



Serving Families in
Orleans, Plaquemines
and St. Bernard Parishes

Volume 6, Issue 4

Opinions contained herein do not necessarily represent those of the funding source, and no endorsement should be inferred.

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Under Construction!

Summer 2013

It's a New FHF of SELA!

FHF of SELA is getting a makeover! (Notice our new logo?) We're changing a few things about how we look and we want your help. During the month of July we are having a **contest** for who can create the best Newsletter Name! The contest will run from July 1st - July 31st. The FHF of SELA staff will then pick our Top Five Favorite Names and hold a vote to determine the winner! The winner will receive an awesome **prize**, a **spotlight** in our next newsletter and, of course, see their creativity each time we deliver the newsletter! If you have an idea for our new newsletter name, then please email your entries to aabend@fhfsela.org with the Subject: **Newsletter Contest** and your creative new name. Please provide either you phone number and/or your email address. If you do not have an email address, you may submit your entry over the phone, on Facebook or Twitter!

Get creative!

Also, check out the new exciting things already happening in our newsletter starting with our layout!

Ask the Advocate!

Welcome to our new column entitled, "Ask the Advocate!" - an anonymous way for parents, siblings, individuals with disabilities and professionals to get all their questions answered. Our newsletters will feature a most frequently asked question, but "Ask the Advocate!" will function beyond the Newsletter! If you have a general question and are embarrassed to ask it or think that it's a question many families would benefit from, then submit your question to info@fhfsela.org with the Subject: **Ask The Advocate!**, **post it on our Facebook or Tweet it at us!**

There is no need to include your name, simply subject the email "Ask the Advocate!", ask your question and sign it with a name of your choosing! We will respond to you via email or over Facebook and Twitter for multiple families to see!

Check out our new column with our first question about IEP and 504 Plans!

Continued on Page 6

**Families Helping Families
Of Southeast Louisiana
Staff**

Carol F. Calix
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Tracy Jones
Office Assistant
(Metropolitan Human Services
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Ranatta Harris
*LaCAN Regions 1 & 10 Team
Leader*

Carol's Corner

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Six years have gone by since we first opened our doors. Slowly, families returned to the New Orleans area, but with six years comes six years of change. Schools have changed. People have changed. And the face of FHF of SELA has changed.

In the last calendar year we handled 1,380 phone calls. Out of the 1,380, 678 of those were first time callers. We conducted 16 presentations, 19 workshops, 4 major one day conferences, attended 25 IEP meetings, 23 case conferences and 5 hearings. We participated in 56 task force/committee meetings, where we did not just attend, but we represented the voices of parents on these committees. Every month we actively serve in People First of NOLA and participate in numerous community outreach projects and health fairs.

In the 2012-13 fiscal year we started two new and exciting programs: The Prism Project of Greater NOLA: Roux-Roux Productions and Transition Academy (the parent and teacher training prior to Career Symposium). In the coming year we are looking forward to a Sibling Support Program, the Next Chapter Book Club and Career Symposium. More importantly, though, we are looking for ways to bring FHF of SELA to every community we serve.

With that in mind, we want to hear from you! What information would be compelling enough to get you to attend a workshop? Would you prefer webinars over in-person meetings? Day meetings or night? Share your thoughts with us. Request a phone survey or go to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KDZDRKP> and help us help you.

Some individuals are already well on their way to being a successful advocate for their loved one with a disability. Others are just starting on this road and need more education. We want to meet you at the point of your need. This is your opportunity to let us know what's important to you. Because without you, there's no us.



Sincerely,

Carol F. Calix

Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana receives partial funding from Metropolitan Human Services District, the State Department of Education, the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council, Family to Family Health Information Center, the University of New Orleans and the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals



Staff Support

A LETTER FROM THE STAFF

As the staff members gear up for the next fiscal year, we wanted to let you know of a couple changes to FHF of SELA. First, we've decided to give ourselves a makeover. We've redesigned our newsletter, redesigned our brochure and will soon update our website. Our Twitter account is active and our Facebook page is up to date. We're ready to hit this new fiscal year with full force. Second, we've made some changes to our wardrobe (or our programs). We've added The Prism Project of Greater NOLA, Career Symposium and Transition Academy and we're planning on adding a Sibling Support Program. These programs have their various reasons of importance in the lives of families of individuals with disabilities. For example, the Sibling Support Program is really going to make FHF of SELA a *family* resource center. Siblings are the members of the family who are typically "forgotten" in the advocacy world. They need a place, just like parents, to gain advocacy skills, because, as we all know, siblings aren't children forever. Siblings need a place to express their emotions, concerns and learn how to advocate for themselves and their siblings. Finally, FHF of SELA is prepared to give that to them. However, with these new programs we need input. That is why we're implementing a survey. We, the Advocates, want to know what you, the families, want. We want to know why you attend workshops and why you do not attend workshops. We want everyone to be advocates and the only way to do so is by getting your feedback. So please fill out the online survey <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KDZDRKP> or call us to request the survey by phone. Finally, we don't want you to forget about our amazing Newsletter Contest! Please help us come up with the newest name for our newsletter as "The Deep South" just doesn't work for us anymore! We want to go beyond The Deep South, so help us think outside the box.

As always, we are here to help you. If you have questions about education advocacy, employment, recreational advocacy, sibling support, early childhood intervention and services, behavioral support, information and referral or would like some peer support contact our office today or ask general questions through our new support forum "Ask The Advocate."

Sincerely,

Aisha Johnson Alex Abend Liz Springs Januell Jasmine Tiecha Keiffer Tracy Jones

Families Helping Families Of Southeast Louisiana Board of Directors

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If you are interested in serving on the FHF of SELA Board, please contact Carol Calix at (504) 943-0343 ext 204 or email her at ccalix@fhfsele.org.

Our board meetings are open to the public, and are scheduled bi-monthly, on the second Thursday of the month at 6pm.

Board Meetings for 2013 are:

June 13, August 8, October 10, December 12

Meetings are held at 7240 Crowder Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70127, Suite 202, unless otherwise stated.



FHF of SELA is a 501(c)3 non-profit resource center for individuals with disabilities and their families. For more information about the services and programs we provide, please call 504-943-0343.

Services

Information and Referral

- Information and referral for evaluations, medical services, Medicare, Medicaid, and Crisis Intervention
- Information on community programs, services and opportunities
- Educational materials, publications and disability-friendly apps.
- Internet and personal resources across all three parishes

Education and Training

- Workshops on caregivers, transition, education, IEP/504, school and family partnerships, communication, healthcare, advocacy and more
- Register for our latest workshops online or by calling 504-943-0343

Peer-to-Peer Support

- Continuous information, guidance and support from our employees: parents, siblings and self-advocates .

Our Vision.

We envision a region where people with disabilities live and are **fully included** in school, work and recreational activities.

Our Mission

Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana's mission is to **educate and empower** individuals with disabilities, their families, professionals and communities by providing resource, training and family-to-family support.

Programs

ALL AGES

- **Family to Family Health Information Center** - Program providing support and information on health care challenges
- **LA Citizens for Action Now (LaCAN)** - A statewide grassroots network for individuals and families advocating for service system supporting individuals with disabilities to live in their own homes rather than a facility.

0 - 3

- **Early Steps Community Outreach Specialist** - The specialist visits hospitals and clinics with information about Early Steps for parents who have children who may exhibit developmental delay

4 - 14

- **Education Advocate** - Funded by the State Department of Education, advocates for all students in regular education and community settings to ensure full and valued membership in society. The Advocate provides workshops, presentations, and one-to-one support. She advocates for children to be educated in the Least Restrictive Environment, or Inclusive Education. The Advocate attends IEP meetings and educates parents on how to be their child's advocate.
- **The Prism Project of Greater NOLA: Roux-Roux Productions** - A performing arts program for children with and without special needs. TPP of GNO teaches children dance, music and theater with the goal of creating an original production.

15 - 22

- **Career Symposium** - A multi-faceted workshop for students with disabilities, their families and teachers to better prepare students with disabilities to have meaningful careers after high school.
- **Transition Advocate** - funded by the State Department of Education and trains, educates and empowers families and professionals to develop Individualized Training Plans.

22 +

- **People First of NOLA** - An adult advocacy group for individuals with disabilities

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS...

FHF of SELA will provide the following workshops this summer and fall.

All workshops by FHF of SELA are **free**.

Wednesday, July 31

Meeting the Behavioral Health Needs of Students with Developmental Disabilities Through Individualized Educational Planning

- Learn the logic behind the behaviors, the challenges in understand and how to address it in the IEP.

11:00 - 1:30pm

Thursday, September 19

Progress Monitoring - Learn how parents and teachers can track a student's performance throughout the school year. Learn how collecting facts about achievements can be useful in IEP meetings.

Norman Meyer Public Library, 3001 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70122

10:00 am - 1:00pm

Thursday, October 10th

Career Symposium - multi-faceted career workshop and trainings for students 16 - 22 and looking for meaningful employment in Orleans, Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes.

Holy Cross

9:30am - 2:00pm

Call FHF of SELA to register for any of the above workshops.

504-943-0343

Ask The Advocate!

Dear Advocate,

I've always been confused about the difference between an **IEP and a **504 Plan**. Don't children with disabilities all receive IEP Plans? Aren't 504 Plans not as "good" as IEPs?**

**Sincerely,
Concerned Parent**

Dear Concerned Parent,

What a great question! So many parents and even professionals are confused about the difference between 504 and IEP. For starters, not every child has an IEP, some children with disabilities have 504 Plans because it gives them the better chance to succeed. Other children have IEPs to give them a better chance to succeed. One is not "better" than the other; they are different to match the variety of children with disabilities. To learn some more, let's define each to view the differences.

The IEP

The Individualized Education Plan (**IEP**) is a program or plan, under the law, that is developed to ensure children with disabilities attending elementary or secondary educational schools receive **specialized instruction and related services**.

For students with disabilities requiring **specialized instruction**, the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** controls the procedural requirements and an **IEP** is developed.

IEP Accommodations and Modifications

Accommodations do not reduce grade level standards but help provide access to curriculum. They can include visual presentation, auditory presentation, multi-sensory presentation, setting, organization, timing and scheduling

Modifications lower learning expectations and should be used only if this is the best way for the child to be successful. Parents must understand if modifications to grade level standards are made their child may be at risk for not meeting graduation requirements.

The 504 Plan

For students who have disabilities not requiring specialized instruction, but need equal **access to public education and services**, a **504 Plan** is created to outline their specific **accessibility requirements**.

A 504 Plan, like an IEP, should be updated yearly to ensure the student receives the most effective accommodations for his/her specific circumstances.

504 Accommodation Examples:

· Arrangement of classroom

Examples: Student sits near teacher; Student sits near positive role model; Teacher stands near student when giving direction; Student avoids distractors; Teacher writes key points on board, provides peer tutors or visual aids.

· Test Taking

Examples: Allowing open book exams, Oral exams, or possible take home tests,

I hope that helped answer some of your questions! If you have more let me know!

Advocating For You,

Advocate

Have more questions? Ask The Advocate on FHF of SELA's Facebook or Twitter pages, or E-mail or call us!



How Did It Go?



FHF of SELA had not one, not two, but **THREE** major events this spring! To hear these awesome events went see the columns below.

TPP OF GNO

The Prism Project of Greater NOLA: Roux-Roux Productions (TPP of GNO) had our first performance on May 4th at Greater St. Stephens Full Gospel Baptist Church. The performance was entitled, "**We Are New Orleans, Too!**" and featured dance, music and theatrical numbers centering around the culture of New Orleans. The performers began their show by second lining to "*Oh, When the Saints*" and finished the show by dancing with **New Creations Brass Band** to "*Do Watcha Wanna*." The entire show was created by the performers with the guidance of the Dance, Music and Theater Directors, the two behaviorist, their one-on-one volunteer buddies from Tulane and UNO and myself. The performance was an incredible success - dazzling and entertaining the audience while empowering children with and without special needs.

To learn more about TPP of GNO please see the following page and attend our next event. If you would like a DVD of the performance please contact the office. Otherwise, check out our three minute promo on YouTube (TPP of GNO PROMO).

Keep up to date on the latest TPP of GNO information by following FHF of SELA on Twitter (@FHFofSELA) and on Facebook.

MHSD Empowerment Forum

The Metropolitan Human Services District Empowerment Forum on Behavioral Health was a huge success on June 12. Over 100 people attended the event to learn more about Behavioral Health and received a binder full of important information. The speakers included **Dr. Jay Sevin, Dr. Mindy Rothstein, Dr. Katherine Smith, Cindy Arceneaux and Judge Calvin Johnson**. The presenters spoke on Positive Behavioral Support, Applied Behavioral Analysis, Behavioral Health, and Education Advocacy. FHF of SELA and MHSD could not have been more pleased with the turn out and the excitement!

Missed the forum but want the information?

Come to 7240 Crowder Blvd. Suite 202 and use our **Lending Library!** All participants, in addition to their binder, received the "*Achieving best behavior for children with developmental disabilities*" workbook by Pamela Lewis. You can check the book out anytime via our Lending Library.



Transition Academy

Transition Academy is a part of the larger workshop event, Career Symposium, but is geared solely for parents and teachers. The goal of Transition Academy is to educate and empower parents and teachers of students with disabilities ages 16 - 22 on how to advocate for their child/student to have meaningful employment and be prepared for transitional services. We taught parents about their rights and responsibilities regarding Social Security, What Happens When Your Child Turns 18, Finding the Ideal Job, Assistive Technology and Advocating for Individualized Transition Plans. In the other room, we educated the educators on Evidence Based Instructional Strategies for Transition. Finally, both parties joined together in a Lunch and Learn where we heard from self-advocates **Jill Egle** and **Stephen Ngyuen**. They assisted everyone in taking what they learned in Transition Academy and putting a face to transition and success. All the participants had glowing evaluations some of whom mentioned this was **the best professional development** they have attended!

If you missed Transition Academy, don't sweat! Career Symposium is coming up in October and it's going to be big. Reserve your spot today by calling FHF of SELA! Want more information? Call and make an appointment with our Transition Specialist to learn how you can advocate for your child or your students.

The LaCAN Adventures

The LaCAN Adventures chronicles advocacy efforts of individuals with disabilities and their families for a service system supporting individuals with disabilities to live in their own homes rather than a facility.



In this year we advocated for:

- Restoring \$794,000 in general funds to CSHS (Children Special Health Services)
- Restoring funding for IFS program (Individual and Family Support)
- Restoring funding to DDC's budget so Families Helping Families Centers can continue to provide services.
- Supported funding needed to phase an additional 200 NOW (New Opportunities Waiver) slots.

LaCAN's advocacy efforts resulted in the restoration and additional funding for:

- ✓ Restoration of **\$794,000** for Children's Special Health Services Clinics
- ✓ Funding of **\$950,000** for the Individual and Family Support Program in the Human Service Districts and Authorities
- ✓ Restoration of **\$54,732** for Families Helping Families Resource Centers
- ✓ Funding of **200** additional NOW slots
- ✓ Protection of funding for the Flexible Family Fund

Achieving these accomplishments was no easy task. Advocates kicked off the legislative season last October and have worked tirelessly ever since. While legislators heard our voices, our Governor, Bobby Jindal, vetoed the efforts.



In addition to advocating for more funding, LaCAN:

- Held **11** Roundtables across Louisiana, with attendees consisting of **269** self-advocates, family members and professionals and **40** legislators and legislative aides
- Coordinated over **65** Legislative Visits
- Held **3** Yellow Shirt Days attended by **96** advocates
- Held a Statewide Disability Rights Rally attended by over **400** advocates
- Initiated **9** Action Alerts with **1,875** confirmed actions by members



Already involved? Want to be involved? Come to the LaCAN Members Meeting!

July 10, 2013

10:30am - 11:30am

Keller Library 4300 S. Broad St., NOLA, 70125

Breakfast will be provided. RSVP to Ranatta Harris

Person to bring the most New Members will win a fantastic prize!

If you are not a LaCAN member please contact Ranatta Harris LaCAN Leader for Regions 1 & 10 at laicanregion1and10@yahoo.com to become one.

Let your voice be heard. Together we can make a difference.

From Passive Parent to Active Advocate.

Ranatta Harris Tells All.

A story of one parent's journey from passive, to educated, to advocate.

In this newsletter, we wanted to highlight one of our own, LaCAN Leader Ranatta Harris. Ms. Harris is a mother of three beautiful children, one of whom has multiple disabilities. Ranatta is a role model to all parents on how nothing is impossible and how any parent can become a strong advocate for their child.

FHF of SELA: Ms. Harris (Ranatta), when did you first notice Keith's disability?

Ranatta Harris: I actually didn't notice it. His daycare provider did. Like many mothers out there, I didn't see anything different about Keith, because not all disabilities are easy to see. So, Keith's daycare provider referred us to ECSS and filled out the referral forms.

FHF of SELA: I imagine you had to wait for some time. Did anything happen during the time you waited for services?

Harris: Yes. Actually, some things did happen. As we waited on ECSS services, which took about two months, I began to feel different towards Keith's daycare provider because she was the one who told me he was different. But instead of being passive about my thoughts, I spoke with her about it. She explained that the best thing a provider could do for their client was to tell them they needed help. She told me that I could remove Keith from her daycare if I didn't feel comfortable anymore, so I did.

FHF of SELA: That sounds like it must have been a hard thing to do. What happened next?

Harris: Well, a month into Keith's new daycare I was being called to come pick up Keith at least 4 times a week. Keith would attack everyone in the daycare unless he was highly medicated. No one could "handle" him, which caused them to kick him out of the school. Not only was this difficult to manage as a mother, but I was working at a job where they could not support me leaving early every day to pick up my son. So they fired me.

FHF of SELA: Now with you out of a job and Keith out of school, what did you do?

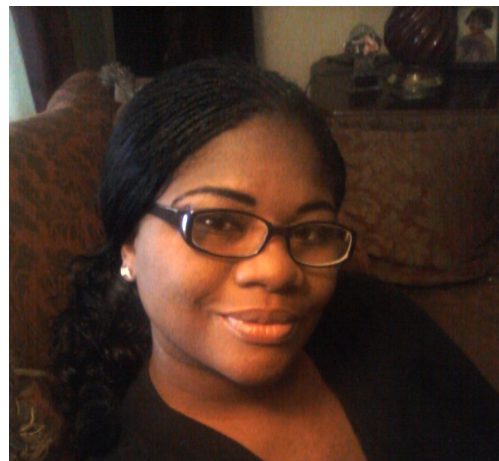
Harris: ECSS referred me to Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana and at some point reality set in. Keith had a disability and I needed to learn how to advocate for him. So after spending spring of 2009 at home, Keith started preschool in the fall and I started my new education.

FHF of SELA: So how did FHF of SELA help you?

Harris: Well it was a long journey. I started working with FHF of SELA's Education Advocate Ms. Aisha Johnson. She told me about the workshops that they were doing and I made sure to attend every single one. Ms. Johnson worked with me on understanding Behavioral Intervention Plans (BIPs), Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs), 504 Plans, Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), how to request school evaluations, how to write effective letters to school and, most importantly, how to be a good record keeper. After working with FHF of SELA I was now armed and ready.

FHF of SELA: That sounds great. Now what was it like when Keith started school?

Harris: The first three years were a nightmare for Keith and myself. Keith would be suspended on a Monday and go back on a Wednesday only to be suspended again and return on Friday to start the process over. All of this was also done with no letter of suspension, which I now know is illegal. After bringing this issue to the school, they returned the concern by calling me every day to come pick up Keith. It got so bad that it seemed as though I was enrolled at the school with Keith!

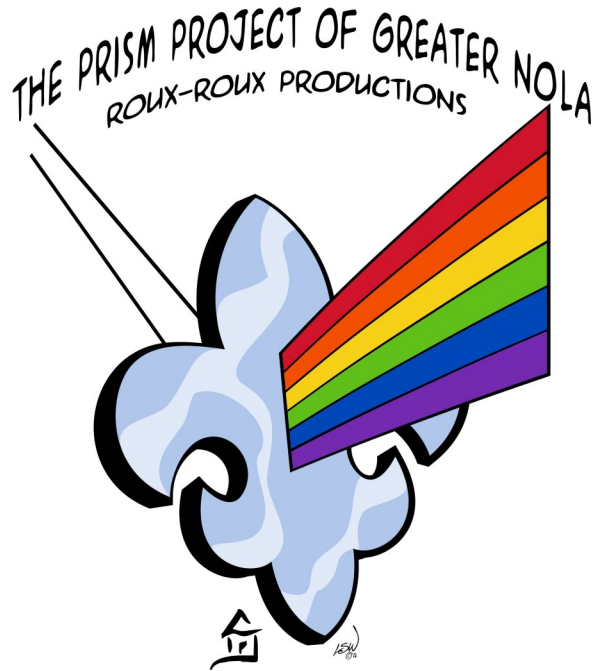


Ranatta's Story Continued on Page 14

What's Next?

The Prism Project of Greater NOLA: Roux-Roux Productions (TPP of GNO) invites you to attend our first fundraiser, at Prytania Bar!

Prytania Bar and Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana will be hosting a fundraiser for TPP of GNO. The fundraiser will enable more children with special needs to participate in FHF of SELA's performing arts program.



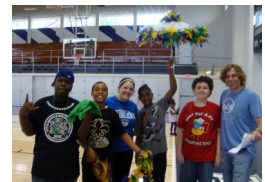
If you love New Orleans, the performing arts and children come out to **Prytania Bar** on **July 18, 2013** from **6pm - 9pm**.

20% of the proceeds will be donated to TPP of GNO, enabling more children with and without disabilities to participate in the performing arts.



We hope to see you there! Any questions please contact Alex at aabend@fhfsela.org.

*Prytania Bar is located at: 3445 Prytania St.
New Orleans, LA 70115*



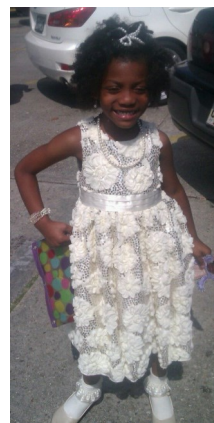
if you would like to find out more information, make a donation or purchase the 2013 Performance DVD, please fill out the below questions and mail it to FHF of SELA. DVDs cost \$10.00 and will be mailed to the address provided once payment is received. All donations are tax-deductible. Please make checks out to Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana. Thank you!

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Email: _____ Address: _____
Child's Name: _____ Age: _____
Why are you interested in TPP of GNO? _____
I would like: Information /Application _____ To Make a Donation of _____
To Purchase a DVD _____

Congratulations Graduates!

Congratulations to all our graduates
from elementary, high school and
college!

If you have a graduate in your family
and you don't see their picture on
this page—post it on our wall or
tweet it to us to brag away!



Thank You To Our Supporters

FHF of SELA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. We rely on contracts with organizations, partnerships with community groups, grants and private donations. Through these incredible organizations and people, FHF of SELA is able to provide free services and programming to families and professionals across Orleans, Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes. It is all thanks to these supporters and the anonymous donors that enable our organization to assist thousands of families across the Greater New Orleans region achieve education and empowerment.

MAJOR DONORS

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The New Orleans Music Exchange

Dr. Janice Janz

GRANTS

The Davis-Molony Fund

New Orleans Recreational Development Commission**

The Frost Foundation

Jock Scott Community Partnership Panel Grants

**Partnership

Make a Donation Today!

Your donations could help families of individuals with special needs connect with accurate resources, provide recreational opportunities to children with special needs, teach parents or individuals with disabilities self-advocacy skills, or provide a student with a disability the means to achieve their dream career.

For Example:

\$5 connects families without internet to accurate resources

\$10 provides a student with a disability tools for their career

\$30 covers the cost of participating in TPP of GNO

\$72 enables two adults with disabilities to become empowered self-advocates

\$150 allows a child with special needs to attend summer camp

Thank you for your support!

All donations are tax-deductible

You can make a donation online by clicking **Donate** at www.fhfsela.org

OR

Mailing your donation with the form below to

Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana

7240 Crowder Blvd. Suite 202

New Orleans, LA 70127

Yes, I would like to donate and learn more about Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana!

Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____ Parish: _____

Relationship: ☐ Parent ☐ Sibling ☐ Self-Advocate ☐ Professional ☐ Family Member ☐ Donor

Please add me to your mailing list: ☐ Yes ☐ No

I would like to donate:

☐ \$5 ☐ \$10 ☐ \$30 ☐ \$72 ☐ \$150 ☐ Other _____

I would like to volunteer or apply for an internship: ☐ Yes ☐ No

I would like information about: _____

Ranatta's Story (Continued)

I felt that the school was working against me, not with me, to help Keith. Each time I requested meetings with school officials, behavioral plans or evaluations, they were all neglected or met with conflict. By this time, I had lost three good jobs and dropped out of college. I then woke up and tuned my emotions into advocacy. I utilized the skills Ms.

Johnson, Keith's advocate at FHF of SELA, provided me with and took my next step.

FHF of SELA: What was your next step?

Harris: To call the State Department of Education. I needed to speak up for my son, because no one else would. I emailed someone at the Louisiana Department of Education and explained my situation. Surprisingly, I got a reply in less than an hour and a phone call in less than 24 hours letting me know that I was requested at the office. This is where my relationship with FHF of SELA came in handy. One of the most important things I learned while working with Ms. Johnson on becoming my child's advocate was to not only be a good record keeper, but to record every conversation. I recorded meetings, face-to-face conversations, phone calls, kept voicemails and emails so that I could have proof that *"no, you did say this"* or *"no, you suspended Keith for this many days."* So when I went to the LDOE meeting, I had all my information together and ready. The representative was so excited because she had never seen a parent with such incredible documentation. To my benefit, all the conversations I recorded came in handy, and the representative did her job. The next day, the school contacted me for a meeting, and all that I had previously requested for Keith was finally granted.

FHF of SELA: Wow, Ranatta. That's an incredible story. How has it been post-LDOE meeting?

Harris: Well, I went from a passive parent to an active advocate because of FHF of SELA's help. My advocacy worked and my voice was heard. Despite my job losses and sleep losses, what I gained for my son is much greater. I am ever grateful to FHF of SELA and Keith's advocate, Ms. Johnson, because they opened the door to mine and Keith's education and I walked through it ready to learn. My journey to get Keith where he is now was not easy, but with the

help of Ms. Johnson and FHF of SELA it was not hard. I know Keith still has a long way to go until he finishes school, but with FHF of SELA on our side, I'm confident that nothing is impossible.

"I then woke up and turned my emotions into advocacy....[I recorded] every conversation."

Ms. Harris is the current LaCAN Regions 1&10 Leader. She works to advocate for individuals with disabilities to remain in their own homes and continues to advocate for her son to receive the best education.

She is currently writing a book about her journey so be on the lookout for her story soon. To learn more about how you can be an active advocate like Ranatta, call 504-943-0343 to attend our workshops and speak to our advocates.

Stipends/ Financial Assistance for Conferences In Louisiana



Financial assistance is available to parents of children with developmental disabilities and to individuals with developmental disabilities who would like to attend

workshops and conferences. Please visit the websites and/or call the agencies that are hosting the event if you are interested in attending or to see if this is something you would benefit from. If you want to attend and need help with the cost of the registration, hotel and/or mileage, please call us for a **Stipend Application.**

Funds are limited so we ask that you notify us of your request as early as possible.

Want More Help?

Check Out These Other Groups!

FHF of Jefferson LPTIC

LaPTIC is a statewide Parent Center providing training and assistance to families who have children ages 0 - 26.

www.fhfjefferson.org

Pyramid Community Parent Resource Center

Providing support, information and training on special education and disability legislation through workshops, newsletters, referrals and one-to-one assistance

www.pyramidparentcenter.org

Family To Family Health Information Center

Serving LA Families of Children and Youth with Special Health Needs ages 0 - 26.

1-800-331-5570



People First of NOLA

WE WANT TO HELP YOU!

In order to best serve all of our families and communities, we will be conducting surveys on what you want to see FHF of SELA provide for you, your family, your child or your community! All surveys will be conducted via phone or Survey Monkey in the next month.

Don't get a call or email? Don't worry! Send us a request to participate in the FHF of SELA Survey or go to

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KDZDRKP>

If you are an adult with a developmental disability and want to learn self-advocacy skills, come join People First of NOLA!

People First of NOLA is...

- A self-advocacy group run by people with disabilities, for people with disabilities
- Where people learn to speak up for themselves about decisions they make
- Where members can connect with others in the community, nation and world
- Where members learn about their rights and responsibilities as citizens of the US

People First of NOLA meets every third Tuesday of the Month at 4:30pm
July 16, August 20, September 17,
October 15, November 19,
December 17



Be Ready For Hurricane Season!

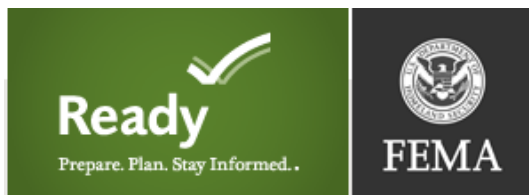
Hurricane Season has started and we want all our families to be ready.

There are a few things you need to know to stay prepared:

1. **Stay Informed** by listening to credible sources and emergency services agencies such as the American Red Cross
2. **Make Plans** in case of an evacuation. Create a way for everyone in your family to stay in contact. Consider all the options whether that means locating the closest shelter or a friend in another state. Make sure you know how you will get there, who you will stay with and what you will bring.
3. **Prepare an Emergency Kit** whether you stay put or evacuate. Remember the basics: food, water, first aid medication, medical equipment and tools. A good rule of thumb is to prepare a kit that will last you at least three days. Also, prepare two separate kits: one in case you evacuate and one in case you stay. Make sure you know what is in each of those kits.
4. **In an Evacuation Be Sure to Bring** special foods and supplements, medical equipment, batteries, adult diapers, 1 gallon of water per person per day, extra clothes for the correct season, copies of important papers and identification, at least one month supply of medications, a list of emergency contacts and prescriptions, and finances.
5. **If You Are A Self-Advocate**, be sure to bring an Emergency Card that contains your Name, Address, Phone Number, Doctor's Number and Name, Caregiver's Number and Name, Parent/Guardian's Number and Name, Evacuation Contact's Name, Number and Address, and the list of Medical Equipment and/or Medications you are currently taking.



We at FHF of SELA want everyone to be safe and sound during this season. If you have any questions or want to discuss your emergency plan call FHF of SELA at 504-943-0343, the American Red Cross at 504-587-1500, your local government office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness or go to www.ready.gov to access other national emergency resources.





Metropolitan Human Services District

1st Quarter Event



Meeting the Behavioral Health Needs of Students with Developmental Disabilities Through Individualized Educational Planning

July 31, 2013

11:00am - 1:30pm

New Orleans East Library

Come learn the logic behind the behaviors, the challenges to understand these behaviors and then how to address them in the IEP.

Register today by calling 504-943-0343

<http://fhfsela.org/calendar-events/event-signups/>

Scan the Barcode.

Become educated and empowered parents, professionals and self-advocates today!

Light refreshments will be provided



Scan this to register online



Metropolitan Human Services District

Crisis Services



Immediate help is available if you are someone you know is in crisis related to mental illness, developmental disabilities or alcohol, drug or gambling addictions.

504-826-2675 or 504-568-3130

All calls are confidential

MHSD Crisis Services is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you don't know what to do, call 504-826-2675. Let MHSD Crisis Services Team of Experts help you take the best action



Do You Need Our Education Advocates?



Does your child have a disability and live in Orleans, Plaquemines or St. Bernard Parish?

Are they between the ages of 3 and 22?

Do they already have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan?

Do they need an IEP or 504 Plan?

Do they have problem behaviors?

Are they constantly suspended or expelled from school?

Are you consistently told that people cannot “handle” your child?

Do you want to be your child’s best advocate?



If any of the above scenarios apply to you, FHF of SELA’s Education Advocates are your answer. Tiecha and Aisha will educate and empower you to be your child’s best advocate. They will teach you the necessary information, they will meet with you to prepare for the IEP or 504 Plan meeting, they will educate you on your rights and responsibilities and they will provide you with support throughout the entire process. The best thing about our Education Advocates is that they are **free**. You do not have to pay them to help you learn how to be an empowered and educated parent. All you have to do is call 504-943-0343 and prepare yourself to learn everything you can about the Special Education system.

We want to help you, because every parent should be their child’s best advocate.



CAREER SYMPOSIUM

A Stepping Stone to Independence

October 9, 2013

Our Lady of Holy Cross College

4123 Woodland Drive, New Orleans, LA 70131

9:30am - 2:00pm

FHF of SELA, in partnership with Louisiana Department of Education, The Frost Foundation, Plaquemines Parish Schools, Algiers Charter Schools, Firstline Schools, St. Bernard Parish schools and An Ideal Job: Supportive Employment, will host a Career Symposium where individuals (16 - 22) with disabilities and their teachers and families will learn about job preparedness and training. Then students will have the opportunity to meet with employers and use some of their newly developed skills,

All participants will receive a Career Symposium Flashdrive Tool Kit containing mock interviews and preparedness videos.



Work Incentives Planning & Assistance **(WIPA)**

WIPA certified Community Work Incentive Coordinators (CWICS) can assist clients understanding the impact of work on SSA and other state and federal benefits. CWICS will develop an individualized benefits analysis plan that can be used as a guide to help clients achieve their employment goals.

The Advocacy Center will begin taking referral effective August 1, 2013 for Orleans, Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes (among others).

Call The Advocacy Center for more information!



Louisiana's Early Intervention System for children with disabilities and developmental delays ages birth to three and their families. By providing resources and support during the critical years, EarlySteps help children get off to a great start. Children with medical conditions likely to cause disability or developmental delay, or with delays in the following areas, may be eligible: Physical, Cognitive, Social, Emotional, Adaptive developmental and communication.

Contact Jaunell Jasmine-Johnson at 504-943-0343 or 1-866-earlysteps (1-866-327-5978)



ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
NEW ORLEANS LA
PERMIT NO. 267

FHF of SELA
7240 Crowder Blvd.
Suite 202
New Orleans, LA 70127


Office: 504-943-0343
1-877-243-7352
Fax: 504-940-3242
E-mail: info@fhfsela.org
Website: www.fhfsela.org



LIKE us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/FHFofSELA or follow us on Twitter
@FHFofSELA to stay up-to-date on all exciting events.

We post articles of interest, links to other advocacy groups, information on trainings
and more!





Still Waiting for Waiver Services?

Join LaCAN NOW!


LaCAN (Louisiana Citizens for Action Now) is a statewide grassroots network of individuals and families who have worked together since 1988 advocating for a system that supports individuals to live in their own homes rather than having to move to a facility to receive needed services.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE! JOIN LACAN!

WWW.LACANADVOCATES.ORG

MAKE A DIFFERENCE!


JOIN LACAN!



Louisiana Together Educating All Children (LaTEACH) is a grass root network of individuals that believe all children should have the opportunity to be educated with their typical peers in a typical classroom.

LaTEACH has made great strides this year but they still need **YOU** to help make a difference in improving education for our children with disabilities.

Donnica Conway-Strawder
LaTEACH Region 1 Area Coordinator
Louisiana Together Educating ALL Children
7240 Crowder Blvd, Suite 202
New Orleans, LA 70127
504-943-0343
1-877-243-7352



What is LaDisAbility Talk?

It's an e-mail talk list from Louisiana Parent Training and Information Center/Families Helping Families of Jefferson to help families of people with disabilities and their advocates in Louisiana share information, resources, and support.

What's a talk list? It is a way for e-mail users to be in a group with others who have similar interests.

Who should join? Parents of children with disabilities, self-advocates, and advocates for people with disabilities in Louisiana.

How do I join? Just send an e-mail to:
fhhprompter@yahoo.com or
LaDisabilityTalk-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

FREE—FREE—FREE