



Message from Patti Carlesimo, Executive Director

Happy 2021! We are looking forward to this New Year bringing hope and good health to our stakeholders.

LADACIN has entered month 11 of the pandemic with our programs and services operating to the best of our ability per our funding source guidelines. We have become quite nimble in moving from on-site or face to face services to virtual services overnight either due to COVID concerns or most recently a blizzard! We appreciate the patience and cooperation of our clients, parents and guardians. We salute our ever present staff who have been working tirelessly to provide education and support to all served. They continue to be our heroes and deserve recognition for their daily efforts to keep our babies, students and clients safe, engaged and healthy in body and mind. Their positive energy prevails and hopefully makes each day better for all. I would be remiss if I neglected to also acknowledge our administrators. It has been a long year - their motivation and dedication to success for their programs never waivers. I have been amazed and inspired by them.

Early Intervention Services continue to offer in-home services, telehealth services and some limited center based services. Although our number of families served is lower than last year at this time we are encouraged to see that our targeted evaluations for eligibility have increased to almost pre-COVID levels. That should result in more children entering the system and receiving services. EI services are critical for the 0-3 year olds exhibiting delays during their developmental years.

Our Child Care program has been open since August with fewer children but with enthusiastic staff who have been very busy tending to the children, doing daily screenings, cleaning, socially distancing, wearing masks and other PPE and making childcare educational and fun. They have even embraced working with several school age children while they were on their school virtual learning platforms. Thanks to federal/state/county supplemental payments child care is able to stay open despite low enrollment.

Our Schools have reopened five days/week from 9-1. Approximately half the students are participating on-site and the other 50% have access to virtual learning during the school day with their class. The staff use of technology has been innovative and impressive! Our students are offered a wide variety of learning opportunities and most are happily participating.

Residential Services have never stopped- 24/7 services and supports for 88 tenants in our nine residential facilities. Kudos to those staff who have “soldiered” through the pandemic ensuring the health and safety of our clients. Day Programs have been opened and closed –they are currently closed by the state with no scheduled return date. Staff are anxious to return to program- everyone misses the clients! Day programs have increased their virtual activities for clients/families.

We also have an incredible Board of Trustees who have been meeting frequently to offer their support and guidance during this Pandemic experience. They have been invaluable to me and instrumental in developing an Operational Plan which will focus our energy and activity this fiscal year. In addition, we are implementing a 3-year Diversity and Inclusion Plan to continue to cultivate and promote our diverse workforce. Our culture is one of dignity and respect. We want all of our employees to feel welcomed and motivated to do their best.

Finally, we were so pleased to be able to host a Vaccine Clinic on January 29<sup>th</sup> with Walgreens- over 260 clients and staff were able to receive their first shot. It was quite exciting to be able to offer the vaccine on-site! Special thanks to Lisa Graul for her diligent efforts on making the contact, organizing the space and schedule, and generally overseeing the event. Thank you to the management team and other staff who helped throughout the day. It was an incredible day!