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**AHEAD Board of Directors Fall 2021 Meeting**

**November 4-6, 2021**

**Thursday, November 4**

**Members Present:** Amanda Kraus (AK), Katy Washington (KW); Jill Sieben-Schneider (JSS), Stephan Smith (SS), Melanie Thornton (MT), Allen Sheffield (AS), Karen Andrews (KA), Chester Goad (CG), Enjie Hall (EH), Zebadiah Hall (ZH), Crystal Hill (CH), Maria Schiano (MS), Tammy Berberi (TB)

**Members Absent:** Chinwendu Okornokwo Burns (COB),

**Meeting Called to Order (unanimously):** 9:05am

**Meeting Adjourned (unanimously):** 3:30pm

**Meeting Minutes:** Summer 2021 Minutes, Approved. MT moved. KW seconded.

**Old Business:** None

**Inclusion Activity:** Share one to three memories/experiences from your past that have shaped your story

## Executive Director Report

### Membership and AHEAD Business

* As of October 15, 2021 AHEAD has 4337 members representing 8% growth. Institutional memberships are where the growth is most present with individual memberships continuing to decline. Possible reasons for individual membership decline may be policy driven--an institution may not be able or willing to pay for an individual membership, but would be willing to pay for multiple people to sign up for an institutional membership for cost saving. AHEAD sends personal emails (not group emails) to all new members when they sign up and sends additional follow up two months later to check-in.
* Anyone who participated in the AHEAD Start program got three months of a trial membership and 50% of participants decided to buy a membership--the same offer will continue.
* The use of the online platform has increased (currently 39 active communities).
* Online courses have netted the organization $175,800 and have seen success with the new registration platform (BlueSky).
* NCSSD grant ended September 30, 2021. Dept of Ed gave organization 7th year extension to spend leftover $80k.
  + Wendy Harbour half time on grant funds and will keep up with technical assistance with NCSSD.
  + Richard Allegra who was formally with NCSSD has moved back to being full time with AHEAD as Director of Outreach.
  + Request for new proposals came out September 30, 2021 and was due October 23, 2021. The grant award has increased from $2.5 million for 4 years and is now $2 million per year for 4 years. Partnered with the University of Minnesota to submit proposal as AHEAD would like support with systems and financial capacity. If award is granted, the grant funds would continue to support NCSSD. December 23, 2021 is the expected known date and the program would begin January 1, 2022.

### Professional Development

* Returning to School with COVID webinar- AHEAD has been working hard to offer professional development that does not entail meeting in-person and that is affordable. Started this last webinar series on the topic of Returning to School with COVID. Had 372 attendees for the first part and 353 attendees for second part. Outside of AHEAD’s legal based programming, AHEAD typically does not see registration numbers this high so the webinar was a success.
* Summer conference 2021- 971 people participated (600 were virtual only). Did not reach in-person capacity of 400, but still reached financial goals from the summer conference.
* Fall webinar series- 12 sessions this year. Registrations run between 60 and 257 per session. Average 130-140 per session. Revenue is on par with spring webinar series.
* Leadership webinar series- 6-part. Registrations were lower--considering putting on pause for a year or two.
* AHEAD Start- 149 people this year vs 140 people last year. One year long AHEAD mentoring program post program. 29 mentors (4 or 5 people each for the year). Half of the people who took the AHEAD Start program have been in their positions for three months or less. Some feedback received from mentees included the need for in-person networking and not knowing who else was in the sessions until the break-out sessions.
  + Suggestion for professional development for folks who have been in field for a while--moving from disability services to executive level, upper-level admin, and leadership positions. Action item: CG to connect with Elisa to discuss.
* Management institute in February- Virtual. Will include a legal track, physical environment track, assessment track, and health sciences in the community college field track.
* Spring Colloquium- April this year. Occurred in May last year, but hit some trouble with graduations, closing out the academic year, etc.
* 2022 Annual Conference. Cleveland, Ohio and Brittney Washington (UNC-Charlotte) is the Program Chair.
  + California has now blocked the state of Ohio as a no-travel state.
    - Action item: SS to find content AHEAD published when California blocked the state of Texas. Are there any work arounds, including payment to AHEAD to arrange travel.

### Research

* Biennial report and salary report has been released within last two months.
* AHEAD has been doing research on the impact of COVID on disability services offices and the impact in the field 3 months, 9 months, and 19 months into the pandemic.
* Think College research project on perceptions and attitudes around programs for students with intellectual disabilities. $50k to conduct the research from Think College.
* Trying first Community of Practice. Topic is around coaching and assessment of coaching programs. Chose 6 institutions to work with for trial run.
* Started a doctoral mentorship program for doc students to have a mentor who is highly published, journals, etc.—3 people in the program so far and are working to get more.

### Budget

Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Review

2021 Revenue Budget Tracking Highlights

* Projected surplus of $277k which is equal to amount we received in federal funding. Thought we would break even or go into the red, but we are not. Membership dues accounts for the majority of revenue. Professional development events exceeded by $173k.
* Audit report to come out in a month. Their preliminary numbers are close to the same calculations that AHEAD has produced.
* Conference revenue- used virtual revenue to offset on-site costs and brought in 53k more than estimated.
* Publications are on the rise and will continue to publish monographs.
* Intellectual disabilities research appears to be $12.5 behind on that contract because we cannot bill on that contract until quarter ends.
* Job Board on AHEAD site (advertising) has increased, exceeded by $10k.

2021 Expenditure Tracking Highlights

* Budgeted down on travel and expenses and spent even less than what was budgeted. Spent less on speaker fees and professional development as folks did not want to take payment.
* TriNet (co-employer) handles payroll, liability, counseling program, for AHEAD and part of TriNet role is to negotiate healthcare. Adams Keegan, Inc. is the new co-employer/company. Spent more in salaries, fringe, and admin and majority of this expenditure was related to fringe benefit costs and most was due to healthcare, $30k over projected estimate. AHEAD to switch healthcare for staff due to high cost and will cut healthcare spending by $50k once switched.
* Budgeted for contract work that didn't end up using as much, saved $8k.
* Negotiated rate with bank (75k) to $50k to process credit cards.
* Educational expenses were $54k under budget; moved all registration services to own platform, ended up spending less on virtual conference.
* NCCSD $114k short of what was expected but expenses were also short.

Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Review

* Budget review includes prepaid expenses for future conferences including $11k to start paying for Cleveland convention center—to pay in installments but AHEAD has to pay in full before conference occurs. City of Cleveland to cut check back to AHEAD for $5k.
* Every hotel room sold, AHEAD is paid back $10.
* Governance and targeted initiatives was projected to cost $18k and actual was $10,504 (AHEAD summer conference board meeting).
* Spent 146k less than we had planned to. $277k surplus.

2022 Proposed Conference Revenue

* Pre-pandemic conferences amounted to an average of 1300-1400 attendees. Receiving feedback that people are having budget and travel justification challenges. AHG numbers are down--1/3 of what we normally get. 850-900 attendees anticipated for summer 2022 conference.
  + Action item: SS to include block in payment description indicating AHEAD can charge/collect at a later date that aligns with fiscal year.
* For virtual broadcasting estimate $40k
  + Virtual available back-up in case COVID numbers increase
* 50 exhibitors have been accepted for this year
* Hotel room comps-when negotiating, one free room per 40 rooms sold. Use those to pay for sleeping rooms to help minimize AHEAD expense. $7365 subsidy for this year.

Ideas for Conference Revenue:

* Feature upcoming summer conference at colloquium in April. May be able to ask certain presenters to do a sneak-peek.
* Can we offer more support to presenters from a cost standpoint?
  + Action item: SS to run calculations and financial modeling to see if options are available for BOD.
* Showcase local and regional engagement--by doing tour of affiliate strand. Maybe bring local affiliate into conference, etc.
* Targeted marketing to VP's for conferences for AHEAD.
* Can we have a practical track (how do we apply theory to practice) to justify why they should be given PD funds to be at the annual conference.

2022 Proposed Conference Expenditure:

* Infrastructure line equates to VCube. VCube conducts the broadcasting for the conference
* Budgeted for $1100 and need to correct to $900 for nametags, conference items, etc.
  + Note for vendor: AHEAD mugs are losing color, did not change vendor but are receiving feedback from members.
* Attrition-difference is what you guarantee vs what you produce. 75% attrition for the upcoming conference.
* Possibly combining welcome reception/president's reception for 2023 (Tuesday evening) and scale back and do something else in the exhibit hall

Overall Budget Proposal Highlights

Budget approved: ZH move to approve and CG seconded. All approved.

Proposed AHEAD Revenue:

* Projected deficit of $198k
  + Not a balanced budget this year, however, sitting on fair amount of cash due to previous 2 years of surplus. Will be asked to approve a deficit budget this year.
    - $800k in savings account
    - $300k in checking account
* Budgeted for 1% membership increase
  + Almost exclusively institutional. Continued the transitional membership for now and budgeted the transitional membership as ongoing-will discontinue when asked by BOD. 40 people took advantage of transitional membership category. Regional workshops and distance education as one lump sum.
  + AHG only virtual last year so revenue was low. Sheraton Denver has not bent on penalties for what AHEAD could not fulfill with AHG and we will likely need to pay (contract minimums for food and beverage; room charges proposed). Sheraton stated that if AHEAD holds 2025 conference at hotel, they will erase all penalties.
* Revenue is $99k less than last year which feeds projected deficit.

Proposed AHEAD Expense

* Increase of $8k for staff meeting-have not had a staff meeting in-person since before COVID.
* Salaries and fringe-drop in $50k--salary savings from Carol Funkes previous role and savings from grant staff.
* Professional development was kept low. All PD for AHEAD staff is currently happening virtually so savings on travel.
* Drop 05 $45k in sub-contract services.
* Retained $20k for sub-contract services.
* Legal fees went from $10k to $5k (hotel contract negotiations).
* Increase of $435k for on-site conferences.
* Budgeted as if we no longer have a grant. If grant comes through, deficit goes away.

Idea (MT): Consider limit in-person meetings to twice per year instead of three times per year. Use savings elsewhere.

Comments:

* Give service in voluntary capacity and try and be fiscally responsible.
* Can be flexible depending on where the budget is.
* BOD volunteers time and sees opportunities to meet as a benefit for networking and a reward as many do not get support from their institutions.
* Some BOD pulled away when they are in the office. Difficult to be present.
* Invest a lot in the work. Likes the flexibility that if we are in a dire situation where we need to cut and we would, but in helping professions, self-sacrificing seems to be too common. Have in-person meetings as much as we can to be present and have conversations to sustain the work.
* Limiting or reducing days/nights for in-person meeting.
* Minimizing the number of board members.
* Host meetings at BOD institutions.

# Friday, November 5

**Members Present:** Amanda Kraus (AK), Katy Washington (KW); Jill Sieben-Schneider (JSS), Stephan Smith (SS), Melanie Thornton (MT), Allen Sheffield (AS), Karen Andrews (KA), Chester Goad (CG), Enjie Hall (EH), Zebadiah Hall (ZH), Crystal Hill (CH), Maria Schiano (MS), Tammy Berberi (TB)

**Members Absent:** Chinwendu Okornokwo Burns (COB),

**Meeting Called to Order (unanimously):** 9:00am

**Meeting Adjourned (unanimously):** 3:30pm

## Advancing AHEAD's DEI Effort Update and Data Discussion

* Plan to go out to K&P's and Affiliate groups for listening tour. Goal of gathering this data is to facilitate, bring groups together, gather information, submit data and recommendations to AHEAD to review membership from a DEI standpoint.
* 100 HBCU's exist according to the 2019 National Center for Educational Statistics--AHEAD has 71 represented within the AHEAD membership. Would like to know how many individuals within the 71 institutions are affiliated with AHEAD (e.g. HBCU School One has 5 individual staff members affiliated with AHEAD).
* BOD would like to see the following in the data–
  + Carnegie Mellon Categories (R1, R2, rural, etc.) as well as trade schools demographics and itemizing the "other" category to give insight as to who the "other" includes.
  + LGBTQ+ data and support services that focus on intersectionality
  + Number of schools that have memberships with AHEAD that have TRIO grants, McNair grants, Talent Search, Upward Bound, Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institutions
  + How many tribal colleges exist in the US in comparison to the number of tribal colleges that are members of AHEAD. Note, AHEAD will be reaching out to some of these schools and communities directly.
  + International member categories represented.
  + What national AHEAD can offer verse what the regional affiliates can offer. Upper-level administration does not want to duplicate professional org affiliations.
  + Edit/add Professional Degree (e.g. JD) as JD is not a doctoral degree.
  + Who belongs to their state affiliates vs national affiliate. More folks belong to their local affiliate as opposed to the national membership. Do we need to send the surveys to the affiliates as national AHEAD only has the opportunity to send this to paid members.
  + Focus on specific membership identifiers as opposed to the institutional data.
  + Focus on community colleges. The community colleges are low.
* Profile in AHEAD account. Is there an opportunity to list identifying/demographic information in the AHEAD profile to gather some of this data as we do not do this right now. Add Jeremy Jarrell to conversations with Jane and Zeb regarding system capacities.
* Bi-annual survey starts by assuming the respondent is in a disability service office. Questions and answers may skew results for respondents who are not sitting in a traditional disability service role (e.g. coordinator vs. tech support). Two surveys go out (professional survey that looks at job titles and pay scales that addresses membership data) verse survey is specifically directed at coordinators/directors. Add a text field to the survey(s) that allows the respondent to identify themselves/roles as they see themselves that also allows AHEAD to disaggregate the data to limit skewed results.
* How do we collect information to inform our practice further and how do we want to use this data:
  + Specific programming, customized and targeted messages (e.g. how to reach out to K&P's, institutions, etc.).
  + Targeted and informed advertising for webinars based on subject matter.
  + Allow us to figure out what type of professional development may be needed.
* Is there a way for AHEAD to do a webinar that speaks to how membership is going, share targeted efforts, and be intentional about sharing what we are doing regarding membership, etc. Run stats throughout conference in certain areas. Share more demographic information in business meeting. Conduct fun interviews at the conference that ask folks to share information about themselves and the work they do. Create a survey booth at the conference. Use data to inform our practice.
* Do we create research protocol around DEI? Reasonable ask from BOD, here are the research questions we have, and create a data collection system around those questions to begin a longitudinal infrastructure.

Action item: SS to ask CHEMA organization about how they collect their identifying information for their members?

Focus Group Participation

* Involve all the K&P's and affiliates
* Chief Diversity Officers
* Other organizations
* AVP organizations
* MS from BOD has expressed interest as an affiliate rep and community college rep.

## Conference 2025 Site Work Update and 2026 Discussion

* RFP's went out to suggested cities from last BOD meeting for 2025.

All in one hotel with best offers:

1. Hilton in Anaheim: All in one--no convention center with extra hotel.

2. Hilton San Francisco Union Square: Only week they can offer is July 4th, all in one.

3. Sheraton Denver: All in one hotel, AHG.

Best offers with offsite hotel deals included:

1. Long Beach Convention Center

2. Palm Springs Convention Center

3. Salt Lake City Convention Center

4. Sacramento Convention Center

BOD Recommends moving Forward With Looking At:

1. Denver

2. Anaheim

3. Long Beach

2026 Conference

* DC or NYC was recommended. Most likely neither will occur as a result of the AHEAD budget.
* Other options might include Pittsburg, Milwaukee, Detroit.
* Will move forward with pursuing Milwaukee & Providence & Toronto & Buffalo

## Affiliates Updates

* Fall 2021 affiliate meeting occurred on November 1, 2021. Focus on purpose of affiliate meetings and overview of AHEAD professional development opportunities, etc.
* Currently down in affiliates. There are 20 affiliates currently and last year there were 35. Outreach has occurred to inquire about registration/affiliation paperwork with very little response back. Will be looking to re-introduce professional development for the spring meeting that focuses on leadership.
* More community college representation on their executive boards than usual.
* Renewal move to online payment and processing. Currently paper form. Can we set it up through our registration system?
  + Action item: JSS and MS to reach out to Jane to see if online registration can be facilitated with Jeremy.

## CAS Updates

* President of CAS has reached out to the AHEAD CAS liaisons, Ann Knettler and Jill Sieben-Schneider. Will move forward with an update to the Disability Resources CAS professional standards. CAS does their best to update standards every five years and the disability resources standards have not been updated since the 13-14 academic year. Updating the standards is typically a 12-month process and involves constituents from AHEAD and constituents from different national organizations that have a connection to the topic at hand. Would want to do outreach to the membership to see who would like to get involved in the editing of standards.

## K & P Updates

* K&P webpages/content is being updated and outreach is being updated by Karen Andrews.
* One of the communities that has been a model is the REDD K&P--they have a strategic plan, leadership has been updated, consistently active. Seeing a lot of burn out resulting in less activity. If K&P's are not active and have not been for a while, can we remove them?
  + Suggestions include removing K&P's who have been inactive for more than 3 plus years; individually contact each one with deadline to encourage movement forward.
* Okay to move forward with closing inactive K&P's.
* Work with Zeb offline about K&P/DEI membership

## Vendor Relationships

* We have members of AHEAD who are members, both profit and non-profit.
  + Ethical concerns among members that vendors are marketing in the community threads.
  + Do we need to reevaluate our partner members by limiting access to community threads, email lists/membership directory, etc.? Can we create a vendor/exhibit page that is a part of the vendor membership with also sending specific guidelines of how they can engage in the community. Create a reporting tool for violations of vendor guidelines.
    - Action item: SK will check with Jeremy about capacity for receiving complaints regarding guideline violation and will get some proposed language to tighten up guidelines.
  + Currently have a vendor who wants to offer professional membership for AHEAD paid for if they purchase their product. Concern with blurring lines of endorsing a product.
    - Action item: SK will let them know that it is not a comfortable step for AHEAD to take.

## Strategic Plan Update

### Group Activity

* Review and assess strategic plan
  + What is missing? What can be removed?
* Should DEI be a dedicate goal?
  + We will break into groups by goal
* Divide into small groups by goal
* Share with large group

### Discussion

* Language and assumptions within each goal and objective can be seen as othering.
* Defining diversity--it needs to be broader than what the current strategic plan lists (gender, sexuality, religion, etc.). DEI planning will help to determine some of these questions. There is not a baseline right now. Met a lot of the checklist type of goals and it's time to move on.
* Between the pandemic, Black Lives Matter, diversity concerns, language changes--a lot has changed in a short amount of time and current plan does not reflect this new world we are living in.
* It is also evident that data collection has been missing. How do we incorporate our new data and data yet to be collected?
* Two people are cycling off this board in summer 2022. It is possible to start this process in spring (virtual mini focus groups, reaching out to membership for feedback, etc.). Recommendation came forward to include AHEAD staff as guests.
* BOD has agreed to move forward with creating a new strategic plan. Will conduct in spring 2022.
  + Membership engagement activity in February for strategic plan input. SS to work with AK to identify a facilitator.

## Digital Accessibility

* Need to raise our capacity as an organization regarding digital access. What is the responsibility of the presenter verse the consultants--especially for the lower level fixes. We should be setting the standard as the BOD to ensure we are making documents and content accessible.
  + Action items: In-service training for BOD and staff; Infuse that expectation/accountability into the strategic plan; Provide check list to those who have been approved to present; virtual session well before the conference that is more pointed; MT to identify a couple colleagues to work on setting up digital accessibility content for presenters and digital accessibility training for the BOD and AHEAD staff.

# Saturday, November 6

**Members Present:** Amanda Kraus (AK), Katy Washington (KW); Jill Sieben-Schneider (JSS), Stephan Smith (SS), Melanie Thornton (MT), Allen Sheffield (AS), Karen Andrews (KA), Chester Goad (CG), Enjie Hall (EH), Zebadiah Hall (ZH), Crystal Hill (CH), Maria Schiano (MS), Tammy Berberi (TB)

**Members Absent:** Chinwendu Okornokwo Burns (COB),

**Meeting Called to Order (unanimously):** 9:03am

**Meeting Adjourned (unanimously):** 10:32am

## 2022 Conference

* Hilton hotel is the main hotel and is attached to the convention center. The other two hotels (Hilton and Marriot) are in close proximity.
* Hosting two events that are not related to the conference. TIPSID Directors meeting on Monday and Tuesday for their project meeting and they will meet in the Hilton hotel. HSM Coalition symposium with be on Monday and Tuesday and will also be in the Hilton hotel.
* Call for proposals is out currently. November 15th is the deadline. Program Chair, Elisa, and Amanda are working to identify a keynote speaker. Priorities for the keynote include someone who can continue to speak to our values (recommended Angela Winfield, LSAC; Jillian Mercado; Anand Prahlad; would like tribal representation; Alice Wong). American Indian Disability Summit--would recommend sending Karen to represent AHEAD and begin making connections.
* Looking into Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Wednesday night for conference.
* Schedule, program acceptance in January. Everything arranged with registration open in second week of March.
* BOD role is to be present and host and network and welcome them; as it gets closer, we will look at meeting schedule.

## AHEAD Reserves

* Lowest funds of the year is start of the October as all expenses for year spent and revenue is still generating
* Investment account, purpose is reserves to draw on in case of emergency. Only drew from account once when AHEAD moved from Boston, MA to North Carolina.
* $508,000 in reserves. All dividends, etc. are reinvested into the account.
* $800,179 money market savings account. Transfer in and out of savings into checking. We only have to maintain a $50k balance in the money market. Would suggest $500k in savings. We are not liable for paying taxes when we pull money from account to account due to AHEAD being a non-profit.
* $403,800 in checking. This account is used for daily expenditures and operating costs.
* $100k in receivables AHEAD waiting to be paid on.
* $1.7 million in all accounts currently
* Socially responsible investing and how it ties to equity. We do not invest in things like natural gas, oil, coal, firearms, alcohol, tobacco, etc. We gear towards mutual funds and bond funds. We do not do high risk investments. Up to Boards discretion to change the investment strategy. Create a policy in spring about what socially responsible investing means and being transparent with membership.
* AHEAD banks through Fifth Third Bank, including the use of the investor. AHEAD staff have a 401k--AHEAD matches first 5%. Accounted for in Admin and Fringe.
* AHEAD moved $100k 2-3 years ago and we have done well with our investments. Approx. 10 percent return.
* Wait until Denver/Sheraton hotel funds are figured out.
* SS would want to wait until we know more about the grant, the Denver/Sheraton, etc. or choose a smaller number to move if BOD would want to move forward.
* Would like to see budget projections and larger picture to assist board in making financial decisions.
* EH motion to move $300k from money market account to investment account. TB seconded. \*Amended to $100k with socially responsible investment. Seconded by TB. Approved unanimously.

## Policy Discussion

* Pell grant bill (accommodation for reduced credits without impacting pell grant eligibility) introduced two weeks ago. The bill looks to approach larger financial aid package in a second phase through the Department of Ed. Approaching 50 other orgs to support the bill. Bi-partisan topic and it is not meeting objection. Also working on it from the senate perspective post introduction in the house of representatives.
* CVS vs. Doe-- not a violation of the ADA if it was not intentional. Signed onto the brief.
* Monthly snapshot of what AHEAD is doing in the public policy realm to membership.
* SS to begin sending weekly APS to BOD
* Recommendation to include a pre-con or session at the annual conference on how to become involved, especially as a state employee (education verse activism), with legislature. Can APS be a part of this? It might be good to pair folks in the field with.
  + Action item: SS to look into seeing if Friday of conference week is the option to bring in APS so they can present to the BOD on Sat.

Next BOD Meeting. Possibly in DC-Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center at Gallaudet University. Need to make sure there is an accessible shuttle. Will send out Doodle Poll for next meeting dates.