



2020 Annual Report





The mission of NCLD is to improve the lives of the 1 in 5 children and adults nationwide with learning and attention issues – by empowering parents and young adults, transforming schools, and advocating for equal rights and opportunities. We’re working to create a society in which every individual possesses the academic, social, and emotional skills needed to succeed in school, at work, and in life. In 2020, NCLD focused on supporting students, parents, and educators as they faced the challenges presented by COVID; protecting the civil rights of students with disabilities during remote learning; and empowering young adults with learning and attention issues to serve as effective self-advocates.

Helping Students, Parents, and Educators During COVID

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the education landscape dramatically and had an outsized impact on students with disabilities. As families navigated the closure of schools, and as schools worked to re-engage students and to provide instruction and services, NCLD created multiple resources to support families and schools. These resources include publications on [Providing a Free Appropriate Public Education \(FAPE\)](#) and on [the importance of family-school collaboration](#); a [guide to reopening schools](#); guides

to virtual learning for both [parents](#) and [educators](#); a [report on inclusive technology during the COVID-19 crisis](#); a [parent advocacy toolkit](#); and a [report on challenges, opportunities and actions](#) for schools to ensure responsible inclusion during virtual learning.





Protecting Civil Rights for Students with Disabilities

In response to efforts by Congress and the Trump administration to waive portions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in the midst of the pandemic, NCLD launched the [#MyIDEAmatters campaign](#). Nearly 1,500 advocates sent letters voicing their opposition to their members of Congress. In addition, NCLD led the advocacy effort with more than 350 other partners to urge Congress to increase funding to support students with disabilities during COVID. NCLD's efforts proved successful in May, when Congress passed the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act, which did not allow states or districts to waive any requirements or civil rights protections for students with disabilities during the COVID-19 crisis.

Ensuring Equity in Special Education

In January, NCLD convened ten leading civil rights and disability organizations to host "Equity in Special Education: The role of race, ethnicity, and poverty," during which we examined the disparate rates of special education identification for students of color; the experience of English learners; and the bias that exists in special education policy and practices. This convening served as a first step in bringing together the civil rights and disability communities to develop a shared understanding of the current state of special

education disproportionality and how we can work together to make change and support educators to better serve students at this intersection. Since this convening, NCLD has been asked to weigh in on intersectionality issues by many civil rights partners, as well as to provide information about disability rights and racial inequities in special education.

The deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Rayshard Brooks, and far too many other Black men and women raised the national conscience towards deeper and broader change in the area of racial justice and spurred NCLD to redouble our efforts to serve as more impactful allies in this effort. During 2020, NCLD closely examined the issue of intersectionality -- how disability, race, ethnicity, income, and other factors often converge and impact the student experience -- and took several meaningful steps to ensure that our processes, practices and programs prioritize equity and empower all stakeholders throughout our organization.





THE LD CHECKLIST: A NEW TOOL TO IDENTIFY LEARNING DISABILITIES

Everyone has trouble with learning and behavior from time to time. But when problems persist, they may signal an underlying learning disability (LD) or attention disorder (ADHD). Uneven progress or lags in the mastery of skills and behaviors – even in children as young as 4 or 5 – should not be ignored. It's important that parents, educators, and other care providers are careful observers and share concerns among each other, so that targeted screening or evaluation can take place. Then students can get the help they need as quickly as possible – before experiencing self-doubt, frustration, and failure.

NCLD used the most recent research available to develop an interactive tool to help with early recognition of learning difficulties. [The LD Checklist: Recognize and Respond](#) is meant to help parents and other caregivers determine whether a child is at risk for, or shows signs of, having learning disabilities. The more characteristics checked, the more important it is to seek clarification about the presence of underlying learning disabilities.

Depending on the results from the checklist, caregivers are recommended subject- and age-specific resources. These high-quality resources range from information on learning disabilities and attention disorders to education games. Now, any care provider can access the tools they need to help a child thrive.

Early recognition and intervention are the first steps to helping a student who may have a learning disability or an attention disorder. Based on the newest research, these tools are meant to make these first steps more accessible, so that more individuals with LD can be in the best possible position to succeed.

LD Checklist: Recognize & Respond

#Check4LD

Learn more:
nclld.org/LDChecklist



EMPOWERING YOUNG ADULTS

The critical transition after high school can be a daunting experience for young adults with learning and attention issues. Many find themselves asking where they should go to college, what career path they should choose, or how to find support and resources. Through its Young Adult Initiatives, NCLD seeks to empower young adults with learning and attention issues by building community; providing leadership opportunities; and conducting research.

rights of students with disabilities. During this event, which was held virtually due to the pandemic, our young advocates met with members of both the Senate and the House of Representatives, including Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) and Representatives Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) and Glenn Thompson (R-PA), encouraging them to take legislative action to protect the rights of students with LD and to fund critical programs in K-12 and higher education.

Recognizing the individuals with disabilities often face challenges when voting, NCLD launched Our Time, Our Vote, a nonpartisan, nonpolitical initiative that aims to engage young adults with learning and attention issues – as well as their families and friends – in civic participation efforts. The goals of Our Time, Our Vote are to empower young adults with the knowledge necessary for them to vote, and to educate the general public about the voting needs of, and stigma faced by, people with learning disabilities. We believe that every voter should have the knowledge, resources, and tools needed to vote with confidence and ease and that young adults can play a powerful role in shaping the future of civic participation. During the 2020 election cycle, Our Time, Our Vote reached more than 1,200 people with important resources to make voting accessible to all. Working with partners we helped register 100 new voters and raised the issue of voting accessibility for people with disabilities.



The COVID-19 pandemic heightened the challenges faced by young adults – as classes were moved online, jobs were closed, and college students were forced out of their dorms. In order to better understand the full impact of the pandemic on young adults with learning and attention issues, NCLD conducted a survey in April 2020. The results of that survey allowed NCLD to [target resources for young adults](#) during the pandemic, which included specific content to help young adults with LD navigate virtual learning; a blog series on how to request accommodations during virtual learning; and a webinar on how COVID has shifted the student aid landscape.

In April 2020, NCLD hosted its annual LD Day of Action, which provided opportunities for more than 50 young adults from across the country to speak with Members of Congress about the importance of protecting the



The 2020 Anne Ford and Allegra Ford Thomas Scholarship Recipients

Each year, NCLD awards scholarships to students with learning disabilities to support their pursuit of secondary education and career advancement goals. [The Anne Ford Scholarship](#) is a four-year scholarship granted to a graduating high school senior with LD and/or ADHD who will be enrolled in a full-time bachelor's degree program. [The Allegra Ford Thomas Scholarship](#) is a two-year scholarship granted to a graduating high school senior who will enroll in a two-year community college, a vocational or technical training program, or a specialized program for students with LD and/or ADHD. During 2020, NCLD received the largest number of scholarship applications to date – with nearly 900 applications from individuals across the country.

2020 Anne Ford Scholarship Recipient

Louis Carrico-Braun



Louis-Carrico-Braun is the 2020 Anne Ford Scholarship recipient. As an individual with ADHD, Louis says that he is “determined to prove that having a disability should not dismantle accomplishing goals.”

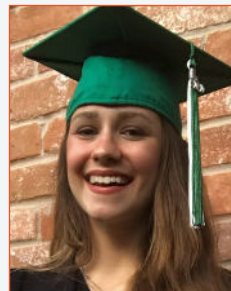
Louis, who resides in Washington, DC, will attend Northeastern University in the Fall to study computer science. “My goal is to become one of the best computer scientists in the world by solving problems and finding new and creative solutions to complex and challenging issues. In the digital age, this means solving problems that can affect the world,” Louis says.

After facing stigma regarding his ADHD in school, Louis excelled academically and became an incredible self-advocate. To help other students with disabilities at his high school, he started a club called “Bright Knights.” “I wanted to help create an environment where students, regardless of their grades or disabilities, could come together and discuss ways to achieve both in and out of school,” Louis says.

NCLD is excited to honor Louis’ academic achievement, leadership qualities and commitment to being a role model for others with learning and attention issues.

2020 Allegra Ford Thomas Scholarship Recipient

Zada Morgan



Zada Morgan is the 2020 Allegra Ford Thomas Scholarship recipient. Zada resides in Spring, Texas and will be attending Lone Star Community College in the Fall to start her path to receiving a business degree and massage therapy license.

Zada was identified as having dyslexia in fourth grade and feels lucky to have received the support and resources she needed to succeed in school. She is also very active in the arts, having appeared in fourteen productions and winning awards for her acting and technical work. “Theatre gave me the opportunity to find my voice, to discover who I am, and who I want to be,” Zada says.

Zada is determined to succeed academically and serve her community. “I learned that education was crucial to life. I want to live a life of success and make change in my community,” she says.

NCLD is excited to honor Zada’s academic achievement, creative talents and commitment to achieving her goals for herself, her family and her community.

Building a Community to Support Vulnerable Students

In March 2020, as schools across the country shifted to remote learning, NCLD joined with five other education organizations to form the [Educating All Learners Alliance](#), with the goal of ensuring that students with disabilities receive the services and supports they need during this challenging time. Within two weeks, EALA unveiled a digital hub and online community for schools and districts to join webinars, access professional development resources, and discover articles and tools in a curated library of content on technology and education.

Since that time, EALA has grown to become an uncommon alliance of more than 90 organizations that represent voices from a diverse range of communities, including disability advocacy, parent, special education, civil rights, and K-12 nonprofit education organizations. EALA members have worked closely to produce an array of resources dedicated to supporting all students and school communities during – and after – the COVID-19 pandemic.



Everyday Champion Awards

COVID-19 created unprecedented obstacles to learning, as well as unprecedented challenges for parents, educators and school administrators. Yet even in the face of this disruption, many found innovative ways to keep learning going and help our kids succeed. To recognize those individuals who have gone above and beyond to help children with learning and attention issues while distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, NCLD launched the Everyday Champion Awards. From a field of 15 finalists, three winners were selected to receive the award, which included a cash prize of \$5,000. NCLD is proud to recognize the outstanding achievements of our 2020 Everyday Champion Award winners and finalists.

Educator Award Winner:

Truman Solverud
Laramie, Wyoming



Educator Award Finalists:

Craig Cervený
Warren Kenny
Caitlin Kriek
Lily Parshenov

School Administrator Winner:

Christine Baeta
Sacramento, California



School Administrator Finalists:

Keith Ball
Molly Buttitta
Laura Fiveash
Lakisha Thigpen

Parent/Caregiver Winner:

Gloria Avila
Cambridge, Massachusetts



Parent/Caregiver Finalists:

Janelle Duttonhoffer
Trina Paynter
Laurie Riedel
Bunny Rivera

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

2020 Financial Report

Total Revenue

\$5,787,934

Total Expenses

\$2,604,746

Net Assets

Beginning of the Period

\$7,061,006

Net Assets

End of the Period

\$10,244,194

Breakdown of Program Services Expenses

Policy and Advocacy

\$1,132,662 (43.5%)

Young Adult Initiatives

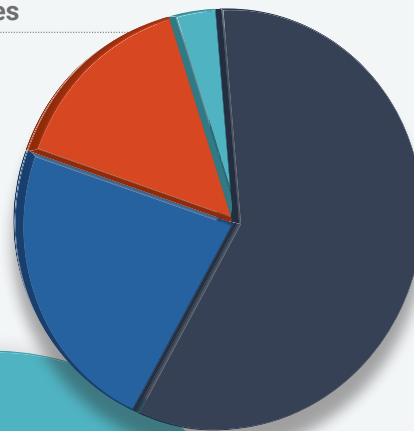
\$417,388 (16%)

Innovation

\$274,704 (10.6%)

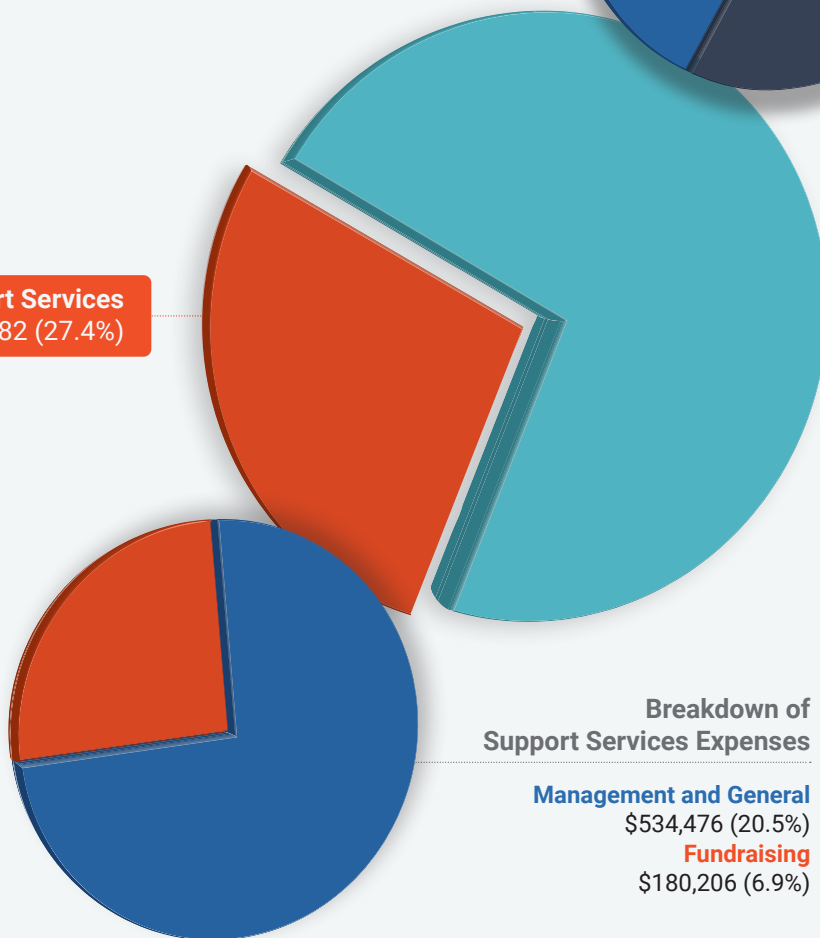
LD Resources and Research

\$65,310 (2.5%)



Support Services
\$714,682 (27.4%)

Program Services
\$1,890,064 (72.6%)



Breakdown of Support Services Expenses

Management and General

\$534,476 (20.5%)

Fundraising

\$180,206 (6.9%)

Board of Directors

Margi Booth, Co-Chair

Joe Zimmer, Co-Chair

John Langelier, Treasurer

Ken Plevan, Secretary

Kristy Baxter

Jody Bellows

David Chard, Ph.D.

Jenna Ellis

Anne Ford

Shanti Fry

John G. Gantz, Jr.

Mark J. Griffin, Ph.D.

The Hon. Thomas H. Kean

Nancy Kingsbury

Mark A. Michael

Sally Quinn

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Lindsay Kubatzky, Policy Manager

