

## **Winter 2024**

The mission of the UCLA Tarjan Center, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, is to advance the self-determination, inclusion, and quality of life among the diversity of people with disabilities and their families. We accomplish our mission through collaborative leadership in training, community education, research, service, and information sharing. We serve as a bridge between the resources of the University and local, state, and international organizations, agencies, policymakers, people with disabilities, and their families.

Over the past two years, the UCLA Tarjan Center has continued to grow and thrive, achieving significant milestones in our work to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities. In 2023, we hosted our inaugural Forum in Developmental Disabilities, which brought together researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and community members to discuss critical issues and advancements in the field. This annual event has now become a cornerstone of our community engagement efforts, with our second Forum held in October 2024.

2024 also marks the launch of the Leadership Academy for Emerging Leaders in Disability Rights, a program designed to equip future self-advocates with the knowledge and skills to advance equity and inclusion in their communities. Through this initiative, we are fostering the next generation of leaders who will drive meaningful change in the disability rights movement.

Our collaboration with the State Council on Developmental Disabilities to assess California's Self-Determination Program was another pivotal achievement. This project culminated in recommendations that directly contributed to new legislation aimed at improving services and supports for individuals with disabilities, further empowering them to take control of their futures.

These accomplishments are a testament to the dedication of our faculty, staff, trainees, and community partners. The UCLA Tarjan Center remains steadfast in our commitment to:

- Increasing knowledge and skills for trainees in providing services, supports, and advocacy for people with developmental disabilities.
- Expanding professional workforce capacity to deliver high-quality, evidence-based services.
- Enhancing community capacity for equitable, inclusive postsecondary education, employment, and health services.
- Increasing access to multidisciplinary clinical services for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Conducting impactful research that improves health and well-being.
- Promoting widespread adoption of research-supported practices, policies, and public awareness materials.

We are deeply grateful for the ongoing support of the Tarjan Advisory Committee, as well as our community and federal partners. Together, we continue to advance self-determination, inclusion, and quality of life for individuals with disabilities and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elizabeth Laugeson Psy.D". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the last name "Laugeson" being the most prominent part.

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Elizabeth A. Laugeson, Psy.D.  
Director, UCLA Tarjan Center