

Arizona Peer and Family Member Coalition (APFC)

Activities and Accomplishments

- **Leadership Training:**

We developed and are delivering a leadership training that prepares peers and family members to be participants in committees and boards in various sectors of the system including in health plan, RBHA, community, and state level groups. Since we have been delivering this training we have developed a pool of trained persons who have been placed on committees and boards. Further, we have more candidates from various backgrounds and parts of the state who are prepared for these roles. In 2018 seven community trainings were completed across the state---in Phoenix, Tucson, Yuma, and Cottonwood. Trainings are planned in Phoenix, Tucson, and Bullhead City for early 2019. The number of statewide trainers is being increased from 5 to 9.

- **Developed a Position Paper on the Arnold v Sarn Law Suit:**

In 2012 APFC developed a position paper on the Arnold v Sarn Law Suit. In that paper we took the position that it was time for the suit to end. We believe that there is a robust and genuine partnership between peers, family members and the system and that partnership makes it no longer necessary for there to be court supervision of the system.

- **Advocated for Revision of AZ Statutes to remove objectionable language:**

During the 2012-2013 legislative session, APFC sought and obtained law change through the introduction and passage of HB 2066 which removed objectionable language that defined a “person with a serious mental illness.” This passed in 2013.

- **Contract to Place Peers, Youth, and Family Members on Mercy Maricopa Committees:**

Late in 2013 Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care (MMIC), the Maricopa RBHA, awarded the APFC the contract to recruit, train, support, and pay stipends to peers, youth, and family members who would be selected to serve on 18 internal committees and Board of Directors. Following selection and the go-live date of April 2014, trainings were held in June, July, and August 2014. When this contract had been completed in 2017 sixty-eight slots had been filled.

- **Partnered with MMIC to recommend new publications and trainings produced by the RBHA:**

Suggestions included printing posters of the Children’s 12 Principles and the Adult 9 Principle, brochures for peers and family members as an introduction to the system and how it works, and a brochure on rights individuals and families have against eviction. Suggestions for additional trainings included Therapeutic Interventions, a training for staff to coach family members and loved ones how to respond when a person with mental illness is in crisis, and the training of agency staff on the benefits a child or adult might qualify for.

- **Sent a letter to Congressman Tim Murphy regarding proposed sweeping changes in the national behavioral health system in 2015.**

There are new pieces of federal legislation concerning both the child and adult behavioral health systems which the Coalition continues to monitor and educate our members about.

- **Worked to expand the coalition's reach by engaging with various peer run organizations in Arizona.**

We offer to provide leadership training as part of a strategy to increase the involvement of peers and family members in the issues and challenges of the Arizona behavioral health system.

- **Obtained an internet based connection to allow for video and telephonic participation in our monthly membership meetings.**

This allows persons across the state to participate in our meetings. The meetings are open to any peer, family member, or ally in Arizona of those who have a mental illness. We meet on the second Tuesday of each month from 12 PM to 1:30 PM at the Family Involvement Center, 5333 N. 7th St, suite A-100, Phoenix, AZ 85014. Doors open at 11:30 AM for networking.