



Dave Toeniskoetter
Chair, Leadership Development Committee
c/o ANCOR
1101 King Street, Suite 380
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Dave,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic interest in serving on ANCOR's Board of Directors. Below you will find the requested items for your consideration.

Biography

George Contos is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of YAI.

YAI is one of New York State's largest not-for-profit, health and social services organizations supporting children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Prior to becoming CEO, George served as YAI's Chairman of the Board (2014), Co-Vice Chairman (2013), and Trustee (2012). Earlier this year, he was named to the Board of Directors for the InterAgency Council of Developmental Disabilities Agencies, Inc. (IAC), a New York, not-for-profit membership organization of over 120 IDD organizations.

Since his introduction to YAI in 2009, George has been a strong advocate and steward for YAI and the people it supports, and has proactively pursued a strong grasp of YAI's finances, funding streams, programs, and infrastructure. His deep understanding of the nuances between an organization's governance versus its day-to-day management and operations enabled him to bring a relatively unique, value-added perspective to his current role as YAI's CEO and lead strategist. Since his tenure began in September, 2015, George has helped YAI realize millions of dollars in long-term operational savings and helped drive over \$22 million dollars of new programs, grants, and business opportunities to the organization.

As part of his advocacy for the success of YAI and the entire field of IDD with state and city governments, George has met with Governor Andrew Cuomo and officials in the Governor's office, the Department of Health (DOH), the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), as well as with several NYC officials. He has successfully linked YAI to internationally recognized thought leaders, both within and without the IDD field, and was

recently part of a panel that presented at the United Nations on the rights of Americans with disabilities.

Prior to becoming CEO, George was a registered investment advisor and Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy (CAP) developing charitable giving and legacy strategies for individuals, families and private foundations. As a former practicing attorney, he specialized in Elder law, trust-based asset protection, and estate and Medicaid planning.

George received his J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center, his B.A. from Tufts University, and his CAP designation from The American College. A native New Yorker, he and his family reside on Manhattan's Upper East Side.

About YAI

For nearly 60 years, YAI has been supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in achieving their fullest lives possible. The YAI network's nearly 5,000 employees support thousands of children and adults every day throughout New York City; Long Island; Westchester, Rockland, and Putnam Counties; Northern New Jersey; Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Its comprehensive range of services include residential programs, employment training, day and community habilitation, opportunities for recreation and socialization, and a variety of additional supports that help and empower people with IDD and their families.

Your history with ANCOR, including service on any ANCOR committee(s), task force(s), Board(s) and other service to ANCOR

The YAI - ANCOR partnership dates back to 1990, with our former CEO serving on the Board of Directors and various committees, including legislative and regulatory policy, managed care/systems redesign, and programming. In addition, YAI staff members continue to play pivotal roles in ANCOR's public relations and government relations, and in its National Advocacy Campaign (NAC).

Over the years, YAI has embraced numerous ANCOR initiatives including, the inaugural DSPs to DC; lobbying on the hill in support of a bill to enhance DSP wages and professionalism; and the formation of ANCOR's NAC. The impact on our staff remains very relevant well beyond these efforts. Our staff members describe how empowering it felt to advocate on behalf of their colleagues, not only those at YAI, but across the country. YAI has stood with ANCOR over the years to bring attention to the important role DSPs play in the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and the need to increase wages and professionalism for DSPs. YAI has even moved its Staff Recognition Week (historically in October), to coincide with National DSP Recognition Week in September.

Staff members from both YAI and our New Jersey agency have been named New York State and New Jersey DSPs of the Year winners through ANCOR's DSP Recognition Awards, bringing pride to our entire organization. ANCOR awarded YAI the 2010 Advocacy Award, in

recognition of the fact that hundreds of our staff contacted their Congressional members to support HR 868 – the Direct Support Professionals Fairness and Security Act.

We frequently share critical ANCOR updates with staff, families, and donors via social media and our website. Over the years, through our network of contacts, we have arranged for ANCOR executives to present their messages through key media outlets and before key constituents.

Why you are interested in serving on the Board of Directors

There are many decisions coming from federal and state lawmakers which impact people with intellectual and developmental and their families, and the organizations supporting them. I am passionate about providing people with IDD and their families with the supports they need and believe that through collaboration with government at all levels, agencies of all sizes, and through new initiatives and partnerships, we can meet and thwart the challenges facing our field. These extraordinary times require new thinking and fresh perspectives, which I know I can bring to the ANCOR Board of Directors.

As the CEO of one of New York State's largest not-for-profit IDD service providers, I can bring value to ANCOR's discussions on a national platform. Furthermore, I have an outstanding senior leadership team with decades of experience, which the ANCOR Board can turn to as an additional resource as necessary.

I am not as effective when I sit on the sidelines, so the opportunity to have a meaningful seat at the table that allows me to engage with other leaders and participate in a national dialogue, will position me to be an active member of ANCOR in a game changing way and a stronger overall advocate for other service providers, and for people with IDD throughout the nation.

What you can contribute toward upholding and advancing ANCOR's mission and strategic goals I consider myself to be a proactive and solution-oriented leader whose personal mission is to embrace the transformation of our field and can use my skill set to support ANCOR in ways both tangible and intangible. My tenure as Trustee and Chairman of YAI's Board for several years afforded me invaluable, first-hand experience in understanding and dealing with the critical difference between governance matters and day-to-day management decisions. My knowledge of: board committee structures and dynamics; my legal, financial, and entrepreneurial background; and my strong communication and interpersonal skills; allow me to bring a value accretive expertise to the ANCOR Board as it works to shape policy, develop solutions and strengthen the IDD community.

At YAI, I have proven to be an effective change agent. For example, I recently authorized the development of YAI's Department of Person-Centered Services to ensure that our staff and programs embrace and align with the person-centered philosophy, with a focus on Personal Outcome Measures (POMs). Under my leadership, YAI established its first Self-Direction pilot project. The organization is about to embark on a project to introduce enhanced technology measures that will allow our staff to work better and that will hopefully and quantifiably improve outcomes for the people we support. We are exploring non-certified housing options, establishing more community-based Day Services opportunities, and strengthening our efforts to

ensure effective staff recruitment and retention. We want to be an organization that's person-centered, not program-centered.

It would be an honor to serve on ANCOR's Board of Directors. I have been, and will continue to be, a tireless advocate for legislation and funding that protects and can enhance the quality of services and supports for those with IDD. I am committed to, and comfortable with, interacting and engaging with politicians at all levels about the importance of our field, workforce, people we support, and their families, and I'm confident that I would be a valuable addition to the ANCOR Board.

Sincerely,
George Contos