



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVOCATE TRAINING PROJECT
SEAT Project



An OSERS Funded Advocacy Project Administered In Partnership

May 3, 2005

Ms. Marilyn Arons
Parent Information Center of New Jersey, Inc.
P.O. Box 2126
Teaneck, NJ 07666

RE: SEAT Project National Advisory Board Selection

Dear Ms. Arons:

First, we want to thank you for your support of the SEAT Project and for your interest in serving on our National Advisory Board. We feel that the success of the SEAT Project, as a project of national significance, is vital to providing good quality lay advocate representation to parents of children with disabilities in supporting their special education needs.

As such, it is our desire to select candidates to sit on our national advisory board based on a variety of criteria, including length and breadth of special education knowledge and experience, knowledge of the practice of lay advocacy work, connections to major disability networks and national advocacy organizations, and those that can provide a diverse perspective from a regional, professional, and cultural point of view. We desire to create a board that can bring diverse perspectives, while working collaboratively to make this project a success in providing standardized training for special education advocates.

Based on the above, it is our pleasure to announce that the following candidates have been selected to sit on our national advisory board (listed in alphabetical order):

Catherine Blakemore	Executive Director, Protection and Advocacy, Inc., Sacramento, CA
Robert Farran	Director, Southwest Special Education Local Planning Area, Southern CA
Nancy Huerta	Senior Staff Attorney, Protection and Advocacy Services, Kansas City, MO
Kim Jones	Executive Director, Advocates for Justice and Education, Washington, D.C.
Denise Poston	Research Project Director, Policy and Families of Children with Disabilities, Beach Center on Disability, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS
Rich Robison	Director, Federation for Children with Special Needs, Boston, MA
Janet Rumble	Child Advocacy Clinic Fellow, Indiana University School of Law, Bloomington, IN
Jamie Ruppman	Director of Governmental Relations, TASH, Vienna, VA
Valerie Vanaman	Private Practice Special Education Attorney, Sherman Oaks, CA
TBD	Representative: Alliance of Parent Training and Information Centers
Anne Smith (Ex Officio)	Project Officer, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Washington, D.C.

USC University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (USC UCEDD)
Center for Disability Studies and Community Inclusion
5000 Sunset Blvd, Suite 510
Los Angeles, CA 90027
Barbara Wheeler, Center Director

Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates (COPAA)
14 Harwood Court (Suite 416)
Scarsdale, NY 10583
Barbara J. Ebenstein, Esq., Chair of COPAA

We will be contacting our new advisory board members shortly to arrange a date and time for our first meeting, hopefully to be scheduled by mid-May.

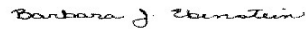
If you applied for a position on our national advisory board and your name does not appear on the list, we want to thank you for your support and interest. It was a difficult decision, as all of the potential candidates had unique qualities and experiences to offer. We hope that you will continue to stay in touch with the SEAT Project management team as the success of this project should lead to its replication and expansion, leading to new opportunities to become involved.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the selections made, please contact Dr. Barbara Wheeler or Barbara J. Ebenstein as the lead representatives of the project.

Sincerely,



Barbara Wheeler, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator
Director, Center for Disability Studies and
Community Inclusion, USC UCEDD



Barbara J. Ebenstein, Esq.
Chair, COPAA

Cc: Anne Smith, OSERS Project Officer