



PROJECT BRIDGE

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER FOR DISABILITIES STUDIES

JANUARY 2012

The January 2012 issue of Project Bridge includes project updates from recent months and events that will take place in the next few months. The next issue will be in February. Please send news and events for this issue to mercooke@udel.edu by **January 13**.

PROJECT UPDATES

- **Leslie Cooksy**, associate professor in the School of Education and Delaware Education Research and Development Center, and **Laura Eisenman**, CDS staff member and associate professor in the School of Education, were awarded a grant to evaluate the 2011 portfolio of Research in Disabilities Education (RDE) research projects for the National Science Foundation. Leslie is the principal investigator for this grant. The RDE program funds research intended to help people with disabilities pursue and succeed in STEM education and careers.
- **CDS Disabilities Specialist Jamie Wolfe** has been appointed as Chair of the Legislative Committee of the State Human Relations Commission. The goal of the commission is to assure minorities within Delaware freedom from discrimination and equal access to the community of their choice. In addition, the Human Relations Commission is responsible for enforcing the Fair Housing Act. The Legislative Committee reviews state legislation related to equal access and suggests legislation that will facilitate the commission's goal. Committee members represent the commission at legislative events.
- **Julie Bowers** has joined the School Age unit as the new project leader for ACCESS (Adapting Curriculum and Classroom Environments for Student Success). The ACCESS project is a statewide initiative funded by the Delaware Department of Education focusing on access to both the academic curriculum and inclusive environments for students with significant intellectual disabilities. Julie has a master's degree in special education and more than 20 years' experience in education. Prior to joining CDS, she worked in the Appoquinimink School District as the transition coordinator and previously worked in the district as an educational diagnostician.

- **Alisha Boyd** is the newest member of the Health and Wellness unit, serving as the Center’s coordinator for the domestic violence grant that is a partnership with the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence and National Alliance on Mental Illness. The grant addresses violence against women with disabilities and mental illness. Its goals include: (1) increasing the capacity of disability-related organizations to understand, recognize and respond to women with disabilities who are victims of abuse, particularly women with developmental disabilities and mental health issues; and (2) helping agencies that provide domestic violence services and programs to become accessible and welcoming to all women. Alisha has a background in criminal justice and previous experience working with victims of domestic violence.

- On January 30, the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition (NHMHBC) will host a press conference to honor Delaware as the first place winner in the **text4baby** state enrollment contest. Senator Thomas Carper will be the keynote speaker at the press conference. Other speakers include **Karen Zalewski**, CDS staff member and project coordinator for text4baby; a text4baby user; and representatives from NHMHBC and Christiana Hospital. At the event, NHMHBC will launch its public service announcements for television about early detection, developmental screenings and text4baby.

- CDS Director **Beth Mineo** gave a presentation on October 27 at the Crime Victims with Disabilities Conference in Dover. She highlighted the considerations needed when communicating with individuals who have disabilities when investigating crime or working with individuals who have been the victim of crimes.

- The **14th Annual LIFE Conference**, which will be held January 19 at the Sheraton Hotel in Dover, will feature Constance Garner, executive director of Advance CLASS, as the keynote speaker. Advance CLASS is a national advocacy organization dedicated to the implementation of a strong and vital long-term services and supports program for both the aging and disability communities. [Online registration](#) is available, with early registration rates in effect through January 10. CDS staff members will present the following workshops at the conference:
 - “There’s an App for That? The Exciting World of Mobile Devices as Assistive Technology.” **Marvin Williams** and **Dan Fendler**, Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI), will examine the expanding world of mobile devices and how they can be used as assistive technology, as well as discussing the accessibility of these devices.

 - “The Long and Winding Road: Understanding the Process of Getting Assistive Technology.” **Marvin Williams** and **Eileen Mapes**, DATI, along with **Katie Megee**, Easter Seals Delaware and Maryland’s Eastern Shore, and **Adam Samuel**, Avenue Medical, will work with participants to help them learn the process of getting assistive technology. The workshop will feature a panel discussion with clinicians and equipment vendors.

- “Access to Medical Service.” **Annalisa Ekbladh**, project coordinator in the Health and Wellness unit, **Ann Phillips**, Delaware Family Voices Family to Family Health Information Center, and **Gregory McClure**, Dental Director for the Delaware Division of Public Health, will provide information about resources and programs in Delaware that can assist families of children with special health care needs and disabilities in locating and accessing the services they need.
- “Emergency Preparedness.” **Phyllis Guinivan** and **Gary Mears**, Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities, and **Terry Whitham**, State Police Dispatch Centers, will share new collaborative approaches and tools that can be used to address inclusive emergency preparedness and assist people with developmental disabilities and their families in the preparation of customized emergency readiness plans.
- “Taking the Mystery and Myth Out of Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plans.” **Chris Barthold** will provide a brief overview of the rationale for conducting a thorough Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and take a look at best practices for conducting an FBA, including how these results are used for creating behavior intervention plans.
- **Assistive Technology unit updates:**
 - The Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI) is working with the Delaware Department of Education and Delaware Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI) to establish a centralized Accessible Instructional Materials Center to serve students across the state. In order to maintain state compliance with copyright laws, DATI has developed guidance for school districts to help them select their **Digital Rights Managers (DRMs)**. Those designated as DRMs will verify that students are eligible to receive accessible materials by virtue of their documented print disabilities. DATI has also created a tutorial and qualifications test for anyone nominated to serve as a DRM. Approximately eight district DRMs have accessed the materials and passed the qualifying test.
 - **Marvin Williams**, AT specialist with DATI, held a workshop in November about speech recognition for teachers who are writing accessible and inclusive units.
- **Transition, Education and Employment Model (TEEM) unit updates:**
 - The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) recently awarded TEEM a new contract to provide Functional Behavior Assessments and Applied Behavior Analysis services to adults with disabilities. CDS staff member **Chris Barthold**, a board-certified behavior analyst (BCBA), will be leading the delivery of these services. Other members of TEEM’s Employment Services program, overseen by **Wendy Claizer**, will be assisting Chris. Under this contract, they will be collecting data from individuals and families about

each individual's adaptive and maladaptive behavior, analyzing the data, and using it to create and implement a behavior support plan. The support plan will be designed to help an individual decrease challenging behaviors and learn the new behaviors that are necessary for getting a job or sustaining current employment. In total, TEEM Employment Services received contracts for six different services, many of which represent a continuation of services currently being provided. These services are conducted in the context of model demonstration programs through which research can be conducted on the most effective methods for supporting adults with disabilities in successfully attaining and maintaining employment.

- In December, TEEM Unit Director **Brian Freedman** attended the Assessing Special Education Students State Collaboratives on Assessment and Student Standards Summit. The topic was Students with Disabilities and Common Core Standards for College and Career Readiness. Brian was a member of a delegation representing Delaware that included individuals from the Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Developmental Disabilities Services and the Parent Information Center.
- **Brian Freedman** was appointed by College of Education and Human Development Dean **Lynn Okagaki** to serve on the college's strategic planning committee.
- **Wendy Claiser, Max Kursh** and **Josh Donaldson** gave a presentation about the **Career and Life Studies Certificate (CLSC)** program to students, parents and educators at Delcastle High School on December 14. The presentation was designed to give more information for students who are interested in postsecondary education options.
- Applications are now available for the second class of students with intellectual disabilities to be accepted into the **CLSC program**. Visit the [CLSC page on the CDS website](#) to download an application or view "frequently asked questions" for the CLSC program. The application deadline is **January 31**. Please contact Mary Thomas at maryt@udel.edu for more information.
- Students and staff in the CLSC program will be hosting an **open house** on **January 12** for prospective students, families, school staff and community members. The open house will be held from 4 to 8 p.m. at 318 South College Avenue, the CLSC program location on the UD campus.
- The CLSC staff is holding twice-monthly **meetings for family members** of CLSC students. The meetings offer support and strategies to families with a child with an intellectual disability who is transitioning to young adulthood. The family meetings, which began in December, will also provide general information on the CLSC program.

- The **Community Connectors** held their fall “DJ Bash” on November 18 at the Independence Hall West residence hall on the UD campus. Nearly 80 students attended—including members of Community Connectors, CLSC students, members of Sigma Kappa sorority and other students. The Connectors appreciate assistance by Emily Fenn, the residential advisor at Independence West, in arranging the event. The Community Connectors are also conducting their annual membership drive. Please contact Debbie Bain at dbain@udel.edu for more information.



CLSC students Aaron Pretlow Jr. (left), Matt Kuliszewski (right) and Drew Netta (second from right) take a break from dancing at the DJ Bash for a quick photo with UD students.

- **School Age unit updates:**
 - The **Delaware Positive Behavior Support** project held a workshop on November 29 led by Dr. Rose Iovannone, assistant professor at the University of South Florida and director of the Prevent-Teach-Reinforce (PTR) Project. The workshop used the PTR Tier 3 behavior intervention process for conducting Functional Behavior Assessments and developing Behavior Intervention Plans. Participants learned the model for delivering Tier 3 behavior supports to students and how to facilitate the process with teams in the schools.
 - 163 schools have enrolled to participate in the 2012 **Delaware School Climate Survey**. This year’s survey was revised to include questions on bullying and cyber-bullying.
 - The **21st Century Community Learning Centers** project at CDS is holding three professional development sessions for its grantees. Each workshop will be held at CDS from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon. Please contact Teresita Cuevas at tmeija@udel.edu or 302-831-2053 for more information.

- **January 12.** “Collaging Our Stories,” focuses on the concepts of storyboarding and collage for any sequence-based academic skill.
 - **February 8.** “Capture a Moment,” is dedicated to using theater to “capture a moment” of history, discovery, creation or revision and explains various theater games and exercises.
 - **February 27.** “Room to Remix” teaches remixing, its applications in English-language arts, encouraging remixing in the classroom and lesson plans utilizing the concept.
- CDS extends a warm welcome back to **Sarah Hearn** and **Ilka Riddle**, who returned from maternity leave in December.
 - The **CDS 2010-2011 Annual Report** has been published as a calendar for 2012, with artwork created by participants at the 2011 Artfest. If you did not receive an annual report or would like to request additional copies, please contact Michele Sands at msands@udel.edu. The report will also be available for viewing in the publications section of the CDS website, www.udel.edu/cds, and photos of the artwork and artists are available at www.udel.edu/cds/art.

HIGHLIGHTED PROJECT OF THE MONTH

Center Conducts Statewide Needs Assessment on Autism

- The Center for Disabilities Studies is conducting a statewide needs assessment survey for families and individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The needs assessment, which includes a survey and listening sessions, will be used to inform a statewide planning process to improve the system of services to individuals with ASD. CDS received a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration to act as state lead for the statewide planning process.

Parents, guardians and individuals with ASD are encouraged to complete a survey to share their opinions about the quality of the health and education services they receive, as well as the factors that influence their life or the life of their child. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete. Information submitted will be completely anonymous.

Families and individuals are also invited to join one of the listening sessions that will take place around the state in January and February 2012. Dinner and a stipend will be provided to participants.

If you are interested in participating in a listening session in Newark, Middletown, Dover or Georgetown or if you have any questions about the survey, contact Annalisa Ekbladh at 302-831-0626 or annalisa@udel.edu.

The anonymous link for families of school age children with autism (ages 3 to 21) is:

English: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/autism_youth

Spanish: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/autismo_joven

The anonymous link for families of adult children with autism is:

English: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/autism_adult

Spanish: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/autismo_adulto

The anonymous link for adults with autism (who wish to fill out the survey themselves) is:

English only: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/autism_adult-individual

RESOURCES

- The Institute on Disability (IOD) at the University of New Hampshire has launched a **new online person-centered planning tool**. [Look Back, Plan Forward](#) is the new website designed for individuals with disabilities and people who are aging as a place to record and reflect on important life events in a web-based timeline. According to IOD, this online record can prove invaluable for understanding and focusing on the individual's desires and preferences when it is used by family caregivers and service providers as a framework for planning tailored services and supports. All personal information is password-protected, and sharing of personal information is at the sole discretion of the site user. For more information about person-centered planning and how to create an online timeline, [visit the Look Back, Plan Forward website](#).
- The Institute on Disability also published a chart book on the status of health disparities experienced by members of racial and ethnic minority groups and people with disabilities in this country. The ***Health Disparities Chart Book on Disability and Racial and Ethnic Status in the United States*** is available as a [free download](#) in pdf format.
- The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is planning to launch a **toll-free disability hotline** in January so passengers with disabilities can call in advance if they anticipate needing extra assistance during security screening. The TSA currently offers [Tips for the Screening Process](#) on its website as well as other more detailed information on security regulations.
- The Research and Training Center on Independent Living at the University of Kansas has released the seventh edition of its publication, **Guidelines for Reporting and Writing About People with Disabilities**. The brochure has become the gold standard for describing disability issues in a way that does not perpetuate perceptions that can lead to discrimination. Developed with input from more than 100 national disability groups, the guidelines have been adopted by the Associated Press and the American Association for the Advancement of Science and are referenced in the American Psychological Association's Publications Manual 6th Edition. The Guidelines are now [available online](#), along with a poster called "Your Words, Our Image," which lists negative and positive terminology for describing people with disabilities—a quick reference useful for public display or in offices and classrooms.

EVENTS

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

- **January 8. Special Olympics Delaware Empowerment Conference**, Clayton Hall on the UD campus, 10 a.m.–3 p.m. The conference offers interactive sessions for Special Olympics athletes, ages 13 through adult, family members with children of any age, friends and/or caregivers. CDS, Community Connectors and Families Know Best will have tables at the information station. View the [conference brochure](#) and contact Brenda Zullo at 302-740-1045 by Friday afternoon, January 6, to see if registration is still possible. Online registration is closed.

The **Project UNIFY Youth Leadership Conference** for high school students is being held in conjunction with the Empowerment Conference. It empowers students to make a difference by advocating for social change within their schools and communities and helping to foster greater acceptance and inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities. Sponsors are Special Olympics, DFRC, the Down Syndrome Association of Delaware and Best Buddies Delaware.

- **January 12. Open House for the Career and Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program**, 4–8 p.m., 318 South College Avenue, Newark. Reply to maryt@udel.edu.
- **January 19. LIFE Conference XIV**, Sheraton Dover Hotel, 8 a.m.–3:45 p.m. CDS is a sponsor of this event. See description under “Project Updates” for more information. Early registration rates are available [online](#) through **January 10**.
- **January 31. Deadline for applications for the CLSC program**. See page 4 for more information.
- **February 1. Transition of Care: Monthly Seminar Series**, A.I. duPont Hospital for Children, 6:30–8 p.m. The topic for this seminar is “Residential Options: Where will you live after you’re done with school?” Registration for the seminar is preferred. Contact Cory Nourie at cnourie@nemours.org or 302-651-4812 to register.
- **February 5. Lewes Polar Bear Plunge**, 1 p.m., Rehoboth Beach. This annual fundraising event benefits Special Olympics Delaware. The Plunge Festival weekend begins Friday, February 3 and features a variety of family-friendly events, including a 5k walk/run, ice sculpting contest and a celebratory party for participants after the plunge. Visit the event [website](#) for more information and a complete schedule of events.
- **Additional 2012 Annual Conferences**, Sheraton Dover Hotel, Dover.
 - **March 15.** Inclusion Conference
 - **April 3.** Transition Conference

ADVOCACY CORNER

This section is dedicated to informing you about advocacy efforts and new or pending legislation or 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.

- CDS is represented by Jamie Wolfe on the state’s **Legislative Planning Committee**, which includes representatives from Delaware’s lead disabilities organizations and agencies. This committee develops a list of ten legislative priority issues each year and is responsible for planning the annual **Disability Day at Legislative Hall**, which will be held on **April 4** this year. During the event, members of the disabilities community educate their state senators and representatives on the ten issues that need to be changed through legislation or policymaking. The issues that the Legislative Planning Committee has selected for this legislative session are:
 - Brain Injury Fund Bill
 - Education Flex Funding
 - H.B. 216 - an act to amend title 18 of the Delaware code relating to unfair practices in the business of insurance
 - H. B. 227: an act to amend title 9, title 22 and title 31 relating to housing/universal design
 - Employment for People with Disabilities
 - Accessible Medical Equipment
 - Residential services for DOE
 - Family Support Waiver
 - Services for new grads
 - Provider increases

Contact Jamie Wolfe at jlw@udel.edu if you have any questions or would like to participate in Disability Day at Legislative Hall.

- The Joint Finance Committee will begin consideration of the Fiscal Year 2013 Operating Budget on Tuesday, January 31 at 10 a.m. in the Joint Finance Hearing Room, ground floor, Legislative Hall. The Capital Improvement Program Public Hearing schedule will begin at the end of February. Check the [schedules](#) if you are interested in attending any of the hearings.

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.

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