



CTD 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Disability Advocacy, Organizing, Arts & Film, Consulting, and Consumer Direction.



2019 was a legislative year, and much of our energy was trained on policy change. But the outcomes of our work were not limited to the Capitol (or to Texas!).

How did CTD work to bring down barriers for you in 2019? Read on!

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Cover photos, from top: Mimi Hau and Armando Martinez shooting a scene for SEW ADAPTIVE (photo by Jennifer Bracy for CTD); actor and disability activist RJ Mitte hosts CTDF 2019 (photo by William Philpott for CTD); Jean-Paul Mejia, as featured in the CBD is Medicine campaign (photo by POOLHOUSE); Dennis Borel and Chase Bearden at the State Capitol (photo by CTD).

2019 by the numbers

68 advocacy partners

\$409 M dollars CTD influenced in the state budget

+400,000 hours worked by CDS Division community attendants

16 years of the Cinema Touching Disability Film Festival

CTD in the 2019 Legislature

Every session has its wins and its losses, and 2019 was no different. While we suffered some crushing moments, it only takes a small step back to recognize that we helped to move the needle a little—or a lot—on all of our priority issues.

How will our policy work affect you in the interim and beyond? If you...

... are an adult in Medicaid, CTD again advanced a dental benefit. For the first time, there is language in Texas statute calling for an adult dental program pilot. For his work on this issue, the DentaQuest Partnership named CTD's Dennis Borel a 2019 Health Equity Hero—one of six in the country!

... receive attendant care through Medicaid, CTD achieved three accomplishments to better support the attendant care workforce in Texas. As you know, low pay to attendants is a serious barrier to reliable care.

- Working closely with our partners, CTD secured \$87 million to add to attendants' paychecks in 2020-2021.
- We pushed for a budget rider to direct the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to further study attendant care.
- We advocated to the Speaker to add legislative work on the issue during the interim—and he did.

... have a child in special education, CTD and partners advocated for a \$204 million increase in state special education funding and set up planning directives.

... aspire to a post-secondary education, CTD had a foundational role in legislation to create, for the first time, a legally-mandated advisory council for post-secondary education for young people with disabilities.



CTD's Susie Angel and Dennis Borel meet with Nelda Hunter, chief of staff for Rep. Zerwas. Photo by the Texas Tribune.

“Partnering with CTD provided a perfect opportunity for dental hygiene students in my public health course to gain greater awareness of the barriers that adults with disabilities face in accessing oral health care in Texas and how to advocate to create change in public policy. By the end of their day at the Capitol, the students confidence grew exponentially and they discovered how they can be agents of change.”

Michelle Landrum, RDH, M.Ed.



... or your child has autism, multiple sclerosis, any kind of seizure disorder, spasticity, terminal cancer, or an incurable neurodegenerative disease like ALS or Parkinson's, CTD was the lead consumer advocate to include all of those diagnoses in expanded access to medical cannabis in Texas. Texans for Responsible Marijuana Policy honored CTD's Chase Bearden with a Leading Advocates Award for his work this session.

In addition, CTD produced a statewide advocacy campaign, CBD is Medicine, which told stories of real Texans whose lives have dramatically improved with legal access to CBD (right).

... or a family member is a person with a guardian, CTD was a principal advocate to expand monitoring of guardianship for compliance with laws and regulations, an area that had very minimal oversight.

... are a voter with a disability, CTD was in the middle of the battle against legislation that would have set new hurdles for voters with disabilities and those who assist them. For those who choose to use mail-in ballots, CTD reminds you to be very clear and consistent with your signatures, which can be used to toss a ballot.



Jean-Paul Mejia in the CBD is Medicine public awareness campaign. Still by POOLHOUSE.

All that is progress, but it's not enough. We need to complete the dental initiative, continue our work to significantly raise attendant wages, continue the move forward on special education, make access to medical cannabis more practical for those who choose this medicine, and more.

Our 2019 Legislative Report has more details about our work at the Capitol this year and what we envision for 2020.

Read it at www.TXDisabilities.org/advocacy.

“Working with CTD has been a very valuable experience for me in my journey into advocacy. Protecting the rights of my daughter and others with disabilities is truly my heart. Being disabled myself gives me one perspective, but being a mother to a disabled daughter has changed everything. The testimony at the Capitol changed me and none of that would have been possible without you.”

Christiana Voorhes (pictured with Rep. Justin Holland and CTD's Chase Bearden)



Representing you at the political poker table

When it comes to policy and practice impacting Texans with disabilities, CTD knows that presence matters. That's why we are regularly at the State Capitol and numerous state agencies, testifying at hearings, meeting with policymakers, and building alliances to ensure the voices of Texans with disabilities are heard.

To name a few examples, CTD is in a strategic position to represent your interests if you...

... access prescription medications through Medicaid. CTD is the only consumer advocate on Drug Utilization Review Board, an important body that decides which medicines are on the Medicaid preferred drug list. Statistics show that being a preferred drug often equals access to medicines.

... or a family member is in Medicaid Managed Care. CTD has, from day one, been a vocal, active appointee on the State Medicaid Managed Care Advisory Committee. With over 90% of Texas Medicaid now in the managed care environment, this critical committee is in a position to raise issues and influence policy.

... rely on physical accessibility within built environments. CTD has been a long-time appointee to the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners, a regulatory body over architects, interior designers, and landscape architects. We have leveraged the state appointment into federal advocacy.

... or your child seeks post-secondary educational opportunities. CTD is among the founders of the Aggie Achieve Advisory Committee, overseeing the launch of the Aggie Achieve post-secondary education program at Texas A&M University.

... have public or private health insurance. As a member of United Healthcare's National Advisory Board, CTD addresses disability services for one of America's largest health insurers, both in Texas and beyond.

... value community over institutions. CTD works primarily in Texas, but we recognize that decisions in Washington have an impact on our lives in the states. We maintain relationships with key members of the Texas congressional delegation to advocate on key federal issues. One focus has been the Empower Act to reauthorize the Money Follows the Person Act, providing federal money to relocate people from institutions to the community, achieved in late 2019.

Consumer Direction

Our CDS Division gives Texans with disabilities the support they need to manage their own attendants. If you are among the nearly 400 individuals served in our Consumer Directed Services program, or their 500 attendants, then you know the benefits.

If you are not, our CDS Division is like having an in-house laboratory for the functional workings of Medicaid community attendant services. In addition to serving those in our program, what we learn from their experience and daily CDS operations allows us to be better informed advocates, helping us to best represent consumers at the Legislature and within stakeholder activities at the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

Arts Programs at CTD

Finally, in the media, we are seeing more and more (and better!) representations of people with disabilities. Through our arts programming, we are proud that we have contributed to this cultural shift locally, and around the world.

In 2019, if you are...

... a cinephile, our 16th annual Cinema Touching Disability Film Festival (CTDFF) continued breaking new ground, with sellout crowds! Actor/ activist RJ Mitte joined the Fest as our guest host, running the show and telling stories about his own rise to fame in Hollywood!

... a writer or reader, we celebrated 10 years of our international Pen 2 Paper disability-focused creative writing contest. We received a ton of outstanding work among nearly 400 entries and are pleased to have partnered with Oleb Books on the Oleb Books Personal Essay Award.



CTDFF staff, guests, and fashion challenge participants and film crew. Photo by William Philpott for CTD.

For this year's theme of adaptive fashion, we partnered with two essential players in the adaptive fashion movement, the Runway of Dreams Foundation and Cur8able, to present short films on adaptive fashion, as well as a presentation by disability fashion stylist Stephanie Thomas. Then, we debuted garments from our own CTDF Adaptive Fashion Challenge, which connected local models with disabilities to local designers, in order to solve a clothing-related problem. Our short documentary SEW ADAPTIVE gave the audience a look behind the scenes.

Thanks to our 2019 sponsors and volunteers!

Read this year's full wrap up, with Short Film Competition results and more, at

www.CTDFilmFest.org.

Read this year's finalists and winners at www.TXDisabilities.org/pen-2-paper.

Plus, we continued our monthly Lion and Pirate Open Mic series with Art Spark Texas at Malvern Books, hosting performers with and without disabilities of all stripes. Featured performers in 2019 included musicians The Old Hats, Cook and Rose, and David and Ann Marie Romero, poet Spirit Thom, and author Skip Bellon.



Portrait of Tanya (Tanya Winters). Photo by David Borden.

... interested in painting, CTD embarked on a new collaboration with Austin artist David Borden. Accessible Portraits: Painting People as They See Themselves "dares society to change its perceptions of disability and beauty." We previewed Accessible Portraits at CTDF and can't wait to share where it's going in 2020!

Our vision for 2020

Looking ahead to 2020, a legislative interim year, we have big plans to continue our work mentioned above, and invite you to join us!

If you...

... are a voter with a disability, CTD is a leading member of REV UP Texas coalition, and is working to promote the disability vote in the 2020 Presidential election. We remind all individuals who vote by mail: to ensure your vote is counted, make sure the signatures on your Ballot by Mail Application and ballot match as closely as possible.

... are committed to state policy change, CTD is planning a series of Raise Your Voice! Roundtables and training events around the state. Through our RYV! advocacy events, CTD comes to your community, to learn, listen, train, and empower you! We are committed to involving you in meaningful ways in our preparations for the 2021 Legislature.

... enjoy art and performance—or are an artist yourself—our Cinema Touching Disability Short Film Competition is open now! Join us at an upcoming open mic at Malvern Books. And stay tuned for

announcements about CTD Film Festival dates, the Pen 2 Paper 2020 deadline, the release of our anthology with Oleb Books, open mic dates, Accessible Portraits events, and more!

Keep up with CTD in 2020 by subscribing to our e-newsletter at txdisabilities.org.

Or follow us on social media:

CTD @TXDisabilities



Cinema Touching Disability
@CTDFilmFestival



Pen 2 Paper @Pen2Paper



“Such an amazing event!!! Very well planned and organized. Wonderful choice to have a showing here. Spacious theatre, kind service, and great speakers.”

Anonymous Cinema Touching Disability audience survey



CTD Coalition of Texans with Disabilities

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www.TXDisabilities.org | Social Media @TXDisabilities



Board of Directors

CTD's Board reflects the population of Texas in terms of types of disability, geographic representation, ethnicity, and income level.

Executive Committee

President: Kenneth Semien, Sr.*
Vice President: Crystal Lyons* **
Secretary: Judy Telge
Treasurer: Jet Schuler

At Large Members

Region 1: Rick Razo
Region 2: John Curnutt*
Region 3: Darren Bates*
Region 4: Darrell Wilson*
Region 5: Marshall Burns*
Region 6: Francis Key*
Region 7: Gene Whitten-Lege
Region 8: vacant

Staff

Executive Director: Dennis Borel
Deputy Executive Director: Chase Bearden*
Chief Operations Officer: Denise Ellison**
Communications Director: Laura Perna
Film Festival Director: William Greer*
Editor/Researcher: Susie Angel*
Development Specialist: Jennifer Bracy*

CDS Director: Kit Cuny
CDS Payroll Administrators: Aracely Menendez, Rosie Williams
CDS Claims Analyst: Laura Harrell

* Person with a disability

** Parent of a child with a disability

CTD is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with Federal Tax ID #74-2071160 CTD is a social and economic impact organization benefitting Texans with all disabilities of all ages. CTD is a membership organization controlled by people with disabilities.

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TEXAS COUNCIL for
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES

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