



PROJECT BRIDGE

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER FOR DISABILITIES STUDIES

JUNE-JULY 2011

The June-July 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 August issue to mercooke@udel.edu by **July 8**.

PROJECT UPDATES

- CDS has received a \$10,000 grant from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Delaware to strengthen the **text4baby** component of the Health and Wellness unit's state-wide public awareness campaign on developmental screening. CDS is one of the first text4baby outreach partners in Delaware and has been appointed by the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition (HMHB) as Delaware's lead organization for text4baby. An educational program of HMHB, [text4baby](#) provides pregnant women and new mothers with information they need to take care of their own health and give their babies the best possible start in life.

As of mid-May, more than 500 moms had registered for text4baby in Delaware. The population of Delaware represents 0.29% of the national population, and when the text4baby campaign began in Delaware, the number of registrants represented 0.25% of the total number of text4baby registrants nationally. It was the project's goal to increase the text4baby percentage to match the population percentage. Thanks to the efforts of **Karen Zalewski** and **Annalisa Ekblad** in promoting text4baby, Delawareans now represent 0.30% of text4baby registrants.

- CDS graduate assistants and students participated in UD's inaugural Graduate Student Forum, which brought 275 graduate students from across campus together for nearly 80 research talks and posters, plus a dinner featuring Jorge Cham, creator of Ph.D. Comics. **Bishwa Poudel**, who works with **Laura Eisenman**, associate professor in the School of Education, presented "Developing a Measure of High School Inclusive Practices." Graduate assistants **Chunyan Yang** (New Directions Early Head Start) and **Jessica Blank** (Delaware Positive Behavior Support) presented "Chinese and American Students' Perceptions of School Climate." Both Chunyan and Jessica are doctoral students in the school psychology program at UD. Former CDS graduate assistant and Junior

Partners in Policymaking coordinator **Megan Pell** presented “I’m Fresh! New Teacher Perspectives Regarding Transitioning.”

- Congratulations to **Sarah Celestin** for completing her doctoral degree at UD! Sarah received a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership with a concentration in special education. She joined graduate assistants **Meredith Cooke, Katie Eaken** and **Allison Jacobus** at the College of Education and Human Development commencement ceremony on May 27. Meredith, Katie and Allison each received a Master of Arts in School Psychology after completing the requirements for this degree during the first year of the three-year school psychology program.
- Our thanks and best wishes to the graduate assistants who are concluding their work with CDS: **Jessica Blank, Michael Lewis** and **Cassie Shutt** will be spending the final year of their school psychology program as interns in Delaware and Maryland school districts. **Sharon Romelczyk**, who graduated with a master’s degree in public administration, is working at the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) in Silver Spring, Md.
- Congratulations to CDS’ Community Advisory Council (CAC) member **Micki Edelson** on her appointment by President Barack Obama to the President’s Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities. The release from the White House highlighted Micki’s accomplishments and awards, including her recent designation as one of the “25 Who Matter in Delaware” by The News Journal. She has also received the Humanitarian Award from the United Way of Delaware, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Wilmington Senior Center, and the Delaware Housing Coalition Award.
- **Delaware Family Voices, Inc.** has received a grant to continue its work on the **Delaware Family to Family Health Information Center**. The program, which began as part of CDS three years ago, has relocated to new offices at Easter Seals Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore in New Castle. The staff continues to work to achieve family-centered care for all children and youth with special health care needs and/or disabilities. As part of a national network, Delaware Family Voices provides families with tools to make informed decisions, advocates for improved public and private policies, builds partnerships among professionals and families, and serves as a trusted resource on health care. New contact information is available [online](#).
- In May, the **Health and Wellness** unit at CDS hosted staff from the **Institute on Disability Studies (IDS)**, the UCEDD (University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities) from the University of Southern Mississippi. IDS requested technical assistance in developing health programs for individuals with disabilities, and AUCD suggested Delaware as a model site. Dawn Rudolph, technical assistance director for AUCD, accompanied two IDS staff members to Delaware. Health and Wellness Unit Director **Ilka Riddle** and Healthy Delawareans with Disabilities Project Coordinator **Eileen Sparling** shared information with them about the following projects: health care transition for youth with disabilities, accessibility initiatives in health care settings and in recreation and fitness settings, oral health initiatives, developmental screening, family support programs, disability data and surveillance, and integration of disability into public health chronic disease programs.

- Members of CAC attended the CDS staff meeting in May to offer their appreciation for the work CDS staff members do to carry out the Center’s mission. CAC Chairman **Bob Valihura** opened the staff appreciation event and invited CAC members including **Linda Heller, Cory Nourie, Debbie Dunlap, Kathy Hughes, Karen Mancini** and **Martha Toomey** to speak about their experiences with CDS staff. CAC members also gave special recognition to **Bev Stapleford** for her years of dedication and service to the disability field while working at CDS.
- In June, CDS Director **Beth Mineo** participated in the National Joint Committee for the Communication Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities research conference in Atlanta. Beth led a discussion for the Augmentative and Alternative Communication Interventions session. Funded by the National Institute of Health, the conference—titled *Research Challenges and Future Directions in Evidence-Based Communication Interventions for Individuals with Severe Disabilities*—featured many leaders in research and intervention.
- **Chris Barthold**, who coordinates the CDS Stepping Stones project, attended the **Annual Meeting of the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI)** in Denver in May. Chris was a presenter on a panel about teaching behavior analysis and facilitated a workshop on B.F. Skinner’s analysis of verbal behavior with Dr. A. Charles Catania, a student of both B.F. Skinner and Fred Keller. Chris is the chair of the Teaching Behavior Analysis Special Interest Group (SIG), which with more than 500 members is ABAI’s second largest SIG.
- CDS staff member **Kathie Herel** will represent CDS at a national meeting of recipients of the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women grant in Louisville, Kentucky at the end of June. The agenda for the conference includes presentations from grantees about deliverables of the grant.
- A new issue of the *delAware* newsletter, was published in June, with the theme “Strengthening Connections.” It features articles about the following projects: the Family Support and Healthcare Alliance Delaware (Family SHADE), the Career and Life Studies Certificate program, Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities, and Accessible Instructional Materials. Please contact Michele Sands at msands@udel.edu if you would like a copy or check the publications page of the CDS website, www.udel.edu/cds.

HIGHLIGHTED PROJECT OF THE MONTH

Stepping Stones Program Assesses Impact of Image Properties on Students’ Learning

- When CDS Director Beth Mineo developed the prototype tool called Chauvet, which tailors pictures to children’s preferences and abilities, her goal was to incorporate the device’s full range of images—from very realistic to more abstract—into communication devices, software applications and instructional materials in the classroom.

For the Stepping Stones project at CDS, funded by the Office of Special Education Programs, Chauvet-generated images are used to determine if the properties of an image affect students' learning or their "representational competence." Each participant first engages in a thorough preference assessment that measures his/her likes and dislikes; the study hypothesizes that a student's preferences will also influence the learning of an image.

Stepping Stones project coordinator Christine Barthold and her team use a training tool that was developed by Mineo and the Newark-based company Agora-Net to present an image of an object to project participants. The image is accompanied by an audio file stating the name of the object, and the participants must choose the correct image when asked, "Show me the..." The participants respond to up to 15 to 20 different target images within one session; each target image is displayed in a group with three other images, all at the same representational level. These levels range from a two-inch photograph of an object to a black-and-white line drawing of the same object.

Each participant experiences all representational levels within each session in a random order. The effect of image properties is assessed by measuring the accuracy of receptive identification at each level. Naming the object and matching are also periodically assessed. Ultimately, the data will show the level of representation that evoked the best response from each participant; this information can then be used to answer a variety of research questions.

Barthold began the preference assessments in January, working with students in the Delaware Autism Program and at the UD Early Learning Center. In mid-May, she implemented the assessment tool with the participants. There are currently six active participants in the Stepping Stones program, with two more taking a summer break from testing and one more soon to join the project.

In June, CDS received unofficial notice of a National Institutes of Health grant that will allow the team to replicate the study with high school students and older participants with autism.

Barthold credits the efforts of her team with the success of the program to date. The team includes undergraduate research assistant Kristy Wallace and three undergraduate volunteers—William Terry, Patty Pierson and Sam Fox— from the University of Delaware's disabilities studies minor program.

"I absolutely would not be able to do this without them," Barthold said.

RESOURCES

- The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) has started to forward job availability notices by email to people who have contacted AAPD looking for job openings. In an effort to provide this service to more people and to ensure that everyone receives all the notices, AAPD has

created the "AAPD Job Connection". Please visit the [AAPD website](#) for more information or to sign up for this service.

- The Bureau of Engraving and Printing launched a new application in April 2011 to help people who are blind or visually impaired denominate—that is, determine the value of U.S. paper money. This free downloadable application (app) is called **EyeNote™**. It is a mobile device app designed for Apple iPhone and the 4th Generation iPod Touch and iPad2 platforms, and it is available through the Apple iTunes App Store. For more information about the app and its uses, please visit the [website](#) or download the [press release](#).
- Award-winning author and nationally known public speaker **Rachel Simon**, best known for her critically acclaimed, bestselling memoir, *Riding The Bus with My Sister*, has published a new book, *The Story of Beautiful Girl*. When Rachel, a Wilmington resident, was writing this novel, she consulted with CDS Director Beth Mineo about selective mutism and physical aspects of speech and she asked Beth to review the book. Rachel notes Beth’s contribution in the acknowledgement section of the book. Visit the book’s [website](#) to read or listen to the first chapter of the book, which tells the story of Linnie, a young white woman with a developmental disability, and Homan, an African American deaf man, who fall in love and escape from the institution where they live; their baby, Julia; and Martha, the woman who hides her. Their lives are “divided by seemingly insurmountable obstacles, yet drawn together by a secret pact and extraordinary love.”
- The Center for Disease Control and Prevention has launched a new website dedicated to adolescent and school health issues and awareness. The [website](#) also offers updated information on adolescent health and a new section on protective factors.

EVENTS

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

- **June 18. Beauty and Baseball: “A Fun Raiser for Autism Delaware,”** Frawley Stadium, 801 Shipyard Drive, 4–8 p.m. You can support Autism Delaware, get a haircut and your nails polished by J. Christian Studio, watch the Blue Rocks play the Winston-Salem Dash, get a meal package of hot dog, soda and chips, and a moon bounce ticket, all for \$22 per person. Tickets are also available for just the game at \$9. The event will also feature an auction with items ranging from baseball memorabilia to kids toys, as well as prizes and face painting. All proceeds from services and auction items will benefit Autism Delaware. \$2.00 from every ticket sold [online](#) will be donated by the Blue Rocks.
- **June 18. 56th Annual Blue-Gold All Star Game,** University of Delaware Stadium, Newark. Parking (\$5 per car) opens at 2 p.m. and children’s pre-game activities begin at 4 p.m. The pre-game celebration will start at 6 p.m. for the general public. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. CDS will have an information table and will participate in the pre-game ceremony.

- **June 19-24. Junior Partners in Policymaking (JPIP).** Students between the ages of 15-22 will live on the UD main campus for five days and engage in activities designed to increase awareness about a variety of issues. The program stresses the importance of self-determination, effective self-advocacy, legal rights and public policy, and planning for the future, for students with and without disabilities. The week includes a visit to Legislative Hall in Dover, a program by the Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative, and a celebration with current JPIP participants as well as program graduates. JPIP is a partnership between the Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council and CDS and is funded by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities.
- **July 12. Medicaid Managed Care Panel Teleconference,** 11 a.m.–1 p.m. The Delawareans with Special Health Needs Medicaid Managed Care Panel is holding its quarterly phone conference to address concerns about service delivery for family members with special health care needs. For information on the next meeting, instructions on how to participate and to be added to the call reminder list, please contact Ann Phillips at annp@defv.org.
- **July 19–21. Special Olympics Delaware Summer Camp.** Special Olympics Delaware's overnight sports camp, sponsored by Bank of America, is a three-day, two-night camp—featuring sports training and traditional camp activities—held at Camp Barnes near Bethany Beach. The camp is offering two sessions to all registered Special Olympics Delaware athletes:

 - Session I: July 19-21 (Project UNIFY Summer Camp at Camp Barnes) and
 - Session II: August 13-15 (Summer Camp at Camp Barnes).

Anyone interested in volunteering as a camp counselor should contact Gary Cimaglia at 302-831-3481 or gcimag@udel.edu.
- **July 25–29. 40th Summer Institute, “The Ins & Outs of Recovery,”** Embassy Suites, Newark DE. Sponsored by the Delaware Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health training office, the conference features keynote speaker Robert Anda, M.D., M.S. Dr. Anda is known for his work on the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study, an ongoing collaboration between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Kaiser Permanente. ACE studies the relationship between multiple categories of childhood trauma and health and behavioral outcomes later in life. In this Pazzaglini Keynote Address, Dr. Anda will provide an overview of the ACE Study and explore how the outcomes can inform practices to create a healthier and more resilient Delaware. Visit the conference website to download the [conference brochure](#) or to [register](#). Registration by mail is due July 15.
- **August 8–10. 13th Annual Autism Summer Institute,** University of New Hampshire, Nashua, NH. The 2011 ASI theme is **Everybody Reads, Everybody Writes, Everybody Has Something to Say.** This integrated literacy and communication theme recognizes that far too many students and adults with autism have not been provided with high-quality literacy instruction or with a means to communicate if their spoken voice is not effective. This theme will be addressed through four strands over the course of the three-day conference that target parents and educators of students of all grade levels as well as a strand specifically for adolescents and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders. The conference is presented by the Institute on Disability at the University of

New Hampshire in collaboration with the Autistic Self-Advocacy Network. [Registration information](#) is available online.

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.

- The movie theater chain, Regal Entertainment Group, announced in May that it will equip its digital theaters with technology that helps deaf, hard of hearing and blind guests more easily access the movies. The technology will provide captions for people who are hard of hearing and descriptive narration for people who are blind. Regal said it plans to roll out the system over the next 12 to 18 months. All 535 theater locations in the U.S. will have digital equipment and be able to offer the technologies for every show time by the end of 2012. It is teaming up with Captionfish, a unit of Zero Gravity Captions LLC, which is an online search engine for finding captioned movies across the country.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

The next issue of Project Bridge will appear in August. If you want to share information about your project or professional activities or announce events that will occur in August or September, please contact Meredith Cooke at mercooke@udel.edu by **July 8**. Project Bridge is now being posted on the CDS website, www.udel.edu/cds.

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](#).

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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 the [website](#) for the address and phone number of the U.S. Department of Education office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.