don't forget that on-demand link. You can access the archive of this presentation any time free of charge. Let us know if you have any toll low up questions. Everyone have a wonderful afternoon. Bye-bye
(Webinar concluded)