



PROJECT BRIDGE

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER FOR DISABILITIES STUDIES

AUGUST 2011

The August 2011 issue of Project Bridge includes project updates from the past few months and events that will take place this summer. Please send news and events for the September issue to mercooke@udel.edu by **August 15**.

PROJECT UPDATES

- CDS extends a warm welcome to **Brian Freedman**, who became the director of the Transition, Education and Employment Model (TEEM) unit at the end of June. Brian received a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Nova Southeastern University and completed a postdoctoral residency in Applied Behavior Analysis and Developmental Disabilities. He has worked with individuals with developmental disabilities for 15 years and most recently served as the Clinical Director for the Center for Autism and Related Disorders at Kennedy Krieger Institute in Baltimore. Brian has developed innovative community collaborations between clinical, educational and community organizations. He has also conducted research on the effectiveness of clinical and school-based interventions, as well as stress and coping among parents and families who have a child with an autism spectrum disorder. Brian will direct all TEEM programs and serve as program director for the Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities into Higher Education (TPSID) grant, which is funding the newly-established Career & Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program at the University of Delaware. Contact Brian at brianf@udel.edu or 302-831-4688.
- **Brian Freedman** gave a presentation at the Autism Society of America National Conference in July titled, "From Research to Real Life: Autism, Divorce, and Married Life." He co-presented with renowned author and speaker, Dr. Robert Naseef, on his research on marriage and divorce rates among families of children with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and strategies for helping parents navigate the challenges of maintaining a strong marital relationship while raising a child with an ASD.

- **Erin Konrad** recently became a full-time member of the School-age unit after working part-time for the Center for the past four years, beginning as a UD undergraduate student. She earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from the Alfred Lerner College of Business and Economics in January 2011. Erin has made valuable contributions to CDS' work on the Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Centers and Supplemental Education Services programs. In her current position, she is providing support for the unit's databases, data analysis, report development and other functions.

- The University's College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) has restructured all financial and human resources functions into a single centralized Financial Services Unit (FSU), located on the main campus. Two CDS staff members, **Debbie Koch** and **Susan Sullivan**, are now part of FSU and are supporting a number of CEHD units. They have been instrumental in managing the grant application and post-award processes at the Center and will continue to work closely with Center staff to provide support for these and other financial functions.

- TPSID/CLSC News
 - Project staff members affiliated with the **Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities into Higher Education (TPSID)** model demonstration grant attended the first annual national project directors' meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota. **Linda Grusenmeyer**, evaluation/research coordinator, **Max Kursh**, job developer, and **Laura Eisenman**, principal investigator, presented a poster about Delaware's initiative at a session with other model demonstration projects from around the U.S. They also attended workshops on topics such as using coaches to facilitate campus integration and federal financial aid for participating students. The photo below features Linda and Max with their poster.



- Students enrolled in the **Career and Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program** took their first steps in the certificate program in June by meeting individually with CLSC staff members. The students participated in assessments and the PATH planning process, in which TEEM unit members support the students as they create personal profiles, identify learning styles and set

goals for what they'd like to achieve through CLSC. The summer portion of the program in August will include an orientation to the UD campus, guest speakers and selection of fall courses.

- The TEEM unit has launched **Project FOCUS**, a customized summer program offered by CDS in partnership with the Delaware Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI). Four students, ages 16–20, are currently enrolled in the program. CDS staff member **Debbie Bain** is working with the students to identify possible externship opportunities, and each student will engage in four separate externships during the course of Project FOCUS. In the fall, the students will meet with representatives from DVI, their families and any other individuals they identify as members of their support network. The group that meets for each student will discuss the externship experiences and identify the next steps in acquiring resources and experiences for the student. For more information about FOCUS, please contact Debbie Bain at 302-831-8733 or dbain@udel.edu.
- Congratulations to **Ashley Curran** and **Megan Pell**, co-coordinators of the Junior Partners in Policymaking (JPIP) program, on the success of the 2011 session. An [article about JPIP](#) was featured in *UDaily*. The session was held from June 19–24; it culminated with a trip to Legislative Hall in Dover where participants had the opportunity to meet with legislators and practice the advocacy skills learned throughout the program. Megan is a doctoral candidate in the College of Education and Human Development; Ashley recently graduated from UD; and both have worked on various projects at CDS. The photo shows JPIP participants and staff on the steps of Legislative Hall.



- Three UD students in the Disabilities Studies Minor program were honored by Autism Delaware as recipients of the 2011-12 Gray Memorial Scholarship award. **Jenna M. MacKenzie**, **Allyson M. Szecsi** and **Anne M. Yuskevich** each received a \$1,000 scholarship for the 2011-12 academic year. Autism Delaware awards this scholarship to support students who have expressed the desire and demonstrated dedication to becoming professionals in the autism field. These students were

featured in an [article](#) in *UDaily* about the scholarship, which was also awarded to a fourth UD student.

- **Awareness and Action** held three trainings in the month of June for people with disabilities and staff from various agencies that support people with disabilities. The program is currently seeking more agencies to host on-site trainings. Awareness and Action teaches people with disabilities to identify cases of abuse and gives them the tools they need to report abuse and protect themselves from victimization. The training also helps those serving in a support role to understand the importance of timely and effective response while providing strategies to support individuals with disabilities to recognize and respond to abuse. For more information, or if your agency is interested in hosting a training, please contact Debbie Bain at 302-831-8733 or dbain@udel.edu.
- CDS continues its series of workshops on disability-related topics on **August 17** with a presentation by William Love, director of the **Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities** (DSAAPD), and DSAAPD staff members. The presenters will provide an overview of the efforts of DSAAPD and the Department of Health and Social Services that focus on building access to community-based long-term care services. DSAAPD is the state agency that provides a broad range of programs and services on behalf of older persons and adults with physical disabilities. To register for this program, contact Michele Sands at msands@udel.edu or 302-831-3038. Attendees are welcome to bring a lunch. Water and snacks will be provided.
- The **Community Connectors**—a group of young adults with disabilities who learn leadership skills through social, fundraising and service events—are in the process of planning their fall fundraising and social activities. If you are interested in becoming a member of Community Connectors or would like to volunteer at an event, please contact Debbie Bain at 302-831-8733 or dbain@udel.edu to explore the possibility of attending the group’s next leadership meeting.

HIGHLIGHTED PROJECT OF THE MONTH

CDS Coordinates Families’ Evaluations of Child Development Watch Services

- The Center for Disabilities Studies conducts an annual survey to assess the satisfaction of families who are served by Child Development Watch (CDW), the statewide early intervention program for children ages birth to 3. The mission of CDW is to enhance the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities or developmental delays and to enhance the capacity of families to meet the needs of their young children. CDW accomplishes its mission through screening, assessment, early intervention and a variety of other services.

The CDW family evaluation survey is composed primarily of multiple choice questions that focus on how the CDW intervention services are working for individual families. Parents are asked if they see differences in their child or family as a result of participating in CDW, or if there are still

intervention needs in the family that have not been met. Additionally, families respond to questions about the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) planning process and their satisfaction with transition planning for children who are aging out of CDW.

Families are eligible to participate in the evaluation survey if they have received CDW services for at least six months. This year, the 570 families who met the criteria for the evaluation survey were divided into eight groups to represent various race or ethnic groups in northern and southern Delaware. CDW aims to have 30 percent of eligible families in each group take the survey so the results can be considered sufficiently representative of all CDW families. Families are invited to participate in the survey in a letter sent to their homes; they can take the survey online or answer questions over the phone.

According to Jim Salt, CDS policy scientist and evaluation coordinator for the CDW evaluation project, the Center has encouraged CDW to raise awareness about the survey, its findings and CDW's response to needs that the survey identifies. By increasing engagement in the evaluation process, CDW will "move toward a climate of quality improvement," Jim said. He has created a feedback report for CDW that communicates in concise bullet points the purpose of the survey, the information gained from it and what is being done now to address needs identified through the survey. In short, it provides CDW with a tool to help families understand the important role they play in shaping early intervention services in Delaware and helping CDW adapt to the changing needs of families.

CDS has several current and former students from the University of Delaware involved in the phone surveys. Each CDW family evaluation survey caller was selected from a pool of highly-qualified applicants with backgrounds in research, interviewing or strong customer service skills. These callers make approximately five attempts, in both day and evening hours, to administer the survey to eligible CDW families. In the first three weeks of calling, 145 surveys were completed—a record number for this short period of time.

For more information about Child Development Watch or the evaluation survey report, please contact Jim Salt at idsalt@udel.edu or 302-831-6735.

RESOURCES

- The City of Wilmington ACCESS Committee will hold an award program and reception to honor individuals, organizations and/or programs that open the doors of ACCESS to people with disabilities in the greater Wilmington area. The Committee is currently seeking nominations for the 2011 event, which will be held October 27. Please complete the [nomination form](#) and submit by September 2 following the directions on the form.

- The Delaware Department of Health and Social Services is holding a series of public forums over the next several months as Delaware begins to plan for the establishment of a **Health Benefits Exchange**, as established in 2010 by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. The public forums will allow state officials to hear from Delawareans about what's most important to include and how best to structure a Health Benefits Exchange to meet the needs of Delaware residents and businesses. Contact Alicia Holmes at aholmes@pcgus.com or 617-717-1423 for information about future public forums.
- The Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance (DMMA), in partnership with the Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities (DSAAPD), is developing an Integrated Long-Term Care initiative named the **Diamond State Health Plan – Plus (DSHP-Plus)**. According to information on the [DMMA website](#), this initiative will provide improved access to community-based long-term care services and increased flexibility to more effectively address individual needs, and to better control rising long-term care costs significantly impacting Medicaid. Delaware joins many states that are implementing new models of delivering long-term care services. DMMA and DSAAPD are holding a series of public information forums to discuss, ask questions and provide comments on DSHP-Plus ([see schedule](#)). The waiver amendment for DSHP-Plus that DMMA intends to submit is in the [July 2011 Register of Regulations](#). Comments are being accepted until August 15, 2011, not July 31 as indicated in the proposal. This waiver amendment integrates nursing facility services and home and community-based services into the existing managed care delivery system.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced new steps to reduce premiums and make it easier for Americans to enroll in the **Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plan (PCIP)** in Delaware. PCIP is a new program created by the Affordable Care Act to help uninsured people with a pre-existing condition get high quality care at affordable prices. It serves as a bridge to 2014 when insurers will no longer be allowed to deny coverage to people with any pre-existing condition, like cancer, diabetes and asthma. As of July 1, premium prices in Delaware for PCIP were reduced by 40%. For more information, including eligibility, plan benefits and rates, and how to apply, go [online](#) and click on “Find Your State” or call toll-free 1-866-717-5826.
- The **National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange (NCDE)** publishes an online journal called **A World Awaits You (AWAY)** filled with firsthand accounts by people with disabilities who participate in international exchange programs. The free online journal also includes interviews with people with disabilities who have participated in a wide range of international exchange programs. It features advice from exchange providers, parents and disability services staff on how they have assisted exchange participants with disabilities in going abroad. Each issue contains useful resources and tips on people with disabilities participating in international exchange programs. The June 2011 issue of AWAY focuses on English language learners with disabilities. The current and previous issues are available for [download](#) from the website.

EVENTS

Visit the CDS website calendar at http://www.udel.edu/cds/index_calendar.html for more events.

- **August 5, 12, 19, 26. “The YOU in Unity” Summer Art Sessions**, 10 a.m.–1 p.m., Kaleidoscope Studio, 310 Kiamensi Road, Wilmington. Lisa Bartoli of Art Therapy Express is presenting an inclusive arts program that unites students (age 12 and above) with and without disabilities. Activities include 2D and 3D visual arts, drama, music and creative music. There are four sessions in August; you can register for each session individually [online](#) (Click on “Register online” button and go to page 3 of the registration form). Each session is limited to 12 students. For more information contact Lisa at info@arttherapyexpress.org or 302-584-4068.
- **August 17. CDS Lunchtime Learning**, 12 noon–1 p.m., Center for Disabilities Studies. Attendance at this fifth in a series of workshops dedicated to disability-related topics is open to members of the Community Advisory Council, CDS staff, UD staff and faculty, and members of the community. See “Project Updates” for more information.
- **August 17. Bill signing ceremony for House Bill #91, House Bill #214 and House Bill #123.** Governor Markell and bill sponsors will be present to sign these important bills into law at 10 a.m. at the Can Do Playground in Wilmington. Details on the bills are provided in the “Advocacy Corner” section of Project Bridge.
- **September 15. Direct Support Professionals Day**, Delaware Technical & Community College, Stanton Campus, 11 a.m.–2 p.m. This second annual event will highlight the valued role Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) play in supporting people with disabilities and honor three Delaware DSPs for their outstanding service. Nominations for outstanding DSPs will be accepted through August 19. Contact Karen Reiss at KReiss@bnh.org for a nomination form. See the [DelARF website](#) for more information about the event.
- **September 16. “Racing to the Top Against Media Messages: How They are Hindering the Next Generation,”** Dover, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. This free conference for teachers, school administrators, parents, youth service providers and community advocates is presented by the Delaware’s Victim’s Rights Task Force and the Domestic Violence Task Force’s Prevention Subcommittee. This conference will feature keynote speaker Mark Tappan, Ed.D., Professor and Director of Education and Human Development at Colby College. Please visit the [website](#) for more information about the Prevention Subcommittee or the conference.
- **September 17. Special Olympics Delaware Families Day at the Beach**, Cape Henlopen State Park Fishing Pier, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Activities for Special Olympics athletes and their family members include the Hoss Cochran Memorial Fishing Tournament, barbeque and ferry ride. Please download the [event flyer](#) for more information or to register.

- **September 21-22. 18th Annual Mid-Atlantic ADA Update**, Baltimore. Representatives from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Department of Justice, Federal Transportation Administration and United States Access Board will conduct presentations on accessibility, employment and other general Americans with Disabilities Act topics. For more information and to register, please visit the [website](#) or call 1-800-949-4232.
- **September 23-24. World Congress on Disabilities**, Atlantic City, NJ. The World Congress on Disabilities (WCD) is celebrating its 12th year as a defining event in the disability and special needs community. The WCD offers exhibits on products and services designed to help those with disabilities. World leaders in medicine, education, research, technology, adaptive physical sports and recreation, and product development gather along with scientists, researchers, physicians, caregivers and families for an intensive learning experience focused on the needs of all people with disabilities. The conference program and registration are available on the [WCD website](#).
- **September 24. Artfest**, New Castle County Absalom Jones Community Center, 310 Kiamensi Road, Newport, 10 a.m.–12 noon. This art workshop is held for young adults and adults with disabilities to create artwork for the 2010-2011 CDS annual report. Lisa Bartoli of Art Therapy Express, Inc. will lead participants in art projects that will be part of the design of the annual report. Please contact Michele Sands at msands@udel.edu or 302-831-3038 for more information.
- **October 5-7. 2011 Southwest Conference on Disability**, Albuquerque Convention Center, Albuquerque, NM. In addition to three keynote speakers and more than 80 breakout sessions, highlights of the 2011 conference include pre-conference workshops, special emphasis themes on technology and inclusion, and the Disability and the Arts program, including the Third Annual Disability Film Festival, Artisans Showcase and Artists in Residence program. Early registration rates are available [online](#) until September 6.
- **Save the Date: October 22. Special Olympics Delaware Fall Festival**, University of Delaware Field House. This annual event features competitions in bocce, flag football, soccer and volleyball for athletes, as well as non-sports activities such as hands-on lessons in winter skin protection and germ prevention, lunch and educational activities. More information about this and other events can be found on the Special Olympics Delaware [website](#).

ADVOCACY CORNER

This section is dedicated to informing you about new or pending policies that relate to individuals with disabilities. If you would like to suggest information to share in upcoming editions of Project Bridge, contact mercooke@udel.edu.

- Delaware’s disability community had many achievements during the first half of the 146th General Assembly. Many legislative initiatives were very successful and will have positive long-term results for people with disabilities, their families and the professionals that support the community. This

effort would not have been possible without the community working together with the legislative body. Bills that will play a major role are listed below.

- **House Bill #91.** This **People First Language (PFL)** bill requires all new state laws and publications, from the effective date of the enactment of this bill into law, to avoid language that is disrespectful and/or offensive to individuals with disabilities. A violation of this bill is not grounds to invalidate any new state law or publication. This bill does not apply to terms that are required by federal law or regulation or state statute.
- **House Bill #214 with House Amendment 1 and Senate Amendment 1.** In compliance with **PFL** guidelines, this act amends current references to persons with disabilities throughout state law by placing the person first and the disability second. Also pursuant to PFL, this act removes offensive and/or insensitive language from state law and replaces that language with respectful language. For example, the act replaces antiquated and offensive terms such as “mental retardation” and “mental illness” with the more appropriate terms “intellectual disability” and “mental condition,” respectively.
- **House Bill #123 with House Amendment 1.** This bill designates the month of October as “Disability History and Awareness Month.”
- **House Bill #76.** This act assures **prosthetic parity** for Delaware citizens who have experienced limb loss. It requires all individual and group health insurance policies to provide orthotic and prosthetic devices at a reimbursement rate equal to the Federal reimbursement rate for people who are aged or have disabilities.
- **House Bill #141.** This bill amends the State Council for Persons with Disabilities’ enabling statute to confirm its status as the state’s **primary brain injury council**, clarifies the role and membership of its brain injury committee, and enhances prospects for acquiring competitive grant funds.
- **Senate Concurrent Resolution #25.** This concurrent resolution encourages Delaware’s public post-secondary education institutions to continue efforts to improve and broaden **disability services**.
- **House Bill #202.** This bill makes it an offense to use an accessible license plate or parking placard issued to another person, unless that person is also in the vehicle. The bill aims to curb the use of **accessible parking spaces** by persons who do not actually need them. Under the state law, a person who violates this provision will “receive a mandatory fine of \$100 for a first offense, and for a subsequent like offense, a mandatory fine of \$200 or a term of imprisonment of not less than 10 or more than 30 days, or both.”

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Jamie Wolfe at jlw@udel.edu. To find further information about the bills listed above and other state legislation, visit the [Bill Tracking](#) page on the state of Delaware website.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

The next issue of Project Bridge will appear in September. If you want to share information about your project or professional activities or announce events that will occur in September or October, please contact Meredith Cooke at mercooke@udel.edu by **August 15**.

CONTACT US

The University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies is located at 461 Wyoming Road, Newark, Delaware, 19716. Please call us at 302-831-6974 or 302-831-4689 (TDD) or visit our website at www.udel.edu/cds.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The University of Delaware does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation in its programs and activities as required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable statutes and University policies. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and related statutes and regulations: Tom Webb, Director, Office of Disabilities Support Services, 240 Academy Street, Alison Hall Suite 119, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716, 302-831-4643. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies and to serve as the overall campus coordinator for purposes of Title IX compliance: Bindu Kolli, Chief Policy Advisor, Office of Equity and Inclusion, 305 Hullihen Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716, 302-831-8063. The following individuals have been designated as deputy Title IX coordinators: for Athletics, Jennifer W. Davis, Vice President for Finance and Administration, 220 Hullihen Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716, 302-831-2769; and for Student Life, Dawn Thompson, Dean of Students/AVP for Student Life, 101 Hullihen Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716, 302-831-8939. Inquiries concerning the application of anti-discrimination laws may be referred to the Title IX coordinator or to the Office for Civil Rights, United States Department of Education. For further information on notice of nondiscrimination, visit <http://wdcrobc01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm> for the address

and phone number of the U.S. Department of Education office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.