



NEWSLETTER NO. 8

ELLEVATE LOUISIANA



ELLEVATE LOUISIANA WAS FOUNDED IN 2020 TO EMPOWER WOMEN LEADERS THROUGHOUT LOUISIANA BY CONNECTING AND EDUCATING THEM ON THE CHALLENGES IMPACTING OUR STATE WITH DATA-DRIVEN, NON-PARTISAN SOLUTIONS TO MAKE A BETTER FUTURE FOR LOUISIANA.

POWER Up:

Women's Leadership Conference 2024

Ellevate Louisiana was again a sponsor at the annual POWER Up conference in New Orleans this year, and according to the feedback, hosted one of the best breakout sessions of the conference. IYKYK. I do...I was there! It was insightful, informative, entertaining, and empowering. Julie put together an all-star panel that did not disappoint: **Deb Grant** - President and CEO of Corporate Playbook | Diversity & Inclusion Expert | Leadership Guru; **Tanya Radecker** - PhD, LPC, NCC, RN, Certified EFT Therapist & Author; **Val Grubb** - Keynote Speaker | Executive Coach | Trainer | Author. As you can see, the talent depth was significant, especially when you add Julie as the moderator, and women showed up! It was standing room only at the start and then came the chairs, rows and rows of extra chairs until the entire room was filled and overflowed into the hallway.

So, what brought and kept so many professional women engaged for one hour in a crowded room? The message. The topic was ELLEVATING Your Communication Skills for Success, the speakers were on point, and the take home was valuable. For those of you who weren't in attendance, you missed a powerful discussion. Therefore, I would like to share the highlights with you here and give credit where it is due.





[From left to right: Julie Stokes, Deb Grant, Dr. Tanya Radecker, and Valerie Grubb](#)

Deb Grant introduced us to “The meeting before the meeting,” a concept that I had never heard of before and one that makes total sense. She explained that men frequently have a pre-meeting with important stakeholders to explain positions and get buy-in before the actual meeting, women often don’t. That way, the meeting becomes a formality because the real business has been

taken care of in a smaller, more intimate pre-meeting beforehand. Without doing this, you leave yourself vulnerable to the conditions and outcome on the day of the meeting. Deb also walked us through the difference between a mentor versus a sponsor, and suggested everyone should have a sponsor. Mentors typically offer advice and guidance, helping you navigate your career. Sponsors advocate for you especially by speaking for you when you are not in the room. A mentor is someone you can lean on for career support; a sponsor is someone who helps advance your career.

Dr. Radecker offered her professional expertise on body language, triggers, and knowing your audience. She explained that when communicating with others their body language, such as posture, eye contact, and facial expressions, as well as your own can direct the outcome of the conversation. Body language, or nonverbal communication, accounts for most of the influence in communication, and this is why Dr. Radecker encouraged the practice of self-awareness in knowing your own triggers and body language. However, knowing yourself is not good enough; you must also know your audience. Tailoring a presentation, meeting, negotiation, etc. to your audience will be much more effective if you understand them as well. Finally, Dr. Radecker addressed the issue of conflict resolution and how to approach & de-escalate potential conflicts with co-workers.

Val Grubb explained imposter syndrome and the crippling effects of constantly questioning whether you are good enough. Imposter syndrome is the inability to believe that one’s success is deserved or has been legitimately achieved through one’s own efforts or skills. She stressed that this state of mind gives rise to irrational thoughts of inadequacy despite professional accolades and achievements and can be one cause of the confidence gap. Men are traditionally more likely to overestimate abilities and performance and women are more likely to underestimate both, giving rise to what some have deemed the confidence gap between men and women. However, Val made it clear that imposter syndrome is not gender specific and can inhibit female to female interactions as well.

My takeaway: When women question their worth it affects their self-confidence and lack of self-confidence shows in your words and actions thereby sabotaging your meetings and sponsorship opportunities. If we as women turn that around, we can better compete and cooperate with other women and men in the workforce. **What’s yours?** (To take the first step in quieting self-doubt and reclaiming your confidence, see Rayne Martin’s article later in this newsletter!)

By: Yvonne Krumins, *Ellevate Louisiana Policy Coordinator*

Healthcare Legislative Outcomes: SB190 & the failures of Maternal Child Health Legislation

Medicaid, the joint state-federal program that covers 1,781,169 Louisianans—approximately 40% of the state's 4.5 million residents [1]—may receive additional funding in FY 2026 to reimburse physicians at 100% of Medicare rates. However, this initiative is still in its early stages. The bill from Sen. Beaudreaux (D-24), known as SB190, was signed into law by Gov. Landry as Act No. 306 on May 28, 2024. Act 306 requires that the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) “develop a plan to increase all Medicaid reimbursement rates (MCO & FFS) to physicians at 100% of Medicare rates.” LDH must submit this plan to both Health & Welfare committees, Senate Finance, and House Appropriations by November 1, 2024. However, submission does not guarantee that the funding will be appropriated. The legislature must then decide during the subsequent fiscal session whether to fully fund the proposed increases. Given the legislature’s conservative super-majority, significant investment in advocacy and lobbying may be necessary for this funding to be appropriated.

CONTINUING CHALLENGES

Medicaid



Access to Care

One persistent issue among the Medicaid population is the lack of access to care; having coverage does not necessarily guarantee access to adequate services. One national study found that office-based physicians were thirty-five percent less likely to accept new patients covered by Medicaid than those covered by private insurance [2]. However, KFF reports that in Louisiana, less than 60% of physicians in the state are accepting new Medicaid patients, one of the lowest rates in

the country. [3] Furthermore, stark differences in reimbursement rates between Medicaid, Medicare, and private insurers likely drive the disparities in access to care. On average, Louisiana Medicaid reimburses providers 20-30% less than Medicare, [4] and this discrepancy is even greater when comparing Medicaid to private plans. Overall, low Medicaid reimbursement rates hinder Medicaid patients’ access to care and increase wait times across the patient population. [5]

The Maternal Child Health (MCH) Crisis

Low Medicaid reimbursement rates contribute significantly to poor maternal and child health outcomes in Louisiana as they limit access to quality care and resources. In recent years, infant and neonatal mortality has decreased across the United States; however, in Louisiana, it has increased. [6] Black mothers and infants experience poor health outcomes such as pre-term birth and mortality at significantly higher rates than their non-black counterparts. [7] Many non-governmental organizations have urged lawmakers to engage in a concerted effort to improve maternal child health outcomes in the state, but this legislative session was far from successful. The majority of births in the state—approximately 62%—are covered by Medicaid [8] and could greatly benefit from increased reimbursement rates and expanded coverage. Despite legislative findings in support of funding several MCH initiatives, no MCH legislation with a fiscal note passed.

Two such similarly positioned bills introduced in the 2024 Regular Session, HB702 by Rep. Willard and SB142 by Sen. Barrow, serve as examples. Both bills would have mandated that Medicaid cover doula services before, during, and after childbirth with a minimum service rate per pregnancy of \$1,250. Doulas provide physical, emotional, and educational support to birthing mothers and their families. The bills' text notes that national leaders in healthcare (e.g., American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, the CDC, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) recognize the "well-established benefits of doula services." Research demonstrates that the care of a doula supports lower C-section rates, fewer obstetric interventions, fewer complications during and after childbirth, shorter labor, and higher scores on the APGAR test which indicate better infant health outside the womb. Medicaid's initial investment would not only save lives, but also prevent additional health expenditures related to pregnancy and birth complications. SB142, which made it out of the Senate, had a fiscal note indicating that the plan would require ~\$385,965 annually from the State General Fund – a relatively small price to pay to possibly prevent morbidity and mortality among vulnerable mothers and children. Ultimately, SB142 was stalled in House Health and Welfare and HB702 was stalled in House Appropriations – a disappointing outcome for a relatively low-cost plan with potential for lasting impacts on the health and well-being of families across the state.

WORKING TO ENSURE THAT NO MONEY IS LEFT BEHIND

It is also important to consider that the federal government plays a considerable role in funding our Medicaid program. The Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) is the percentage of Medicaid costs that the federal government covers per Medicaid dollar spent. Based on this FMAP, a multiplier indicates how many federal dollars match each state dollar. The FMAP is determined by a state's average per capita income relative to the national average, ensuring that lower-income states receive more federal funding to promote equity. The federal government already contributes at least \$1 in matching funds for every \$1 a state spends on Medicaid [9] and considering Louisiana's relatively low per capita income, the state's FMAP and multipliers for FY2025 are 65.06% and 2.13, respectively. This means that for every state dollar spent on Medicaid, the federal government pays \$2.13 additional dollars. [10] Therefore, failing to increase Medicaid reimbursement to providers means leaving significant amounts of federal funding on the table. After all, the federal government funds more than half of our Medicaid program, and increasing reimbursement rates would enhance access to care, improve health outcomes, and ensure that our residents lead healthier, more productive lives.

Ultimately, Ellevate will continue to advocate for both increased Medicaid reimbursement rates and fully funded initiatives to improve maternal child health across the state.

By: Amanda Toole, *Ellevate Louisiana Staff*

[1] Louisiana Department of Health. (2024, April). Enrollment Trends 202403. La Dept. of Health. Retrieved May 2, 2024, from https://ldh.la.gov/assets/medicaid/MedicaidEnrollmentReports/EnrollmentTrends/EnrollmentTrends_202403.pdf

[2] Decker S. L. (2012). In 2011 nearly one-third of physicians said they would not accept new Medicaid patients, but rising fees may help. Health affairs (Project Hope), 31(8), 1673–1679. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2012.0294>

[3] Medicaid's Role in Louisiana. (2017, July 21). KFF. Retrieved June 28, 2024, from <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/fact-sheet/medicaids-role-in-louisiana/>

[4] Medicaid-to-Medicare Fee Index. (n.d.). KFF. Retrieved June 28, 2024, from <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/state-indicator/medicaid-to-medicare-fee-index/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colld%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>

[5] Pelzl, C. E. (2023, May 22). Medicaid Reimbursement Is Not Keeping Pace With Medicare. American College of Radiology. Retrieved June 28, 2024, from <https://www.acr.org/Practice-Management-Quality-Informatics/ACR-Bulletin/Articles/June-2023/Medicaid-Reimbursement-Is-Not-Keeping-Pace-With-Medicare>

[6] 2023 Health of Women and Children Report. (2023, October 10). America's Health Rankings. Retrieved June 28, 2024, from https://assets.americashealthrankings.org/app/uploads/ahr_2023hwc_comprehensivereport_final_web.pdf

[7] 2023 March Of Dimes Report Card For Louisiana. (n.d.). March of Dimes. Retrieved June 28, 2024, from <https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/reports/louisiana/report-card>

[8] Medicaid coverage of births: Louisiana, 2017–2022. (n.d.). March of Dimes. Retrieved June 28, 2024, from <https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/data?reg=99&top=11&stop=154&slev=4&obj=1&sreg=22>

[9] Policy Basics: Introduction to Medicaid. (2020, April 14). Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Retrieved June 28, 2024, from <https://www.cbpp.org/research/policy-basics-introduction-to-medicaid>

[10] Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for Medicaid and Multiplier. (n.d.). KFF. Retrieved June 28, 2024, from <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/state-indicator/federal-matching-rate-and-multiplier/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colld%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>

The Self-Doubt Trap: Unleashing Women's Leadership Potential

To the remarkable women leaders out there: I see you. Day in and day out, you achieve, nurture, and empower. You relentlessly push boundaries while supporting those around you. Yet, amidst these triumphs, there's a tendency not to pause and celebrate your successes. Instead, you're already eyeing the next milestone, driven by a relentless inner voice that whispers you're not doing enough, or worse, that you're not enough.

Let's address this. It's crucial to recognize that self-doubt is common among even the most successful leaders. Understanding that self-doubt can be managed and mastered is the first step in quieting those voices in your head that tell you that you aren't doing a good job, aren't enough, can't lead, and other false and limiting stories they try to convince you of.

So, what is the most effective way to take the power away from that internal nagging critic? It all starts with Claiming Yourself—leveraging your talents and strengths to their fullest potential. The more you see, embrace, and love yourself, the less you will hear and believe the internal negative voice that tries to control us all.

So how is that done? Here are the steps with an example:

- 1. Recognize Your Strengths:** The first step involves identifying what you are good at. This often starts with assessments or reflections to pinpoint your unique talents and capabilities.

Sarah, a department head at a healthcare organization, often felt insecure about her leadership abilities. She took the VIA Institute on Character Strengths assessment and

discovered her top strengths were teamwork, empathy, and strategic thinking. Realizing these strengths, Sarah acknowledged how her ability to connect with her team and think strategically had been crucial to navigating past challenges.



- 2. Internalize Your Strengths:** After recognizing your strengths, it's important to fully accept and integrate these into your self-perception and leadership identity. This means believing in your abilities and seeing them as integral parts of your leadership style.



After recognizing her strengths, Sarah began internalizing them by reflecting on past leadership successes. She started a "leadership reflections" journal, noting instances when her empathy helped resolve conflicts or her strategic thinking led to successful project outcomes. By regularly reviewing these entries, Sarah saw these strengths as core to her leadership identity.

3. Leverage Your Strengths: Use your strengths strategically to overcome challenges and achieve goals. This involves applying your unique skills in practical scenarios to enhance your effectiveness and influence.

With a stronger belief in her strengths, Sarah started to leverage her empathy and strategic thinking more deliberately in her leadership role. She initiated regular one-on-one meetings with team members to understand their concerns and aspirations, which helped build trust and morale. Additionally, she used her strategic thinking to create a long-term vision for her department, aligning team goals with the organization's objectives.



4. Manage Your Strengths Effectively: Ensure you're using your strengths appropriately and not overextending them, which can lead to imbalance or burnout. Managing your strengths involves understanding how to maintain a healthy dynamic where your skills are used effectively without overshadowing other important areas.

Sarah recognized that while her empathy was a strength, it could also lead to emotional exhaustion if not managed properly. She implemented a strategy to ensure balance: setting aside specific times for deep listening and problem-solving while taking time for self-care and reflection. She also encouraged her team to develop their problem-solving skills, ensuring they could handle some issues independently, which helped maintain a healthy team dynamic.

WHERE TO START:

Recognize Your Strengths by taking this free VIA Institute on Character Strengths assessment [linked here](#). Afterward, I recommend scheduling a call with a leadership coach to discuss your results and explore how to quiet the negative voices in your head by living from your strengths daily.

You can lead confidently, focusing on your strengths rather than being held back by self-doubt. You are amazing. Now, it is a matter of recognizing and celebrating your strengths so that you can feel fabulous as you lead in a way that continues to make a difference in the world.



RAYNE MARTIN, IT'S THE IMPACT

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

LEGISGATOR LUNCHEON 2024



Friday, August 16, 2024

11:30AM - 1:30PM



**L'Auberge Casino Resort
Lake Charles**

777 Avenue L'Auberge
Lake Charles, LA 70601



Join Ellevate Louisiana as we attend the Chamber SWLA's 19th LegisGator Luncheon. The event will showcase the Southwest Louisiana region to our Federal, State and Local elected officials.

Ellevate Dinner at Vic & Anthony's the night before. Contact Mallory Kiefer (contact info below) for details!

**SCAN HERE TO
REGISTER!**



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ELLEVATE
LOUISIANA

POLICY SUMMIT

September 26, 2024



8:00AM - 4:30AM



City Club of Baton Rouge

IN PERSON | MEMBERS ONLY

ANNUAL MEETING | FIVE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETINGS | LUNCH

*** STAY TUNED FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE EVENT ***

TENTATIVE AGENDA

8:00AM - 8:30AM	REGISTRATION	12:00PM - 1:30PM	LUNCH & ANNUAL MEETING
8:30AM - 9:30AM	1ST COMMITTEE MEETING	1:30PM - 1:45PM	15-MIN. NETWORKING BREAK
9:30AM - 9:45AM	15-MIN. NETWORKING BREAK	1:45PM - 2:45PM	4TH COMMITTEE MEETING
9:45AM - 10:45AM	2ND COMMITTEE MEETING	2:45PM - 3:00PM	15-MIN. NETWORKING BREAK
10:45AM - 11:00AM	15-MIN. NETWORKING BREAK	3:00PM - 4:00PM	5TH COMMITTEE MEETING
11:00AM - 12:00PM	3RD COMMITTEE MEETING	4:00PM - 4:30PM	ADJOURNMENT

SCAN HERE TO REGISTER!



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