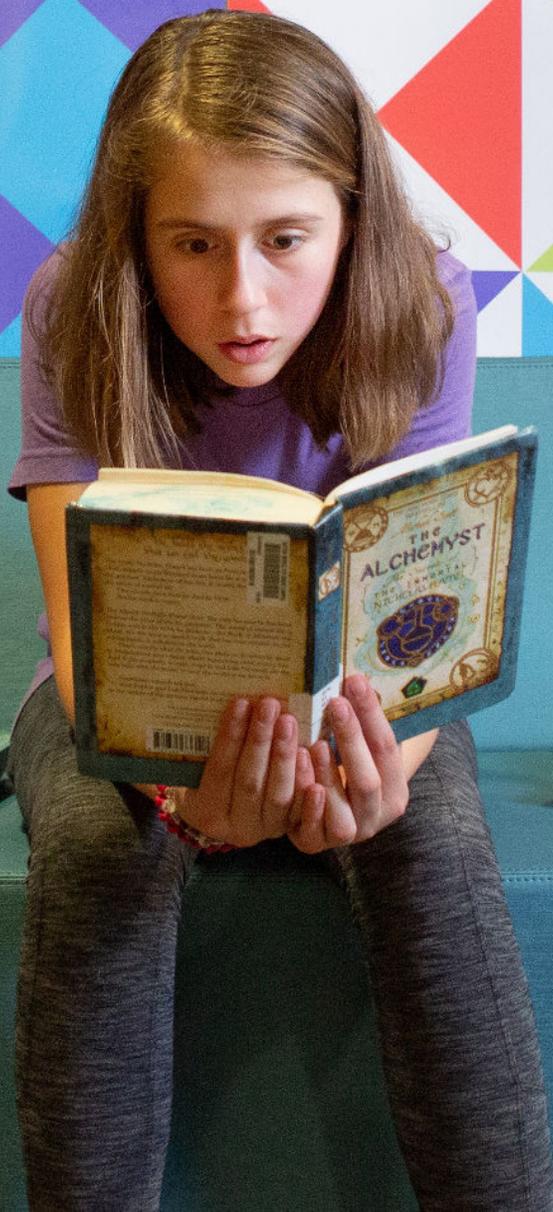




# 2022 Annual Report

Founded in 1977, the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) is the leading organization representing the learning disability community. NCLD improves the lives of all people with learning disabilities by empowering parents, enabling young adults, transforming schools, and creating policy and advocacy impact.

In 2022, NCLD celebrated its 45th anniversary by strengthening our policy and federal coalition management work; publishing and disseminating groundbreaking resources to help educators, policy makers, parents, and students enhance their understanding of learning disabilities; identifying, empowering, and supporting new generations of leaders; and responding to issues and challenges faced by individuals with learning disabilities.



## Shining a Light on Impact: Advancing Accessible Education and Equitable Opportunities



In 2022, NCLD continued to refine and amplify the compelling narratives that vividly illustrate our profound impact. Our steadfast commitment to advancing accessible education and equitable opportunities for individuals with learning disabilities remained at the heart of our mission.

Through the power of visual storytelling, encompassing vibrant visuals, engaging infographics, and dynamic multimedia, we elevated the voices of our Young Adult Leadership Council. This strategic approach enriched our brand awareness and expanded our digital footprint, strengthening our connection with a broader audience.

Our commitment echoed within our community and among LD Champions. We embarked to confront disparities,

igniting rapid mobilization and fervent advocacy directly. A standout accomplishment emerged with the passage of the RISE Act through the House of Representatives in 2022—a momentous stride forward. This achievement was magnified by our first in-person LD Day of Action since 2019, a monumental event that unfolded after a global pandemic set off by COVID-19.

Partnering with journalists, we've leveraged thought leadership from our team of subject matter experts, igniting crucial conversations and shedding light on the vital importance of accessible education.

Additionally, we used an Omni-channel approach to target new champions and engage with supporters to amplify these critical issues and topics.



### The Respond, Innovate, Succeed, and Empower (RISE) Act Passed by U.S. House of Representatives

In September 2022, the House of Representatives passed the RISE Act as part of the larger Mental Health Matters Act. This piece of legislation would eliminate two obstacles facing students with disabilities as they pursue higher education: (1) it would allow students with disabilities to submit their Individualized Education Program (IEP), 504 plan, or prior evaluation as documentation of their disability

when seeking accommodations in college, thereby avoiding the need for a costly new evaluation; and (2) it would allow additional funding for a technical assistance center that provides students and families with information about disability services in college and provides training to college faculty members on best practices to support students with disabilities.

**NCLD has championed the RISE act for years, mobilizing thousands of parents and students to contact members of Congress.**

## Unlocking Futures: Youth with Learning Disabilities and the Juvenile Justice System

In response to feedback from our civil rights partners that the disability community needs to increase its focus on issues within the criminal justice system – particularly in light of recent reform efforts – and building on NCLD’s longstanding history of advocating for children and youth with disabilities, we created [“Unlocking Futures: Youth with Learning Disabilities and the Juvenile Justice System.”](#) This report highlights the fact that, of the nearly 240,000 instances of juvenile detention in the United States every year, an estimated 60%-75% are of individuals with one or more disabilities. Further, the report sheds new light on the many ways that our juvenile justice system fails youth with disabilities. Finally, the report concludes with policy recommendations to improve these issues moving forward. NCLD intends for this report to serve as the foundation for our future work to support youth with disabilities impacted by the juvenile justice system.

## Planning Your Future: A Guide to Transition



During 2022, with support from the Educating All Learners Alliance, NCLD hosted a series of listening sessions with young adults, parents, educators, transition specialists, transition service providers, college disability services staff, and researchers in the field. A common theme expressed by all these stakeholders was the lack of resource and knowledge sharing about transition planning, changes in legal rights and responsibilities, and how to access the available supports and services that do exist in post-high school settings.

In response, NCLD created [“Planning Your Future: A Guide to Transition,”](#) a suite of resources developed specifically for students, families, and educators during the transition process. This go-at-your-own pace resource enables students to learn about the education and civil rights laws that protect them in K-12, higher education, and workforce settings and also includes guidance on how to be a strong self advocate during transition planning. The hub also contains multiple additional resources that help students explore and reflect on opportunities that are available to them, as well as an educator/parent facilitation guide.





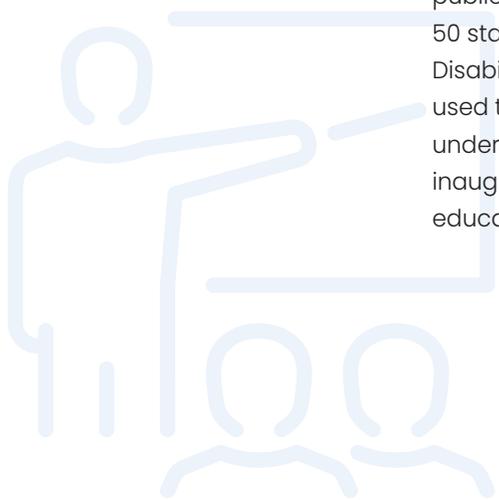
## Early Warning Systems for Learning Disabilities

**NCLD is a key member of the nine-organization GRAD Partnership for Student Success.**

During 2022, NCLD consulted on the development of a rubric to assess how well high schools are addressing the needs of students with disabilities on their path to graduation and postsecondary success. To better understand student and expert experiences and support for students with disabilities on their path to high school graduation, NCLD also hosted a series of focus group sessions with LD experts, special education administrators, and young adults with learning disabilities. NCLD submitted a memo highlighting findings from these sessions to the GRAD Partnership to help refine the partnership's criteria and definition of a student success system that considers the needs of students with disabilities.

## The State of Learning Disabilities

One of NCLD's primary research priorities is expanding its flagship publication, *The State of Learning Disabilities*, which highlights current trends and best practices for serving individuals with learning disabilities in the United States. In preparation for the next edition of this publication, during 2022 NCLD researched and compiled data from all 50 states regarding each state's practices surrounding Specific Learning Disabilities. This information will be disseminated on NCLD's website and used to support federal policy asks in congressional meetings. To better understand our community's diverse experiences, we also launched NCLD's inaugural annual survey of young adults with learning disabilities, K-12 educators, and caregivers.



The critical transition after high school can be a daunting experience for many young adults with learning disabilities – as they often find themselves asking where they should go to college, what career path they should choose, or wondering how to find support and resources. NCLD aims to empower young adults with learning disabilities through our many initiatives, including an online community, leadership opportunities, and research.

## Young Adult Leadership Council

Launched in 2018, NCLD's Young Adult Leadership Council (YALC) is a unique leadership development and training program for young adults with learning disabilities and attention issues. This year, NCLD welcomed the fifth cohort of the YALC, which brought together 12 new advocates from across the United States and Canada. During the year, we also expanded the online curriculum developed in 2021 to onboard and engage our young leaders and to prepare them for their service on the YALC.



## LD Day of Action

Following two years of virtual events, NCLD was pleased to host an in-person LD Day of Action in 2022. In partnership with Eye to Eye National, NCLD brought 45 young adult leaders to Washington to engage in powerful awareness building work with members of Congress and the Biden administration. During this event, our young leaders held 55 different meetings with members of Congress to educate them about the importance of policy efforts to support the needs of students with disabilities. In addition, we hosted a roundtable discussion with Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona and staff members from the Department of Education, and young adult participants had an opportunity to visit the White House.



**2022**

## ANNE FORD AND ALLEGRA FORD THOMAS SCHOLARSHIPS

Every 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 2022, NCLD received a record number of applications for the Anne Ford and Allegra Ford Thomas scholarships – with more than 3,000 applicants from students throughout the country.**



## 2022 Anne Ford Scholarship Recipient



### **Zomara Lee**

Zomara Lee is a graduate of Kecoughtan High School in Hampton, Virginia. While in high school, Zomara was the Captain of the varsity cheerleading team, a member of the varsity golf team, vice president of the student council association, and founder and vice president of the Future Farmers of America. She also participated in several other clubs and organizations. Zomara graduated high school with a 3.96 GPA and was a member of the National Honor Society and the Art, Math, English, Spanish, Science, and Social Studies Honor Societies. Throughout high school, Zomara excelled academically with rigorous classes, which consisted of AP and Dual Enrollment. She will be attending Virginia Tech University, double majoring in Animal and Poultry Science and Dairy Science with a pre-vet emphasis. Zomara aspires to become an exotic veterinarian and help preserve our wildlife from extinction.



## 2022 Allegra Ford Thomas Scholarship Recipient

### **Lacey Schmidt**

Lacey Schmidt is a graduate of Deshler High School in Deshler, Nebraska. She maintained a 3.9 GPA while participating in extracurricular activities throughout high school. She is a three-sport athlete, peer mentor, and avid volunteer within her community. In addition to her academic and athletic commitments, Lacey finds joy in showcasing her livestock across the nation as a participant in the Future Farmers of America. She is currently a freshman at Colby Community College, studying agricultural economics and animal science. Lacey also serves as a judge for the school's livestock team.



## COVID-19 Impact Scholarships

During 2022, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to create significant disruptions to the college and life plans of young adults with learning disabilities. Throughout the pandemic, students have been faced with difficult decisions such as adapting their college plans, reducing credit loads, and losing out on internship and job opportunities.

In response to these hardships, NCLD created the COVID-19 Impact Scholarships, which provide awards of \$1,500 to mitigate the financial and academic disruptions caused by the pandemic. In 2022, the twelve winners were:

- Zina Antolin
- Yakiraah Corley
- Kelly D'Angelo
- Sarah Devine
- David Elkayam
- Oliver Fentum
- Heather Hayes
- Kendrick Johnson
- Camden Moors
- Dorian Smith
- Danteris Thompson
- Madison Wiseman

## Everyday Champion Awards



**Hannah Olin**



**Joseph Rosen**

Educators and administrators are instrumental in advancing the learning accessibility rights movement for students with learning disabilities and attention issues. Recognizing that disability rights are central to this movement, NCLD's Everyday Champion Award honors individuals who consistently demonstrate resilience and innovation to ensure that students with learning disabilities and attention issues receive equitable education and support.

The Everyday Champion Awards highlight the significance of disability rights and learning accessibility, emphasizing the need for equitable opportunities, inclusivity, and the dismantling of systemic barriers. Educators and administrators play a vital role in championing these principles while ensuring that individuals with learning disabilities and attention issues can fully participate in society, attain academic achievements, and experience the rights they deserve.

In 2022, NCLD was proud to recognize the exceptional achievements of Hannah Olin, an educator from Arvada, Colorado, and Joseph Rosen, an administrator from Chicago, Illinois. These Everyday Champions exhibit courage and innovation in support of students with LD and attention issues. Their effective solutions, support, and dedication go beyond the challenges faced during the pandemic, showcasing the long-lasting impact of their efforts to foster equitable opportunities and inclusive environments for students.

During 2022, NCLD worked to strengthen its relationships with constituents by listening to the issues and challenges faced by individuals with learning disabilities. Using tools such as social listening and geo-targeting, we have worked to build community, share resources, and shape policy to help individuals with disabilities feel seen, valued, and heard. Key efforts have included:



## Increasing our Digital Footprint

In an effort to reach additional individuals through social media and other digital channels, we have drawn upon the experiences of our Young Adult Leadership Council members in several important ways. One recent example is [On Our Minds](#), an integrated awareness campaign created to communicate the correlation between learning disabilities and mental health issues. This campaign garnered more than double NCLD's normal digital engagement and increased our cross-channel followers by nearly 15%.



## Recent Publications

During 2022, NCLD created and disseminated more than 40 articles and publications, including: [Black Students with Disabilities Deserve Better School Experiences](#); [An End to the Reading Wars? More US schools Embrace Phonics](#); [Standardized Tests are Valuable for Students with Disabilities – But More Inclusivity Needed](#); [When Social-Emotional Learning Leaves out Students with Disabilities](#).



## Podcasts, Webinars and Other Media

Throughout the year, NCLD team members participated in numerous podcasts and webinars created by partner organizations, including the Tourette Society and the Learning First Alliance. In addition, Jordan Green, a member of NCLD's Young Adult Leadership Council, was featured on an episode of the PBS series *A World of Difference* entitled "[Addressing Neurodivergent Mental Health Needs](#)."

## THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

### Financial Report

#### Total Revenue

\$3,401,842

#### Total Expenses

\$2,759,183

#### Net Assets

##### Beginning of the Period

\$10,041,559

##### Net Assets

##### End of the Period

\$10,684,218

#### Breakdown of Program Services Expenses

##### Public Policy and Advocacy

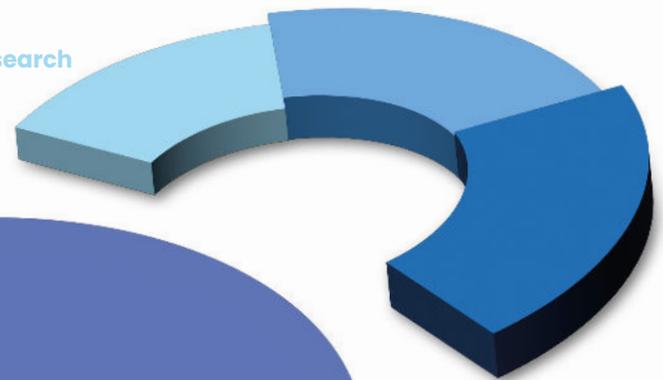
\$574,542 (36.9%)

##### Leadership

\$570,533 (36.6%)

##### LD Resources and Research

\$412,173 (26.5%)



#### Support Services

\$1,201,935 (43.6%)

#### Program Services

\$1,557,248 (56.4%)



#### Breakdown of Support Services Expenses

##### Management and General

\$558,127 (46.4%)

##### Fundraising

\$346,212 (28.8%)

##### Communications

\$297,596 (24.8%)

## Board of Directors

Margi Booth, Co-Chair

Joe Zimmel, Co-Chair and Treasurer

Ken Plevan, Secretary

Kristy Baxter

Jody Bellows

David Chard, Ph.D.

George Duran

Jenna Ellis

Shanti Fry

John G. Gantz, Jr.

Alondra Gonzalez

The Hon. Thomas H. Kean

Brian Hindo

Mark A. Michael

G.M. O'Connell

Cassia Schifter

*Anne Ford, Chair Emerita*

## Team

Jacqueline Rodriguez, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer (Incoming)

Kena Mayberry, Ph.D., Chief Operating Officer

Amelia Malone, Ph.D., Director of Research and Innovation

Joey Hunziker, Director of Leadership and Organizing

Cierra Mangal, Director of Communications

Lindsay Kubatzky, Director of Policy and Advocacy

Jamille O. White, SHRM, Director of Human Resources and Operations

Saashya Rodrigo, Ph.D., Principal Researcher

Brittany Greer, Senior Program Manager

Kate Bartlein, Senior Project Manager

Nicole Fuller, Policy Manager

Victoria Rayol, Project Manager, Digital Marketing

Adolfo Ferrario, Development Associate

Shayna Harris, Research Associate

Mackenzie Schondelmayer, Communications Associate

Jessica Snyderman, Policy Research Associate

Patricia Cook, Executive Assistant

