



## CHAMPAIGN COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

---

### CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD FOR CARE AND TREATMENT OF PERSONS WITH A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

#### Champaign County Developmental Disabilities Board (CCDDB) AGENDA

Wednesday, May 18, 2011

Brookens Administrative Building

Meeting Room 1

1776 E. Washington St., Urbana, IL 61802

**8:00 AM**

1. Call to Order – Ms. Holly Jordan, President
2. Roll Call – Stephanie Howard-Gallo
3. Additions to Agenda
4. Citizen Input
5. CCMHB Input
6. Approval of CCDDB Minutes
  - A. 4/20/10 Board Meeting\*

*Minutes are included in the packet. Board action is requested.*
7. President's Comments – Ms. Holly Jordan
8. Executive Director's Comments – Peter Tracy
9. Staff Report – *Included in the Board packet.*
10. Agency Information
11. Financial Report
  - A. Approval of Claims\*

*Included in the Board packet. Action is requested.*
12. New Business
  - A. PY12 Allocation Decisions\*

*A Decision Memo is included in the Board packet. Action is requested.*
13. Old Business
  - A. Disability Resource Expo

*A report by Barb Bressner is included in the Board packet.*
  - B. Anti-Stigma Alliance Event Wrap-up
14. Board Announcements
15. Adjournment

*\*Board action requested*

L.A.

---

**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD FOR CARE AND TREATMENT  
OF PERSONS WITH A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY  
(CCDDB)  
BOARD MEETING**

*Minutes –April 20, 2011*

*Brookens Administrative Center  
1776 E. Washington St.  
Urbana, IL  
Meeting Room 1 (Lyle Shields Room)*

*8:00 a.m.*

---

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Holly Jordan, President; Mike Smith, Joyce Dill

**STAFF PRESENT:** Peter Tracy, Executive Director; Lynn Canfield, Nancy Crawford, Mark Driscoll

**STAFF EXCUSED:** Stephanie Howard-Gallo

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Dennis Carpenter, Mike Brown, Charleston Transitional Facility (CTF); Patty Walters, Danielle Matthews, Annette Becherer, Rob Bribriescio, Vicki Tolf, Laura Bennett, Dale Morrissey, Jennifer Carlson, Developmental Services Center (DSC); Pam Klassert, Hadley Ravencroft, Glenna Tharp, Persons Assuming Control of their Environment(PACE); Sally Mustered, C-U Autism Network; Brandi Granse, Head Start; Jennifer Knapp, Paula Vanier, Vicki Niswander, Community Choices; Barb Bressner, Consultant; Sheila Ferguson, Community Elements; Joe Keeley, Christie Clinic

---

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Ms. Holly Jordan, Board President, called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

**ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:**

None.

**CITIZEN INPUT:**

None.

**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH BOARD (CCMHB) INPUT:**

The CCMHB will meet later today.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Minutes from the February 23, 2011 Board meeting were included in the packet.

**MOTION: Mr. Smith moved to approve the minutes from the February 23, 2011 Board meeting. Ms. Dill seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

**PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS:**

No Comments.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

No Report.

**STAFF REPORT:**

No report.

**AGENCY INFORMATION:**

None.

**FINANCIAL INFORMATION:**

**Approval of Claims:**

A copy of the claims report was included in the Board packet.

**MOTION: Mr. Smith moved to accept the claims report as presented. Ms. Dill seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **FY12 Program Summaries:**

Draft CCDDDB program summaries, a Briefing Memorandum and a list of CCDDDB applications were included in the Board packet. Mr. Tracy briefly reviewed each agencies application requests. Agencies were given an opportunity to respond to their program summaries in writing or in person at the meeting. Letters received from Champaign County Head Start and C-U Autism Network were distributed at the meeting. Board members were given an opportunity to ask agency representatives questions or clarification regarding their applications. Mr. Tracy announced that funding decisions will be made at the May 18<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

### **Cultural and Linguistic Competence Plans Review:**

A Briefing Memorandum and a rating scale of applicant's cultural competency plans was included in the Board packet for review.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### **Anti-Stigma Alliance:**

A report from Ms. Barb Bressner was included in the packet for information only. Ebertfest will be held April 27 – May 1, 2011. The Anti-Stigma Alliance will be showing a free family movie "Louder than a Bomb" on May 1, 2011 at the close of the festival.

### **Disabilities Resource Expo:**

A written report from Ms. Barb Bressner was included in the Board packet.

## **BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Joe Keeley, Christie Clinic's Developmental Pediatrician, was introduced.

## **ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by: Stephanie Howard-Gallo

*\*Minutes are in draft form and subject to CCDDDB approval.*

## **Lynn Canfield, Associate Director for Developmental Disabilities Staff Report – May 18, 2011**

Agency Monitoring Visits and Quarterly Reports: Stephanie Howard-Gallo and I completed program monitoring visits for one CCMHB- and five CCDDDB-funded programs at three agencies. Each of Developmental Services Center’s Apartment Services and Client/Family Support Services programs, Charleston Transitional Facilities’ Nursing and Residential programs, and Community Choices’ Customized Employment and Self-Determination Support programs is new to us this year. We enjoyed longer than usual visits with directors and staff servicing these contracts and learned about program activities; we clarified expectations regarding eligibility, documentation, and reporting. Data reported for second quarter for each program were verified. The remaining FY11 site visits are being scheduled. Third Quarter Reports were due on Friday, April 29, and it appears that all CCDDDB-funded agencies submitted them on time, some supplying additional information as requested or as they choose. While entering data into our tables, I will ask for any clarification or corrections needed.

Anti-Stigma Alliance and ACCESS Initiative: The sponsored film, Louder than a Bomb, closed Roger Ebert’s film festival with plenty of media coverage and served as our free post-festival community film that afternoon. Directly afterward, performances by local youth and stars of the film, along with a youth art and poetry exhibit, kicked off Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week. To commemorate the week, ACCESS Initiative distributed bright green bracelets community-wide and made them available at their many events. One of these was a well-attended Community Leader Luncheon which featured an update from Tracy Parsons and a brief presentation by MEE (Motivational Educational Entertainment) Productions on their research in promoting mental wellness and resiliency in urban communities. Green bracelets were visible that evening on the wrists of Champaign’s mayor and City Manager throughout the council meeting and swearing in ceremonies. Later in the week, a two-hour ACCESS sponsored Teen SPEAK poetry event featured powerful readings by many young poets and tied back to the film while emphasizing mental health, resiliency, trauma, and stigma.

Board to Board: At the April 27 meeting of the Champaign County Senior Services Advisory Board, I learned that 40% of those aged 55 and older are still in the work force, which is beginning to have an impact on volunteers, the engine of many social service efforts. The June 22 meeting promises updates on SHIP (State Health Insurance Assistance Program) and national health care. I was unable to attend the most recent TALKS board meeting due to a prior commitment.

Other Activity: CCDDDB and CCMHB contract boilerplates have been updated to incorporate the audit accountability policies approved in January. I continued the conversation with George Ordal of UI School of Medicine in preparation for a June 22 study session on the topic of nutrition and health/mental health. I attended March and April Mental Health Agencies Council meetings, a Metropolitan Intergovernmental Council meeting, Champaign County Transition Planning Committee meeting, and meetings of the Community Response Group. During the April meeting of the Quarter Cent Administrative Team, we teleconferenced with Scott Sells and Ellen Souder of Savannah Family Institute for discussion of funding requests.

Unmet Need for DD Services in Champaign County: Due to changes in intake and waiting list procedures, as well as the high likelihood of duplication across waiting lists, agencies may have difficulty assessing unmet need of county residents. I spoke with Babette Leek, PAS/ISSA, about using

PUNS for this purpose. Given that the proposed Ligas Consent Decree calls for placement from PUNS of 3,000 Illinois residents, this database is likely to remain current and comprehensive, possibly serving as a more stable source of information on the services being sought in our community.

From the PUNS update published on February 7, 2011:

- **194** individuals in Champaign County were identified with “emergency need.” The earlier point system is no longer in place; now individuals are automatically eligible if emergency need can be demonstrated, but no award is guaranteed (e.g., placement or HBSS, both now vulnerable to rate cuts).
- **269** Champaign County residents identified as in need of service within a year; **116** of these are recent or coming graduates. This is reflected in the description of existing services, with Education first, then Speech, then OT, and then Behavioral.

An update from April 5, 2011 is attached. For comparison with February data:

- **198** individuals in Champaign County are now identified in "emergency need."
- **274** in crisis (need service within a year), of whom **120** are recent or coming grads.

Supports sought are (in order of demand) Transportation, Personal Support, Support to work in community, Support for in-center work/activities, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Behavioral Supports, 24 hour Residential, Respite, Physical Therapy, Intermittent Residential Support, and Assistive Technology.

Champaign County data are referenced on pages 23-25 of the full document, which can be viewed at: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/OneNetLibrary/27897/documents/DD%20Reports/PUNS/CountyandSelectionDetail040511.pdf>



**PUNS Data By County and Selection Detail**

April 05, 2011

**County: Champaign**

**Reason for PUNS or PUNS Update**

New	175
Annual Update	91
Change of category (Emergency, Planning, or Critical)	17
Change of service needs (more or less) - unchanged category (Emergency, Planning, or Critical)	3
Person is fully served or is not requesting any supports within the next five (5) years	121
Moved to another state, close PUNS	4
Deceased	2
Other, supports still needed	5
Other, close PUNS	20

**EMERGENCY NEED(Person needs in-home or day supports immediately)**

1. Individual needs immediate support to stay in their own home/family home (short term - 90 days or less); e.g., hospitalization of care giver or temporary illness of an individual living in their own home.	9
2. Individual needs immediate support to stay in their own home/family home or maintain their employment situation (long term); e.g., due to the person's serious health or behavioral issues.	15
3. Care giver needs immediate support to keep their family member at home (short term - 90 days or less); e.g., family member recuperating from illness and needs short term enhanced supports.	4
4. Care giver needs immediate support to keep their family member at home (long term); e.g., care giver is permanently disabled or is terminally ill and needs long term enhanced supports immediately to keep their family member at home.	6

**EMERGENCY NEED(Person needs out-of-home supports immediately)**

1. Care giver is unable or unwilling to continue providing care (e.g., person has been abandoned).	28
2. Death of the care giver with no other supports available.	4
3. Person has been committed by the court or is at risk of incarceration.	3
4. Person is living in a setting where there is suspicion of abuse or neglect.	3
5. Person is in an exceedingly expensive or inappropriate placement and immediately needs a new place to live (for example, an acute care hospital, a mental health placement, a homeless shelter, etc.).	7
6. Other crisis, Specify:	119

**CRITICAL NEED(Person needs supports within one year)**

1. Individual or care giver will need support within the next year in order for the individual to continue living in their current situation.	26
2. Person has a care giver (age 60+) and will need supports within the next year.	6
3. Person has an ill care giver who will be unable to continue providing care within the next year.	3
4. Person has behavior(s) that warrant additional supports to live in their own home or family home.	24
5. Individual personal care needs cannot be met by current care givers or the person's health has deteriorated.	7
6. There has been a death or other family crisis, requiring additional supports.	3
7. Person has a care giver who would be unable to work if services are not provided.	16
8. Person or care giver needs an alternative living arrangement.	11
9. Person has graduated or left school in the past 10 years, or will be graduating in the next 3 years.	120
10. Person is living in an inappropriate place, awaiting a proper place (can manage for the short term; e.g., persons aging out of children's residential services).	2
11. Person moved from another state where they were receiving residential, day and/or in-home supports.	8
12. The state has plans to assist the person in moving within the next year (from a state-operated or private Intermediate Care Facility for People with Developmental Disabilities, nursing home or state hospital).	1



**PUNS Data By County and Selection Detail**

**April 05, 2011**

13. Person is losing eligibilty for Department of Children and Family Services supports in the next year.	5
14. Person is losing eligibility for Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment supports in the next year.	3
15. Person is losing eligibility for Intermediate Care Facility for People with Developmental Disabilities supports in the next year.	1
16. Person is losing eligibility for Medically Fragile/Technology Dependant Children's Waiver supports in the next year.	1
17. Person is residing in an out-of-home residential setting and is losing funding from the public school system.	1
20. Person wants to leave current setting within the next year.	5
21. Person needs services within the next year for some other reason, specify:	31

**PLANNING FOR NEED(Person's needs for service is more than a year away but less than 5 years away, or the care giver is older than 60 years)**

1. Person is not currently in need of services, but will need service if something happens to the care giver.	73
2. Person lives in a large setting, and person/family has expressed a desire to move (or the state plans to move the person).	1
3. Person is dissatisfied with current residential services and wishes to move to a different residential setting.	1
4. Person wishes to move to a different geographic location in Illinois.	3
5. Person currently lives in out-of-home residential setting and wishes to live in own home.	1
6. Person currently lives in out-of-home residential setting and wishes to return to parents' home and parents concur.	2
7. Person is receiving supports for vocational or other structured activities and wants and needs increased supports to retire.	1
8. Person or care giver needs increased supports.	45
9. Person is losing eligibility for Department of Children and Family Services supports within 1-5 years.	2
14. Other, Explain:	18

**EXISTING SUPPORTS AND SERVICES**

Respite Supports (24 Hour)	20
Respite Supports (<24 hour)	21
Behavioral Supports (includes behavioral intervention, therapy and counseling)	87
Physical Therapy	61
Occupational Therapy	111
Speech Therapy	140
Education	179
Assistive Technology	31
Homemaker/Chore Services	3
Adaptions to Home or Vehicle	5
Personal Support under a Home-Based Program, Which Could Be Funded By Developmental Disabilites, Division of Rehabilitation Services or Department on Aging (can include habilitation, personal care, respite, retirement supports, budgeting, etc.)	5
Medical Equipment/Supplies	10
Nursing Services in the Home, Provided Intermittently	1
Other Individual Supports	18

**TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation (include trip/mileage reimbursement)	116
Other Transportation Service	47
Senior Adult Day Services	2
Developmental Training	65
"Regular Work"/Sheltered Employment	77
Supported Employment	40
Vocational and Educational Programs Funded By the Division of Rehabilitation Services	13



**PUNS Data By County and Selection Detail**

April 05, 2011

Other Day Supports (e.g. volunteering, community experience) 6

**RESIDENTIAL SUPPORTS**

Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA)/Family	6
Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA)/Intermittent	7
Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA)/Host Family	1
Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA)/24 Hour	31
Intermediate Care Facilities for People with Developmental Disabilities (ICF/DD) 16 or Fewer People	2
Intermediate Care Facilities for People with Developmental Disabilities (ICF/DD) 17 or More People	1
Skilled Nursing Facility/Pediatrics (SNF/PED)	2
Supported Living Arrangement	1
Shelter Care/Board Home	1
Children's Residential Services	7
Child Care Institutions (Including Residential Schools)	4
Other Residential Support (including homeless shelters)	8

**SUPPORTS NEEDED**

Personal Support (includes habilitation, personal care and intermittent respite services)	226
Respite Supports (24 hours or greater)	89
Behavioral Supports (includes behavioral intervention, therapy and counseling)	133
Physical Therapy	81
Occupational Therapy	169
Speech Therapy	141
Assistive Technology	67
Adaptations to Home or Vehicle	29
Nursing Services in the Home, Provided Intermittently	5
Other Individual Supports	36

**TRANSPORTATION NEEDED**

Transportation (include trip/mileage reimbursement)	231
Other Transportation Service	78

**VOCATIONAL OR OTHER STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES**

Support to work at home (e.g., self employment or earning at home)	6
Support to work in the community	154
Support to engage in work/activities in a disability setting	151

**RESIDENTIAL SUPPORTS NEEDED**

Out-of-home residential services with less than 24-hour supports	71
Out-of-home residential services with 24-hour supports	112

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY

EXPENDITURE APPROVAL LIST

5/05/11

PAGE 5

VENDOR NO	VENDOR NAME	TRN DTE	B N CD	TRNS NO	PO NO	CHECK NUMBER	CHECK DATE	ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	ITEM DESCRIPTION	EXPENDITURE AMOUNT
*** FUND NO. 108 DEVLPMNTL DISABILITY FUND											
*** DEPT NO. 050 DEVL MNTL DISABILITY BOARD											
90	CHAMPAIGN COUNTY TREASURER							MENT HLTH BD FND 090			
		5/03/11	04 VR 108-	46		452872	5/05/11	108-050-533.07-00	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	MAY ADMIN FEE	27,849.00
										VENDOR TOTAL	27,849.00 *
16011	CHARLESTON TRANSITIONAL FACILITY										
		4/19/11	04 VR 108-	45		451653	4/21/11	108-050-533.92-00	CONTRIBUTIONS & GRANTS	MAR RESIDNTIAL	3,652.11
										VENDOR TOTAL	3,652.11 *
									DEVL MNTL DISABILITY BOARD	DEPARTMENT TOTAL	31,501.11 *
									DEVLPMNTL DISABILITY FUND	FUND TOTAL	31,501.11 *

11.A.



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD FOR CARE AND TREATMENT  
OF PERSONS WITH A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

DECISION MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** May 18, 2011  
**TO:** Members, Champaign County Developmental Disabilities Board  
**FROM:** Peter Tracy  
**SUBJECT:** STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FY12 FUNDING

*“Wide diversification is only required when investors do not understand what they are doing.”  
Warren Buffett*

Intent

This memorandum is to offer staff recommendations for FY12 (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012) funding allocations for the consideration of the Champaign County Developmental Disabilities Board (CCDDB). These recommendations are predicated on a thorough evaluation of applications using decision support criteria approved by the CCDDB in November 2010. Final funding decision authority rests with the CCDDB and their sole discretion and judgment concerning the most appropriate and efficacious use of available dollars based on assessment of community needs, best value, alignment with decision support criteria, pricing and affordability, and reasonable distribution of funds across disability areas.

Background and Policy Considerations

Surviving in an Era of Severe Fiscal Austerity: The State of Illinois’ fiscal situation and outlook for funding of disabilities services remains bleak despite the tax increases passed by the General Assembly. To the extent possible, the CCMHB and CCDDB have positioned to address the most pressing needs of our community, albeit with a full recognition of serious gaps and deficiencies in our primary areas of interest caused by State budget cuts and fiscal policies. As a local funding authority, the CCDDB has committed to work with our providers and community stakeholders to identify and support the most critical mission-syntonic programs and services.

Partnership and Collaboration with the Champaign County Mental Health Board: Our commitment to planning, funding, monitoring, and evaluating developmental disabilities programs and services is cemented in statute and is unwavering. The Memorandum of Understanding with the Champaign County Mental Health Board (CCMHB) defines how our mandate is to be implemented. This agreement defines the FY12 allocation for developmental disabilities programs and services, as well as the expectation for integrated planning by the Boards.

### **Statutory Authority**

The Champaign County Developmental Disabilities Board (CCDDDB) policies on funding are predicated on the requirements of the County Care for Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act (55 ILCS 105 / Section 0.01 et.seq.). All funds shall be allocated within the intent of the controlling act as codified in the laws of the State of Illinois. The recommendations included in this memorandum, opinions, and comments are based on our assessment of how closely applications align with statutory mandates, CCDDDB funding policies, approved decision support criteria, and priorities. Best and Final Offers may be sought as part of the negotiation process for authorized FY12 contracts. The CCDDDB reserves the right to refrain from making an award when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the county.

Upon approval by the Board, this memorandum shall become an addendum to the CCDDDB funding guidelines incorporated in standard operating procedures.

### **Decision Factors and Considerations**

The approved criteria delineated in this memorandum are to be used as guidance by the Board in assessing applications for CCDDDB funding. However, they are not the sole considerations taken into account in finalizing funding decisions. Other considerations would include the judgment of the Board and its staff, opinion about the provider's ability to implement the program and services proposed, the soundness of the proposed methodologies, reasonableness of pricing and affordability of applications within the context of available dollars, and the administrative and fiscal capacity of the agency. Further, to be eligible to receive CCDDDB funds, applications must reflect the goals and objectives stated in the Three Year Plan as well as the operating principles and public policy positions taken by the Board.

The final funding decisions rest with the CCDDDB and their judgment concerning the most appropriate and efficacious use of available dollars based on assessment of community needs, equitable distribution across disability areas, and decision-support match up. The CCDDDB allocation of funding is a complex task predicated on multiple variables. It is important to remember that our allocation process is not a request for proposals (RFP). Applicants for funding are not responding to a common set of specifications, but rather are applying for funding to address a wide variety of developmental disability service needs in our community. In many respects our job is significantly more difficult than simply conducting an RFP. Based on past experience, we can anticipate the nature and scope of applications will vary significantly. For this reason, a numerical rating/selection methodology is not applicable or relevant to our particular circumstances. Our focus is on what constitutes a best value to our community, based on a combination of cost and non-cost factors, and will reflect an integrated assessment of the relative merits of applications using criteria and priorities approved by the CCDDDB.

### Application Caveats:

- Submission of an application does not commit the CCDDDB to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of an application or to pay for any other costs incurred prior to the execution of a formal contract.
- Technical assistance available to applicants will be limited to process questions concerning the use of the online registration and application system, application forms, budget forms, application instructions, and CCDDDB Funding Guidelines.
- Applications which include excessive information beyond the scope of the application format will not be reviewed and, at the discretion of staff, may be disqualified from consideration. Letters of support for applications are discouraged and if submitted will not be considered as part of the allocation and selection process.
- The CCDDDB retains the right to accept or reject any or all applications and reserves the right to refrain from making an award when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the county.
- The CCDDDB reserves the right to vary the provisions set forth herein at any time prior to the execution of a contract where the CCDDDB deems such variances to be in the best interest of Champaign County.
- Applications and submissions become the property of the CCDDDB and as such, are public documents that may be copied and made available upon request after allocation decisions have been made or as deemed appropriate by the CCDDDB. Materials submitted will not be returned or deleted from the online system.
- The CCDDDB reserves the right, but is under no obligation, to negotiate an extension of any contract funded under this allocation process for up to a period not to exceed two years with or without additional procurement.
- If selected for contract negotiations, the applicant may be required to prepare and submit additional information prior to final contract execution, in order to reach terms for the provision of services that are agreeable to both parties. Failure to submit required information may result in cancellation of the award of a contract.
- The execution of financial contracts resultant of this application process is dependent upon the availability of adequate funds and the needs of Champaign County.
- The CCDDDB reserves the right to further define and add application components as needed. Applicants selected as responsive to the intent of this online application process will be given equal opportunity to update proposals for the newly identified components.
- All proposals considered must be received on time and must be responsive to the application instructions. The CCDDDB is not responsible for lateness or non-delivery of mail or messenger. Late applications shall be rejected.
- The contents of a successful application will be developed into a formal contract, if selected for funding. Failure of the applicant to accept these obligations can result in cancellation of the award for contract. The CCDDDB reserves the right to withdraw or reduce the amount of an award if there is misrepresentation of the applicant's ability to perform as stated in the application.
- The CCDDDB reserves the right to negotiate the final terms (i.e., best and final offer) of any or all contracts with the applicant selected, and any such terms negotiated as a result of this application process may be renegotiated and/or amended in order to meet the

needs of Champaign County. The CCDDDB also reserves the right to require the submission of any revision to the application, which results from negotiations conducted.

- The CCDDDB reserves the right to contact any individual, agency or employer listed in the application or to contact others who may have experience and/or knowledge of the applicant's relevant performance and/or qualifications.
- Final Decision Authority – The CCDDDB will make the final decision concerning all applications for funding, taking into consideration staff recommendations, defined decision support criteria, best value, and availability of funds.

### **FY12 Decision Support and Priorities**

The items included in this section will be heavily weighted in the decision of which applications should receive funding during the FY12 contract year (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012). These items are closely aligned with CCDDDB planning and needs assessment processes, intergovernmental agreements, memoranda of understanding, and the recommendations of consultants hired by the board.

1. The following **five categories of services and populations** of persons with developmental disabilities represent the current priorities of the developmental disabilities system of care. Person-centered planning efforts, promoting self-directed and culturally appropriate individualized service plans, may be undertaken within any of the five categories.
  - (a) **Vocational** development training for individuals with developmental disabilities. Activities include assessment, exploration and enhancement of interests and abilities, instruction in job tasks and problem-solving, assistance in establishing a vocational direction and objective, and support for customized employment opportunities.
  - (b) Individualized **residential service options** for people with developmental disabilities most in danger of being removed from their home community or of becoming homeless. This may include emergency residential support for families, assisted living for medically fragile individuals, in-home supports and/or respite services, and a range of supports and services for individuals living in the most integrated settings.
  - (c) **Flexible family support** for people with developmental disabilities and their families to enhance their ability to live together. The intent is to allow consumer families to determine the process of providing care and support for a family member. Allocation of funds is to be used for a variety of services including family respite, assistive technology, transportation, household needs, and recreational activities.
  - (d) **Comprehensive services for young children** with developmental delays. Comprehensive means an array of Early Intervention services to address all areas of development that is coordinated, home-based, and considers the needs of the entire family. Early identification of children with developmental delays can be achieved through consultation with child care providers and pre-school educators.

(e) **Adult day programs** for people with severe cognitive impairments with behavioral challenges who may also have significant physical limitations. Services provided should include: functional academic skills training, communications skills development, occupational therapy, fitness training, vocational training, personal care instruction/support, community integration opportunities, independent living skills training, and social skills training.

2. Applications that support the continued enhancement of awareness and understanding of Developmental Disabilities to include support of sustainable **consumer advocacy and family support organizations**, especially those comprising parents of and persons with the most prevalent Developmental Disabilities of mild mental retardation, moderate to profound mental retardation, and autism.
3. Applications that promote **single point of access** to information about disabilities, especially developmental disabilities. Access to information for families new to the developmental disabilities system of care and/or from rural Champaign County should be a primary target.
4. **Gaps in Core Services Related to State of Illinois Budget Cuts:** Applications which specifically address state-funded core services which have sustained major funding reductions shall continue to be considered as high priority of CCDDDB FY12 funding. As mentioned in the overview section of this memorandum, the full extent of IDHS budget cuts may not be known until after the application deadline. This means all applications will likely be subject to significant contract negotiation (e.g., budget and program plan).

### **Overarching Decision Support Considerations**

The FY12 CCDDDB allocation process will require all applications to address the overarching criteria listed below. Assessment of all FY12 applications will focus on alignment with these overarching criteria.

1. **Underserved Populations** - Programs and services that promote access for underserved populations identified in the Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity and the consultation with Carl Bell, M.D.
2. **Countywide Access** - Programs and services that promote county-wide access for all people in Champaign County. Zip code data is mandated.
3. **Medicaid Reimbursement** - Programs and services eligible for participation in Medicaid reimbursement for people with developmental disabilities.
4. **Budget and Program Connectedness** - Applications that clearly explain the relationship between budgeted costs and program components receive additional consideration. "What is the Board buying?" is the salient question that must be answered in the proposal, and clarity is required.

## **Secondary Decision Support and Priority Criteria**

The process items included in this section will be used as important discriminating factors which influence final allocation decision recommendations. The CCDDDB uses an online system for agencies to apply for funding. An agency must complete the one-time registration process, including the Organization Eligibility Questionnaire, before gaining access to the online application forms.

Minimal responsiveness: Applications that do not meet these thresholds are “non-responsive” and will be returned to the applicant. All agencies must be registered using the online system. The application(s) must be completed using the online system.

1. Eligible applicant – based on the Organization Eligibility Questionnaire.
2. Compliance with the application deadline. Late applications will not be accepted.
3. Application must relate directly to developmental disabilities programs and services.
4. Application must be appropriate to this funding source and shall provide evidence that other funding sources are not available to support this program/service.

Approach/Methods/Innovation: Applications proposing evidence based or research based approaches, and in addition address fidelity to the specific model cited. Applications demonstrating creative and/or innovative approaches to meet defined community need will receive additional consideration.

Staff Credentials: Applications that address and highlight staff credentials and specialized training will receive additional consideration.

Application Quality: Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria listed below. It is recognized that a rating system of this type allows for a level of subjectivity. In addition, comparison of applications from different organizations also influences individual ratings (i.e., “grading on a curve”). If the quality of an organization’s applications is exceptionally high, this tends to “raise the bar” to a higher level of expectation for all applications.

- “High compliance” applications were judged to have fully addressed all of the requirements of the application process.
- “Moderate compliance” applications covered all requirements but were conceptually lacking in detail.
- “Needs improvement” applications attempted to address all requirements but fell short in some areas.
- “Unresponsive” applications either did not address requirements or were inappropriately priced.

## **Contract Negotiation Considerations**

All recommendations included in the decision section of this memorandum are provisional with funding contingent on the completion of successful contract negotiation. This can include

significant modification of the budget, program plan, and personnel matrix in order to align the contract more closely with CCDDDB planning, budget, and policy specifications. If selected for contract negotiations, the applicant may be required to prepare and submit additional information prior to final contract execution, in order to reach terms for the provision of services that are agreeable to both parties. Failure to submit required information shall result in cancellation of the award of a contract.

As a component of the contract development process, all applications approved for funding may be subject to reductions for conferences/conventions/meetings and associated travel budget lines.

### **Special Notification Concerning FY12 Awards**

**The funding decisions recommended in this decision memorandum are based on revenue estimates which will not be finalized until the CCDDDB budget is approved by the Champaign County Board in November 2011. For this reason all FY12 CCDDDB contracts shall be subject to possible reductions in the contract maximums to compensate for any CCDDDB revenue shortfall. These reductions shall be documented by contract amendment at the discretion of the CCDDDB executive director with every effort made to maintain the viability and integrity of contracts approved for funding. The FY12 contract boilerplate shall also include the following provision:**

*Obligations of the Board will cease immediately without penalty or further payment being required if in any fiscal year the tax that is levied, collected and paid into the Developmental Disabilities Fund is judged by the CCDDDB executive director not to be sufficient for payment as delineated in the terms and conditions under this Contract.*

### **Decision Section**

The staff recommendations are based on decision support criteria match up and a variety of other factors outlined in this memorandum. For additional information, please refer to the application Program Summaries presented at the April 2011 CCDDDB Meeting.

### **Staff Recommendations: Individual Applications**

#### **Autism Society of Illinois - C-U Autism Network**

Funding request is for \$12,000. The recommendation is to fund the proposal to continue outreach and support for parents and families with autistic children. Family support is one of the five primary categories identified by the CCDDDB.

Recommend: \$12,000

Motion to **approve** funding of \$12,000 as recommended for **The Autism Society of Illinois – Champaign-Urbana Autism Network** as presented in this memorandum:

\_\_\_\_\_ Approved  
\_\_\_\_\_ Denied  
\_\_\_\_\_ Modified  
\_\_\_\_\_ Additional Information Needed

Champaign County Down Syndrome Network – Down Syndrome Network

Funding request is for \$15,000. The recommendation is to fund the proposal to continue outreach and support for parents and families of children with Down Syndrome. Family support is one of the five primary categories identified by the CCDDDB. Consultation with Cultural and Linguistic Competence Coordinator is recommended to address underserved populations.

Recommend: \$15,000

Motion to **approve** funding of \$15,000 as recommended for **Champaign County Down Syndrome Network- Down Syndrome Network** as presented in this memorandum:

\_\_\_\_\_ Approved  
\_\_\_\_\_ Denied  
\_\_\_\_\_ Modified  
\_\_\_\_\_ Additional Information Needed

Champaign County Head Start/Early Head Start

Funding request is for \$41,675. The recommendation is to fund the proposal to maintain and expand this program which enhances early intervention services for young children in Champaign County and their families. This is one of the five priority categories identified by the CCDDDB.

Recommend: \$41,675

Motion to **approve** funding of \$41,675 as recommended for **Champaign County Head Start/Early Head Start** as presented in this memorandum:

\_\_\_\_\_ Approved  
\_\_\_\_\_ Denied  
\_\_\_\_\_ Modified  
\_\_\_\_\_ Additional Information Needed

Charleston Transitional Facility (CTF) – Nursing

Funding request is for \$20,204. The recommendation is to fund the proposal to maintain and expand support for nursing services in the residential program, which includes annual medication training for staff. Nursing services included in the state rate are not adequate to cover actual costs, and some residents have a greater need for support as they grow older. Requires contract negotiation to strengthen performance measures, resolve budget forms, and address board composition.

Recommend: \$20,204

Motion to **approve** funding of \$20,204 as recommended for **Charleston Transitional Facility (CTF) - Nursing** as presented in this memorandum:

- Approved
- Denied
- Modified
- Additional Information Needed

Charleston Transitional Facility (CTF) – Residential

Funding request is for \$38,000. The recommendation is to fund the proposal to maintain support of one resident of seven in CILA home located in Champaign. This is one of the five priority areas identified by the CCDDDB. Requires contract negotiation to strengthen performance measures, resolve budget forms, and address board composition.  
 Recommend: \$38,000

Motion to **approve** funding of \$38,000 as recommended for **Charleston Transitional Facility (CTF) - Residential** as presented in this memorandum:

- Approved
- Denied
- Modified
- Additional Information Needed

Community Choices, Inc. – Customized Employment

Funding request is for \$30,000. The recommendation is to fund the proposal to maintain this program, which utilizes a creative, consumer-driven approach to employment support consistent with the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities “Blueprint for System Redesign in Illinois.”  
 Recommend: \$30,000

Motion to **approve** funding of \$30,000 as recommended for **Community Choices, Inc. – Customized Employment** as presented in this memorandum:

- Approved
- Denied
- Modified
- Additional Information Needed

Community Elements, Inc. – Coordination of Services – DD/MI

Funding request is for \$51,775. Although this application proposes a needed service and furthers continuity of care, it is not affordable in the current climate of fiscal austerity. The recommendation is not to fund this application due to low revenue projections and other fiscal considerations.  
 Recommend: Do not fund due to budgetary constraints.

Motion to **DENY** funding of \$51,775 as requested by the **Community Elements, Inc. – Coordination of Services – DD/MI** as presented in this memorandum:

- Approved
- Denied
- Modified
- Additional Information Needed

Developmental Services Center – Family Development Center

Funding request is for \$381,435. The recommendation is to fund this proposal to maintain and expand efforts to make a range of early intervention services available for children age 0 to 5 with developmental disabilities and delays. Early intervention is one of the five priority categories identified by the CCDDDB. Requires a special provision related to additional reporting.  
Recommend: \$381,435

Motion to **approve** funding of \$381,435 as recommended for **Developmental Services Center – Family Development Center** as presented in this memorandum:

- Approved
- Denied
- Modified
- Additional Information Needed

Developmental Services Center – Apartment Services

Funding request is for \$411,328. The recommendation is to fund this proposal to maintain support of apartment services as part of the continuum of residential services offered for people with developmental disabilities in Champaign County; consumer driven planning is featured. Requires contract negotiation to strengthen performance measures and a special provision for additional reporting.  
Recommend: \$411,328

Motion to **approve** funding of \$411,328 as recommended for **Developmental Services Center – Apartment Services** as presented in this memorandum:

- Approved
- Denied
- Modified
- Additional Information Needed

Developmental Services Center – CILA

Funding request is for \$158,620. The recommendation is for partial funding of this proposal, which addresses the primary area of long term commitment to residential care. CCDDDB funding supports program-wide residential capacity. Requires contract negotiation related to strengthening performance measures and a special provision for additional reporting.  
Recommend: \$154,000

Motion to **approve** funding of \$154,000 as recommended for **Developmental Services Center – CILA** as presented in this memorandum:

- Approved
- Denied
- Modified
- Additional Information Needed

Developmental Services Center – Client/Family Support Services

Funding request is for \$396,212. The recommendation is to fund this proposal to maintain support of the program, which features case management services such as intake screening, advocacy, assessment, information and referral, linkage, coordination and monitoring of person-centered individual service plans, some direct support, and crisis intervention. Requires a special provision for additional reporting.

Recommend: \$396,212

Motion to **approve** funding of \$396,212 as recommended for **Developmental Services Center – Client/Family Support Services** as presented in this memorandum:

- Approved
- Denied
- Modified
- Additional Information Needed

Developmental Services Center – Clinical Services

Funding request is for \$177,966. The recommendation is to fund this proposal to maintain and expand the program, which matches up well with criteria and addresses one of the five priority categories identified by the CCDDDB. The program addresses needs that overlay some criteria areas identified by both the CCMHB and CCDDDB. Requires contract negotiation related to strengthening performance measures and a special provision for additional reporting.

Recommend: \$177,966

Motion to **approve** funding of \$177,966 as recommended for **Developmental Services Center – Clinical Services** as presented in this memorandum:

- Approved
- Denied
- Modified
- Additional Information Needed

Developmental Services Center – Developmental Training/Employment Services

Funding request is for \$1,202,014. The recommendation is for partial funding of the proposal, to sustain the operational activities of these large programs. Developmental Training and Employment Services are among the five priority areas identified by the CCDDDB, and consumer driven service planning is highlighted. Requires contract negotiation related to strengthening performance measures and a special provision for additional reporting.

Recommend: \$1,182,706

Motion to **approve** funding of \$1,182,706 as recommended for **Developmental Services Center – Developmental Training and Employment Services** as presented in this memorandum:

Approved  
 Denied  
 Modified  
 Additional Information Needed

Developmental Services Center – Individual and Family Support

Funding request is for \$338,324. The recommendation is to fund this program to maintain and expand flexible, comprehensive support to families, driven by consumer choice. The proposal matches up well with criteria and addresses one of the five priority categories identified by the CCDDDB. Requires contract negotiation related to strengthening performance measures and a special provision for additional reporting.

Recommend: \$338,324

Motion to **approve** funding of \$338,324 as recommended for **Developmental Services Center – Individual and Family Support** as presented in this memorandum:

Approved  
 Denied  
 Modified  
 Additional Information Needed

Developmental Services Center – Individual and Family Support - Expansion

Funding request is for \$60,000. Although the proposal seeks to expand a sought after, flexible, comprehensive, consumer and family driven program, it is not affordable in the current climate of fiscal austerity. The recommendation is not to fund this request.

Recommend: Do not fund due to budgetary constraints.

Motion to **deny** funding of \$60,000 as recommended for **Developmental Services Center – Individual and Family Support Expansion** as presented in this memorandum:

Approved  
 Denied  
 Modified  
 Additional Information Needed

Persons Assuming Control of Their Environment (PACE) – Opportunities for Independence

Funding request is for \$59,546. The recommendation is to fund this program which addresses core areas, makes consumer participation central to service planning, and enhances options for people with developmental disabilities to acquire independent living skills. Requires minor revision of budget and/or program forms.

Recommend: \$59,546

Motion to **approve** funding of \$59,546 as recommended for **Persons Assuming Control of Their Environment (PACE) – Opportunities for Independence** as presented in this memorandum:

- Approved
- Denied
- Modified
- Additional Information Needed

Motion to authorize the executive director to implement contract maximum reductions as described in the “Special Notification Concerning FY12 Awards” section of this memorandum (see below):

- Approved
- Denied
- Modified
- Additional Information needed

### **Special Notification Concerning FY12 Awards**

**The recommendations in this decision memorandum are based on revenue estimates which will not be finalized until the CCDDDB budget is approved by the Champaign County Board in November 2011. For this reason all FY12 CCDDDB contracts shall be subject to possible reductions in contract maximums necessary to compensate for any CCDDDB revenue shortfall. These reductions shall be documented by contract amendment at the discretion of the CCDDDB executive director with every effort made to maintain the viability and integrity of contracts approved for funding. The FY12 contract boilerplate shall also include the following provision:**

***Obligations of the Board will cease immediately without penalty or further payment being required if in any fiscal year the tax that is levied, collected and paid into the Developmental Disabilities Fund is judged by the CCDDDB executive director not to be sufficient for payment as delineated in the terms and conditions under this Contract.***

<b>CCDDB Agency Program Allocation Request/Recommended Amounts - PY12</b>			
July 1, 2011 thru June 30, 2012			
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Program Name</b>	<b>PY12 Request</b>	<b>Recommended</b>
Autism Society of Illinois	CU Autism Network	12,000	12,000
Champaign County Down Syndrome Network	Parent Support Group	15,000	15,000
Champaign County Head Start/Early Head Start	Social Emotional Disabilities Svcs	41,675	41,675
Charleston Transitional Facility	Nursing Services	20,204	20,204
	Residential Services	38,000	38,000
Charleston Transitional Facility Total		58,204	58,204
Community Choices	Customized Employment	30,000	30,000
Community Elements, Inc.	Coordination of Services - DD/MI	51,775	-
Developmental Services Center	Family Development Center	381,435	381,435
	Apartment Services	411,328	411,328
	CILA	158,620	154,000
	Client/Family Support Services	396,212	396,212
	Clinical Services	177,966	177,966
	Developmental Training/Employment	1,202,014	1,182,706
	Individual & Fam Suppt	338,324	338,324
	Individual & Family Support - Expansion	60,000	-
DSC Total		3,125,899	3,041,971
PACE	Opportunities for People with DD	59,546	59,546
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,394,099</b>	<b>3,258,396</b>
<i>CCDDB PY12 Agency Requests nkc 5/10/11</i>			

**“Reaching Out For Answers:  
Disability Resource Expo”  
Progress Report  
May, 2011**

The 5<sup>th</sup> annual Disability Resource Expo will be held on Saturday, October 22 at Lincoln Square Village in Urbana.

Eleven members of the Expo Steering Committee met for the first time this planning year on April 12. I'm pleased, again, to report that this group has maintained a consistent membership, with most members being with us since the inception of the Expo in 2007. We did welcome one new member, Diane Baker of Worn Jerabek Architects.

Members spent some time reviewing the participant and exhibitor evaluations from the 2010 Expo, and will utilize this input as we plan for the 2011 Expo.

The Exhibitor Committee met on May 10 to begin to identify potential new exhibitors. We were fortunate to be able to bring on approximately a dozen new exhibitors last year, and hope to do so again in 2011. The group also discussed some different options for Exhibitor Bingo, and explored possible organizations to invite that will address services to veterans.

The Marketing/Promotion Committee continues its work by talking with various businesses who may be interested in funding certain pieces of the Expo...example: printing, entertainment, Pride Room. We are currently awaiting a response from three businesses as to their intent for sponsorship. Donation request letters will be mailed in early to mid July. Billboard space has already been reserved for the month of October through Adams Outdoor Advertising. Save-The-Date flyers were distributed at the Anti-Stigma Alliance film on May 1 at the Virginia Theater.

The Entertainment Committee continues to pursue some top entertainment for this years' event. Our goal, as in past years, is to highlight performers who have a disability, or entertainment groups where persons with disabilities are active participants. It is also important to bring new entertainment to the event each year in order to attract participants.

The Accessibility Committee has received a commitment from our three veteran sign language interpreters to help us out again, and DRES will be formatting all of our materials again this year.

The remaining copies of the 2010 Resource Book are being used in our fundraising efforts. We printed 1,500 of these books, and have distributed most of them at this point.

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Bressner  
Expo Coordinator

# Louder Than a Bomb

Film screening sponsored by: Champaign County Anti-Stigma Alliance

## From heartbreak to hope in the art of a poem

By Roger Ebert

Poetry slams began in Chicago in 1984 and have become an international phenomenon without most people probably having heard of them. They're poetry readings as a spectator sport. Individuals and teams are scored by judges on the Olympic 10-point scale, but while Olympic diving judges claim to be looking at specific elements in a dive, slam judges are responding to emotion, charisma and--well, poetry. Some slammers are also rap artists, but slam and rap and different art forms, and slammers rely only on their voices.

"Louder Than a Bomb" is about the 2008 Chicago-area slam of the same name, the nation's largest. Teams and soloists from 60 high schools compete, and the finalists face off in a city-wide slam that fills a theater usually used for rock concerts. The suspense that year initially centered on Steinmetz, a troubled inner city school that had never entered before it won the 2007 Bomb in a thrilling upset. Can Steinmetz and its coach, James Sloan, repeat?

The film was directed by Greg Jacobs and Jon Siskel (Gene's nephew), who followed several competitors for months and guessed well in choosing those they focused on. The 2008 Steinmetz team had some gifted repeaters, and we also meet three outstanding solo talents:

- Nova Venerable from Oak Park/River Forest High School, who helps her mom with the complex needs of a disabled kid brother and then writes about that and her absent father.
- Nate Marshall from Whitney Young Magnet High School, whose parents were addicts but who, when asked to choose between basketball and poetry, chose words and masters them with almost bewildering fluency.
- Adam Gottlieb, from Northside College Prep, whose poems are so joyous and whose performances so charismatic that he makes it possible to think of a slammer as a rock star.
- The Steinmetz team, calling themselves the Steinmenauts, are Lamar Jordan, Kevin Harris, Jésus Lark, Charles Smith, and She'Kira McKnight. They develop artistic

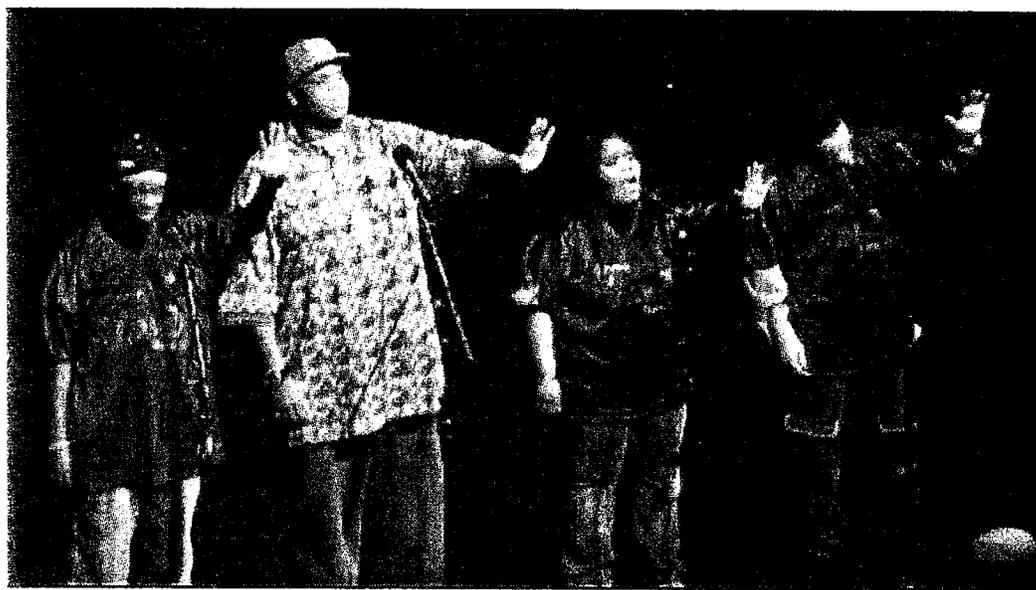


Greg Jacobs and Jon Siskel, directors of "Louder Than a Bomb."

and personal differences that Coach Sloan helps them work out during tense scenes. When they triumphantly appear on stage, their very presence is a tribute to their poetry.

Siskel and Jacobs focus on the performances, which are inspiring and electrifying. Their film left me wondering why American television must be so gutless and shallow. If these kids and others like them were programmed against America Idol or Dancing With the Stars, the shabbiness of those shows would be placed in dramatic contrast. Here are real performers with real feelings and important things to say.

I hesitate to hint about the outcome of the contest, nor to



The Steinmetz team in a scene from "Louder Than a Bomb."

SUNDAY 12noon

# BEHIND THE SCENES

**LOUDER THAN A BOMB**  
(2010) No MPAA rating

Directed by  
Greg Jacobs and Jon Siskel

Featuring:  
Kevin Coval, Adam Gottlieb,  
Elizabeth Graf, Kevin Harris,  
John Hood, Lamar Jordan, Peter  
Kahn, J sus Lark, Nate Marshall,  
She'Kira McKnight, Preye Porri,  
James Sloan, Charles Smith,  
Robbie Q. Telfer and Nova  
Venerable

Running time: 100 minutes  
Print Courtesy: Siskel/Jacob  
Productions

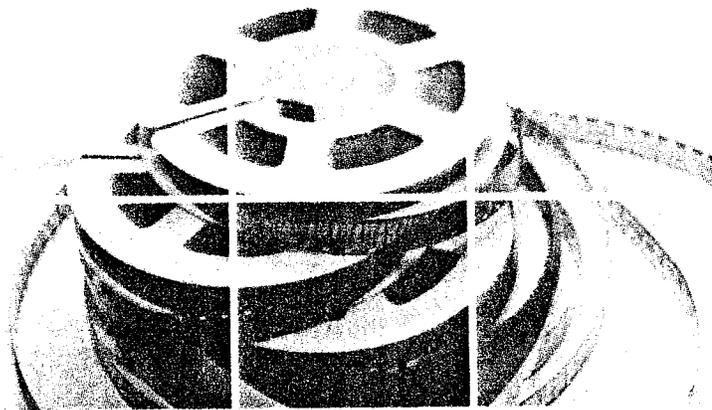
*Here are real performers with real feelings and important things to say.*



*Nova Venerable in a scene from "Louder Than a Bomb."*

steal some of the thunder and surprises from the performers. I'll end on this. After "Louder Than a Bomb" plays theatrically, it will air on the Oprah Winfrey Network. Why doesn't Oprah consider it a pilot for a series? America's Got Talent, all right, but maybe we've been looking for it in the wrong places. **minireview**

"Louder Than a Bomb" (Unrated, 100 minutes). Chicago's annual city-wide poetry slam competition involves teams or performers from 60 high schools, and the finals, called Louder Than a Bomb, are like a rock concert crossed with a basketball tournament. We meet the team from Steinmetz, hoping to repeat as city champions, and poets from Whitney Young, Oak Park/River Forest, and Northside College Prep. Inspiring and electrifying. Directed by Greg Jacobs and Jon Siskel (Gene's nephew).



## Investing more than money

At Hickory Point Bank & Trust, we believe it takes more than money to make the world go around. That's why we're proud to support **Ebertfest**.

*Yes*

There is a difference.

**HICKORY  
POINT  
BANK**  
& TRUST, fsb



[www.hickorypointbank.com](http://www.hickorypointbank.com)

701 Devonshire Drive • Champaign • 217-351-7100



Member FDIC

LOGIN Create new account Login problems?



Search:



Our Sites



BROWSE THE BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Find a business:

e.g. auto repair

Search

**The News-Gazette**  
SERVING EAST CENTRAL ILLINOIS

News | Sports | Entertainment | Multimedia | Community  
Opinions | Classified | Shop | Subscribe  
Help

START SMART  
Read the News-Gazette on your home computer. It's free!

**READ ALL ABOUT IT!**  
on your home computer.

Every page. Every story. Click here to start your online subscription now.

**The News-Ga.**

Home

## Documentary started with 'strange diversity'

Wed, 04/27/2011 - 8:00am | [Melissa Merli](#)

CHAMPAIGN -- Chicago filmmaker Greg Jacobs and his wife were driving by the Metro concert hall one Saturday night in 2005 when something caught his attention: the line of people waiting to get into the Louder Than a Bomb poetry slam finals.

It was made up of teens of all shapes, sizes and colors.

"It was just a very strange diversity for the North Side of Chicago for high school kids and on a Saturday night there to see poetry," Jacobs later said in a Media Impact video interview.

"It also meant there were kids on stage doing their poetry, performing and reading their own work in front of their peers, which is something I would never have been caught dead doing in high school."

That "strange combination" led Jacobs to mention to his filmmaking partner Jon Siskel that the poetry slam might be a good subject for a documentary. Siskel agreed.

Now, six years later and one year after "Louder Than a Bomb" was released, the two will bring the 99-minute documentary to Roger Ebert's Film Festival, which begins today (Wednesday) and ends Sunday at the Virginia Theatre in Champaign.

The documentary, which will close the festival on Sunday, tells the story of four Chicago high school poetry teams as they prepare for the Louder Than a Bomb poetry slam.

After the screening, which starts at noon, Siskel, Jacobs and Kevin Coval, founder and artistic director of the Louder Than a Bomb poetry slam, will go on stage to talk about the documentary. Five Steinmetz High School poets from Chicago will perform as well.

"Louder Than a Bomb" was something of a departure for Siskel and Jacobs. They founded Siskel/Jacobs Productions in 2005 with the focus on making TV documentaries.

Before starting on "Louder," they had begun producing for the History Channel "102 Minutes That Changed America," which reconstructed in real time the events of Sept. 11, 2001, in New York. It won several awards, among them three prime-time Emmys.

Other made-for-TV documentaries produced by Siskel/Jacobs include one about the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon, another about Hurricane Katrina, and a recent one on the earthquake/tsunami in Japan.

TV documentaries, Siskel and Jacobs said in a telephone interview from Chicago, have shorter production calendars than the five years they spent on "Louder Than a Bomb."

Once they decided to make it, they reached out to Coval, who introduced them to many of the 40 Louder Than a Bomb poetry teams in the Chicago area. The filmmakers narrowed the list to a dozen.



Photo by: Provided

Jon Siskel, left, and Greg Jacobs.

### Other Related Content

- [Alliance will repeat film after fest ends](#)

For over a year, they visited those schools and hung with the students and poetry-slam coaches. They then narrowed the teams to four and spent eight months shooting them and two years editing the footage.

The two finished the documentary on March 25, 2010, and premiered it before 250 teenagers two days later.

"The kids stood up," Jacobs said. "They said it was the best true-story movie they'd ever seen. It connects to kids in a way most documentaries don't. Teachers say they're emotional and passionate about the film, and the teachers are too."

Indeed, the two see high schools students and teachers as their core audiences.

Siskel and Jacobs also want to see Louder Than a Bomb poetry slam competitions in cities nationwide. They have already visited Tulsa, Okla., to help Coval establish one there, and have received requests from other cities.

Siskel and Jacobs, who have shown "Louder Than a Bomb" at festivals nationwide, are "thrilled" to bring it to Ebertfest 2011.

"I just think it's amazing what Roger and Chaz put together; we're just honored to be part of that group," Siskel said.

Siskel, of course, is a nephew of the late Chicago Tribune movie critic Gene Siskel, who was Ebert's TV partner on "Siskel & Ebert at the Movies."

"Growing up around him, going to movies with him, definitely made me a huge fan of film and movies," Jon Siskel said of his uncle. "Also he just had a big role in guiding me in my career. I had a moment when I was doing writing for newspapers and magazines. He knew of an opportunity coming up to get into TV and film and made an introduction and I moved out to Los Angeles. I started from there."

[Login](#) or [register](#) to post comments



Categories (4): [News](#), [Community Events](#), [Film](#), [Arts and Entertainment](#)

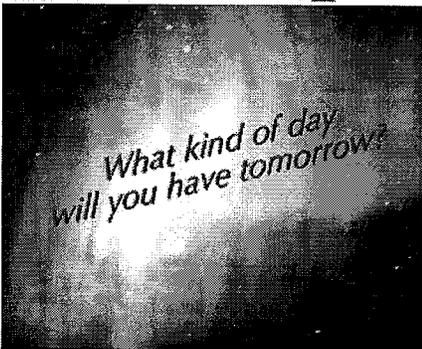
Location (4): [Champaign County](#), [Champaign](#), [Local](#), [Urbana](#)

## Comments

*News-Gazette.com embraces discussion of both community and world issues. We welcome you to contribute your ideas, opinions and comments, but we ask that you avoid personal attacks, vulgarity and hate speech. News-Gazette.com reserves the right to remove any comment at its discretion, and we will block repeat offenders' accounts. To post comments, you must first be a registered user, and your username will appear with any comment you post. Happy posting.*

[Login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

## Search News Stories



## More Like This

- [Ohio town in documentary reminds Ebert of Urbana](#)
- [Alliance will repeat film after fest ends](#)
- [Jewison visiting C-U for annual film festival](#)
- [Ebert couldn't resist adding a 13th entry to his annual film festival](#)
- [2011 Roger Ebert's Film Festival schedule](#)
- [Ebert brings Linklater, Welles film to town](#)



BROWSE THE BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Find a business:

e.g. auto repair



- News
- Sports
- Entertainment
- Multimedia
- Community
- Opinions
- Classified
- Shop
- Subscribe
- Help



Sudoku Battleships Hashi KAKURU Crosswords and more...



Home

# Alliance will repeat film after fest ends

Wed, 04/27/2011 - 8:00am | [Melissa Merli](#)

CHAMPAIGN -- If you miss "Louder Than a Bomb" during Eberfest, you will have another chance to see the documentary on Sunday, right after Roger Ebert's Film Festival ends at the Virginia Theatre.

### Other Related Content

- [Documentary started with 'strange diversity'](#)

The Champaign County Anti-Stigma Alliance, a major Eberfest sponsor, is not only sponsoring the "Bomb" festival screening but also will show the doc right after the festival ends, around 4 p.m. That screening will be free and open to the public; tickets to the Eberfest screening, starting at noon, are \$13 each.

After both, filmmakers Jon Siskel and Greg Jabobs and Kevin Coval, founder and artistic director of the Louder Than a Bomb poetry slam, will be on stage to discuss the 99-minute documentary about four Chicago high school teams preparing for and competing in the Louder Than a Bomb poetry slam.

Joining them after the Eberfest screening will be five Steinmetz High School student poets. Local young poets will perform on stage as well after the Anti-Stigma Alliance screening.

The local poets are involved in ACCESS Initiative, which focuses on families and youths with mental-health issues and involvement in the juvenile-justice system.

Login or register to post comments



Categories (4): [News](#), [Community Events](#), [Film](#), [Arts and Entertainment](#)

Location (4): [Champaign County](#), [Champaign](#), [Local](#), [Urbana](#)

Tags (1): [Eberfest](#)

## Comments

*News-Gazette.com embraces discussion of both community and world issues. We welcome you to contribute your ideas, opinions and comments, but we ask that you avoid personal attacks, vulgarity and hate speech. News-Gazette.com reserves the right to remove any comment at its discretion, and we will block repeat offenders' accounts. To post comments, you must first be a registered user, and your username will appear with any comment you post. Happy posting.*

Login or register to post comments

## Search News Stories



LOGIN Create new account Login problems?



Search:



Our Sites



BROWSE THE BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Find a business:

e.g. auto repair

Search

# The News-Gazette

SERVING EAST CENTRAL ILLINOIS

- News
- Sports
- Entertainment
- Multimedia
- Community
- Opinions
- Classified
- Shop
- Subscribe
- Help



[Home](#)

## Teens are raising their voices in poetry showcase

Sat, 04/30/2011 - 8:30am | [Julie Wurth](#)

Poetry isn't the most popular hobby among high school students, Jazzlyn Carter confesses, but she is now an official convert.

The 14-year-old Urbana High School freshman is one of 15 teens taking part in a poetry showcase organized by the Champaign County ACCESS Initiative to demonstrate the importance of family and youth involvement in the children's mental health movement.

Several of the teens will also perform at a "poetry slam" at the Virginia Theatre on Sunday after a free screening of "Louder Than a Bomb," a documentary about four Chicago high school teams competing with many others in a poetry slam.

The idea is to give teens a voice about issues that concern them, leading up to Children's Mental Health Awareness Week, which starts Sunday, said their coach, Aaron Ammons.

Domestic violence, bullying and other stressors affect teens' mental health, said Ammons, a local author and poet.

"This is about young people using the expression of the spoken word in poetry to deal with issues that they face as teens," he said. "They're using this creative expression and using their voice in a positive way and to help other people. That's what we're trying to celebrate here."

The ACCESS Initiative focuses on families and youths with mental-health issues and involvement in the juvenile-justice system.

Organizers recruited teens for the poetry project through area high schools and other organizations.

The students worked with Ammons to choose topics centered on trauma and resilience, ranging from suicide to homosexuality to peer pressure and learning disabilities. They attended five two-hour workshops where they watched "Louder Than a Bomb" and worked on their own poems, listening to each other perform and critiquing each other's work.

"This is not a contest. The point is the poetry and the relationships they build with the other students," Ammons said. "That sort of camaraderie, that's what we're really working on."

Carter is an aspiring songwriter who didn't think she'd be much of a poet until she got involved with the project. She's written gospel songs and other music, but the spoken word is "deeper," with no music to distract the listener, she said. The focus is purely on the words.

"I didn't feel like I would be good at writing a poem," Carter said, but she surprised herself. The writing came easily, and she put together her poem in three short bursts of creativity.



Photo by: Darrell Hoemann/The News-Gazette

Several members of a local poetry slam workshop pose for a photo Friday during a rehearsal at the Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club in Champaign. The group includes, top row from left, Reno Hines, Kamron Haley, Lonnie Johnson, Dante Scott and Keosha Gaines and, bottom row, Collette Harmon (wearing yellow), Jazzlyn Carter, Tamarra Likens, Deandre Lemons and Marshall Allston-Yeagle.

Her poem, "Murder of the Soul," describes how "violence is deeper than physical. You can murder someone on the inside with what you say," she said. Her goal is to encourage people to "watch what you say."

Carter said she didn't draw on any particular experience in her own life, though she says she has been hurt by words at times.

"It just came to me. It seems like this was something inside of me. I'm not sure exactly what it is. I just know your words can hurt people, especially at a young age. It soaks in," she said.

She reads her poem like a rap song, with strong emotion. The other teens encouraged Carter to "go deeper" after hearing the first section she wrote, and she did, invoking images of crime in later passages. She said the other teens were "speechless" when they heard the finished product.

The two-minute poem begins:

"I fight through this and I look around

seeing the things that try to hold us down

We say it's murder, and drugs,

from all those so-called thugs

but tell me what that really means

Tell me what you see in between

The lines of the words on my computer screen."

And later:

"The fact that you crush my soul feel no remorse for the sin?

You know what, that makes you worse than the dealer

more dangerous than that serial killer.

And worse than that murderer out there on the streets.

'Cause your words are like bullets and you're right in front of me."

Carter, who sings and plays the piano, has hopes of becoming a singer-songwriter some day, though she may go to medical school or law school as a "backup."

"I'm a performer at heart," she said.

She plans to keep up with the poetry, too, to help with her songwriting. She thinks the project was valuable because teens don't give much thought to poetry otherwise.

"Poetry really reaches people in a way nothing else can. You're not going to change people like this in a song. It just opens people's eyes and gets them to understand something new," she said.

Three of the students will perform at 6 p.m. Sunday at the Virginia Theatre following the free showing of "Louder Than a Bomb" at 4 p.m. by the Champaign County Anti-Stigma Alliance. (The film will also be shown at noon, by paid admission, as part of Ebertfest, and five Chicago Steinmetz High School poets will perform after both showings.)

All 15 local teen poets will also perform at two other free public venues:

7:30 to 9:30 p.m. today at the Independent Media Center, 202 S. Broadway Ave., U, as part of a "Poetry for the People Slam" with youth and adult performers.

6 to 8 p.m. Thursday at the "Teen SPEAK" Cafe at the Independent Media Center, coordinated by Ammons.

Besides Carter, the participants are: Keosha Gaines, Meaguell Gaines, Kamron Haley, Collette "Co-Co" Harmon, Tamarra Likens, Nailah Davis, Dante Scott, Lonnie Johnson, Marshall Allston-Yeagle, Summir Evans, Jemika Butler, Deandre Lemons, Rashod Fly and Preston Roseborough.

[Login](#) or [register](#) to post comments



Categories (2):