

**REGIONAL AUTISM ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**RAAC**

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES  
AND MEMBERSHIP**



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## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND MEMBERSHIP

The Regional Autism Advisory Council (RAAC) was established in 1999 in response to the urgent need for comprehensive supports and services for individuals with autism and their families. Since its inception, RAAC has become a cornerstone of regional collaboration, bringing together experts across various disciplines to address the multifaceted needs of the autism community. RAAC's efforts have been instrumental in enhancing the region's capacity to serve individuals with autism through coordinated training, education, and resource sharing.

In January 2024, the RAAC Executive Committee (EC) approached the University of Cincinnati Intellectual and Developmental Disability (IDD) Education Center to acquire RAAC. The EC sought to integrate RAAC into an organization with a strong infrastructure and experienced team to sustain and advance its mission. The IDD Education Center welcomed the opportunity to acquire RAAC, aiming to position the University of Cincinnati as a leader in autism and intellectual and developmental disability support and education. The following analysis details the strategic importance of RAAC, its advantages for members, and the pressing need for sustained investment in this crucial initiative.



## MEETING CRITICAL NEEDS THROUGH STRATEGIC GROWTH AND COLLABORATION

The demand for high-quality, coordinated services for individuals with autism and those with related support needs remains critical. Many families and individuals face challenges navigating fragmented systems and receiving effective support in educational and community settings, resulting in inconsistent care, isolation and lack of skills development. Additionally, there is an increasing need for accessible advanced training and professional development opportunities for families, providers, and educators across the region.

As RAAC transitions under the umbrella of the IDD Education Center, it is essential to sustain and expand its capacity to serve the community effectively. With a strategic plan to ensure sustainability, enhance service offerings, and foster community connections, RAAC can strengthen its impact and build on the progress made over the past two decades.

### RAAC'S MISSION:

## CREATE POSITIVE CHANGE

Providing community-driven connection, impactful education and training, and resource sharing to support the autism community and those with related support needs.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES YEAR 1-3

To address these challenges, the RAAC leadership team has identified the following strategic priorities:

## ENSURE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

- ① **Develop and Implement a New Membership Structure:** Establishing a robust membership model will provide a stable revenue stream and foster a sense of ownership and involvement among stakeholders.  
*Membership from county boards, county ESCs, private and public schools, agencies, providers, individuals and family members will be critical to RAAC's financial and collaborative partnership sustainability.*
- ① **Revise Branding and Messaging:** Updating RAAC's branding will help align the program with the University of Cincinnati's goals and values, attracting new members and partners.
- ① **Create and Implement a Fundraising Plan:** Backed by the UC Foundation and its dedicated development team, the IDD Education Center will incorporate RAAC into its strategic fundraising efforts, ensuring continued growth and impact.

## BECOME A LEADER IN TRAINING AND RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

- ① **Identify Best Practices and Gaps in Training:** Evaluating current regional and national training offerings will enable RAAC to fill gaps and provide high-quality education tailored to the needs of the community.
- ① **Create a Structure for Regular Training Opportunities:** Offering monthly or bi-monthly training sessions will ensure consistent professional development for service providers, educators, and family members.
- ① **Plan and Implement the RAAC Training Institute:** A comprehensive training event will position RAAC as a leading resource for education and skill development.
- ① **Become a Research Partner:** By harnessing the IDD Education Center's established research initiatives and partnerships, RAAC will expand its research impact, creating greater access to cutting-edge advancements in care and support.

## PROVIDE INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY CONNECTION

- ① **Engage Underrepresented Members of the Community:** Expanding outreach to underrepresented groups will ensure that RAAC's services are accessible to all.
- ① **Provide a Platform for Networking and Resource Sharing:** RAAC will continue to serve as a hub for collaboration, allowing members to share resources and address common challenges.
- ① **Foster Community Connections:** Strengthening partnerships within the community will promote positive change and improve outcomes for individuals with autism and those with related support needs.
- ① **Create a RAAC Advisory Board:** The advisory board will be a group comprised of volunteers from all membership levels, providing diverse perspectives and strategic guidance to support the organization's mission and initiatives.

RAAC's continued success is essential to the autism and IDD community. Investing in its strategic priorities will help the IDD Education Center and UC strengthen RAAC's leadership, sustain its impact, and expand opportunities for collaboration, education, and community engagement.

# VALUE TO MEMBERS

RAAC offers significant value to its members by providing:

## ACCESS TO CUTTING-EDGE TRAINING AND RESOURCES

Members benefit from the latest research, training, and professional development opportunities, enabling them to deliver high-quality care and best practices. Trainings will be aligned with community needs and challenges and will also provide continuing education units for educators and professionals in the fields.

## A PLATFORM FOR ADVOCACY AND COLLABORATION

RAAC serves as a voice for the community, advocating for policies and practices that support individuals with autism, those with related support needs, and their families across the lifespan.

## NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

Members can connect with peers, share best practices, and collaborate on initiatives that drive positive change in the community.

## LEADERSHIP AND OUTREACH

RAAC's dedicated leadership ensures that the program not only maintains its current offerings but also expands its reach through strategic outreach and partnerships.

# 2025 RAAC ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL	ANNUAL COST	MEMBERSHIP ACCESS	NETWORKING, TRAININGS AND EVENTS	MARKETING BENEFITS	EXTRAS BENEFITS
Free	\$0	Access to RAAC website, listserv, monthly updates	Pay-as-you-go: Networking (\$25), Virtual Trainings (\$20), 1-Day Conference (\$100)	-	-
Self-Advocate/ Family Member	\$25 <i>per person</i>	Access to RAAC website, listserv, monthly updates	50% off: Networking, Trainings, and 1-Day Conference	-	-
Professional	\$250 <i>per person</i>	Access to RAAC website, listserv, monthly updates	Included	-	-
Partner	\$1,000	Full access for 4 employees	Included for 4 employees	Logo/link on RAAC website, and 1 Social Media Spotlight per year	-
Collaborator	\$2,500	Full access for 10 employees	Included for 10 employees	Logo/link on RAAC website, and 2 Social Media Spotlight per year	-
Visionary	\$5,000	Full access for 20 employees	Included for 20 employees	Logo/link on RAAC website, 4 Social Media Spotlights per year, and share job postings and events via RAAC	Bi-annual 1:1 meeting with RAAC Director
Champion	\$7,500	Full access for 30 employees	Included for 30 employees	Logo/link on RAAC website, 6 Social Media Spotlights per year, and share job postings and events via RAAC	Bi-annual 1:1 meeting with RAAC Director
Innovator	\$10,000	Full access for 30 employees	Included for 30 employees	Logo/link on RAAC website, 12 Social Media Spotlights per year, and share job postings and events via RAAC	Bi-annual 1:1 with RAAC Director, ½-Day Training, 10 hrs consultation, 10 hrs facilitation

To become a RAAC member, please email [RAAC\\_cincy@uc.edu](mailto:RAAC_cincy@uc.edu)  
Annual memberships will run from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.