



FALL NEWSLETTER

SEPT • OCT • NOV • DEC

PARISHES WE SERVE

Acadia Evangeline Iberia Lafayette
St. Landry St. Martin Vermilion

Contact Information

100 Benman Road
Lafayette, LA 70506

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Fax: 337.984.3468

Email: info@fhfacadiana.org

Website: www.fhfacadiana.org

Office Hours

MONDAY - THURSDAY

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

FRIDAY

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Throughout history, families have been turning to other families that have dealt with similar struggles, and it is within our nature to do so. Families Helping Families has been developed to aid families in the search for the support, information, and resources that can help them. A very powerful bond and commitment exists between families who share like circumstances and travel a similar path. An informed, educated, and supported family raises a strong, nourished, and capable child with a bright and successful future. We believe access to this kind of support and resources should be available to everyone who needs it, and Families Helping Families is here to help.

WEBSITE



thank you

Our staff would like to thank the
Stuller Family Foundation
and
Clifford J. Schumacher
with **William C. Schumacher**
Family Foundation
for the generous grant to FHFOA!



We're truly thankful for your donation — it makes a real difference and allows us to continue the important work we're passionate about here in Region 4. We couldn't do it without incredible support like yours!



2025 CALENDAR OF DISABILITY-RELATED DATES

September

- World Alzheimer's Month
- Deaf Awareness Month (US)
- Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month (US)
- National Service Dog Month

07: Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Awareness Day (US)

09: International Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Day

13: Celiac Disease Awareness Day (US)

15: World Lymphoma Awareness Day - Hodgkin's Lymphoma

20: Usher Syndrome Awareness Day (Global)

21: World Alzheimer's Day

23: International Day of Sign Languages

28: International Day of the Deaf/World Deaf Day

October

- ADHD Awareness Month (US)
- Disability Employment Awareness Month (US)
- Down Syndrome Awareness Month (US)
- Dwarfism Awareness Month (US)
- Dysautonomia Awareness Month (Global)
- Dyslexia Awareness Month (Global)
- Learning Disability Awareness Month (US)
- Rett Syndrome Awareness Month (US)
- Selective Mutism Awareness Month (US)

01: International Day of Older Persons

06: World Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day

09: Word Sight Day / World Blind Day

10: World Mental Health Day

15: White Cane Awareness Day (US)

22: International Stuttering Awareness Day

25: World Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Day

29: World Stroke Day

November

- Diabetes Awareness Month (US)
- Epilepsy Awareness Month (US)

14: World Diabetes Day

16: International Day for Tolerance

December

UPCOMING TRAININGS

Monday
September 15, 2025
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

REGISTER

REGISTER NOW
<https://tinyurl.com/091525Intro2WorkPt2>

KEY LAWS THAT SUPPORT YOUTH AND CAREER READINESS

Join us for Part 2 of this series, where we will discuss the key laws that support youth and career readiness.

 **Karen Scallan, FHF of GNO**
 **Brenda Bares, FHF Acadiana**
 **Monday, September 15, 2025**
 **1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

 **Louisiana**
Changing Lives. Every Day.

 **Families
Helping
Families**
of Louisiana



Accommodations VS Modifications

Accommodations and modifications are often used interchangeably, but they mean very different things — especially when it comes to accessibility and inclusion. Do

Wednesday
September 17, 2025
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM

you know when each applies, and how they can impact learning, participation, or service delivery?

Join this interactive training to:

- Learn the key differences between accommodations and modifications
- Understand when and why each should be applied
- Gain practical examples you can use in real-world settings

REGISTER

REQUEST A TRAINING


If there is a topic that you would like to know more about, please email us with your request(s).

SUBMIT REQUEST

UPDATES &
ANNOUNCEMENTS

St. Martin Parish

Tuesday, September 23,
2025



Coffee & COMMUNITY
FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES OF ACADIANA

Our mission is to assist and strengthen individuals with disabilities and their families through a coordinated network of resources, services and supports.

Families Helping Families of Acadiana is located in Lafayette, Louisiana and we offer:

- Peer Support
- Information & Referral
- Advocacy
- Education & Training

We understand that it may be difficult for many families to come to our office. So, we are coming to you!

We travel to each parish in Region 4. While there, we visit and enjoy local coffee shops. But, most of all, we get a chance to sit and talk to you!

COME HAVE COFFEE WITH US!

REGION 4

ACADIA EVANGELINE

IBERIA LAFAYETTE

ST. LANDRY ST. MARTIN

VERMILION

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
110 Evangeline Blvd.
St. Martinville, LA 70582

Please continue to check your email and/or the FHFOA Facebook page for upcoming dates and locations.

Partners in Policymaking (PIP)

Are you passionate about disability rights, inclusion, and shaping public policy? Louisiana's Partners in Policymaking is now accepting applications for its leadership training program!



Application Deadline: September 30

MORE INFO

Disability Awareness Awards Ceremony

Tuesday, October 7, 2025
@ 9:00 AM



Disability Awareness AWARDS CEREMONY

Honoring those who champion accessibility,
inclusivity, and support for individuals with
disabilities throughout Lafayette Parish

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2025

9:00 AM

HEYMANN PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

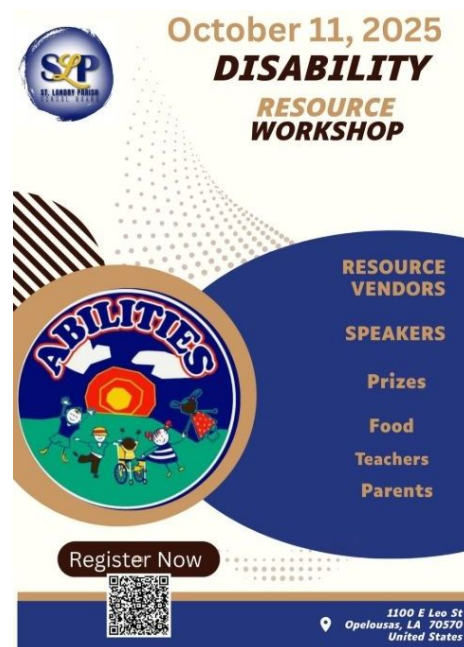
VISIT [LAFAYETTELA.GOV/DAC](https://lafayettela.gov/dac) OR
SCAN HERE TO SUBMIT A
NOMINATION



Disability Resource Workshop

Saturday, October 11, 2025
@ 10:00 AM - 3:30 PM

REGISTER



Treats at the Village

Monday, October 13, 2025

@ 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

An annual trick or treating experience for
individuals with disabilities (of all ages!) and
their families with free admission, candy,
music, and fun!

*Event Sponsored by: LARC's Acadian Village
In Partnership with: Families Helping Families of
Acadiana, Acadiana Area Human Services
District, & DREAMS Foundation of Acadiana*



REGISTER

Acadiana Opportunity Job Fair

Wednesday, October 22, 2025
@ 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

[MORE INFO](#)

Acadiana Opportunity Job Fair



Wednesday, October 22



9:00 a.m. to noon



Heymann Convention Center
1373 S College Rd

Benefits Planning Sessions

9:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

Learn how obtaining employment may impact
your SSI or SSDI benefits
Learn how to use the Developmental Disability
Waiver Programs to support employment

INFO

www.lafayette.org/opportunity
or (504) 347-9115



**WANTED:
Willing &
Able
Workers**

Christmas Extravaganza

Saturday, December 6, 2025

@ 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

FHFOA and other community partners have joined together again to host our annual Christmas Extravaganza for individuals with disabilities and their families.

The event will include games, activities, light snacks, and meeting with Santa Claus!

The Christmas Extravaganza is free to attend.



*Check our website
and/or social media
for more updates.*

OFFICE CLOSURES

Tuesday

November 11



Thursday & Friday

November 27 & 28



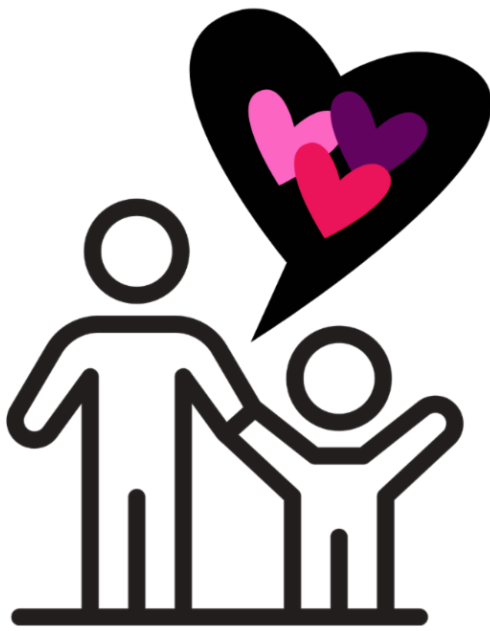
December 19
through January 2

SUPPORT

**Parents,
do you need someone
to talk to?**

We're here to listen!

*Please call our office to
schedule an appointment.*



CALL US

Every family is different, that is why we offer one-on-one individualized parent support. These sessions can be held in person, phone or virtually.

Families Helping Families of Acadiana provides a comfortable, nonjudgmental, and confidential environment that will allow you to be at ease when confiding with us.



Group Support

Please continue to check our website and/or all our social media platforms for scheduled dates.

WEBSITE

We offer a welcoming, supportive space where families can come together. A variety of topics are explored, and everyone is encouraged to share, connect, and feel a true sense of belonging. All are welcome.

DONATE ONLINE TODAY



In The Community



*Annette Frugé attending the
Children's Cabinet Advisory Panel
in July.*

Goodbye For Now, Friend



This summer, we say a heartfelt farewell to our friend and colleague, Annette Frugé. She has accepted a new opportunity with another wonderful organization, and while we will deeply miss her presence here, we are excited to see all the amazing things she will accomplish in this next chapter. Please join us in sending her not only best wishes in her career journey but also comfort and strength during this time.



Annette, thank you for all you've given to our team — you leave behind a legacy of kindness, dedication, and friendship. We wish you joy, peace, and success in all your new adventures.



Sincerely, All of Us Here at FHFOA



LOUISIANA YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM

WEBSITE

Camp is...

- focused on leadership, self-determination, and empowerment.
- hosted on a college campus during the summer.
- 100% free to those who attend, including lodging and food.
- accepting campers with an ADA-defined disability, which is inclusive of mental health conditions and neurodivergence.
- accredited through the American Camp Association, meaning we follow national best practices when it comes to safety and quality in camping.

Our 2025 Summer Session:





The LAYLF Team
attending Disability
Awareness Day
at the Capital.



JOIN LaCAN

**Linking lawmakers,
individuals with
disabilities, and
family members to
make positive change
in systems serving
people with
disabilities.**

- LaCAN (Louisiana Council's Advocacy Network) furthers the Council's mission by advocating for policies and systems that support inclusion everywhere people learn, work, live, and play.
- LaCAN advocates for service systems that support children and adults with disabilities to live in their own homes and be fully-included and participating members of their local schools and communities.
- LaCAN provides information and support to individuals wishing to effectively advocate for systems change in the areas of home and community-based services, education, and employment.
- Regional LaCAN teams include individuals with disabilities, their family members, and professionals. These members are notified by email or phone when communication with state agency officials, legislators or the Governor is necessary.

Guiding Principles

- Children, regardless of the severity of their disability, need families and enduring relationships with adults in a nurturing home environment to develop to their fullest potential.

- Adults with developmental disabilities should be afforded the opportunity to make decisions for themselves, live in typical homes and communities, and exercise their full rights and responsibilities as citizens.
- People with developmental disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, should have the opportunity and support needed to gain and maintain competitive, integrated, individualized employment.
- All students, with or without disabilities, should be provided the same opportunities to be educated in neighborhood schools as their sisters, brothers, friends, and neighbors.
- All students, with or without disabilities, should be provided with the support to learn together effectively, involving family, school, and community.

Benefits to Membership

You can help improve the systems that serve individuals with developmental disabilities by joining the LaCAN and participating in its advocacy efforts.

** There are no dues or fees to join, and your activity level is up to you. **

Here are just a few of the benefits to joining LaCAN:

Connection	Information	Training	Support
Become a part of a regional team of advocates.	Receive current information on proposed policy changes and how those changes may affect you and others.	Learn skills to effectively advocate for systems change.	Receive assistance from a regional LaCAN Leader who will link you with your policymakers and support your advocacy efforts.

EMAIL



Nicole Flores
Executive Director



Todd Fontenot

Financial Manager,
Information & Referral
Specialist



Susie Dupont

Accounts Manager



Nicole DeJean

Special Projects



Brenda Bares

Education Liaison



Danielle Ledet

Education Liaison,
Information & Referral
Specialist



Kristie Curtis

LaCAN Leader



Lillian DeJean

Louisiana Youth Leadership
Forum Coordinator



Harlon Cowsar, II

Adult Program Coordinator,
Referral Specialist



AnnMarie Bihm

Outreach Prep Specialist,
Education Liaison Aide



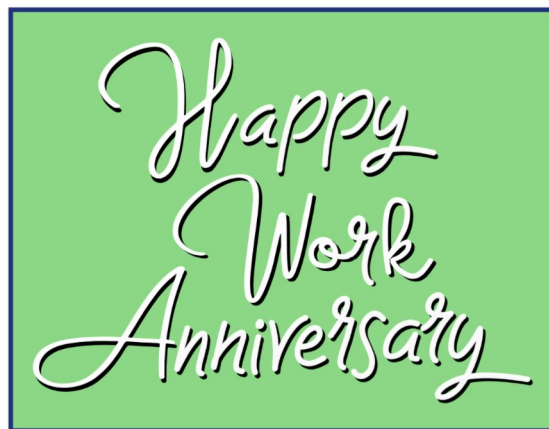


Month of October

**Susie Dupont
&
Danielle Ledet**

Month of November

**Kristie Curtis
&
Todd Fontenot**



Month of September

**Nicole Flores
&
Danielle Ledet**

Month of November

**Harlon Cowsar, II
&
Susie Dupont**

Thank you for all your hard work and dedication!

Meet Our
BOARD
of
DIRECTORS



Terrell Bergeron
Chair



Kisha Levy
Vice-Chair



Jessica Leday
Secretary



Rebecca Fruge'
Treasurer



Denise Auzenne
Member



Cherelle L. Williams
Member



Angie LaBorde
Member

*Photo
Coming
Soon!*

Carmen Cetnar
Member

*Photo
Coming
Soon!*

Paul Ganucheau
Member

*Photo
Coming
Soon!*

Jessica Ranken
Member

Community Partners

232 HELP



ACADIANA ADVOCACY NETWORK



SERVE . COMPASSION . COMMUNITY



Affiliated Blind
of Louisiana
TRAINING CENTER



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF ST. LANDRY-EVANGELINE, INC.



THE FAMILY TREE
INFORMATION, EDUCATION & COUNSELING CENTER



Goodwill



**LOUISIANA
VOAD**

Macaroni KID
BY CertifiKID

MAGNOLIA
SPECIAL NEEDS PLANNING

**Nurse-Family
Partnership**
Helping First-Time Parents Succeed®

PEDIA TRUST
Day Care for Medically Fragile Children

Save the Children®

**SECOND
HARVEST
FOOD BANK**
FEEDING SOUTH LOUISIANA

**Ttrain
UNIQUE**

**We Rock The Spectrum®
KID'S GYM**
For All Kids - Lafayette

Programs Supported Through Our Center



[CONTACT](#)



*Feature Article
Coming Next
Newsletter*



The Families Helping Families Network

The Families Helping Families Networks are individual, non-profit, family-driven resource centers. We are a group of families, who through our own experiences, promote advocacy and are committed to reaching other families who have members with disabilities. The term "disability" includes physical, mental, emotional, behavioral, and/or academic needs.

Our FHF Centers are directed and staffed by parents, self-advocates, or family members of individuals with disabilities. Our Centers provide education and trainings, peer support, and information and referrals as part of their free services.

**Please see
below to find
the FHF Center
located in your
region or area
of the state.**

**Families Helping Families of Greater New Orleans
(FHF of GNO)**

700 Hickory Avenue, Harahan, LA 70123
504.888.9111 or 1.800.766.7736 (Toll-Free)
504.353.2350 (Fax)
www.fhfogno.org



Region 2

Ascension, East & West Baton Rouge,
East & West Feliciana, Iberville, Pointe Coupee

Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge

2356 Drusilla Lane, Baton Rouge, LA 70809
225.216.7474 or 1.866.216.7474 (Toll-Free)
225.216.7977 (Fax)
www.fhfgbr.org



Region 3

Assumption, Lafourche, St. Charles,
St. James, St. John, St. Mary, Terrebonne

Bayou Land Families Helping Families

286 Highway 3185, Thibodaux, LA 70301
985.447.4461 or 1.800.331.5570 (Toll-Free)
985.447.7988 (Fax)
www.blfhf.org



Region 4

Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin,
Vermilion

Families Helping Families of Acadiana

100 Benman Road, Lafayette, LA 70506
337.984.3458 or 1.855.984.3458 (Toll-Free)
337.984.3468 (Fax)
www.fhfacadiana.org



Region 5

Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis

Families Helping Families of Southwest Louisiana

324 West Hale Street, Lake Charles, LA 70601
337.436.2570 or 1.800.894.6558 (Toll-Free)
337.436.2578 (Fax)
www.fhfwla.org



Region 6

Avoyelles, Concordia, Catahoula,
Grant, LaSalle, Rapides, Vernon, Winn

Families Helping Families at the Crossroads of La.

2840 Military Highway, Suite A, Pineville, LA 71360

318.641.7373 or 1.800.259.7200 (Toll-Free)

318.640.4299 (Fax)

www.familieshelpingfamilies.net



Region 7

Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, Desoto,
Lincoln, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine, Webster

Families Helping Families Region 7

215 Bobbie Street, Suite 100, Bossier City, LA 71112

318.226.4541 or 1.877.226.4541 (Toll-Free)

318.742.7260 (Fax)

www.fhfregion7.com



Region 8

Caldwell, East & West Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Lincoln,
Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union

Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana

5200 Northeast Road, Monroe, LA 71203

318.361.0487 or 1.888.300.1320 (Toll-Free)

318.361.0417 (Fax)

www.fhfnela.org



Region 9

Livingston, St. Helena, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Washington

Northshore Families Helping Families

108 Highland Park Plaza, Covington, LA 70433

985.875.0511 or 1.800.383.8700 (Toll-Free)

985.875.9979 (Fax)

www.fhfnorthshore.org



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