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## PROJECT BRIDGE

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THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER FOR DISABILITIES STUDIES

### OCTOBER 2011

The October 2011 issue of Project Bridge includes project updates from the past few months and events that will take place in the next few months. The next issue will be a combined November-December issues that will be sent in mid-November. Please send news and events for this issue to [mercooke@udel.edu](mailto:mercooke@udel.edu) by **October 17**.

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### PROJECT UPDATES

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- CDS is hosting **“Understanding Self-determination,”** a workshop for parents, people with disabilities, professionals and others in the community, on Monday, October 24 from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Embassy Suites in Newark. The featured speakers are Sue Swenson, a disabilities advocate and parent of an adult son with disabilities, and Liz Weintraub, a self-advocate. There will also be a panel discussion with the guest speakers, parents, self-advocates and professionals. The registration fee of \$15 includes lunch; scholarships are available. See the [CDS website calendar](#) for links to the invitation and reply card. You may register [online](#) with a credit card. Contact Michele Sands at [msands@udel.edu](mailto:msands@udel.edu) or 302-831-3038 for more information. The State of Delaware Developmental Disabilities Counsel is a co-sponsor of the workshop.
- The next session in the **CDS Luchtime Learning** series will be Monday, October 10. TEEM Unit Director **Brian Freedman** and psychologist and author **Robert Naseef** will present their findings about marriage and divorce rates among families of children with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). They will also share strategies for helping parents navigate the challenges of maintaining a strong marital relationship while raising a child with an ASD. Dr. Naseef is a psychologist in the Philadelphia area who specializes in families of children with disabilities; he also is the father of a son with autism. This free workshop will be held from 12 noon to 1 p.m. at the Center for Disabilities Studies. Attendees are welcome to bring a bag lunch. Water and snacks will be provided. Please register with Meredith Cooke at [mercooke@udel.edu](mailto:mercooke@udel.edu).

- After almost 10 years, **Jim Salt** is leaving CDS, where he worked as a policy scientist and evaluation coordinator for the Child Development Watch evaluation project. Jim also consulted on a number of CDS projects and provided technical assistance on federal evaluation projects. Many thanks to Jim for all of his hard work, and best wishes on all future endeavors.
- **Marvin Williams**, AT specialist for the Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative, presented at the Delaware Society for Human Resource Management in September. Marvin's shared with attendees strategies for accommodating employees utilizing assistive technology. His presentation was called, "Attracting and Retaining Skilled Workers: Assistive Technology and Good Workplace Design."
- **Esley Newton** joined the ACCESS project in September as an instructional coach. She has a master's degree in education from the University of Delaware and previously worked as a teacher of students with autism and severe disabilities in the Brandywine School District. Welcome, Esley!
- Healthy Delawareans with Disabilities (HDWD) has released "**Effective Communication for Health Care Providers: A Guide to Caring for People with Disabilities.**" This publication provides information that will help health care providers and their staff develop skills and acquire tools to successfully communicate and provide accommodations to patients with disabilities. For copies of the report, please visit the [HDWD website](#) or call 302-831-6974.
- CDS Director **Beth Mineo** is presenting at the "**Partners in Justice: Bridging the Gaps, A Conference for Understanding and Responding to the Needs of Crime Victims with Disabilities**" in Dover on October 27. Beth will lead attendees at a workshop focusing on the impact of communication disorders on an individual's ability to understand and interact with the world around them—including vulnerability to influence and access to services and supports. Other training topics include: victimization, the definition of disability and mandatory reporting and consent. The DD Council is sponsoring this training conference for professionals who work with people with disabilities, individuals with disabilities, families and advocates. Contact Dena Plummer at [dena.plummer@state.de.us](mailto:dena.plummer@state.de.us) by October 13 to see if space is available.
- As part of a national effort to promote career development for students with disabilities through hands-on career exploration, on-site job shadowing and ongoing peer mentoring, CDS is sponsoring the third annual **Disability Mentoring Day** on October 19. On this day, the University of Delaware, Newark businesses and CDS will join together to offer adults with disabilities the opportunity to explore their roles in the workforce and cultivate professional interests. Disability Mentoring Day is held in October in conjunction with **National Disability Employment Awareness Month**. President Barack Obama issued a proclamation in recognition of this observance, urging all Americans to embrace the talents and skills that individuals with disabilities bring to the workplace and community, and to promote the right to equal employment opportunity for all people.
- The **Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities** project at CDS is hosting a two-part webinar series, "The Emerging Landscape: The Law Related to People with Disabilities and

Emergency Preparedness and Response.” Brian Parsons, senior policy advisor at the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, is the presenter. The first webinar was held on September 21. The second webinar, scheduled for **November 3**, from 1:00 to 2:15 p.m., will focus on what emergency managers should know about civil rights requirements regarding individuals with disabilities in preparedness, response and recovery activities. It will also address legal principles including accessibility, integration, inclusion, effective communication and program modification. [Registration for the webinar](#) can be completed online or by contacting Phyllis Guiniva at [pguiniva@udel.edu](mailto:pguiniva@udel.edu).

- CDS still needs your input! In preparation for writing the Center’s next five-year plan, CDS and the Community Advisory Council are asking Delawareans for their input on the status of services and current priorities for people with disabilities in Delaware. CDS has created a **needs assessment** that will be used to shape the five-year planning process. Please take a few moments to complete the needs assessment by visiting our online survey at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/H8HRCMK>.

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## HIGHLIGHTED PROJECT OF THE MONTH

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### **Artfest Brings Together People with Disabilities and Volunteers for a Day of Artistic Expression**

- More than 40 people came together on Saturday, September 24 for a morning of creativity and artistic expression at Artfest 2011. Artfest is an annual CDS event that brings together people of all abilities and ages, University of Delaware undergraduate students, CDS graduate assistants and staff members, and other volunteers to create the artwork for the CDS annual report, which is published as a calendar.

Each participant chose from a variety of paints, paintbrushes, stencils, novel implements and adaptive devices to create individual works of art. Ranging from watercolors to colored pencil drawings to traditional paintings, the artwork reflects each artist’s talents and interests. Volunteers were on hand to work one-on-one with the participants, lending support and companionship as they expressed themselves through art. The artists also personalized individual wooden dishes to take home at the conclusion of the event.

Allyson Szecsi is a junior at UD who has volunteered at Artfest for three years. She said that after her first experience with the event, she was “hooked.”

“Artfest gives me the opportunity to work one on one with someone with a disability. I enjoy seeing their faces light up when I am able to connect with each one on a personal level, in some way, by communicating through their artwork,” Allyson said.



*An Artfest participant and her mentor, above, work together to create a watercolor painting.*

Artfest is led by Lisa Bartoli, art therapist and executive director of the Art Therapy Express Program, Inc., an instructional art education and therapy program that allows individuals to explore alternative means of communication through the arts. The Art Therapy Express Program is located at Lisa Bartoli's Kaleidoscope Studio at New Castle County's Absalom Jones Community Center in Newport, Delaware.

The CDS annual report will highlight the Center's work from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011 and will be distributed as a calendar for 2012.

## RESOURCES

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- **October is Disability History and Awareness Month (DHAM) in Delaware.** This official observance began in 2009 when members of the Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) encouraged Rep. Quinton Johnson and Senator Bethany Hall-Long to sponsor House Concurrent Resolution 19. The purpose was to encourage schools to include information in their lessons and have activities to promote the accomplishments of individuals with disabilities throughout history in order to increase awareness and acceptance of students with various disabilities. The October observance became law this year with the passage of House Bill 123.

For the 2011 DHAM, GACEC is continuing programs from the past two years. It is providing resource manuals and materials to schools, publishing newsletters, posting information on its

website and sponsoring a [statewide poster contest](#). Materials on bullying have been added to the resources because children with disabilities are bullied more frequently than their peers without disabilities. The council also is bringing the Kids on the Block program, an interactive disability awareness puppet show, back to Delaware. Check the [GACEC website](#) for more DHAM information.

- The Center for Disabilities Studies and Delaware Family Voices/Family to Family Health Information Center have created the second edition of ***Connecting the Dots—A Guide to Finding Services for Children and Adults with Special Health Care Needs in Delaware***. This guide is designed to help individuals with a newly-diagnosed disability or special health care need and their families find available supports and services. It includes suggestions about where to begin your search for information and services; extensive lists of resources for first steps and next steps; a glossary of terms; commonly used acronyms; and stories about families who have been successful in finding support for a child with disabilities or special health care needs. The guide is currently available for download on the [CDS website](#).
- The **Delawareans with Special Health Needs** group is holding its quarterly Medicaid Managed Care Panel phone conference on **October 11**. This parent-run group provides families of children with special healthcare needs with support and information needed to navigate the service delivery system. Parents are invited to call in with concerns and questions about their child's Medicaid/managed care coverage. They will have the opportunity to hear from representatives of agencies such as the Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance, Department of Education, Community Legal Aid Society, Inc. and Medicaid Health Benefits Manager's Office. For more information on this meeting, instructions on how to participate or to be added to the call reminder list, please contact **Ann Phillips** at [annp@defv.org](mailto:annp@defv.org).
- In May 2011, Magination Press published ***On Your Own: A College Readiness Guide for Teens with ADHD/LD*** to assist teens in preparing for college life. Students are guided in assessing their "living-on-your-own" skills such as problem solving/decision making, communication, self-awareness, and identifying what needs improving. Authors Patricia O. Quinn and Theresa E. Laurie Maitland created a readiness survey, worksheets, and easy-to-use advice and strategies to assist students in creating a personalized plan and center on developing three crucial skill areas: self-determination, daily living and academics. The book is available for purchase online through any major distributor.
- **Hewlett-Packard** is collaborating with a pair of autism organizations to develop apps to help people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) handle everything from scheduling and communication to bullying. In October, the company plans to bring together volunteer developers tasked with creating apps to address seven core areas of need for people within the autism community. Some of the apps are expected to be designed for individuals with ASD to use themselves. These might include apps featuring social stories, help with time management, assistive communication software or a tool to report bullying. Other applications will be designed

to help parents and professionals track progress with behavior or medical concerns. Ideas for the apps were selected from over 250 suggestions submitted to Autism Speaks and the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism, which partnered with HP on the “Hacking Autism” initiative. Once complete, the apps will be provided to the public free of charge, according to officials at Autism Speaks.

- The **Delaware Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)**, part of the Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities, launched a new website in September to help Delawareans find disability and aging resources. The website—[www.delawareadrc.com](http://www.delawareadrc.com)— allows people to search by county for services such as home modifications, personal care, respite, home-delivered meals, durable medical equipment, case management and assisted living. The ADRC also offers a call center (800-223-9074), staffed from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday to answer questions and provide information.
- Nemours/A.I. duPont Hospital for Children began a Transition of Care Monthly Seminar Series in October that will continue through May. The sessions are intended to help families learn about changes in services and supports that occur as teens move into adulthood. The next session, “Increasing self-management and empowering young adults with special health care needs,” will be held November 2 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the hospital. For further information, contact Cory Nourie at 302-651-4812 or [cnourie@nemours.org](mailto:cnourie@nemours.org).

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## EVENTS

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Visit the CDS website calendar at [http://www.udel.edu/cds/index\\_calendar.html](http://www.udel.edu/cds/index_calendar.html) for more events.

- **October 10. CDS Lunchtime Learning**, Center for Disabilities Studies, 12 noon–1 p.m., “Autism: The Impact on Parents and Strategies for Coping.” See description under “Project Updates” for more information.
- **October 12. Special Needs Planning Workshop**, Easter Seals, New Castle, 6–8 p.m. Delaware Family Voices offers this free workshop exploring critical issues such as protecting government benefit eligibility for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), creating special needs trusts, the importance of a will, and guardianship. Presenters include Patrick Bergmaier, a special needs planner for the MetLife Center for Special Needs Planning, and Miguel Pena, an attorney who specializes in navigating the legal field for individuals with disabilities and their families. Registration is required for this event. Contact Michelle Lamers at [mlamers@defv.org](mailto:mlamers@defv.org) or 302-221-5362 for more information or to register.
- **October 17. Transitioning Youth and Young Adults from Pediatric to Adult Health Care Systems Webinar**, 12 noon–1 p.m. The Association of University Centers on Disabilities’ Health

and Disability Special Interest Group is hosting a webinar that will discuss existing approaches to transitioning youth and young adults from pediatric to adult health care systems. Presenters include Cory Nourie, a member of the CDS Community Advisory Council and patient transition social work coordinator for the Division of Transition of Care at Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children. [Online registration](#) is available. Please contact AUCD Senior Project Specialist Sharon Romelczyk at [sromelczyk@aucd.org](mailto:sromelczyk@aucd.org) if you have any questions.

- **October 19. Disability Mentoring Day, Newark.** See description in “Project Updates” for more information.
- **October 19. “Cultural Competency—From Theory to Practice,”** Delaware State University, Dover, 11:30 a.m.–2 p.m. Hosted by the Division of Public Health’s Office of Health Equity, this training will raise awareness of cultural issues that impact the delivery of health services and provide strategies to improve health outcomes. The training—designed for healthcare professionals and students—features Horace DeLisser, M.D., assistant dean for cultural competency and spirituality at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. Registration for this event is \$10 per session. Please visit the DPH [website](#) for more information or to register.
- **October 22. ArtFeast,** Kaleidoscope Studio, 310 Kiamensi Road, Wilmington, 10 a.m.–12 noon. Lisa Bartoli and Art Therapy Express Program, Inc. offer an event that brings together art, food and costumes. Participants will create a landscape painting and a clay container and learn to prepare a variety of foods. Delcastle Technical High School’s Cooks and Bakers students, led by Jim Berman, will lead the group’s exploration into the culinary arts. Costumes are encouraged. The cost is \$10 per person and [registration](#) is required. Call Lisa Bartoli at 302-584-4068 if you have any questions.
- **October 24. Self-determination workshop, Embassy Suites,** Newark, 11:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. See description under “Project Updates” for more information.
- **October 27. “Partners in Justice: Bridging the Gaps, A Conference for Understanding and Responding to the Needs of Crime Victims with Disabilities,”** The Duncan Center, Dover, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. The [registration](#) deadline is October 13. See description under “Project Updates” for more information.
- **November 3. “The Emerging Landscape: The Law Related to People with Disabilities and Emergency Preparedness and Response” emergency preparedness webinar,** 1–2:15 p.m. See description in “Project Updates” for more information.
- **November 1–2. 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Delaware State Human Resources Conference,** Clayton Hall, University of Delaware, Newark. This conference features guest speakers including Jeff Tobe, Christopher Murray, Dr. Pat Buhler and Sylvia La Fair, as well as breakout sessions focused on legal updates, diversity, social media and other topics. Contact Laurie Sample at [lsample@deshrm.org](mailto:lsample@deshrm.org)

for more information or to register for this event.

- **November 6–9. 2011 AUCD Annual Meeting and Conference**, Crystal City, Virginia. The theme of the 2011 Association of University Centers on Disabilities Conference is “The Journey Continues: 40 Years Advancing Equity and Excellence through Research, Education and Service.” It is celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the AUCD network and provides a special opportunity for network members and partners to share their interests, talents and perspectives. The event includes nationally-known speakers, a poster session featuring the newest research in developmental disabilities, and various entertainment/leisure activities. Visit [the AUCD website](#) for more information or to register.
- **November 14. CDS Lunchtime Learning**, Center for Disabilities Studies, 12 noon–1 p.m. Three months after the March 2011 earthquake, tsunami and related disasters struck Japan, UD Disaster Research Center (DRC) Associate Director Tricia Wachtendorf and graduate research assistant Rochelle Brittingham traveled to Japan. They were part of a reconnaissance team that visited Iwata and Miyagi prefecture to learn about the social impacts of the disasters. At the Lunchtime Learning session they will discuss some of the factors that led to disparate evacuation and sheltering strategies for those with a range of functional and intellectual disabilities, the challenges these survivors faced months after the event, and the potential implications for disaster planning in the United States.
- **January 19, 2012. LIFE Conference XIV**, Sheraton Dover Hotel, 8 a.m.–3:45 p.m. This annual conference for people with disabilities and those who support them features national speakers and a wide variety of topics. The keynote speaker is Constance Garner, Ph.D., executive director of Advance CLASS—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. Featured topics at the conference include emergency preparedness, state legislation, assistive technology and increasing accessibility in the home. CDS is a sponsor of this event. More details will follow in the next issue of Project Bridge. [Online registration](#) for the conference begins October 20.
  - **Additional 2012 Annual Conferences**, Sheraton Dover Hotel, Dover.
    - **March 15.** Inclusion Conference
    - **April 3.** Transition Conference

## ADVOCACY CORNER

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**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](mailto:mercooke@udel.edu).**

- The House of Representatives and the Senate passed the Combating Autism Reauthorization Act, which renews the 2006 law that allocates millions of federal dollars for autism research, training

and infrastructure. This bill will provide \$231 million annually for three years to educate professionals about proper screening, diagnosis and intervention for children with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities. It also funds autism research and surveillance. President Obama signed the bill into law on September 30.

- The Delaware Office of Management and Budget announced the schedule of hearings for the Fiscal Year 2013 budget process. The hearings start at the beginning of November; see the [full schedule and locations](#).

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## ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

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The next issue of Project Bridge will be a combined November-December issue that will appear in mid-November. If you want to share information about your project or professional activities or announce events that will occur in November or December, please contact Meredith Cooke at [mercooke@udel.edu](mailto:mercooke@udel.edu) by **October 17**.

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## CONTACT US

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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](http://www.udel.edu/cds).

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## NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

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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://wdcrobcop01.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.



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