



To: NADE Board of Directors
From: Kristina Burbank, Northeast Regional Director
Date: August 25, 2021
Subject: NADE Northeast Regional Director 2021 End-Year Report

I am pleased to make my End-Year Report as the Northeast Regional Director of NADE. The NE region has been struggling with membership, having lost an additional four members overall. As we continue facing adversities during the Coronavirus pandemic, difficulties persist in recruiting and retaining new members in an already small region. The New York chapter has lost two members and New Jersey lost one. Vermont lost several members due to attrition, however was able to recruit some new members with no net loss. Work-from-home mandates in various states have affected membership retention and participation has been a challenge.

The Vermont Chapter, The Green Mountain Association of Disability Examiners (GMADE) remains the largest chapter in the Region. As per the agreement with the VT DDS to cover memberships for adjudicators and support staff, GMADE is committed to providing 12 hours of training for adjudicators and 6 hours of training for support staff. The GMADE training committee is working closely with the State of Vermont's employee training center to provide a multi-part professional development training aimed at helping staff become more engaged with their work and to plan a career path within the DDS. This training is scheduled to start in the new federal fiscal year and has garnered a great amount of interest among staff, both member and non-member alike. Training modalities are being worked through in order to accommodate staff working from home.

GMADE is currently working on recruiting speakers for the 2022 National Training Conference in Burlington, Vermont. The GMADE board has been working diligently to keep members engaged while dealing with heavy workloads in addition to this national health crisis. The board organized a GMADE Blue and Green Week Photo Contest in support of National Donate Life Month in April with the contest winner getting a gift card to a local coffee shop. Our winner gave a heartfelt thanks to all those who had participated and shared that her close friend was waiting for an organ donation and thanked GMADE for bringing attention to this important cause. Unfortunately, due to SSA restrictions on the use of Teams, a virtual event was not held.

GMADE held an in-person BBQ for NDPW in the month of June. Turnout was more than expected and the staff were appreciative to have an in-person event after so long meeting virtually. Management worked with GMADE to tie-in to Public Service Recognition Week and distributed gifts to all staff and recognized employees who had reached their 5-year, 10-year and 25-year marks with the state. Staff participated in games and shared side dishes for potluck while GMADE provided burgers, hot dogs and a vegan option.

The GMADE newsletter, "News GMADE Just For You" published its quarterly issue with a two-page article dedicated to the career of Trudy Lyon-Hart, the VT DDS's

recently retired Director. She was presented a plaque at her retirement party by our chapter in recognition of her years of service and support to NADE and GMADE.

There have been no reports from other chapters in the region.

As outlined in the charges for Regional Director, I have kept the chapter presidents and contacts within our region updated and have solicited their input on various actions requiring our comments and feedback. Communication at all levels is vital to the success and strength of an organization.

With COVID-19 still hanging over our heads causing interruptions in our regular activities as well as DDS workflow in general, I endeavor to help our organization retain members and generate local activity. I wish to thank the Board for the opportunity to serve and for all their help and understanding as I continue to learn my role and my responsibilities.

Kristina Burbank
NADE Northeast Regional Director