

My Experience in Partners in Policymaking®

By: Steven Nguyen



FHF of Jefferson
201 Evans Road
Building One, Suite 100
Harahan, LA 70123
504.888.9111
504.888.0246 (fax)
www.fhfjefferson.org

Top Row: Robert Paddy (Caddo), Jennifer Huber (Jefferson), Ashley Plaisance (St. Tammany), Micah Moscovis (St. Landry)

3rd Row: Liz Gary (Program Coordinator), Lionel Carbajal (St. Tammany), Sandra Guichard (St. Tammany), Kevira Johnson (East Baton Rouge), Karen Artus (St. Tammany), Cathy Castille (Acadia), Robbie Gray (LaDDC)

2nd Row: Carmen Cetnar (Lafayette), Brittney Barnett (Ascension), Ayesha Moinuddin (Calcasieu), Hilary Bordelon (St. Tammany), Zachry Edmonston (Ascension)

Front Row: Morgan Brownlee (St. Tammany), Ta'Rhonda Chube (East Baton Rouge), Steven Nguyen (Jefferson), April Dunn (East Baton Rouge), Justine Fucci (St. Tammany)

Partners in Policymaking® is a national leadership course, geared towards parents of young children with developmental disabilities and adults with developmental disabilities, better known as self-advocates. The course started out in Minnesota, in 1987, and the curriculum has since been adopted in 35 states and even internationally. Here in Louisiana, the class meets from January through July, one weekend out of each month. Each class Liz Gary, Partners Coordinator, invites quality speakers from the state and



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national levels to share their expertise.

6 months ago, I embarked on this journey called **Partners in Policymaking®**. Little did I know, this journey would be a life changing experience for me. It has equipped me with the necessary tools and knowledge to become an effective advocate for myself and other individuals with disabilities to effect systems change in a positive way. Throughout that time, I got to know all of my classmates. Together; we learned, built relationships, shared our personal stories and experiences, shared in moments of happiness, and leaned on each other during moments of sadness.

If you are a parent of a child with a developmental disability, or an adult with a developmental disability, and you have the desire to learn, build connections, and advocate for the betterment of your community, I encourage you to sign up! Applications are being accepted later this summer. For more information, visit the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council's website at <http://www.laddc.org/initiatives.cfm?aid=8&id=8>



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