



Paralysis Resource Center State Pilot Program – Year One: University of Kentucky Human Development Institute

Program Overview

Wellness Edge, operated by the Human Development Institute (HDI) at the University of Kentucky, seeks to build capacity of local communities to enhance and facilitate access to recreational programs, so they might effectively

serve individuals with paralysis and their support networks. The project will increase the quality of engagement for individuals with paralysis and their support networks, including caregivers, family, and friends in recreational settings, and improve health outcomes.

Wellness Edge specifically targets individuals with paralysis and their support networks in Kentucky's rural regions, which represent 77 percent of the state's counties. Through this project, the University of Kentucky works with groups who could create or expand upon already existing innovative recreational programs to serve individuals with paralysis.

In Year One of this project, the University of Kentucky provided grants to eight subawardees: the Kentucky-Indiana Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America; Spina Bifida Association of Kentucky; Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Division of Parks and Recreation; Community Foundation of Louisville; Fayette County Public Schools; Easter Seals Cardinal Hill; Center for Accessible Living; and Bluegrass Tennis Associations. Subawardee initiatives include provision of adaptive recreational programming and the purchase of adaptive sports equipment for use in the community.

Administrative Structure

Three core staff members at HDI lead Wellness Edge:

- *Principal Investigator*, who oversees the development of the subaward work plans, fiscal administration of the subawards, application and review of the subawards, and evaluation.
- *Project Director and Advocacy Specialist*, who coordinates technical assistance (TA) activities, including monthly TA calls, provides TA on advocacy, ensures that sub-awardees can complete their projects in a timely manner, and conducts marketing and dissemination activities.
- *Wellness Specialist*, who provides TA on environmental barriers and challenges faced by the sub-awardees, connects them to local resources, and develops TA products.

Additionally, Wellness Edge convened an eight-member advisory panel which includes individuals with paralysis, support networks, wellness experts, and community members. The advisory panel meets quarterly to review and select subawardees and provide guidance to project staff.



Technical Assistance Offered

Wellness Edge staff provides TA that centers around problem-solving issues related to advocacy and building community awareness, as well as recreational strategies that can enhance accessibility. TA includes:

- An initial call to discuss subawardee budget, data requirements, and possible TA areas, including development of a TA plan and activity timeline checklist
- Monthly calls with each subawardee to discuss progress on activities, problem-solve implementation difficulties, and address emerging challenges and opportunities
- Posting of resources on the project website, based on needs identified in the TA calls
- Site visits to provide onsite technical assistance

Outcomes

Wellness Edge successfully solicited applicants for the grant in Year One and provided TA to subawardees, including creation of a centralized repository of TA products and resources.

Year One subawardees and participants expressed satisfaction in Wellness Edge's TA offerings: 99 percent of participants indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with Wellness Edge-related events.