

MAJOR EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ADVOCACY CENTER

- December, 1973** Incorporation of Louisiana Center for the Public Interest.
- May, 1974** LCPI begins operation out of offices in the Maison Blanche Building with funding from Loyola Law School, the Council for Legal Education on Professional Responsibility and the Stern Fund.
- January, 1975** LCPI receives grant from Exxon Education Foundation to continue its work in providing direct services to elderly clients in matters such as Social Security representation, protective services, and Medicare and Medicaid entitlement.
- January, 1976** LCPI receives a grant from the U.S. Administration on Aging to become a technical assistance backup center for legal services for the elderly. LCPI is one of five model programs funded nationally.
- July, 1976** LCPI, with the Louisiana Consumers League, sues the City Council of New Orleans and NOPSI. The suit results in a judgment that the City of New Orleans had improperly increased rates for NOPSI on the city's transit system, resulting in illegal collection of the nickel fare increase over a period of years amounting to more than two million dollars. Proceeds from the fund created by this litigation were ultimately returned to consumers of transit services and the fare increase was rolled back.
- January, 1977** LCPI publishes a Program Developmental Manual detailing how others might implement its model program of interdisciplinary law and social work services. Center staff also produces Lawyer Referral Services: An Organizer's Manual and Materials and several video public announcements for use in educating the elderly about the need for and availability of legal services.
- February, 1977** LCPI contracts with the Louisiana State Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities to develop a plan for the implementation of the Louisiana Protection and Advocacy System for the Developmentally Disabled. Such a plan is required under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 1976.
- October, 1977** LCPI brings suit on behalf of nursing home residents, arguing that they are entitled to transfer planning prior to their relocation from one facility to another. The litigation was precipitated by an abrupt closure of Plantation Nursing Home located in New Orleans East. Nearly 100 residents were suddenly moved to new nursing homes without prior planning. In testimony by the administrator of Plantation Nursing Home, he indicated that in his opinion several individuals had died as a result of the transfer trauma associated with the home's closure and residents' relocation. This litigation led to inclusion of transfer planning in the state's nursing home program, whereby all residents would receive pre- and post-transfer counseling in order to minimize the traumatic effects of relocation.
- October, 1977** The plan for implementation of protection and advocacy services developed by LCPI staff is approved by the DD Council. The Advocate for the Developmentally

Disabled is established as a special unit of New Orleans Legal Assistance Corporation. ADD will implement the Protection and Advocacy section of the DD Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, with funding provided by the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Developmental Disabilities.

- June, 1978** Consent Decree in Pitts v. Stewart which was brought by LCPI as many Medicaid recipients were unable to utilize program benefits because of the expense and difficulty associated with arranging transportation. The lawsuit led to an annual commitment of two million dollars to fund transportation costs to and from medical appointments.
- July, 1978** Toll-free WATS line established by ADD to serve all of Louisiana - made possible through DD Council grant in the amount of \$14,165.00
- January, 1979** The Advocate for the Developmentally Disabled is incorporated as a non-profit agency, independent of NOLAC and moves to quarters located at 333 St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans.
- July, 1979** ADD establishes a branch office in Shreveport. Made possible by a grant from the DD Council in the amount of \$30,200.
- July, 1979** Grant to ADD from the Louisiana Committee on the Humanities to conduct a seminar series on "Images of the Handicapped: Humanistic Perspectives". Funded for \$13,749.
- October, 1979** Advocacy Demand project operated by ADD and funded by the DD Council to meet increased advocacy need. Provides for continued operation of the toll-free line, the publication of two self-advocacy manuals and additional funds for increased attorney capacity. Funded for \$22,320.
- July, 1980** ADD and LCPI staff work to promote passage of Civil Rights for Handicapped Persons Act which prohibits discrimination against the disabled in housing, employment and state programs.
- July, 1980** Normalization Training grant funded by DD Council under which LCPI staff trains consumer groups on the principles of normalization. This is a statewide training grant.
- July, 1980** The Legal Services Developer for the State of Louisiana is employed by LCPI to develop legal services for elderly people across Louisiana. The LSD is funded by the Governor's Office.
- January, 1981** ADD begins to operate the Client Assistance Program, a statewide advocacy program for clients and client applicants of the Louisiana Division of Rehabilitation Services. Ongoing funding through the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration.
- January, 1981** ADD operates a one-year project designed to provide legal services to disabled minority children, particularly those who are involved in the juvenile justice system in Orleans and Jefferson Parishes. Funded by the Developmental Disabilities Law Center, Kansas City, Missouri, in the amount of \$11,365.

- July, 1981** Project Enable is established by LCPI as a program designed to keep elderly and disabled people in the community through the provision of volunteers who help such persons with needs of daily living.
- October, 1981** ADD establishes a branch office in Baton Rouge. Office space is shared with the Louisiana Epilepsy Association. Made possible by two-year grant in the amount of \$70,423.
- February, 1982** Consent Decree in Luke S. v. Louisiana Department of Education, a class action lawsuit filed by ADD to eliminate waiting lists for special education evaluations.
- June, 1982** ADD receives a grant from the Southern Education Foundation, Atlanta, Georgia to recruit, train and match 50 volunteer advocates for Gary W. class members. \$5,000.
- July, 1982** The Louisiana Long Term Care Ombudsman Program is established with Region I ombudsman staff employed by LCPI.
- June, 1983** LCPI receives a decision in Kron v. Heckler which prohibits the continuation of a federal policy that restricted Medicare hospitalization benefits for Medicare recipients residing in nursing homes. The court's decision beneficially impacted five hundred thousand nursing home residents nationwide.
- September, 1983** ADD closes its Baton Rouge office.
- October, 1983** ADD initiates a two-year project designed to address needs of young people in nursing homes in Louisiana. Funded by the DD Council in the amount of \$78,372.
- November, 1983** ADD publishes an Education Packet: Your Child's Right to Education Under Act 754, 18 pages; The Evaluation Process Under Act 754, 8 pages; Due Process Under Act 754, 7 pages, 7 pages; The Individualized Education Program (IEP) Checklist, 7 pages.
- January, 1984** ADD receives a grant from the Foundation for Children with Learning Disabilities, New York, N.Y. to develop a manual for the representation of youth in the juvenile justice system. Funded by \$13,000.
- February, 1984** Merger of Advocate for the Developmentally Disabled and Louisiana Center for the Public Interest.
- Incorporation of Advocacy Center for the Elderly and Disabled. Agency moves to quarters at 1001 Howard Avenue, Suite 300A, New Orleans.
- October, 1984** Practicum in Self Advocacy, a one-year project funded by the DDC to prepare twenty-four disabled individuals for leadership roles in the advocacy movement on local, regional and statewide levels. Funded at \$24,000.
- December, 1984** Establishment of branch office in Lafayette.
- January, 1985** ACED becomes a United Way agency.
- February, 1985** Publication of Disabled Youth and the Juvenile Court System, 127 pages.

- September, 1985** Ten-month project funded by the DD Council in the amount of \$20,000 to develop minority outreach programs and strategies that enable service providers to increase levels of awareness, participation and use of their programs by persons with developmental disabilities who are members of minority populations in Louisiana.
- October, 1985** Initiation of the Consumer Empowerment Project, a one-year project aimed to increase the knowledge of disabled persons and parents of disabled children about their legal rights. Eight one-day regional forums are held, providing information about the rights of DD persons and about how to exercise those rights. Funded by the DD Council in the amount of \$43,000.
- October, 1985** First issue of L'Avocat, ACED's quarterly newsletter.
- January, 1986** Publication of Those Who Sit and Wait ... Young People in the Nursing Homes of Louisiana, 94 pages.
- June 1986** Establishment of the Protection and Advocacy for the Mentally Ill Individuals Program or Louisiana Advocates for Mentally Ill Persons (LAMP). On-going funding by the National Institute of Mental Health.
- July, 1986** Publication of The Cultural Dimensions Guide for providers of services for people with developmental disabilities, 38 pages.
- July, 1986** First annual fundraiser held at Flagons, "A Sweet Idea".
- October, 1986** Eye on Community Homes, a one-year project funded by the DD Council in the amount of \$40,057 to develop a model for monitoring group and community homes for developmentally disabled people in Louisiana.
- January, 1987** ACED begins serving as local counsel in Gary W. v. State of Louisiana, C.A. NO. 74-2412, class action lawsuit that brought Louisiana children back from Texas to receive appropriate services in their home state.
- January, 1987** ACED receives grant from the Senior Citizen Trust Fund in the amount of \$11,000 to prepare a concept paper and plan for guardianship services in Louisiana.
- June, 1987** Publication of Knowing the Road: A Guide to Vocational Rehabilitation Services, 16 pages.
- June, 1987** Consent agreement in Laura I. v. Louisiana Department of Education, USDC #86-457, a class action lawsuit brought to ensure special education students' access to extended year programs based on individual need rather than fixed time periods.
- July, 1987** The Public Accommodations Bill is amended to include mentally and physically disabled persons. The bill's passage prohibits discrimination against handicapped people in public places such as restaurants, bars, health clubs, etc.
- July, 1987** ACED begins to implement Special Parent Advocacy Training, a one-year project to provide outreach and a series of training workshops for minority parents of disabled children on rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The DD Council provides \$9,960 toward implementation of the \$26,000 project.

September, 1987	Second annual fundraiser held at Flagon's, "A Sweet Idea". The first annual advocacy award presented to Joseph Benedetto.
October, 1987	DD Council funds Information Access, a program designed to promote systems change through information gathering and dissemination. Funding at \$10,000.
December, 1987	ACED withdraws from United Way.
January, 1988	Publication of <u>A Guide for Monitoring Community-based Residential Services</u> , 70 pages.
January, 1988	Settlement agreement reached in <u>Laura Cooper v. Fowler et al</u> , Orleans CDC #87-12205, a lawsuit which challenged the statewide inaccessibility of voting places under Acts 665 and 625. As a result of this lawsuit all polling places must be made accessible to the mobility impaired.
February, 1988	Establishment of ACED offices in Southeast Louisiana State Hospital and East Louisiana State Hospital.
September, 1988	Consent Decree signed in <u>Adam A et al v. Sandra Robinson, M.D.</u> , USDC #86-1928, a class action lawsuit challenging conditions and quality of care provided at the Crisis Intervention Unit of Charity Hospital of New Orleans. As a result of this lawsuit, people can no longer be held at the CIU for inordinate amounts of time. Children can no longer be held there and conditions at the CIU are vastly improved.
October, 1988	Third annual fundraiser held at Flagon's, "A Belgian Beer Fest". Annual advocacy awards presented to Roger LaRue, Elvera Brown, and Ursula and Dempsey Markey.
January, 1989	Legal Capacity Program is initiated via funds from the DD Council, \$58,990; IOLTA, \$5,000; and the Greater New Orleans Regional Foundation, \$4,250. The project provides volunteer curators for developmentally disabled and elderly persons who are interdicted.
January, 1989	ACED is reorganized along functional rather than programmatic lines.
March, 1989	ACED relinquishes role as local counsel in <u>Gary W. V. State of Louisiana</u> which is resumed by James Kellogg.
May, 1989	<u>Behind the Facade of Tranquility</u> is published. The 24-page report addresses the issue of abuse at East Louisiana State Hospital.
June, 1989	ACED moves its New Orleans office to 210 O'Keefe Avenue, Suite 700, New Orleans, LA 70112.
July, 1989	The Ombudsman Legal Assistance Program is created. The purpose of the program is to provide legal backup to the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program in Louisiana which serves all residents, age 60 and above, in Louisiana.
	ACED, for the first time, begins provision of legal services to the elderly in Caddo Parish.

- September, 1989** With Loyola Law Clinic, ACED initiates the Elderlaw Project designed to train law students in legal issues of elderly people.
- October, 1989** ACED Board votes to establish a pension plan for ACED employees effective October 1989.
- ACED contracts to produce the quarterly newsletter of the Institute on Mental Hygiene called In Mental Health.
- Fourth annual fundraiser, "An Evening in Tuscany," is held at Flagon's . Annual advocacy awards were presented to Jerry and Ida Mialaret of River Ridge, John and Maizie Thibeaux of Lafayette and Sandra Ballard of Shreveport.
- November, 1989** ACED establishes office at Central Louisiana State Hospital.
- Lafayette Advisory Committee is formed.
- January, 1990** The Ombudsman Legal Assistance Program is expanded to serve non-DD, non-elderly residents of nursing homes via a grant from IOLTA.
- April, 1990** Rollin' By The River, a guide to accessible locations in the New Orleans Central Business District and the French Quarter is published. The guide is well-received and well-covered by the press, including The New York Times and many airline publications.
- July, 1990** ACED takes over the operation of the Ombudsman program in East Baton Rouge and in the parishes under the umbrella of Capital Area Agency on Aging. ACED also provides legal services to the elderly in East Baton Rouge for the first time.
- ACED opens Baton Rouge Office.
- Herbert Smith et al v. City of New Orleans, et al is filed in federal court. This class action seeks to insure the provision of interpreter services to hearing impaired individuals in the criminal justice system.
- October, 1990** ACED has first external evaluation. A NAPAS Peer Review Team composed of Harvey (CO), Shaw (NE), Wyeth (MI), Rossman (FL) and Harvey (DC) performed the review.
- November, 1990** ACED sponsors a workshop, "Assessing the Presence of Tardive Dyskinesia" for 58 mental health professionals. John Kalachnik of Minnesota conducts the conference.
- December, 1990** ACED, under contract to the Human Development Center, produces a report and recommendations on procedural safeguards in early intervention programs in Louisiana.
- January, 1991** DMR/DD funds Guardianship Task Force to be staffed and coordinated by ACED. The Task Force will meet for one year, at the end of which a plan for a statewide guardianship program will be implemented.

March, 1991	ACED focuses public and media attention on deficiencies in public transportation services for elderly and disabled persons in New Orleans. As a result, needed improvements are promised.
July ,1991	ACED begins to deliver legal services in Calcasieu, and ombudsman services in St. Bernard. ACED no longer provides ELS services in North Delta and East Baton Rouge.
January, 1992	PAIR program is initiated, operating out of New Orleans, Shreveport and Lafayette offices.
January, 1992	An IOLTA grant award permits the agency to hire part-time intake/outreach staff in all branch offices.
February, 1992	Louisiana Guardianship Services, Inc. (LGSi) is incorporated.
June, 1992	The Work of the Guardianship Task Force and the Legal Capacity Program is concluded. The Legislature approves funding for LGSi and passes bill authorizing a private non profit corporation to act in the role of guardian.
August, 1992	ACED publishes <i>SSI Benefits for Children with Disabilities</i> .
September, 1992	<i>Education Is For All Children</i> , a handbook about the rights of children enrolled in special education, is published.
October, 1992	ACED is a founding member of Louisiana for Low Income Housing Today.
November, 1992	<i>On Your Own Behalf</i> , a guide to the LRS appeals process, is published by ACED's CAP program.
November, 1992	St. Bernard Parish is added to the Ombudsman program.
November, 1992	ACED is one of the founding members of the Leadership for Inclusive Communities
December, 1992	ACED receives Honorable Mention in the Greater New Orleans Foundation's Managing for Excellence Competition.
February, 1993	ACED initiates mid-year in-service training for all staff.
March, 1993	<i>Choosing a Nursing Home and Making It Work for You</i> is published.
May, 1993	Director of Development position is created.
June, 1993	ACED issues a "White Paper" to the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals. The paper addresses the need for the Department to develop regulations implementing the state MR/DD Act.
September, 1993	ACED co-sponsors "Doors to Inclusion" conference on assistive technology. The conference attracts more than 900 participants.

- October, 1993** ACED is notified that it has been awarded a three-year Parent Training and Information grant from the U.S. Department of Education. ACED is one of only six grantees in the country who received these funds to train and provide technical assistance to persons with disabilities and their families about the Rehabilitation Act, Transition, and Independent Living. ACED calls the program STAR, Support and Training to Access Rights.
- October, 1993** ACED sponsors a one-day "Funding Seminar" attended by 50 stakeholders in the MR/DD service system who want to know about the DHH budget process and its impact on services for people with disabilities.
- November, 1993** ACED acts as a site coordinator for a national public forum on the Clinton Health Plan and how it affects people with disabilities.
- November, 1993** ACED holds second annual Art Show/Advocacy Awards event at Place St. Charles.
- November, 1993** ACED co-sponsors "Housing Rights and Remedies" training with NORIL, VOA, JPHSA, and FAMI.
- December, 1993** ACED files a class action law suit, *Tubre v. RTA*, against the Regional Transit System in New Orleans, alleging that RTA is out of compliance with the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- January, 1994** St. John Parish is added to the Ombudsman program.
- January, 1994** Support and Training to Access Rights (STAR). Funded by Rehabilitation Services Administration, STAR is a collaborative effort of public, private, professional and consumer groups in Louisiana to develop a statewide mechanism which will expand training and support services to young adults with disabilities and their families.
- March, 1994** ACED settles two pending attorney fees claims for work in successful special education cases for a total of \$51,000.
- June, 1994** Assistive Technology Project, contracted with Louisiana Assistive Technology Access Network. Created under the Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1988 (as amended in 1994), and funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, U.S. Department of Education, the objective is to provide protection and advocacy services to individuals requiring assistive technology, including individual and systemic representation.
- July, 1994** Community Living Ombudsman Program (CLOP). ACED is awarded a one-year grant by the Louisiana Council on Developmental Disabilities to plan for the implementation of a new program to provide ombudsman services to residents of ICFs-MR. The project utilizes a task force of consumers, family members and professionals to provide input to the planning process.
- August, 1994** ACED hosts statewide training on Seclusion and Restraint in Baton Rouge.
- November, 1994** Court Accessibility Project. ACED is commissioned to conduct an accessibility study and develop an accessibility plan for the Civil District Court of Orleans Parish and First City Court of New Orleans.

- December, 1994** ACED's Legal Unit is reorganized into four specialized issue groups.
- December, 1994** In *Jonathan G. v. Caddo Parish School Board*, the court rules that suspending students for behavior related to their disabilities violates Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- February, 1995** HIV/AIDS Advocacy Project in Louisiana. Funded by a grant from Protection and Advocacy of New Mexico, the project will focus on increasing awareness of legal rights and legal services for persons with HIV disease in non-metropolitan areas of the state.
- April, 1995** "Ticket To Ride" is a project funded through a grant from Easter Seals/Project ACTION from April, 1995 through February, 1997. It is a collaborative effort among ACED and the Regional Transit Administration in New Orleans and SporTran in Shreveport. The major objectives are to improve access to public transportation for persons with disabilities and to assist transit providers to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- May, 1995** A jury trial results in a victory for ACED's client in *Grantham v. Moffet*. The client is a deaf woman challenging Southeastern Louisiana University's denial of her right to pursue a degree in elementary education.
- September, 1995** *C. et al v. Department of Health and Hospitals*, a class action lawsuit, brought on behalf of two classes of children affected by July, 1995 cuts in Medicaid services, those denied personal care attendant services and those denied respite care services.
- October, 1995** A Consent Decree is signed in *Tubre v. Regional Transit Authority*.
- January, 1996** Receives small grant from the American Bar Association to prepare a written guide/resource to adult protective services in Louisiana.
- February, 1996** The Community Living Ombudsman Program begins a pilot project in the Baton Rouge area.
- April, 1996** Publishes From Hospital To Home, a guide to the educational rights of children in psychiatric facilities and after discharge.
- June, 1996** New Orleans office moves to 225 Baronne Street, Suite 2112.
- October, 1996** The Ninth Annual Advocacy Awards Ceremony is held - combined with "Open House" for new New Orleans offices.
- December, 1996** Issues Visions of Safety: Dreams Versus Reality in Louisiana's Service System for People with Disabilities. This is a study of abuse/neglect in Louisiana.
- February, 1997** Advocacy Center, Developmental Disabilities Council and Human Development Center enter into agreement to form TRI*ADD (Training Resources and Information for Advances in Developmental Disabilities).
- July, 1997** ADA Campaign "kicked off" on steps of State Capitol. The goal is to "make Louisiana the most welcoming state in the union to people with disabilities."

- October, 1997** Advocacy Center hosts its annual Awards Ceremony honoring Rep. Raymond Jetson, Whitney National Bank, Barney Sellers, Martha Whitlock, Antoine Brown III, Mary Anne Trascher and Sharon DeVisco.
- October, 1997** Advocacy Center files EPSDT lawsuit, *Chisholm v. Jindal*, to establish this program for children, aged 0-21, throughout Louisiana.
- November, 1997** First edition of TriAngle is published. This is a joint newsletter of the Louisiana State Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities, the University Affiliated Program (The Human Development Center) and the Advocacy Center.
- November, 1997** Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefits for Individuals with Disabilities published.
- April, 1998** Taco Bell suit filed, seeking to ensure physical accessibility as per the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- June, 1998** Electronic Funds Transfer Project initiated.
- June, 1998** AC hosts first “Blue Ribbon Panel” for planning input.
- July, 1998** CLOP issues its first systems barriers report.
- August, 1998** Guide to the Rights of Residents of ICFs-MR Facilities in Louisiana published.
- August, 1998** AC becomes Louisiana affiliate of the Southwest Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center.
- August, 1998** Suit against Southern University in New Orleans filed. Suit filed under the ADA on grounds that the Southern University in N.O. campus is not accessible to people with disabilities.
- August, 1998** Suit against Louisiana Lottery Corporation filed Suite filed under the ADA on grounds that the Louisiana Lottery Corporation has not ensured that lottery outlets are accessible to people with disabilities.
- September, 1998** Suit against Palace Theatre filed. Filed under the ADA on grounds that the theatre is inaccessible to people with physical disabilities.
- October, 1998** Advocacy Awards Ceremony honors Dennis Bagneris (Legislative), David Stinebaugh (Self), Alice Cooney and Margie Noto (Volunteer), Virginia Guagliardo (Parent), and James Wallace (Professional).
- October, 1998** AC issues “20 Plus” Report.
- March, 1999** Taco Bell lawsuit settled
- March, 1999** “Rides of March” campaign in which riders spot check the buses of the RTA to ascertain whether they are complying with terms of the Consent Decree in *Tubre v. RTA*.

- June, 1999** Advocacy award presented to the Advocacy Center by the Louisiana Association of the Deaf in recognition of services to the deaf community in the area of equal access.
- June, 1999** Advocacy Center awarded Certificate of Appreciation by the Multicultural Committee of the National Association of Protection and Advocacy Systems in acknowledgment of increased cultural competence and best practices
- June, 1999** Coalition of advocates for persons with disabilities, led by the AC, convince the Governor of Louisiana to remove Louisiana’s name from the *amicus* brief in the Olmstead case.
- July, 1999** Legislature appropriates additional funds to enable the CLOP program to hire a “roving ombudsman”.
- July, 1999** In *Advocacy Center v. Stalder*, 98-646-A (M.D. LA), the court held that a correctional center must release to the Advocacy Center the medical and mental health records of inmates who have consented to the release of their records, notwithstanding state confidentiality requirements restricting such disclosure.
- October, 1999** AC presents a seminar entitled “Legal Planning for People with Special Needs”.
- October, 1999** Press Conference highlighting the results of the “Rides of March” campaign, which showed continuing problems with accessibility for persons with disabilities attempting to use the services of the RTA.
- November, 1999** AC, under the aegis of the PCMR/Louisiana Team, issues the Legally Adequate Consent Task Force Report
- November, 1999** AC hosts its eleventh annual Advocacy Awards Ceremony with recipients being: Legislative Award, Representative Warren Triche; Professional Advocate, David Williams; Family Advocate, Frances Hilburn; Self Advocate, Debra Scott; Volunteer Advocate, Carol Bosworth.
- December, 1999** EPSDT lawsuit partially settled (as regards case management)
- April, 2000** AC files *Barthelemy v DHH*, alleging that DHH is not doing enough to provide services that would allow people with disabilities to live outside nursing homes, and that forcing people to live in restrictive environments is a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- May, 2000** AC, with NORIL, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bayou Chapter, and LSU Human Development Center, host a statewide Transportation Summit, the goal of which is to highlight transportation problems facing people with disabilities in Louisiana and to present options for addressing such problems.
- August, 2000** Children’s Choice Waiver Suit filed, alleging that requiring parents to make a choice between the MR/DD Waiver and the Children’s Choice Waiver is illegal.
- September, 2000** AC files suit in federal court challenging the process by which level of care assessments are performed. This case, “the PASSAR case” seeks to retain nursing home care for people with mental illness should they need and choose it.

November, 2000	AC holds its annual Advocacy Awards Ceremony honoring Brian Jackson, Self Advocate; Susan Nelson, Family Advocate; Karen Higgenbotham, Volunteer Advocate; and Josephine Bourne, Professional Advocate.
February, 2001	Judge Barbier rules that Louisiana’s refusal to pay for psychologists through its Medicaid system denies children with autism treatment required under federal law. This is in partial settlement of Chisholm v. DHH, the EPSDT case.
April, 2001	AC initiates the PABSS program (Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security)
May, 2001	Settlement is reached in lawsuit filed against Delgado Community College whereby the College will make adjustments in its physical plant and its policies and procedures to come into conformance with the ADA.
June, 2001	Consent decree is entered in AC’s case involving the rights of deaf inmates at Orleans Parish Prison.
June, 2001	Louisiana Legislature appropriates funds to expand the CLOP into Houma/Thibodaux, Lafayette, and Covington areas of the state.
August, 2001	AC agrees to settlement in Lapara, et al v. Louisiana Lottery Corporation in which the Lottery Corporation agrees to ensure that all places of public accommodation selling lottery tickets will henceforward be accessible to persons with disabilities.
October, 2001	AC hosts the thirteenth annual Advocacy Awards Ceremony, Silent Auction and Reception during which it honors Cindy Lou Logarbo, Self Advocate; Juanita Nordess, Family Advocate; Jeanne Abadie, professional Advocate; Opal Mitchell, Volunteer Advocate; Marsha Shuler, Media Advocate; and Donna Myhre, Life Achievement Award.
November, 2001	Federal litigation which challenged the screening process used by DHH for mentally ill residents or applicants to nursing homes is settled. Screening process is changed and discriminatory process is eliminated statewide. Children’s Choice Waiver lawsuit is settled. Settlement allows people who have chosen the Children’s Choice Waiver to get back on the MR/DD Waiver waiting list in original date order, if their date on the waiting list has been reached.
January, 2002	DHH accepts assessment tool created to screen people for eligibility for community living. The tool was created by a task force led by AC.
February, 2002	AC hosts a Mayoral Forum at which candidates are asked about their views on issues of concern to people with disabilities in New Orleans.
March, 2002	AC, along with the DD Council, is the subject of an “MTARS” review by the Administration on Children and Families, a division of the federal DHHS.
May, 2002	AC is asked to administer the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program in five additional Parishes: Terrebonne, LaFourche, Orleans, Plaquemines, and Jefferson

Parishes. This brings the total number of Parishes in which AC is running the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program to twenty-two.

June, 2002

AC settles the remaining issue, prior authorization, in the Chisholm case, and the court orders immediate action regarding implementing an earlier ruling on psychological services for children.

AC is successful in the Legislature in obtaining CLOP funding for two more regions of the state: Jefferson and Shreveport. With the addition of these two regions, CLOP now serves all regions of the state with the exception of Lake Charles and Alexandria.

July, 2002

The Advocacy Center filed a lawsuit in federal court challenging Louisiana Medicaid's policy that authorized a power wheelchair, only if someone over the age of 21 was in school with a plan to achieve self-support or was already working. The AC's client was a 58 year old woman who had used a wheelchair since 1992, who had no use of one arm and limited use of her other arm, and for whom school or work was not an option. As a result of this lawsuit, the client received a power wheelchair and Medicaid's policy was changed.

September, 2002

AC received notification from HRSA that it has been awarded one of the first Traumatic Brain Injury grants. This will enable AC to increase its services to people with TBI.

October, 2002

AC hosts its 14th Annual Awards Ceremony. Award recipients include: Robin Wagner, Professional Advocate; Thelma Matthews, Volunteer Advocate; Joyce Mernin, Family Advocate; Representative Diane Winston, Legislative Advocate; Theresa L. Fitzgerald and Willie Martin, Self Advocates. Diane Mirvis, staff member, was also honored for having completed 10 years of service with the AC.

November, 2002

Expansion of New Orleans Office is completed

December, 2002

AC starts work on the development of an Investigations Unit

AC is notified that our application to partner with domestic violence and sexual assault programs on issues affecting victims with disabilities is approved; work will begin in January.

January, 2003

AC determines that the Louisiana Lottery Corporation has achieved substantial compliance in insuring that all lottery retail outlets are accessible. This single case, brought by AC, affected over 4,000 locations throughout Louisiana, and required the lottery corporation to use its substantial resources to monitor and enforce accessibility at these sites.

CLOP expands to the greater Shreveport area

February, 2003

The AC receives a contract to collaborate with the Louisiana Coalition on Abuse and Domestic Violence (LCADV) to ensure that persons who work in the area of domestic violence are fully informed about the rights and special needs of persons – especially women – with disabilities.

- March, 2003** AC receives its first HUD grant. Under the terms of the grant, AC, in concert with the Human Development Center and the Fair Housing Action Center, will provide training to people with disabilities in South Louisiana about their housing rights.
- PAIMI program is the first in the country to be monitored by the feds using the new protocol
- May, 2003** New position, Outreach and Training Coordinator, is established
- June, 2003** Ellen Katz, Senior Staff Attorney, is awarded the Louisiana State Bar Association's Career Public Interest Award.
- July, 2003** AC receives small grant to survey restaurants that will be featured in the 2004 Zagat Survey for accessibility features. The 2004 Zagat Survey, published in December, 2003, is the first of the Zagat Surveys in the nation to include information about handicap accessibility.
- AC begins the provision of legal services to seniors in St. Tammany Parish
- We close the Wendy's and Taco Bell lawsuits having determined that both had achieved compliance with years-old agreements.
- AC establishes the position of Human Resources Specialist.
- September, 2003** AC co-sponsors "Doors to Inclusion" conference in Baton Rouge, which includes a very successful legal track.
- AC publishes a report entitled: "Mental Health Rehabilitation Services: Rehabilitation or a Get Rich Quick Scheme?" This report shines the spotlight on abuses in the mental health rehabilitation services system and spurs DHH into action to remedy abuses
- PATBI Town Meeting is held as preliminary to establishing a renewed and invigorated Louisiana TBI Association.
- AC successfully argues that the Personal Care Option should remain a part of the Barthelemy Consent Agreement.
- October, 2003** AC reorganizes and fully establishes the Investigation Unit and a new Systems Advocacy Group and Short Term Assistance Group. AC also establishes Self-Determination and Access Issue Groups in addition to the groups already operational: Education; Financial Entitlements and Institutional Rights.
- November, 2003** AC holds its 15th Annual Awards Ceremony on November 14. Honored were: Derrick Edwards, Self Advocate; Virginia Eubanks, Volunteer Advocate; Rose Gilbert, Family Advocate; Queen Hudson, Professional Advocate; and Sheila Stroup, Media Advocate.
- January, 2004** AC receives a grant from the Gheens Foundations to initiate a transition program in five New Orleans high schools.

March, 2004	Governor Blanco calls a two day Health Care Summit in New Orleans. All disability advocates seize upon this as an opportunity to finally transform the long-term care system for persons with disabilities.
March, 2004	The Advocacy Center, the DD Council and the Human Development Center hold a joint “Focus Group” in Monroe for the purpose of receiving input into their respective 2005 plans.
March, 2004	The AC initiates its “Get to Know Your New Legislator” initiative whereby board and staff schedule visits with all new legislators before the 2004 legislative session.
May, 2004	AC begins to streamline and automate its intake database
May, 2004	AC and the Louisiana Department of Social Services (DSS) enter into a memorandum of understanding regarding AC’s access to children and their records in DSS licensed facilities.
June, 2004	AC is successful in having the legislature appropriate enough funds to expand CLOP into a statewide program. AC also scores legislative victories in the areas of scooter use and voting rights.
July, 2004	AC is told that the Governor’s office wants to “review” all our state grants because of a possible conflict of interest. AC, with its supporters, springs into action. The Governor’s Office, the Attorney General’s Office and the Director of the Governor’s Office of Elderly Affairs are deluged with letters stating that AC should be allowed to keep its state funded programs. AC staff and board members meet with the Governor’s people and later draft a treatise stating why there is no conflict of interest.
October, 2004	AC serves as a Pilot Project for the filed testing of the PAAT PPR form.
November, 2004	AC is advised that the state of Louisiana will continue to contract with the agency for the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, the Community Living Ombudsman Program and the Ombudsman Legal Assistance Program.
November, 2004	The LEAD contract with the Secretary of State’s Office is finally signed. AC continues carrying out voting advocacy, including the surveying of 500 voting booths during the presidential election.
December, 2004	AC holds its annual staff meeting, in-service and awards dinner. Bill Minvielle receives the Bellanger Award for employee excellence.
January, 2005	AC’s Lafayette office moves from 515 south College Drive to downtown Lafayette.
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August, 2005	Hurricane Katrina hits south Louisiana. AC’s main office in N.O. is shut down for months. The City of New Orleans is completely evacuated for two months.

September, 2005	AC establishes Katrina workgroup and immediately begins to offer services to victims of both Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in shelters, at Disaster Recovery Centers and via our normal intake processes.
September, 2005	AC establishes Katrina for Persons with Disabilities Fund in order to give people with disabilities small monetary grants to get them back on their feet.
October, 2005	AC receives supplemental grant from Louisiana Department of Justice to further its housing rights work on behalf of persons with disabilities
Oct. – Dec., 2005	AC hosts five volunteers from P&As in N. Dakota, Idaho, Virginia and N.Hampshire who come to Louisiana to assist with work on behalf of Katrina/Rita victims.
December, 2005	AC establishes Katrina Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities (KAID) case management project
January, 2006	AC is notified that it has received a third year of HUD funding to do outreach and training about housing rights
January, 2006	AC receives a grant from AARP to serve seniors who are victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita
March, 2006	AC files lawsuit against FEMA alleging that FEMA has not provided enough accessible trailers for people with mobility impairments.
April, 2006	AC convinces State of Louisiana not to cut off Louisianians living outside the state from Medicaid coverage.
April, 2006	AC moves into new office space in New Orleans at 1010 Common St. Suite 2600
May, 2006	AC holds its 17th Awards Ceremony. Recipients are: Senator John Alario, Legislative Award; Jon Muller, Media Award; Beth Green, Volunteer Award; Keith Newlun, Self Award
May, 2006	AC receives an Equal Justice Works Fellowship the focus of which is to help people transition from institutions to the community
September, 2006	Brou (FEMA Trailer) case is settled. FEMA will make percentage of all new trailers accessible and sets up a complaint line for people who need accessible trailers.
January, 2007	AC receives a fourth year of HUD funding to do outreach and training to case managers about housing rights of persons with disabilities.
January, 2007	AC receives a second years of AARP funding to assist victims of Hurricane Rita
May, 2007	AC hosts an Employment Summit, an initiative designed to increase the employments of persons with disabilities in Louisiana. The participants adopt “Work Pays” as their theme and motto.

- May, 2007** After successfully guiding the reestablishment of the Brain Injury Association of Louisiana, AC sponsors a Statewide Brain Injury Conference in Baton Rouge, the first such conference since the early 90s.
- May, 2007** AC is the recipient of a New Voices Fellowship, the focus of which is the establishment of a grass roots advocacy movement among constituents with mental illness in Louisiana.
- July, 2007** AC's Baton Rouge Office moves to improved quarters at 8225 Florida Boulevard.
- September, 2007** Class action lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana against the Capital Area Transit System (CATS). Suit alleges failure of CATS's paratransit program to conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- January, 2008** Lawsuit filed on behalf of individual client in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana against the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals and two providers of group home services to people with developmental disabilities to require the ICF-DD program to be accessible to people in wheelchairs.
- March, 2008** AC launches its social networking pages on Disaboom and Facebook.
- May, 2008** Settlement agreement reached whereby the Capital Area Transit System (CATS) agreed to comply with specific performance standards for on-time performances and trip capacity.
- May, 2008** AC officially closes down its Katrina Aid Today (KAT) case management program. In the two and a half years of KAT's operation, the program served approximately 2,500 people and distributed \$5 million to them.
- June, 2008** AC hosts community project in conjunction with NDRN annual conference in New Orleans. Fifty volunteers work at three "Rebuilding Together New Orleans" sites, laying floors, painting, and landscaping.
- June, 2008** AC holds press conference in Baton Rouge to announce the release of its report on Child Residential Facilities. The report, "Out of Control," cites widespread abuse and neglect of the children who reside in these facilities throughout Louisiana.
- September, 2008** AC is the recipient of a three-year Department of Justice Office of Violence Against Women grant. This project will ensure that people in the disability community are more aware about sexual violence against women, how to prevent and address this issue, and that sexual assault services are accessible to persons with disabilities who experience sexual assault.
- October, 2008** AC unveils its new logo developed pro bono by the Peter Mayer Advertising firm.
- October, 2008** AC holds its Advocacy Awards Ceremony, honoring Gary Acosta, Jr., Self-Advocate; Craig S. Pate, Volunteer Advocate; Martha Kegel, Professional Advocate; Joanne Chavez, Family Advocate; and Wayne Thomas and William Jackson, Advocacy Team.

- November, 2008** AC staffs election hotline for the presidential election, receiving the most calls since the initiation of the hotline in 2007. 430 people called the hotline for information about voting issues.
- November, 2008** AC receives notification that it has been awarded an IOLTA grant by the Louisiana Bar Foundation.
- April, 2009** AC completes Strategic Plan for 2010-2013.