**OCSS Report**

Little Rock, Arkansas

August 23, 2016

OCSS –Our Community Standing Strong along with project manager, SABE conducted and participated **sessions to support Arkansas move forward** with strengthening the self advocacy movement in the south. The opening session was presented in a way to get the Arkansas self advocates to continue to build efforts around their work in self advocacy. The discussion and exercise was intended to for Arkansas SA to determine their accomplishment, identify what was important around the issues, and come up with an action plan to reach goals.

**SA identified (3) goals:**

#1 Hire a State Coordinator

#2 Accessibility

#3 Training

(All of the information was captured through use of flip chart and will be compiled by the Arkansas P &A and given to SA as guide to continue work in progress)

Another session was to refresh and continue to introduce the **importance of the Regional Technical Assistance Project**, OCSS. This session clued SA to the mission of OCSS and motivated members to continue to press forward with their work and understand that SA movement is a power that will take everyone to make it strong. A reflection at a glance of what Arkansas has done was shared related to the grant. Tennessee Gage brothers provided their personal stories around institutions and closing them down. A cheer was shared to continue the excitement and buzz around OCSS efforts.

Another session as led by **Commissioner Aaron Bishop**. He gave a strong message about the history of self advocacy and related to a memory book of going back to the beginnings of SA to current status of SA. He also tied the SA movement into the civil rights movement and shared his story of involvement. Commissioner Bishop even tied Little Rock historical Central High into the movement.

The final session **summarized session information** on the day then SA were led to come up with action plan based on what is most important to SA in Arkansas. Arkansas SA appeared to be proud of their accomplishments and vowed to take action, not just talk, but act.

A reception was held with self advocates, legislatures, partners and the Commissioner and his staff. It was a great opportunity for SA to **increase their networking and build stronger resources** within their community.

OCSS represented by Chaqueta Stuckey, Co Director

Tia Nelis, SABE President

Bill Gage, OCSS advisory board member

Sam Gage, OCSS advisory board member

Carol Rabideau, Tennessee AUCD

Glenda Hyman, OCSS Support/SABE Advisor