

**Jim Comstock-Galagan** has served the past thirteen years as the Executive Director\Senior Attorney of the Southern Disability Law Center (SDLC) located in New Orleans, LA, with a second office in Austin, TX. Founded in 2001, SDLC is a 510 (c) (3) non-profit legal services organization dedicated to protecting and advancing the legal rights of people with disabilities throughout the South. It partners with the Southern Poverty Law Center, Protection and Advocacy (P&A) programs, Legal Services Corporations (LSC) and disability organizations on major, systemic disability rights issues involving the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the federal Medicaid Act. Recently on July 15, 2014, Jim retired.

Before founding SDLC, Jim was the Executive Director of Advocacy, Inc. (AI), the Texas P&A, where he worked for 12 years. During that period, he managed the growth of the Texas P&A program from an office of 34 staff to a staff of 93, and from a centralized operation with one office to a regionalized operation with eleven offices spread across Texas.

From 1981-1989, Jim worked for the Advocacy Center for the Elderly and Disabled in New Orleans (Louisiana P&A) as its Legal Director. From 1979 to 1981 Jim worked as a staff attorney for the Louisiana Center for the Public Interest.

Jim graduated from Tulane University School of Law in 1977, and has a BA in Accounting & Economics from the University of Puget Sound.

Jim is the author of publications and training materials on the IDEA, the ADA, and Section 504, including: Stopping the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Pipeline by Enforcing Federal Special Education Law (2006), co-authored with Rhonda Brownstein from the Southern Poverty Law Center. He has served as lead or co-counsel in several IDEA class action lawsuits in Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas on behalf of thousands of students with disabilities, and in five systemic IDEA Administrative Complaints filed under the IDEA in Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas and Florida. Jim has also made numerous presentations at both regional and national conferences on IDEA and ADA issues.