

# SILCs Creating Strategic Partnerships



Shawnique Cotton, AZSILC Chair



Scott Lindbloom, COSILC Member

# Strategy Defined

- A plan of action or policy designed to achieve a major or overall aim. ([Oxford Dictionary](#))
- A method or plan chosen to bring about a desired future, such as achievement of a goal or solution to a problem. ([businessdictionary.com](#))

# Partnership Defined

- In a broad sense, a partnership can be any endeavor undertaken jointly by multiple parties. The parties may be governments, nonprofits enterprises, businesses, or private individuals. The goals of a partnership also vary widely. ([Investopedia.com](https://www.investopedia.com))
- Partnerships may include a formal agreement or legal contract or arise when two or more parties more informally invest their energies and efforts toward a common pursuit, such as collaborating on a project, or serving on a joint task force.
- Informal partnerships can grow into more formal or legally binding partnerships, and being strategic about who you collaborate with can help you to cultivate relationships that move you in the direction you are trying to go.

# Collaboration Defined

- the process of two or more people, entities or organizations working together to complete a task or achieve a goal. ([Wikipedia](#))
- the act or process of working together or cooperating. ([Dictionary.com](#))

# Strategy Starts in the SPIL (1 of 5)

- The mission of the Arizona Independent (IL) Living Network and the 2021-2023 Arizona State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) is **to work collaboratively with a wide variety of entities** to identify gaps, mitigate barriers, and cultivate equity, with, and for, Arizonans who have disabilities.
- The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), Centers for Independent Living, and the Designated State Entity (CO Division of Vocational Rehabilitation/Office of Independent Living Services) **will continue to work closely with each other to collaborate** on opportunities to maximize resources to support community life for people with disabilities. The SILC has broad statewide representation, which provides opportunities for coordination. **The SILC and full CIL Network participate in many collaborations at the state level, ensuring CILs are maximized, and the IL philosophy is infused throughout CO.**

# Strategy Starts in the SPIL (2 of 5)

- Goal B: Arizona disability organizations **collaborate** to mitigate barriers for Arizonans who have disabilities.
  - B.4: Arizona Statewide Independent Living Council (AZSILC) **shares results** of a cross-disability Needs Assessment that has statewide reach, **with other disability centric organizations**, followed by a solutions-focused forum, **to prioritize activities for collective action**.
  - B.5: Arizona Statewide Independent Living Council **joins other partner organizations** in supporting the mission of Arizona Disability Coalition.

# Strategy Starts in the SPIL (3 of 5)

- 1.3 Developing a strong and effective IL Network
  - **Increase partnerships** and communication with state government agencies:
  - Improve effective communication with leaders of state agencies and boards, including: HCPF, DOLA, CDHS and CDLE/DVR to **coordinate membership** on committees and relevant stakeholder groups.
  - **Invite targeted representatives to serve on the SILC or appropriate SILC Committees.**
  - **Quarterly meetings** between designated representatives of above agencies and IL Network, including the SILC, will occur.

# Strategy Starts in the SPIL (4 of 5)

The SILC and full IL Network will continue to outreach to, and coordinate with, other state boards, councils and agencies with a focus on disabilities, including:

- DD Planning Council
- Mindsource (Brain Injury)
- Behavioral Health Planning Council
- State Rehabilitation Council
- Office of Employment First
- APSE
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Local Workforce Centers
- The Rocky Mountain ADA Center
- The Veteran's Administration
- The Client Assistance Program
- Area Agency on Aging and Adult Resources
- The Colorado Assistive Technology Program
- State Youth Council
- State Workforce Development Council
- The Colorado Advisory Council for Persons with Disability
- The Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Local high schools and post-secondary entities
- DOLA/Division of Housing
- State Medicaid Agency (Health Care Policy and Financing), specifically CTS, the Colorado Community Choice Act, and the Medicaid Buy-In for Working Adults with Disabilities
- Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Rural and frontier social service agencies, mental health providers, and DVR Counselors
- Area Agencies on Aging and Aging, other organizations and agencies addressing the needs of consumers with significant disabilities
- Long Term Care, including the Colorado Living Advisory Group and the Regional Care Collaborative Organization



# Strategy Starts in the SPIL (5 of 5)

- Ability360
- Arizona Council of the Blind
- Arizona Department of Education
- Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs
- Arizona Department of Health Services
- Arizona Division of Developmental Disabilities
- Arizona Rehabilitation Services Administration
- Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living
- Assist! To Independence
- Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona
- Coyote Crisis Collaborative
- Direct Advocacy & Resource Center
- Diverse Ability Incorporated
- Independent Living Research Utilization
- Institute for Human Development
- Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
- Arizona Center for Disability Law
- Arizona Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- National Council on Independent Living
- New Horizons Disability Empowerment Center
- Opportunity Tree
- Raising Special Kids
- Sonoran UCEDD
- The Arc of Arizona
- World Institute on Disability
- Services Maximizing Independent Living and Empowerment
- National Association of Statewide Independent Living Councils

# Turning Passion Into Power – Leveraging Partnerships

## (1 of 4)

- Many Council members come into their Council service not really understanding what SILCs do, and what they cannot do, which sometimes leads Council members to either push boundaries or become dissatisfied with their service.
- It is important that Council members receive ongoing training to ensure that they understand their roles and do not cross those lines.
- By design, Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs) are a catalyst for statewide outcomes, and strategic systems change through collaboration, and do not provide direct services to individuals. SILCs cannot provide independent living services, manage such services, or compete with Centers for Independent Living in the delivery of such services.

# Turning Passion Into Power – Leveraging Partnerships

## (2 of 4)

- As longtime members, we recognize that it takes some time for members to really learn what SILCs are all about and how their SILC makes an impact in their state or territory. Sometimes slow and steady wins the race, because it takes time to build strategy and collaborative partnerships.
- Being in the right space at the right time is very important for SILCs, because one entity can't do everything, so creating a strategy to leverage partnerships is an effective way to increase your bandwidth toward making an enduring impact.
- When Scott served on AZSILC, members of the Council wanted to do more around the Caregiving Workforce in the state, as well as to better support the Environmental Illness Community in Arizona. However, time was needed to develop the collaborative partnerships necessary to implement a strategy that had enough traction for AZSILC to effectively mobilize on.

# Turning Passion Into Power – Leveraging Partnerships

## (3 of 4)

- As result of a longtime partnership with Arizona Department of Health Services, AZSILC secured funding to start a Statewide Caregiving Collaborative and an Environmental Illness Coalition, which now have the investment of multiple statewide partners who are working together to make gains in both areas.
- With so much need, it is essential for SILCs to prioritize the areas in which they can invest their energies, and the pandemic was a big catalyst for more discussion around Health Equity, and as result, Arizona was more open for AZSILC to mobilize in these two areas. AZSILC never forgot about the issues, it was just necessary find the right strategy to make the impact AZSILC was looking to make, and as soon as that path forward was clear, AZSILC made their move.

# Turning Passion Into Power – Leveraging Partnerships

## (4 of 4)

- Scott has been serving on Colorado SILC for less than one year. When the existing COSILC Policy Committee needed a new Chair, Scott jumped at the chance because he is passionate about policy and has experience with policy development and legislative advocacy.
- Since Scott took on the role, the COSILC Policy Committee has some new members:
  - ADA Coordinator from Denver National Airport
  - Alliance for Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- Scott also facilitated the appointment of a representative from Aging and Disability Resource Center to become a non-voting member of the Colorado SILC.

# Leveraging Partnerships – Long-term Results (1 of 2)

- AZSILC has had an Arizona Department of Health Services contract for Personal Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Preparedness and Response for almost 15 years. This funded partnership grew out of a collaborative project and has led to additional partnerships being developed, and subsequent funding opportunities to continue this important work. Scott was Chair of the AZSILC Emergency Preparedness Committee and Shawnique is the current Chair of this committee.
- A few years ago, an AZSILC partner was approached to apply for a Health Disparities grant and instead of leading this effort themselves, asked AZSILC to lead the effort because of their history of working in this space. Out of this grant, the Arizona Rural Health Equity Collaborative as formed, and a Best Practices guide was developed and disseminated. New partners also emerged, who have now become involved in other AZSILC initiatives.

# Leveraging Partnerships – Long-term Results (2 of 2)

- AZSILC was approached by partners to participate in a funded statewide sexual abuse and disability collaborative, which grew out of an advocacy mobilization in Arizona.
- Over the course of three SPIL cycles, AZSILC concentrated efforts on Youth Leadership and Engagement. Written into the SPIL was an that AZSILC supported the development of a new nonprofit organization to sustain those efforts, which is going strong and growing continually. AZSILC has mentored several other states, including Colorado to develop similar Youth Leadership and Engagement Initiatives. Both the AZSILC and Colorado Youth Leadership Forums are successful and grew out of strategic SILC partnerships.

# Questions or Comments?

For more information about AZSILC, please contact:

Mellie Adu, State Administrator

[mellie@azsilc.org](mailto:mellie@azsilc.org)

602-262-2900, ext 1

For more information about COSILC, please contact:

Peter Pike, Program Manager

[Peter.Pike@state.co.us](mailto:Peter.Pike@state.co.us)

303-902-5897