



# 20 15 ANNUAL REPORT



# NEW MEXICO

GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON DISABILITY





*Susana Martinez*  
Governor

## STATE OF NEW MEXICO GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON DISABILITY



*Karen Courtney Peterson*  
Agency Director

*Susan O. Gray*  
Chairperson

January 2016

Dear Honorable Governor Martinez:

On behalf of the New Mexico Governor's Commission on Disability, it is my privilege to submit our 2015 annual report on the work of the Commission and the Staff.

The Commission continues its efforts to help educate and inform New Mexico residents and visitors on issues important to people with disabilities. With approximately fifteen percent of our state's population living with disabilities, we work daily to provide technical assistance and training in areas of physical, communication, technology and services accessibility to citizens of all ages.

In Fiscal Year 2015, we performed over 133 physical accessibility plan reviews and site inspections, responded to over 10,600 inquiries for disability information and technical assistance, distributed over 5000 bicycle helmets and helmet safety activity books to children and teachers, conducted concussion studies, provided over 200 disability trainings state-wide, and distributed 156 assistive technology devices for use by persons with disabilities through our federal Technology Assistance Program.

We thank you for your continued support of our efforts to serve our citizens with disabilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Peterson".

Karen Peterson

## Table of Contents

Letter from the Director.....	Page i
Table of Contents.....	Page ii
Governor Appointed and Statutory Commissioners and NMGCD Staff.....	Page 1
Mission, Objectives, and Statutory Responsibilities.....	Page 2
Accessibility and Technical Assistance.....	Page 3
New Mexico Technology Assistance Program and Brain Injury Advisory Council.....	Page 4
Special Projects.....	Page 5-6
Statement of Fiscal Activities.....	Page 7

**New Mexico**  
**Governor's Commission on Disability**

**Commission Members**

By statute, the New Mexico Governor's Commission on Disability (GCD) is comprised of fifteen members: nine Governor-appointed members and six statutory members.

**Appointed**

Susan O. Gray (Santa Fe) Chair  
James Hay (Los Alamos) Immediate Past Chair  
Curtiss Wilson (Albuquerque) Vice Chair  
Doris Cherry (Capitan)  
Doris Dennison (Yah Ta Hey)  
Trudy Luken (Las Cruces)  
Leslie Bledsoe (Albuquerque)  
Lawrence Sanchez (Albuquerque)  
VACANT– Appointed Member

**Statutory**

Aging and Long Term Services – Gino Rinaldi,  
Cabinet Secretary  
(Carlos Moya, proxy)  
Children Youth and Family – Monique Jacobson,  
Cabinet Secretary  
(Helen Quintana, proxy)  
Department of Health - Retta Ward, Cabinet  
Secretary  
(Marc Kolman, proxy)  
Department of Workforce Solutions - Celina Bussey,  
Cabinet Secretary  
(Chris Zafra, proxy)  
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – Veronica  
DeLeonDowd, Interim Division Director  
  
Human Services Department - Brent Earnest,  
Cabinet Secretary  
(Kimberly Reibsommer, proxy)

**Staff**

Karen Peterson, Director  
Anthony Alarid, Deputy Director  
Hope Reed, Access Specialist  
Vince Barrera, Access Specialist  
Crystal Benavidez, Financial Specialist  
Dee Martinez, Disability Specialist  
Guy Surdi, Disability Specialist  
Lisa McNiven, Disability Specialist

Elizabeth Peterson, BIAC Program Coordinator  
Tracy Agiovlasis, Program Manager - NMTAP  
Samuel Castillo, Technology Coordinator – NMTAP  
Jesse Armijo, Technology Specialist – NMTAP  
Yvonne Abeyta, Administrative Assistant – NMTAP  
Louise Rodriguez, Administrative Assistant – NMTAP  
Julie Barela, Administrative Assistant

# Governor's Commission on Disability Fiscal Year 2015 Annual Report

## **Mission**

The Governor's Commission on Disability (GCD) is committed to improving the quality of life for all New Mexicans with disabilities by addressing social integration, economic self-sufficiency, political resolve, physical and program accessibility, and full participation in the benefits of life and rights of all individuals.

## **Objectives**

- Increase awareness and knowledge of disability issues among policy-makers and the general public
- Promote access to physical, sensory, programmatic, attitudinal and communication barriers
- Increase opportunities for New Mexicans with disabilities to live successfully in the community, with services and supports as needed
- Increase collaboration and cooperation among disability related organizations in New Mexico



## **Statutory Responsibilities**

The GCD was created in 1978 under Section 28-10-1 NMSA 1978. Its continuing mandate is to:

- Promote public awareness of disability from a social, political and cultural perspective that focuses on improving the quality of life of people with disabilities
- Educate and encourage public and private action related to community living for people with disabilities on accessibility issues such as employment, housing, transportation, voting, building codes and recreation.
- Provide advice and testimony to the Governor and Legislature regarding disability issues
- Focus on disability issues over the life span. GCD advocates for policies and programs that promote inclusion of all people with disabilities into community living in New Mexico.



## Accessibility

Accessibility is more than physical access such as adding a ramp where steps exist, allowing right of use. An expanded definition of accessibility requires GCD to look at how programs, services, and activities are delivered.

### **New Mexico Building Code – 2015**

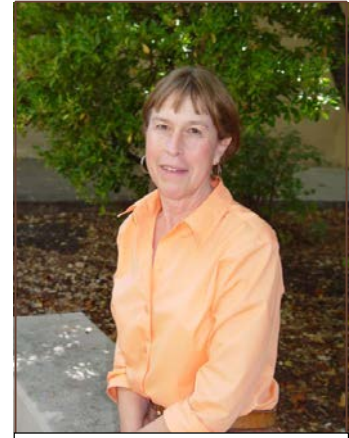
GCD Chairs the New Mexico Building Code (NMBC-2015) Code Change Subcommittee for Accessibility which completed its work for the current cycle earlier in 2015. The New Mexico Construction Industries Division (CID) will soon begin training throughout the state. GCD staff will be assisting CID with Accessibility training at numerous locations statewide.

### **American National Standards Institute A117.1 (ANSI)**

ANSI is a national standard design and code writing committee for construction of accessible facilities. GCD was the first state agency to become a voting member of ANSI with continued membership to date.

### **Statewide ADA Transition Plan for Sidewalks and Curb Ramps**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines identify accessible sidewalks and curb ramps as a top priority. GCD Staff has been working with the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) on current updates of accessible sidewalk and curb ramp standards. Training has begun and the NMDOT has started implementation of their Statewide ADA Transition Plan for Sidewalks and Curb Ramps. GCD is providing assistance to NMDOT in coordination with, and inclusion of, people with disabilities in the Statewide ADA Transition Plan for Sidewalks and Curb Ramps. This allows GCD staff to assist local businesses and individuals with any local sidewalk and curb ramp concerns. Review of compliance and implementation of the final Statewide ADA Transition Plan for Sidewalks and Curb Ramps is on-going.



Hope Reed, GCD's Access Specialist

## Technical Assistance

GCD provides disability-related technical assistance to individuals, private businesses and governments in New Mexico. GCD staff provides information, referrals and trainings regarding all disabilities across the lifespan. In addition, staff also reviews architectural plans for accessibility and performs site inspections. Some of the trainings provided on a statewide basis include: Disability Awareness, ADA Title I, II and III, Service Animals and Physical Accessibility.

GCD established the ADA Coordinator's Council in 2006. It is comprised of individual state agency ADA Coordinators. The Council serves as a forum for agency ADA Coordinators to acquire education, technical assistance, policy/procedure development and implementation.



## New Mexico Technology Assistance Program



The New Mexico Technology Assistance Program's (NMTAP) mission is to assist individuals with disabilities enhance their quality of life through the use of assistive technology. To fulfill this mission, the NMTAP staff provides many services to individuals with disabilities, their family members, and service providers, including support to individuals transitioning into higher education, work, or community living. Services offered include the following:

**Assistive Bank of Loan Equipment (ABLE) Device Loan Program** - this device loan program offers teachers, therapists, case managers and DVR counselors the opportunity to try out assistive devices/software with students/clients prior to purchase. NMTAP works with schools, agencies, and counselors to both identify and try out the most practical and efficient technology solutions that match user needs;



**Financial Loan Programs** - Securing loans to purchase devices can be difficult. NMTAP works closely with local banks to prepare an affordable loan solution that will enable the purchase of equipment needed to succeed in business or in a home-based business;

The **Equipment Re-Use** program, where equipment is donated, then refurbished and distributed back into the community;

The **NMTAP Advisory Council** advises the Governor's Commission on Disability and its staff on issues regarding assistive technology program improvements.

## New Mexico Brain Injury Advisory Council



The Brain Injury Advisory Council (BIAC) is composed of between 18 and 24 individuals appointed by the Governor from all areas of the state. The BIAC advises the Governor's Commission on Disability regarding issues concerning individuals living with brain injuries. Members of the council include individuals with brain injuries, family members, healthcare professionals, and other agencies professionals.

The BIAC's mission is to advocate for the development of a statewide system of comprehensive, community based resources that will maximize the personal choices and functional independence of persons with brain injuries.

Additionally, the BIAC promotes prevention and increased public awareness to decrease the incidence of preventable brain injuries.

The BIAC meets regularly to identify and address needs of the brain injury community. Legislative action, increasing public awareness and prevention efforts, advocacy, training, grass roots development and collaboration with local, state and private agencies to increase and improve existing services are just a few of the activities in which the council is actively involved.



## Special Projects

### Adaptive Sports and Recreation

The GCD is developing an integrated network of support with government agencies, program providers and public/private organizations to sustain, develop and expand adaptive sports and recreation in New Mexico. Creating opportunities for all New Mexicans to participate in adaptive sports and recreation statewide, improves the health and wellbeing of individuals with disabilities through physical and social activities, thus improving their quality of life.



### Emergency Preparedness

The GCD is providing guidance for the development of emergency plans that speak directly to specific actions required in order to provide meaningful access to individuals with disabilities during emergency response in accordance with House Memorial 87.

### Southwest Conference on Disability

GCD is co-sponsor and co-organizer of the annual Southwest Conference on Disability (SWCD) with the UNM's Center for Development and Disability. The SWCD is a major regional conference that annually brings together attendees and presenters from New Mexico, from states across the country as well as internationally.

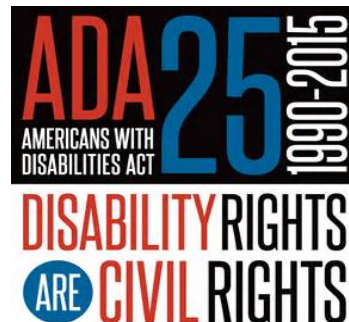




## Quality of Life Grant Program – Fiscal Year 2015 Awardees

“Quality of Life” is a small grant program providing limited financial assistance to small, local non-profits in state organizations to expand and enhance services to improve the quality of community living for New Mexicans with disabilities.

- **The Adoption Exchange:** Education and resources on adopting children with special needs, increased the number of permanent and loving adoptive families.
- **Companion Animal Action Team:** Twenty-five low-income individuals with disabilities received services to spay or neuter their companion animal at no cost.
- **Desert Lotus Acupuncture:** Additional 8-12 treatments or equivalent were provided per year to individuals with disabilities.
- **Eve’s Fund for Native American Health Initiatives:** Five VIPs was sent to the Southwest Conference on Disability and to give presentation at schools, chapter houses, and conferences.
- **Free Spirit Therapeutic Horseback Riding Program:** The purchase of a portable ramp, laptop, and pocket projector supported program availability.
- **Hands & Voices New Mexico Chapter:** Programs were expanded to reach Native American families in the areas of Farmington and Gallup.
- **New Life Homes:** Installation of an automatic door opening mechanism to the main access door, increasing accessibility to the head offices, leasing office and community room at their newest apartment community.
- **New Mexico Direct Caregivers Coalition:** Providing outreach and recruitment, costs of instructional delivery, travel to training locations, translation service and travel stipends for participants who need them to attend the classes.
- **Presbyterian Ear Institute:** Increase services to children ages 18 months to 3 years of age who are not currently receiving individual speech/language therapy.
- **Ski Apache Adaptive Sports:** Forty-eight New Mexican disabled veteran or active military personnel with a disability and their family received lift passes, lessons and the use of equipment.
- **The Mental Health Association of NM:** The Quality of Life Grant will be used to assist consumers living in boarding homes to move out and save money to eventually move into their own place.

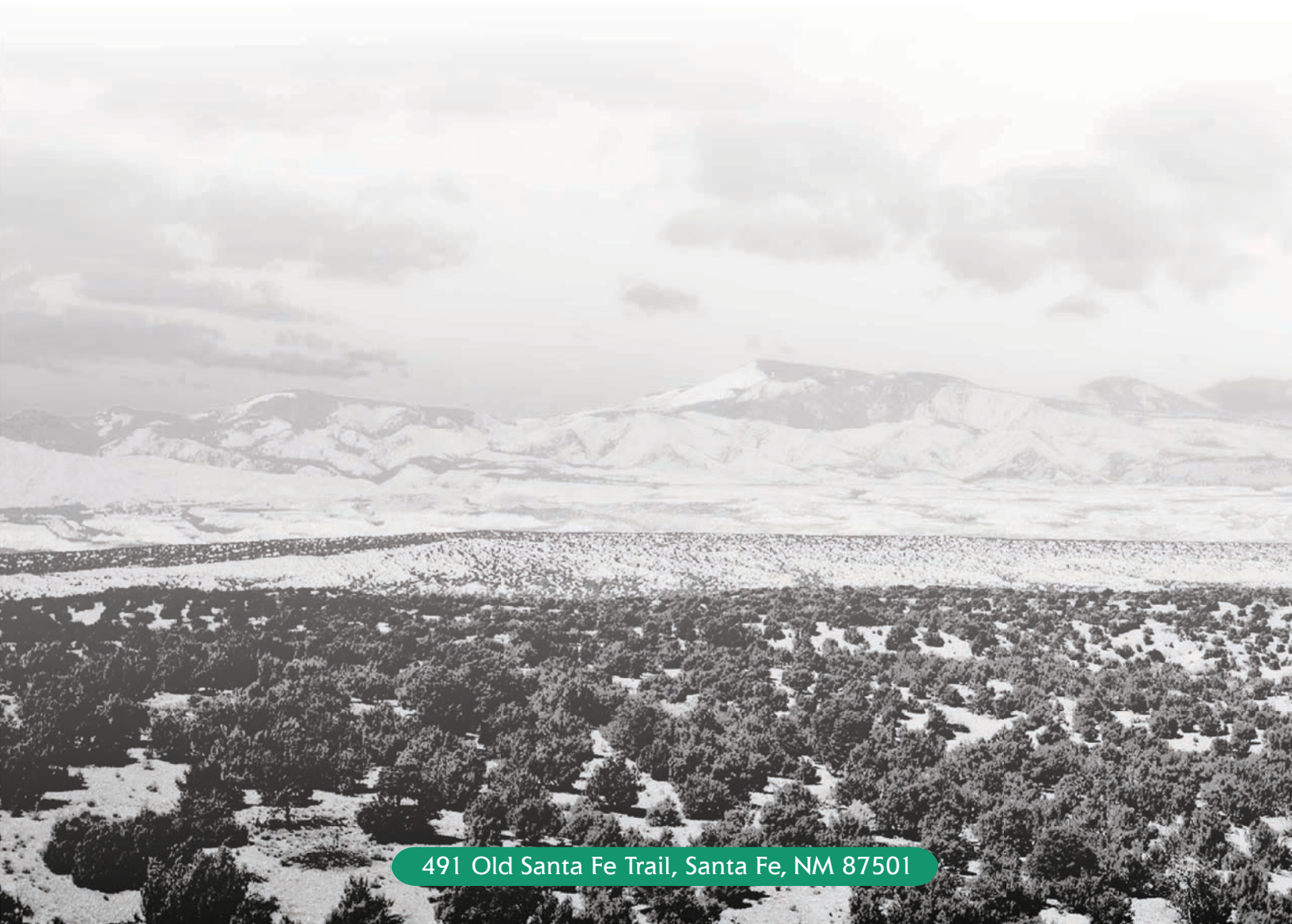


STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON DISABILITY  
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES  
For the Year Ended June 30, 2015

Exhibit 2

	<b>Governmental Activities</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>	
Current	
General government	
Personal services and employee benefits	\$875,577
Contractual services	280,098
Other costs	458,267
Special appropriation-contractual services	50,000
Depreciation	10,824
Total program expenses	<u>1,674,766</u>
<b>Revenues</b>	
Federal grant	<u>361,236</u>
Total program revenue	<u>361,236</u>
Net program expenses	<u>(1,313,530)</u>
<b>General revenues and transfers:</b>	
State general fund appropriation	1,323,000
Reversions to state general fund	<u>(28,704)</u>
Total general revenues and transfers	<u>1,294,296</u>
Changes in net position	<u>(19,234)</u>
Net position-beginning of year	<u>383,141</u>
Net position-ending of year	<u><u>\$363,907</u></u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.



491 Old Santa Fe Trail, Santa Fe, NM 87501