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MAUREEN JOHNSON:

Hello welcome to life after LEND the sponsored by AUCD also known as the (audio issues) technical developments of tender -- develop much Centre I am Maureen Johnson, and there's a leader for the training facility I'm also emerging -- for the training centre monomers leader myself and I am an emerging leader of colour so before we begin I would like to address a few logistical details, because of the number of participants you'll be muted through the webinar.

You consummate questions at any point in the chat box on your webinar Consul if you have questions we will lead them aloud to accommodate all attendees we have cart captioning available if you would like to access it please click the CC button to view the subtitles.

We ask if you do speak during the discussion portion please unmute yourself and begin by saying your name, this will let you know who is speaking so it will let you know speaking especially the captioner, this is being recorded and it will be available within the week as well as the written transcript from the captioner. So again we want to thank you all for coming today.

We will start with just a poll to see who is here so I will share my screen with the mentor later poll so if you could put your answer in the chat we can see what program you're coming from in your role and some words that come to mind when you think of the benefits of alumni engagement.

So will give you a couple sent -- couple seconds see how your response again the link to this poll is in the chat. Great, we see a great wide array of people coming from California and Washington and New Mexico and Georgia and Iowa, University of Washington again, I see Cincinnati and the California LEND, Connecticut, Wisconsin, UC Davis, my Institute, wonderful, Nebraska LEND.

So for the next question what is your role? We want to know are you coming to us as Director? Trading Director? Maybe you are a current training or formal training trying to see how you can continue get engaged with your program? Or maybe or other program or faculty staff like a cell faculty or family faculty?

Well we have a great array of participants, I see the majority are former trainees, some current trainees and the rest are faculty. Great, fantastic. In our final question, we want to know what words come to mind when you consider the benefits of alumni engagement.

I know for me, I know some of the great things about being connected to your centre as alumni are that it is a community. The mentorship, that is a great answer, inclusion, networking, teamwork, growth, a lot of great responses, reciprocity and belonging, idea sharing and new opportunities,

Great, fantastic. I see some responses in the chat as well like future leaders. Great, thank you so much for answering. So now, I will introduce, well first I will talk about the learning objectives for today's webinar. You can expect to learn about the benefits of engaging former trainees including self and self advocate trainees, we will identify some macro and micro strategies for engagement as well as discussing solutions for emerging challenges and talking about some evaluation methods as well.

So please join me in welcoming our moderates for today's panel, Alyx Medlock, from the training Director of New Mexico LEND and Mark Crenshaw the Assistant Director of the Georgia Centre for leadership and disability. Cell turn over to our moderators, thank you.

MARK CRENSHAW:

Thank you -- welcome and welcome to our guest today, I Mark Crenshaw, I guess I am to start, so as we begin, we will review a little bit about how Alex and I thought about our approach to learning objectives for the webinar today.

So in terms of the benefits of engaging trainees I just wanted to say that from my perspective here in our LEND program, I really just want to highlight the goal of LEND, I think. Which is to train interdisciplinary workforce. That is ready to provide individual and family care.

And you know, advocate within four individual disabilities and their autism and their families, so I think that LEND is key will he think about that, obviously in terms of their requirements of our land grants is important because we want to be able to do follow-up.

But I think that the first reason I would say it is important is because I am really interested in building the capacity of the state of Georgia, to better meet the needs of children, adults and families. With disabilities. And alumni engagement is part of that long-term strategy. I want to know where the Georgia LEND alumni are so that I can provide guidance and opportunities to connect to LEND.

And guidance and opportunities to connect to conversations at our state that position alumni for leadership. And just in terms of connecting you now briefly using social media those who know me in this network know that it is a bad way can I have been on for many years in terms of engaging leaders, so close Facebook groups that the alumni participated in one of the good things what a micro strategy that happens at this time every year is when we finish land we welcome the new alumni LEND to the Facebook group, it is one of the things that I can get a little bit emotional about, with the alumni welcoming new alumni to the LEND family here in Georgia has been important to me.

In terms of the micro-strategies it has been important to say that I went back and counted you know in terms of the schedule for our land presentations I think that in the year that we just finished we

engaged about 12 or 13 alumni in about 12, to provide subject matter expertise.

You know to be family mentors. For family trainees to be family mentors and leadership mentors for families same with our then who have been in the alumni program to engage them and to mentor self advocates in our program and just to say, you know we sort of evaluate that by by counting soap quantitatively and qualitatively we have sort of counted the numbers of folks who remain engaged and we know where they are and also really being clear about the fact that we are in our 11th year of land developing quite a -- LEND developing quite a group people who have stories of navigating complex systems and stories to share with their colleagues so that is what I will say in the beginning. If you want to take it from here, alyx.

ALYX MEDLOCK:

Thank you Mark, I am Alyx Medlock I liked injuries myself I am a white woman in my late 40s and I have her brought hair and glasses. My background is a houseplant so I am really glad to be here with all of you so can we go to the next slide? What I would like to talk about is the first thing that Mark said which is that we really want to think in terms of this discussion in this panel about why we are supporting alumni engagements and I think that this goes from the top for really concrete reasons why we are asking people to continue to engage with us like things like rent reporting. At our two and five and 10 year surveys.

In things that Mark touched on like things hike having former trainees then contribute to this more robust LEND training so we ask our trainees to come back as panelists. And as people who are leading discussions and seminars and then it goes into these more abstract reasons why we ask for this engagement which is that we are meeting our goals of having leaders in our communities and in New Mexico we have a large, rural state and we want to make sure we are staying in touch with those leadership goals and the things happening within those communities.

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So, there you go, so in New Mexico as Martin mentioned -- as Mark mentioned we are thinking about micro and macro levels, Abba how we engage people individually which involves many different things like inviting people to come and present with us.

It also involves connections with people in the community, connecting with opportunities for leadership, like board openings and employments, and leadership opportunities, so connecting individuals with where we know their strengths lie, and we note there are things we are doing at a cohort level. So the list of these things, we have an online portal in New Mexico, we host alumni symposiums things like email lists and brown bags which we mentioned. And social media like creating cohort groups. Next page please.

And I think, here's an example, we had a picture of the portal because it took us a long time to make so now you off the see it and this is an opportunity for our alumni and current trainees to have a discussion board that we can think about leadership opportunities and what people are doing in their communities, resources so former trainees have asked us to have a depository of things that they can go to get information and resources that they have gained through LEND.

In this networking connection between the members and that calendar of events and I'd like to mention that quickly because it is beautiful right? So next slide please. And I think I would like to talk about the ways that engagement has been supported. And MH or thing was that we applied and had this to fast grant through ITAC.

And it was a gain through leveraging I think that's an important word our network group so it was to create a space and I think that AUCD providing support help us create that space to make an opportunity to do this.

I think that time on the next slide I would say is the most thing that made it hard to implement these things. So that is it, time I have it in caps because I'm yelling the site you are (Laughs) This is the biggest challenge making the space and making sure can be prioritized. So having that opportunity through fast grant really helped us.

And this piece on motivation, why do trainees want to continue their involvement with us? They want to continue creating those leadership opportunities., Sorry I have lots of dogs (Laughs)

I will put my contact information in there, everyone has it but I want to make sure we were framing the discussion with our lovely panel so thank you all.

MAUREEN JOHNSON:

Thank you so much will move into our panel discussion. So I will let Mark introduce our first panelist.

MARK CRENSHAW:

Sore first panelist is Donna Morgan Johnson.

They are the development and partnership director for Georgia's childcare subsidy program, childcare and parent services at the Department of learning here in Georgia.

She also serves as the family faculty for the Georgia LEND program, in disability. Georgia State University. Ms. Morgan Johnson's previous roles includes serving the director for children and special healthcare needs. Title V. And the director of child health programs and director of George's

intervention program, which is the ID EA part C program in Georgia. It is in the maternal child health sector.

Ms. Morgan Johnson was also the coordinator and co-author of the (Name) for Georgia, and a member of the 2011, 2012, inaugural Georgia LEND cohort. She was a family member in that first cohort.

She is the mom of three young adult daughters. One of whom lives with autism. Ms. Morgan Johnson has a Masters degree from Walden University in human and social services. Thank you for being with us, Donna.

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

I am very excited to introduce Brandon Eddy. He is a speech pathologist at Portland State University Beach and hearing sciences departments. I did not mention that I am also an SLP, so we have (indiscernible) for each other. He completed training in both the Iowa LEND program in 2014 and 15, and the Oregon LEND program in 2015 at 2016. He served as a trainee in AUCD in 2015 at 2016. And currently serves at the AUCD emerging leaders advisory Board.

Brendan is passionate about family centred interdisciplinary clinical practice and research. Particularly, in augmentative and alternative communication and cleft and cranial facial differences will stop welcome, Brendan, thank you for coming.

MARK CRENSHAW:

This is Mark speaking again. The next person I will introduce is Maggie Winston. Maggie is an advocate from Alaska, a full-time program director for local Centre for Independent living, and an adjunct faculty (indiscernible). She has a fiery passion for disability policy and advocacy and is the author of the blog Pretty Wheelchair Girl. Thank you for being with us today, Maggie.

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

I'm very excited to introduce Anjali Rao. She has over 20 years of experience as a faculty pediatrician at Northwestern University where she provided care to multiple pediatric communities and taught medical trainees at the Feinberg School of medicine.

She is currently at the University of Chicago where she is sub specializing in developmental and behavioural pediatrics. And serves a patient population that disproportionately faces a myriad of health disparities. Her advocacy and research interest focus on increasing access to care for vulnerable youths and fostering systemwide change to increase care delivery for children and teens with developmental differences.

Doctor Rao is currently the vice chair for the AUCD interest group. She is also a developmental and pediatrics fellow at the University of Chicago and was 2020-2021 AUCD training liaison for the Illinois LEND. Welcome, Anjali.

MARK CRENSHAW:

Now that we have introduced the panel and, once again, thank you all for taking the time out of your Friday afternoon — or, Friday, to be with us.

I will ask Maggie if she will begin by answering the first question: can you discuss different ways your program engaged you after your time as a trainee?

MAGGIE WINSTON:

Absolutely. Thank you for being here today. My program engaged me by hiring me as a faculty. We did not actually incorporate self advocates until my cohort in 2016.

And then, right after that, they started incorporating self advocacy faculty as well. So, I think that has helped me to stay engaged because I sit on every cohort now.

But that is something that we have done in our program a lot since. So, there is a little bit of a turnover in LEND faculty. But, pretty much, all of that turnover is filled with individuals from previous cohorts.

So, it is really cool that we get to see the same faces and continue to engage as faculty that way.

MARK CRENSHAW:

Thank you, Maggie.

Donna, I wonder if you could respond to that first question?

DONNA MORGAN JOHNSON:

Certainly. So, gosh, it has been 10 years. I guess, last year was our 10th year. I started with LEND as family discipline. Over the ten-year period, I have been engaged in a lot of different ways. I have come back and sat on panels, I have had the pleasure of having family members who were engaged in LEND to reach out to me, to ask questions will stop I have done presentations on different roles, in different capacities.

But, you know, before becoming family faculty this year, I was already supporting other family members. And that was really nice because what I saw was Mark, who was my director — training director at the time, he really saw my trajectory and the path that I was on once we saw families were struggling. He connected me, and I loved working with them. Once I moved into some of the roles that

I had, I've been able to serve as a resource for the program. So, it's been a great experience.

MARK CRENSHAW:

Thank you, Donna.

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

Mark, do you want to ask the second question?

MARK CRENSHAW:

I can!

So, the second question is, how did your program engage you individually and how did they engage your cohort of trainees?

And for this question, we will go to Brandon first.

BRANDON EDDY:

Sure, thank you for that question.

I think I would like to begin just by starting to talk about my LEND program. In the Iowa LEND program, something that I loved was that they pay for everybody to go to the AUCD conference in March. And we had the chance to meet with our legislators at the national level, and advocate for bills and legislation that was important at the time.

That really stood out to me. I had the privilege to also do that again the following year at the Oregon LEND program. They paid for me to get to do that as well.

I say the other moments that stood out, again, in the Iowa program, they brought all of their trainees to the state level, too, again, advocate for those who were up in the state legislation at a time.

I bring this out as standout moments because my brief review of alumni literature — because I have to get into this in preparation for this panel. But alumni engagement literature would suggest that the likelihood of somebody to maintain engagement with their cohort and their training program, once graduated, is the richness of the experience that they have had as part of the training.

So, I bring this up to see that I want to be engaged. LEND was incredible as a training experience for me, and both programs that I participated in.

As we talk about strategies to improve engagement, I see aspects that we should think about from

how we improve engagement at the training level, but also, how do we create engagement for those trainees who have already graduated.

Since graduating from LEND, at the group level, I've primarily engaged with both programs in the sense that I have done the two and five year surveys. That is the primary way this point.

Individually, I have maintained connections with the Oregon LEND program, and of course, practising in the state of Oregon right now. Although, I think fondly of my Iowa LEND program, I've had limited individual engagements since leaving. With the Oregon LEND program, a lot of the engagement that I've had is in aspects of my current positions — placing students with their program experiences. I've had a chance to mentor speech language ecology Fellows who is serving as LEND trainees currently. I've had the privilege to be hired as a research associate for the Institute of development of disability at our local program too. So, I feel very think before that, obviously.

Since transitioning to Portland State again, placing students now to encourage them to have these experiences. I've had a chance to reject my former mentors to serve as guest lecturers that I'm teaching to graduate and undergraduate students. I've been told by some of those individuals that it has helped their promotion pathways for advancing. And I've had the chance to do research collaborations with a number of faculty. So, it is very helpful, I think, from a future generation of student training standpoint. But also, helping to advance both my professional pathway, and hopefully, my colleagues who are still in the LEND program, as faculty right now.

MARK CRENSHAW:

Thank you, Brendan. Anjali, do you want to respond to the second question?

ANJALI RAO:

I trained last year for the LEND program, it has helped me with the pediatric and (indiscernible) fellowships. So, it is part of what we do.

So, in that sense, it is nice to always have someone in both my home program, and my home program, you know? (Laughs)

My DBP fellowship program and also, my Illinois LEND program, there someone above me and below me in terms of that training pathway. That is nice to have, to have someone to look up to and say, "how did you approach this assignment?"

And also, to turn back around and do that for the person coming next.

In terms of cohort engagement, Illinois LEND, I think, there is a lot of information sharing that it starts

with, within weekly newsletter, highlighting what our other cohort members are doing. And then come also, making sure that we know of opportunities open to us through that. I was able to learn of the AUCD trainee liaison program. I was able to apply and be accepted to that program, which, of course, required endorsement and support from my LEND directors. They were very supportive in giving that endorsement.

They have also been able to engage me individually by having me come back to help serve as consultant faculty at times, when that didactic is pertinent to something that I can add to. So, I've been able to serve in that capacity.

And then, I also applied and was accepted to be the AUCD autism Sigg culture, last year, and that was with a lot of support and endorsement from my LEND director.

So, I think, that kind of happens on this blast, you know, way to start with. "Here is our newsletter, here is opportunities." And then when they see somebody was ready to engage, then that gives a chance to work more individually with that person to help move them along the path that they are choosing for themselves at that time.

MARK CRENSHAW:

That's great and jolly -- that's great Anjali. Perhaps Maggie you could talk about how the LEND program engaged you and how to gauge the full cohort of trainees you engaged with? We offer you that opportunity now.

MAGGIE WILSON:

Thank you, I think I explained how they engaged me individually, fortunately, but how we engage other trainees, very similar to other examples the guise of already given.

Calling back for panels is a really big one. Every single year, we will call some of our former trainees back in, we always do a panel of former trainees in the beginning at our first face-to-face we call it.

And Alaska is really kind of a big small-town, anyway.

And so when you have an interdisciplinary group that is doing developmental disability specific stuff that makes it even more of a small town thing, so I think through social media. Particularly we have an Alaska land without walls group. And through calling back to do these panels it is not super difficult with that small town feel to engage. So that is probably region and state specific I'm sure you guys, and you're much bigger programs and states with more population it is more difficult.

So I guess for anybody out there who has a lot of rural individuals or smaller populations it is really about keeping that small town kind of close-knit vibe together through social media and through that interest -- interdisciplinary field, I guess.

MARK CRENSHAW:

That's great, Maggie and I think this might be a question for folks in the chat but you know, I think there are some things that we do in Atlanta that work for us in terms of getting people together. On a regular basis that might be a challenge in Alaska so I am interested to think that that balance would be really interesting to think about. Thanks for raising that, thanks I think that is important for us to think about as we think about the challenges and opportunities in our individual programs. So Donna I want to give you an opportunity to address this question

If you have anything to add specifically, or you just go ahead.

DONNA JOHNSON:

Yeah, I think one of the things that I have always loved, and unfortunately with COVID we have not been able to do it is much as our picnic. Where we get back together and we get to bring all the cohorts together, everyone who has participated, and it is amazing. You would think that something as simple as a picnic, well use get to see people but it's that moment where you get to find out where your colleagues have gone. What have they gone to do?

Connections are made even connections beyond those conversations that happen during that time together. And classroom. -- In classroom and I can say through bringing the cohorts back together I can say I've had opportunities to come my way because you know, it's like, "Of Donna I didn't know you're doing this or even extended to this." And it has been a great way to network.

And I will say the other important part of it is for me it is not just about the lend program has engaged me. It is about how I have engaged LEND.

I have had things that have happened and I know that if I shared this with Mark or at the time Dan or Emily, about opportunities that can really help. Strengthen, and you know it may be applicable for people within the cohort. It helps us all to grow we continue to thrive as a family which is what the ultimate plan is for me. I love having a family whether it is here, I love all of you because you're part of my family. How about that?

MARK CRENSHAW:

Thanks, Donna.

ALYX MEDLOCK:

Don I think Alaska the next question first if you would like to keep talking because

(Laughter)

ALYX MEDLOCK:

That will be lovely, I think it touches on what you have already been speaking about which is what you've all been speaking about and Donna I liked that idea that you put out there about this reciprocal interaction about what LEND is doing to reach out to you what you are doing to stay in touch with LEND.

So what I want to start with, though is do you have ideas or suggestions about how engagement could be improved? Like in ways that engagement with alumni could be improved from the LEND?

DONNA JOHNSON:

You know, I do, I was very fortunate and I have been very fortunate on my path at LEND, I'll give this tidbit when I started at LEND and family discipline I had not even finished my bachelors degree but I was working on it and I knew I wanted to go.

And I have had this amazing journey. When I moved into the role of Director for the children with special health needs program or the (unknown term) program I was able to reach out and engage LEND, because it was an opportunity for us to both grow. I knew the benefit of, there were projects that I knew LEND was working on. Like there were projects and there were -- anyway had experience in public health so why not use this wealth of talent that sits within LEND and I reached out to Mark and said hey Mark, I have some that may actually benefit and could help expand the skill set and how the trainees to understand how state government works.

And you know, I think again, thinking about not just how wetland can do for you but what you can do for LEND and I think we are on the same page and we are all working towards the same thing. I think we have to be creative, I love the social media. That Mark engages us and. I have learned a lot about what my colleagues are doing. But also, opportunity. And I thought maybe I need to plug in here. Para I have reached---

I have rechecked some my colleagues and I said this is something for you. So I have engaged my staff and recommended them for LEND. I think it is continuing to grow the network because I can see the skills that sit within my team and I want to make sure certainly they have the same opportunity.

ALYX MEDLOCK:

Thank you, Donna. And that makes me think about how important the relationships were the you created with Mark and others. Sorry Mark you're the one who is here but how important it is for that relationship to have a relationship you can go back and reach out for those important things in creating those relationships and really how important that is. So thank you

DONNA JOHNSON:

I like to add one thing to that when I was at public health we were working on healthcare transition project. And I knew there were a couple of LEND programs that were focused on that same work and had to been developing. I use my relationship as being part of the LEND family, I reached out and I could not get through the door the first time but when I said I was a LEND fellow wow. People reached out. Because they were LEND. And they stand chair. So not just my own LEND but other programs.

ALYX MEDLOCK:

Yes right and other peoples investment of LEND as a concept helps you get your foot in that door. Yeah, no, that is a great point. Brandon, I will ask you the same question. How do you think engagement could have been improved? It sounds like you have had different experiences over time?

BRANDON EDDY:

It has been nice to see different LEND programs but I'd also like to reinforce what Donna said that I think this is a two-way Street, I think the trainees to be engaged to want to be engaged I think that in terms of how lend programs can improve engagement there could be aspects that are (audio issues) or how LEND training could improve but also a top-down in terms of incentives for engaging those alumni engagement. Para I think I mentioned before that I enjoyed doing my two and five year surveys it felt like a nice way to connect with my former land program but overall what I think I would wish for would be more opportunities in sustained engagement over time with my LEND program just to see where people are at.

Like as Donna said, the social events to get together they are a nice way to build community and to see where former LEND trainees are added to build those connections which are so important to have that community. I would like to acknowledge that while those chickens they will be important as a practical professional I am a speech language pathologist and I know many of our colleagues have other professional homes beyond AUCD.

As a speech language pathologist my home organization is the language (audio issues) they have the IOT eight they have countless other organizations beyond this so where we lay ourselves out they often get in clinical positions after graduating where they have full-time jobs, it means there have small meta-resources left for where we allocate our times and dedication to.

So obviously a strong training experience as a LEND fellow or LEND trainee wants us to dedicate that time towards LEND and AUCD and the efforts put forth by those organizations but we also have requirements to fulfil continuing education like mandatory trainings which both take time and funding.

So what I would say given the limited resources available to our former trainees, I imagine that some may need some incentivize a shin to maximize their engagement with sustained engagement with the LEND program after, it doesn't necessarily mean that we have to pay them to show up to events, that I do think that offering continuing education that meets requirements of multiple professional organizations can be a powerful way to engage the statement -- sustaining while meeting our professional requirements our trainees have. I think there's lots of opportunities for collaboration between groups.

I do a lot of research projects in my current position as a faculty member. I know that many of my colleagues have to do research projects as part of their LEND program. So I know there opportunities for collaboration that exist within former trainees that can advance our careers. But also help to meet than meet it for current trainees as well as to enhance the quality of the program that I've already spoken to already.

We have gotten into social connections, like an (Name) spoke about this amazing program they spoke about with the social media P setting that is a great idea. I think some of the challenges of being a faculty member leading this that sustaining this with all of your current job and other responsibilities you have. Because that takes time and someone has to do it. And I think if we shift to a top-down approach for how to engage alumni, there has to be the funding that supports this position to exist.

To dedicate to that time, and to be in different LEND programs, I have seen that this is sometimes an extra part of someone's job and and sometimes them just taking the initiative to really want to engage alumni.

I think we look at the funding mechanisms there is a possibility of distributing more funds, either to those who have sustained an engaging alumni networks besides just the two and five year and 10 year check ins. That would be a great way to really likely enhance the amount of engagement we have. I was excited to see the fast grant that A;yx was awarded, I think that this allows people to get the funding to dedicate to this workweeks is this his full-time jobs that multiple faculty members have at universities purely to engage with alumni. It is not an extra thing it is a key component of the growth of the network.

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

When we create that space and fun something, and provide time for something, it is an indication of its value. It is something that we decided as a group is valuable enough to create an opportunity for that — that is an excellent idea, thank you, Brandon. Anjali, do you want to touch on this question as well, around how you think that we can be doing better job in engagement?

ANJALI RAO:

I can echo some other things that have already been said. It is a collaborative effort. I mean, it is the Holy Spirit of LEND. It is collaboration. And I think carrying that forward during the alumni years is important. And I agree, everything that is AUCD or LEND related, right now, for me, personally, is completely on a voluntary basis.

Unfortunately, I'm not necessarily supported from my home training program with (Name), or LEND, so there is limitations to the ability to engage because of that.

So, things such as the fast program is a fantastic way to continue that support.

And I think that — I think we understand those benefits. I don't think anyone here — it is kind of like what we are dealing with in our — what we are doing with LEND, in general. Everything comes back to time, capacity, and where are things out in terms of legislation and advocacy.

And I think that it applies to the resources and the patients and the populations that we are working with. And it is starting to apply to us as well, in our abilities to move forward. So, I think, sometimes taking a little bit of a step back and saying, "how do we help ourselves in a collaborative manner so that we can continue to help others?" That is important.

And through the pandemic, that theme has been touched upon but really, it is really starting to make more efforts in that way. You know, the oxygen mask goes on you first, kind of idea.

A little bit of that might help moving forward.

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

Anjali, you had mentioned before the idea of mentorship as a way — having people mentor you, and you mentoring others in that process. It sounds like that as well, creating those mentoring networks with LEND. Do you want to add anything else about that?

ANJALI RAO:

I think one of the areas that I would like to see a little bit more mentorship development is not just through my home LEND program, but as we start to engage with the bigger AUCD organization, having more opportunities to have connections with leadership and mentorship through AUCD. I think that would be a nice way to move forward.

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

That is an excellent idea. An ongoing mentorship is so meaningful, I think. If we had it at different LEND programs, that is a interesting and need opportunity.

ANJALI RAO:

I think, from what I gathered, there is some consistency from LEND to LEND. And then, there is a lot of individuality from LEND to LEND. It is some of those really excellent programs and ways of engagement that are working in one area, could be more translatable to other LEND programs. That might be a nice benefit for all.

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

Very interesting, thank you.

So, for our next question, Maggie, I will start with you, if you do not mind.

Our next question is: how has your continued engagement with your LEND program supported you in your own leadership journey?

MAGGIE WINSTON:

Excellent question. Again, I will go back to my personal experience, which is becoming faculty.

I am a person with a disability, anyway. I have a spinal cord injury, so, you can see my neck piece. I'm driving a power wheelchair with my face.

I also happened to be sort of naturally, kind of, spicy, rebellious as a person. So, salve advocacy came naturally, even before I acquired a disability. So, I'm passionate about teaching individuals about dignity of risk, ableism, inspiration porn, the kinds of issues that make me feel good to help me train and teach people and help spread this message that we have been lied to a society — that disability is not bad and that we can carry on, absolutely, normal lives. And that we do not have to be exceptional or horrible, and crippled, you know?

That, for me, has been the most individually powerful thing. To be able to spread that and the mentorship — like was mentioned before — continuing on in that way. It makes me feel super empowered as a disabled woman, especially. So, that is how it has been great for me.

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

Yes, thank you so much. And I'm going to ask you the follow-up question as well: what parts of your training experiences have motivated you to stay in contact with LEND and AUCD and the network — and maintaining that contact with your LEND program.

MAGGIE WINSTON:

Even if I was not consistently engaged by being faculty, it is that advocacy piece, right? We all did not happenstance with LEND, where all advocates and we have goals. So, we want to be engaged and

advocate right out of the gate.

So, I lost my train of thought there. (Laughs)

Can you repeat the question?

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

I certainly can.

What parts of your training experiences have motivated you to continue with your engagement. You started answering it in a lovely way. So, whatever else you want to add is perfect.

MAGGIE WINSTON:

Just the advocacy piece, that specific part is what really helped.

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

So, I will ask a question to Donna as well. But I think, Donna, has talked about those relationship pieces. That is what I am hearing from you, Maggie, as well — we have a network of people who are also very motivated by the things that we are. They are very engaged so, those are the people that we want to hang out with. Those are the people that we want to continue to work with. So, I think that makes perfect sense.

Donna, how has your continued engagement supported your leadership journey?

DONNA MORGAN JOHNSON:

I think the first thing, of course, is given the opportunity to become part of faculty, you know, for me, I really wanted to give back to the program that gave to me. I thought, especially as a family member, it has meant so much to be able to support other family members and solve advocates who are really on this journey.

And one thing that has motivated me through this process — and through my training — was as a family member, you come in with your own lens of what you think life looks like. You come in with their own experiences.

But through my engagement with LEND, through training and through the course of these 10 years, I've learned the other side. And I've learned from members of my cohort or other disciplines, saying that (indiscernible) as a parent, of a young woman who was in high school and I am trying to navigate a system. And when the psychologist said to me, "no, we are not going to do this," but then, getting to reach out to my colleagues to say, "can you please explain to me why these people will not give my

child the service?" And they can explain to me that "Donna, this is based on an education in space, not based on your personal space."

So, learning all of that, the inter-workings and the back end of this has really moulded me to not only continue my journey, but to support other parents who may not know.

So, that is where I feel like I have gotten a lot of motivation. So, thanks.

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

Yes, that's absolutely great. Thank you for sharing that.

Brandon, or Anjali, do you want to share anything in the last few minutes that we have?

ANJALI RAO:

I think that common goal of advocacy is such a strong driver for everyone involved with this and continues to be involved. And I think understanding that the problems are bigger than any one discipline, unless we come together to work as a truly multidisciplinary team, then that is the only way to achieve those common goals.

And I think that has been a breath of fresh air to be on those teams, to continue to move that idea forward. Even when we are going back and working with our own disciplines. And also, sharing that knowledge with others in our own disciplines who do not have the opportunity to thrive within a full LEND training program.

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

Absolutely. Brandon, do you have anything that you would like to add to this?

BRANDON EDDY:

I think that is great. It is. It is all about shared goals and through that, we have the opportunity to enhance future generations of trainees who are advancing beyond this. I look at my path and without the Iowa program, I probably would not have been in the organ program. Without that, I would not have gotten the research job, that got me math faculty position. I attribute everything that I have success in with my experience with LEND, and my drive to support efforts in terms of my own values, they align with LEND. LEND passed that onto me and I will continue to pass it on to the students that I teach.

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

Thank you all so much. Those themes of the richness of the experiences that we have in LEND supporting that continued engagement and that continued desire to be part of that network, not within

our own LEND programs, but within AUCD and with each other and those who have shared goals. So, thank you.

Mark, do you have any last words?

MARK CRENSHAW:

I just wanted to amplify Anjali and their point. I think, often, when we start with a new LEND cohort, and we talk about the challenges that kids, adults and families with disabilities are attempting to navigate the systems and the complexity, it seems like a really complicated and complex set of challenges to unravel. And it is, for sure. But I wanted to amplify Anjali and their point, that part of the benefit of LEND is having people from 14 or 15 disciplines in a room together, bringing 14 or 15 unique life experiences and perspectives about how we can advocate for more just future. And in the sense, that we absolutely cannot expect that people who are psychologists or social workers could bring enough perspectives and ideas and experiences in the room to do it alone. So, that is exactly why we come together in LEND, to do it. And back to my original point, you know, You know, the goal of LEND is to build an interdisciplinary workforce that is focused on these issues over time.

And so, Donna, I don't know what I said in your interview but I am fond of saying and lend interviews to applicants, come join us on this 25 year journey to make sure we are stronger for the kids and adults we care about and so I think Anjali I think you hit the nail on the head for why this is such a vital conversation so I appreciate your perspective.

MAUREEN JOHNSON:

I would like to thank our moderators so much thank you Mark and Alyx for directing the flow of this conversation and thank you to our panelists, Donna, Brandon, Maggie, and Anjali now we're going to some questions so please if you have some questions for our panel please if you could put them in the chat.

I think I saw one question earlier from Maja, they were support fellow during the April 2020 lockdown period and they asked how can someone like me find usage and application for the training and time you put into the training? Are there any opportunities out there, thank you for your suggestions and guidance.

ALYX MEDLOCK:

Maggie and Donna I wonder if you have specific experiences that could answer that question?

MAGGIE WILSON:

Could you repeat the question once more please?

MAUREEN JOHNSON:

Sure no problem, I am asking so Maya is a family support fellow how can someone like me find usage of the application of training that they did under the unit -- are there any opportunities out there?

ALYX MEDLOCK:

I want Maggie and Donna's answer this and we think about this within our LEND that if you're coming to LEND as a professional fellow you have a pretty clear path of your leadership right? You know what kind of things to do in your leadership and in our experience that path is less clear for families and self advocates who are coming to lend programs looking for leadership and advocacy opportunities and that path is a bit muddier to navigate. And so it is something that I have thought about a lot.

I want to think about how much we are thinking about this but I think Maggie and Donna you can answer the question better than I could.

MAGGIE WILSON:

Yeah, and I would say look for other leadership opportunities as well through like other nonprofits. I'm a board member for what is called peer power of Alaska.

We are aboard for -- aboard for people who are self advocates a for people who have disabilities in Alaska, and finding that, track that is best for you and your family, if you are family Advocate you have a kid with a disability, you know finding your group within your state or local region that advocates their. And yeah, finding your niche within your community because they're all kinds of ways to go and maybe if not in your local community maybe there is something nationwide that are always looking for strong applicants and leaders as well.

DONNA JOHNSON:

I totally agree with Maggie Black I will share this, and that I will actually give an opportunity for AUCD at the same time. So one of the things that I have been able to serve on board just as Maggie and what I have been able to find is sometimes when I'm interviewed what I said on the American pediatric subcommittee I set as a parent advocate for the DPP network-DVP autism, every time I have had my first conversation I keep hearing that we have been looking for parents.

And then thinking, well, we are here, we want to help. And so I think what may be helpful is if there is an opportunity for may be you know AUCD to find some of these boards they want parent voices but there needs to be a way for us to connect and for me it has been that I ended up on both of these boards because of one of my fellow lend MAc -- LEND ports because I said Donna, we need a parent, I think if there was a more structured way may be for AUCD, some of these boards and organizations that you engage with to say hey, we have some parent voices if you need some because many of them don't have a way to connect to us.

And we would know how to connect to them, so I would say check with your local programs just like Maggie said, and you know some of these big foundations and organizations today they say do you need apparent voice because they are talking about us. And self advocates. So those are some possible strategies.

ALYX MEDLOCK:

Yes, absolutely and on our portal that I showed you the picture we have the discussion board with the idea people could post those kind of leadership opportunities for of those kinds and for people to get more involved but the truth is is that a has been more I did individual level like Donna was saying it has been at an individual level where I know and this person has been looking for this and the person in my mind to be a good fit for that position and then I am making those connections at that individual level based on those relationships but at that more organized top-down peace like what Brandon was saying that is a lot harder to find. And jelly bac -

ANJALI RAO:

I will echo it is kind of hard to fall in the professional circles to it happens through word-of-mouth like I know that person I know this person they mentored that person I know this person who is mentoring through them, it is a common issue across all organizations.

MARK CRENSHAW:

And I wanted to add, Alyx, to this conversation that sometimes it is important to start small so start with conversations with other families in the space you are in.

Start with conversations but what families need and what your experience is relevant to helping to meet those needs and then sort of thing, in terms of ripples right? So if this is a concern for families like mine, who in the state is a good conversation partner? Or who in my community is a good conversation partner? Or what else I would say is who are the people that are doing the kind of work that you might want to do? And is it feasible for your LEND to support you to connect to those folks.

To say, how did you get here? If you wanted to do this as part of my leadership journey if I wanted to make a contribution like this have what I do that? So just to say, from my perspective it is all about the relationships. And so sometimes you can use land MAc -- use LEND to open that door that might not otherwise be available so start small, feel successful and think about every expanding circles back and who you know and who could help you go where you want to go.

There are couple comments in the chat, about serving on boards, and not being paid positions. I do understand that that is a barrier for folks. We just recently this week we've had conversations with one of our state agencies about compensating individuals with disabilities for their time on a workgroup. So

understand that that is a conversation that we need to be having with folks about engaging people with disabilities and valuing their time.

MAUREEN JOHNSON:

Agreed, definitely, I see a question from the chat can any alumni get involved with community groups within their city or region, we have heard many answers that absolutely you can -- -- yes definitely so

MARK CRENSHAW:

So for Shannon, oh I see it, so as a (Name) training Director, the answer is yes with the expectation as you do and then the conversation is how can I as a LEND training Director how can I support the people that have been in my LEND room to do that? So it is absolutely that we want for all of our trainees to continue to be engaged. And to grow on their leadership journey and that is the way that that happens. I think that is important.

MAUREEN JOHNSON:

Yes, absolutely if you have any continued questions for panelists you can put them in the chat and we can also have some discussion questions just to help with understanding of what strategies (audio issues) are panelists use (audio issues)

SPEAKER:

I think Maureen had connection issues+of she's back.

MAUREEN JOHNSON:

Yes I saw my Zoom crashed, sorry about that, I will re-share my screen. So as I was mentioning we have some discussion questions for you, the audience and we would love to know first what are some successful strategies that you have done that your program to engage alumni? And if you are former trainee what strategies have you seen that your centre has done? So this link to this poll is in the chat if you could put in your responses.

We have some responses and I will share my screen, and the answers so what are some strategies that your has done when engaging alumni? OK we see a couple responses, flexible participation in panel discussion from your cohorts, Facebook groups, that's wonderful. Virtual alumni and virtual engagement opportunities kind of relates to a Facebook group. Keeping in touch with alumni more than just with surveys, even before COVID we see some it gatherings participating in the community leadership activities, but is a great response as well.

I see to capture some responses that we see in the chat which is, yes like Facebook group. Inviting them to events. I think that is really fantastic, at AUCD we offer events as well that are open to current and former trainees. LinkedIn.

AUCD does have a LinkedIn group for emerging communities. So, one of my colleagues can put that in the chat, that is another way to get connected.

Kathleen has raised their hand?

Yes, Kathleen?

SPEAKER:

Yes, this is me advocating for people like me. I hate when everybody puts it in the chat because when you put it in the chat, I miss the whole thing. I take forever to type. I have to talk with my voice. I cannot type it in with my voice.

I just wanted to wish that people would stop saying, "put it in the chat." Because it annoys me.

And also, I cannot participate if you ask us to put it in the chat. It just bugs me, and I'm sorry for being rude. But that is how I feel.

SPEAKER:

No, you're not being rude at all. We appreciate your feedback the stuff I can also make sure to be mindful — to make sure that we are getting everybody's participation. Please raise your hand, or unmute. So, we appreciate your participation as well.

SPEAKER:

Alright, thank you.

MARK CRENSHAW:

Maureen, something that I forgot to say earlier that I think is part of the engagement strategy is that I want to get my LEND alumni used to communicating with me about job changes and papers published and, you know, milestones on their leadership journeys when they receive awards, things like that. So, I can share that information with number one, my project officer, but also, with the LEND community.

So, part of the other engagement strategy is celebration. You know, Donna talked about a picnic, and that is one way to celebrate.

But this work is really not easy. If this would be easy, we would not have to spend so much time thinking about how to train people to do it. So, I think celebration is really key as an engagement strategy. So, celebrating people's wins is so important to me.

So, engaging the individuals and cohorts to say, "I heard about this great thing that happened for someone who is in my cohort." It gives me an excuse to reach out to this person. And I asked them if I can share it with a wider audience. You know, to set in the LEND community, in Georgia, this idea that we are going to celebrate when people win. And we are going to celebrate. And it is not just when we get new money allocated for an important program, but it is also the micro wins.

I need every occasion I can to celebrate.

SPEAKER:

Yes, I love the idea of connecting with our trainees when they have awards that they have gotten, or when they are doing speaking engagement and highlighting that with their cohort and alumni.

J. ALYX MEDLOCK:

On that note, I have one little piece to add: LEND often has a lovely platform to provide an opportunity for people's leadership to be acknowledged, to be celebrated. And not everywhere is that platform. So, we have to take advantage of the platform that we have.

That is the brown bags that we have had — we've had alumni come back and present brown bags to a wider audience. And I think providing the opportunity for people to share their leadership has been really important. I would just add that to what Mark was saying.

SPEAKER:

(Indiscernable).

MARK CRENSHAW:

With something that is happening right now on my social media, but I wanted to also add as well is that I posted about a book and several LEND trainees — several alumni came up in the comments about this book that I posted about. And they said "I'm ordering this book right now," so, I said "OK, we will have a book group." I fully expect that this book group will bring together LEND alumni from across the cohorts.

And that just happened because I posted about a book that I ordered at 2 PM this morning when I was scrolling.

So, just to say, you know, "I will read the book anyway, I will look for people to talk to about it anyway, might as well be people that I like to talk to."

SPEAKER:

That is another great idea as well. If you wants, you can put the book in the chat or say it out loud.

MARK CRENSHAW:

It is called My Body Is Not a (indiscernible) Request. It is about disability justice and fake spaces (?). I'm really interested in that. And several of my former trainees are interested in that as well.

SPEAKER:

That sounds interesting as well. I love the title, it is very thought-provoking.

Our next question is for those who are faculty. Wanting us to understand how the program measures success in terms of how you are engaging with trainees. So, if you do want to raise your hand, using the Zoom Console, you can do that to answer this question.

And I know that you guys will take a couple of minutes to answer. That is actually our final question.

So, again, if you have any thoughts about how your program measures success. Or, if you want to share what you consider our barriers to the process. I know that we talked about that a little bit in the panel, talking about time, you know, lack of paid resources.

MARK CRENSHAW:

Maureen, from my perspective, one of the ways that we measure success in terms of that is really talking about our LEND alumni as emerging leaders in these spaces. And then, taking the time, and our reporting, to say, this is a picture of a few of the alumni that we have engaged and the contributions that they are contributing, the way that they are strengthening with what they have to offer.

And then, it was 60 presentations over the course of the LEND year. You know, 15 alumni were engaged in sharing perspectives.

So, those are just small ways. But I do think those are important to lift up.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mark, I think that is appreciated as well.

As we start wrapping up, are there any final thoughts from our moderators or panelists, or even anyone in the audience — feel free to unmute and unpack any thoughts that you have.

DONNA MORGAN JOHNSON:

I do have one final thought. I was thinking about the question about ways, in particular, families and sub- advocates can engage in different opportunities.

Right now, in our society, there is a huge focus on diversity, equity and inclusion. Many organizations are implementing roles of DEI directors. And I think, sometimes, you have to start in your own LEND before you can expand to other parts of the land.

So, thinking about may be, where you work, or, where you know and are seeing different opportunities. Reaching out to some of those directors or chief equity officers, or whatever they are, especially (indiscernible). I just got a DEI position, or whatever. And reaching at the say, "are you interested in having a different voice or perspective?"

And not just saying that you are a family member or a self advocate, but letting them know about your training in LEND. Because they may not know about LEND. You know, we know, but for them to be able to understand what you bring to the table and why your voice is so important. So, again, if this is the space that you really want to serve in and be a part of, and really, to use your voice, you know, capturing this opportunity right now that is happening across the country. So, just a thought.

SPEAKER:

Yes, that's an excellent point, Donna.

We, at AUCD, really raise the voices of trainees who say how unique LEND is will stop especially those outside of the AUCD network.

Kathleen, you have your hand raised?

SPEAKER:

I think I already did this. But I want to remind everyone that accessibility is what makes this space welcoming. And (indiscernible), and I do not think I am a self advocate, because I think that we all should be self advocates.

I think you will not say, that they cannot contribute, that they should feel welcome, it is probably because things are not accessible to them. If people do not feel welcome, they will not participate. That's it.

SPEAKER:

That's a great point to end on, Kathleen. Making sure that things are accessible and that if we are going to note that if we are welcoming everyone, it is getting support that we need to that everyone can participate and have their voices heard.

So, we are going to close out this webinar. Again, we want to thank you all for joining us and I wanted

to skip the last question, in the interest of time.

I wanted to make sure that everyone knows that you can provide your feedback on this webinar, using the link to this survey. We also have a QR code that you can scan to tell us more feedback on not only does webinar, but if you have any ideas on other webinars.

SPEAKER:

Can I speak in this space really quickly?

I am one of the emerging leaders and I wanted to tell Kathleen that accessibility is important, but modelling it is also important. Like, what accessibility should look like for those people who do not know.

SPEAKER:

That is a great point.

I want to close us and say thank you for your time. Have a great Friday.

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