



# MEDICAID CLIENT VOICE COUNCIL ENGAGE

Volume 9

The Medicaid Client Voice Council seeks to amplify voices and increase feedback from the clients of Medicaid-funded programs.



The Medicaid Client Voice Council served up special cupcakes and cookies to celebrate the completion of service for inaugural members.

## What's BEING SAID

"When I first stated with the Council I think I came for my kiddos. But it has really turned into much more than that. I've been able to actually help a lot of people in the community."

Medicaid Client Voice Council member Reba Shipley



# What's HAPPENING



## ACHIEVING A BETTER LIFE EXPERIENCE (ABLE)

Fran Jansen and Chris Scott with the Arkansas State Treasurer's Office informed Council members about the Arkansas ABLE program. "This is the best kept secret in the Arkansas disability community," shared Jansen. "Arkansas ABLE is a savings and investment plan that makes it possible for people living with a disability to be able to save and invest and manage their money and use it for expenses related to living with the disability." Similar to 529 college saving plans, Arkansas ABLE plans have been around for about five years. As of November 2023, there were 936 such plans opened with an average account size of \$5,600. Money saved can be used to pay for qualified expenses. "That includes any expenses incurred as a result of living with the disability that is intended to make the quality of life better," says Jansen. For a list of qualified expenses or to learn more about the program, visit [AR.SaveWithABLE.com](https://AR.SaveWithABLE.com).

### WHO'S ELIGIBLE?

ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS ARE THOSE WHO:

- Have a physical or mental disability that is expected to last for at least a year or can be terminal
- OR
- Their disability is included on the Social Security Administration's list of compassionate allowances conditions
- AND
- Onset of their disability occurred before age 26\*

\*The ABLE Age Adjustment Act, which increases the age of onset from 26 years to 46 years, was adopted in December 2022. This new eligibility age will go into effect beginning in 2026. Arkansas ABLE intends to adopt this change through State Legislative approval.



### VIEW THE LAST MEETING





# What's AHEAD

Next Council Meeting

Tuesday, January 23, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

AFMC Campus



Division of County Operations Director Mary Franklin discusses Medicaid's Workers with Disabilities program.

## WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES PROGRAM

"The Workers with Disabilities program exists to be able to help people who would be eligible for SSI (Supplemental Security Income) to be able to work and not lose coverage. That is the purpose of Workers with Disabilities. There isn't an earned income limit or an asset limit for this category. If you would be eligible for SSI if you weren't working, then you qualify for this program." Mary Franklin, DCO Director. For more information, visit [Humanservices.arkansas.gov](https://humanservices.arkansas.gov).

## FOND FAREWELL

The term of service set for members of the Medicaid Client Voice Council is two years. 10 of the inaugural Council members completed their two-year obligation and participated in their final MCVC meeting. They will now join an alumni advisory group. In 2024, a new class of Council members will join those members who have completed their first year of service. With great appreciation we thank Deandria Bass-Carrigan, Alison Caballero, Naythan Dyke, Frank Hellmer, Michele Lappin, Bradley Ledgerwood, Amanda Sanders, Reba Shipley, Jerry Watson, Daronda Williams for their dedication, insight, and service.





# Meet THE COUNCIL



**KRISTEN ARNOLD  
CONWAY**



**DEANDRIEA BASS-CARRIGAN  
CONWAY**



**ALISON CABALLERO  
LITTLE ROCK**



**BRITTANY GILMORE  
DEQUEEN**



**NAYTHAN DYKE  
FORT SMITH**



**GALE HOLLAWAY  
HARDY**



**HEATHER HONAKER  
LITTLE ROCK**



**ETANDRA MCCLURE  
LITTLE ROCK**



**FRANK HELLMER  
LITTLE ROCK**



**MICHELE LAPPIN  
WHITE COUNTY**



**BRADLEY LEDGERWOOD  
CASH**



**DARONDA WILLIAMS  
PRESCOTT**



**KEVIN HOOVER  
GREENBRIER**



**YOLANDA TRAYLOR  
LITTLE ROCK**



**JERRY WATSON  
PINE BLUFF**



**ANGELICA YANEZ  
ROGERS**



# Meet THE COUNCIL



**MICHELLE PEDRO**  
SPRINGDALE



**BETTY RAIFORD**  
PINE BLUFF



**AMANDA SANDERS**  
MOUNTAIN HOME



**REBA SHIPLEY**  
JONESBORO