

pressing need for networking and cooperation among specialized and categorical programs, particularly at the service delivery level, to ensure continuation of coordinated services to people with developmental disabilities. Second, project findings and successful innovative models of projects need to be made available nationally to policy makers as well as to direct service providers.

B. Purpose of the Administration on Developmental Disabilities

The Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) is the lead agency within ACF and DHHS responsible for planning and administering programs which promote the self-sufficiency and protect the rights of individuals with developmental disabilities.

The 1994 Amendments (Pub. L. 103-230) to the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (42 U.S.C.6000, *et seq.*) (the Act) supports and provides assistance to States and public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations to assure that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of and have access to culturally competent services, supports, and other assistance and opportunities that promote independence, productivity and integration and inclusion into the community.

The Act points out that:

- Disability is a natural part of the human experience that does not diminish the right of individuals with developmental disabilities to enjoy the opportunity for independence, productivity and inclusion into the community;
- Individuals whose disabilities occur during their developmental period frequently have severe disabilities that are likely to continue indefinitely;
- Individuals with developmental disabilities often require lifelong specialized services and assistance, provided in a coordinated and culturally competent manner by many agencies, professionals, advocates, community representatives, and others to eliminate barriers and to meet the needs of such individuals and their families;

The Act further finds that:

- Individuals with developmental disabilities, including those with the most severe developmental disabilities, are capable of achieving independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion into the community, and often require the provision of services, supports and other assistance to achieve such;

- Individuals with developmental disabilities have competencies, capabilities and personal goals that should be recognized, supported, and encouraged, and any assistance to such individuals should be provided in an individualized manner, consistent with the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, and capabilities of the individual;

- Individuals with developmental disabilities and their families are the primary decision makers regarding the services and supports such individuals and their families receive; and play decision making roles in policies and programs that affect the lives of such individuals and their families; and

- It is in the nation's interest for individuals with developmental disabilities to be employed, and to live conventional and independent lives as a part of families and communities.

Toward these ends, ADD seeks to enhance the capabilities of families in assisting individuals with developmental disabilities to achieve their maximum potential; to support the increasing ability of individuals with developmental disabilities to exercise greater choice and self-determination; to engage in leadership activities in their communities; as well as to ensure the protection of their legal and human rights.

Programs funded under the Act are:

- Federal assistance to State developmental disabilities councils;
- State system for the protection and advocacy of individual rights;
- Grants to university affiliated programs for interdisciplinary training, exemplary services, technical assistance, and information dissemination; and
- Grants for Projects of National Significance.

C. Description of Projects of National Significance

Under Part E of the Act, demonstration (and in some cases, cooperative agreement) grants and technical assistance contracts are awarded for projects of national significance that support the development of national and State policy to enhance the independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion of individuals with developmental disabilities through:

- Data collection and analysis;
- Technical assistance to enhance the quality of State developmental disabilities councils, protection and advocacy systems, and university affiliated programs; and
- Other projects of sufficient size and scope that hold promise to expand or

improve opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities, including:

- technical assistance for the development of information and referral systems;
- educating policy makers;
- Federal interagency initiatives;
- the enhancement of participation of racial and ethnic groups in public and private sector initiatives in developmental disabilities;
- transition of youth with developmental disabilities from school to adult life; and
- special pilots and evaluation studies to explore the expansion of programs under part B (State developmental disabilities councils) to individuals with severe disabilities other than developmental disabilities.

Section 162(c) of the Act requires that ADD publish in the **Federal Register** proposed priorities for grants and contracts to carry out Projects of National Significance. The Act also requires a period of 60 days for public comment concerning such proposed priorities. After analyzing and considering such comments, ADD must publish in the **Federal Register** final priorities for such grants and contracts, and solicit applications for funding based on the final priorities selected.

The following section presents the proposed priority areas for Fiscal Year 1995 Projects of National Significance. We welcome specific comments and suggestions as well as suggestions for additional priority areas. We would also like to receive suggestions on topics which are timely and relate to specific needs in the developmental disabilities field.

Please be aware that the development of final funding priorities is based on the public comment response to this notice, current agency and departmental priorities, needs in the field of developmental disabilities and the developmental disabilities network, etc., as well as the availability of funds for this fiscal year.

Part II. Fiscal Year 1995 Proposed Priority Areas for Projects of National Significance

ADD is interested in all comments and recommendations which address areas of existing or evolving national significance related to the field of developmental disabilities.

ADD also solicits recommendations for project activities which will advocate for public policy change and community acceptance of all individuals with developmental disabilities and families so that such