



PROJECT BRIDGE

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER FOR DISABILITIES STUDIES

SEPTEMBER 2011

The September 2011 issue of Project Bridge includes project updates from the past few months and events that will take place in the next few months. Please send news and events for the October issue to mercooke@udel.edu by **September 9**.

PROJECT UPDATES

- In preparation for writing the Center's next five-year plan, CDS and the Community Advisory Council would like your 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>.
- CDS is hosting "**Understanding Self-determination,**" a workshop for Community Advisory Council members, parents, professionals and others in the community, on Monday, October 24 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. The agenda for the conference includes a luncheon, a presentation by each speaker followed by a time for questions and discussion, and a panel discussion with the guest speakers, parents, self-advocates and professionals. There is a registration fee of \$15, with scholarships available. Please contact Michele Sands at msands@udel.edu or 302-831-3038 for more information or to request an invitation. The State of Delaware Developmental Disabilities Counsel is a sponsor of the workshop.
- **Sarah Celestin**, project director for the Delaware Alternate Portfolio Assessment, has accepted a position at the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) in the Exceptional Children Group. In her new position Sarah will continue to make significant contributions on behalf of students with disabilities. Her last day as a CDS employee is September 9. CDS staff members and students wish Sarah the best of luck in her future endeavors.

- Health and Wellness staff member **Kathie Herel** has accepted a full-time position at the Parent Information Center. She will be coordinating the Educational Surrogate Parent Program, advocating for the educational needs of children in foster care. Kathie oversaw the domestic violence grant at CDS. CDS extends warm wishes to Kathie on this new opportunity.
- The Health and Wellness unit at the CDS has received funding from the Delaware Disabilities Council to develop an **online inclusion training program** to promote inclusion of young athletes participating in sports programs at the YMCA of Delaware. Currently, there is no training available to prepare coaches to accommodate youth athletes with disabilities. The web-based training will address common types of physical, sensory, intellectual and learning disabilities in children and youth; present inclusion models for children and youth sports programs and cultural perspectives and etiquette on inclusion, including People First language; and offer strategies to support and include children and youth with disabilities. Additionally, CDS will provide a technical assistance plan and a resource guide/toolkit for support and guidance to ensure that sports staff has access to support while implementing volunteer coaches training components into their facilities' activities. The year-long project begins September 1, 2011.
- In August, the School Age unit welcomed new staff member and Instructional Coach **Stephanie De Mayo**, a former Smyrna School District teacher in the Comprehensive Life Skills program for students in fifth through eighth grade. Stephanie will apply her four years of experience with students with disabilities to the ACCESS (Adapting Curriculum and Classroom Environments for Student Access) project. Welcome, Stephanie!
- CDS is pleased to welcome our new graduate assistants. Three students are working on the Healthy Delawareans with Disabilities (HDWD) project: **Katelyn Borrás**, a second-year master's student in Human Development and Family Studies; **Rochelle Brittingham**, a second-year doctoral student in sociology; and **Dana Sedlik**, a second-year student in the master's in public administration program. The TEEM unit welcomes **Joshua Donaldson**, a first-year doctoral student in HDFS who will be working for CLSC. Four first-year school psychology students have joined the Center: **Sarah Lemonte** (ACCESS), **Dara Lipschutz** (ACCESS), **Lindsey Mantz** (PBS) and **Kristin Valle** (PBS). **Megan Pell**, a doctoral student completing her Ph.D. in special education in the School of Education, has returned to CDS to work for PBS; Megan previously worked for PBS two years ago. These students join four returning graduate assistants: **Meredith Cooke** (dissemination), **Katie Eaken** (ACCESS), **Michelle Finegan** (TEEM) and **Allison Jacobus** (TEEM).
- The next session in the **CDS Lunchtime Learning** series, which focuses on issues addressed by CDS and other topics related to disabilities, 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 Michele Sands at msands@udel.edu.

- The Summer 2011 issue of ***The AT Messenger***, a quarterly publication of the Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI) at CDS, is now available in print and several electronic formats. Read about collaboration for inclusive emergency preparedness and response, changes to Medicaid-purchased durable medical equipment ownership in Delaware, the AT Bargain Basement, the Delaware AT Exchange, accessibility ramps and more. Information about subscribing to *The AT Messenger* and links to online editions are available on the [DATI website's news page](#).
- Are you ready for an emergency? **September is National Preparedness Month** (read [President Barack Obama's proclamation](#)). This year marks the eighth annual effort to support emergency preparedness efforts and encourage individuals to take action to ensure they are prepared for an emergency. The Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities (EPID) project at CDS helps people with disabilities prepare for a disaster. EPID staff recommends that individuals assemble an emergency kit that includes the basics for sheltering at home or outside the home at locations such as a shelter, hotel or friend's home; making an emergency plan and sharing that plan with family members or trusted individuals; and staying informed about national disasters or other emergency situations. Groups that are interested in having an emergency preparedness presentation or individuals in need of assistance in preparing a plan should contact Gary Mears at gmears@udel.edu or 302-831-3201. Visit www.delawarecitizencorps and www.prepared.org to find information and resources, including videos, to help you prepare for an emergency.

HIGHLIGHTED PROJECT OF THE MONTH

CDS Partners with Goodwill to Launch Durable Medical Equipment Reuse Program

- On August 3, Goodwill Durable Medical Equipment (DME) opened its headquarters in Wilmington.

Goodwill of Delaware and Delaware County was awarded a contract through the Delaware Recycles and Reuses Assistive Technology Project of CDS' Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI) to provide access to safe and appropriate gently-used durable medical equipment for Delawareans with disabilities who are otherwise unable to acquire this equipment. Goodwill has received donations of equipment from A.I. duPont Hospital for Children and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS), and will also receive equipment that was purchased with Medicaid funds and is no longer useful to the original recipient. Goodwill can also accept equipment donations from the public through its 18 drop-off sites in Delaware. Individuals can arrange for pick-up of large items by calling 1-866-317-2299 ext. 600.

“Durable medical equipment” includes wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, lifts, home care beds, commodes, communication devices and other items. As a part of this program, will collect

equipment from donors; sort, assess, clean, sanitize, repair and refurbish the equipment for resale; create a database to document the inventory; store the equipment and match appropriate available equipment to people with disabilities in need. It will also recycle or dispose of unused materials. Current employees involved in the process of sanitizing and reconditioning items include adults with disabilities from Chimes Delaware, a provider of day, vocational and residential services for people with cognitive disabilities.

CDS Director Beth Mineo, who also directs DATI, spoke at the Goodwill DME grand opening ceremony. In her remarks, she explained that DATI established the goal of providing AT to everyone who needs it several years ago. Equipment reuse was one idea developed to promote AT availability and accessibility.

“Making a very long story short, we are here today launching a program that makes incredibly good sense,” Mineo said. “Get useful equipment out of basements and garages and attics into the hands of people who need it. Employ people with disabilities in the refurbishment process. Stretch federal and state dollars farther. Keep material out of landfills. Give people a tax deduction for contributing to the greater good. What's not to love?”

For information about Goodwill’s medical equipment refurbishment program, call 302-463-1465.

RESOURCES

- **Autism Speaks** created a new guide for parents of children with autism and other disabilities to help them navigate the process of developing an individualized education program (IEP). The 26-page document offers an overview of the legal rights of parents and students with disabilities, as well as sample forms, frequently asked questions, general timelines for the special education eligibility determinations and other resources. It is available for free download on the [Autism Speaks website](#).
- The **Clearinghouse for Home and Community Based Services** released a series of person-centered thinking tools in video format. The series of nine videos covers a series of topics including the history of lifestyle planning, training, first steps and personal stories. The goal of the project is to provide support for the creation of best practice and its implementation by individuals and agencies. Each video can be viewed individually by following the link’s listed on the organization’s [website](#).
- **Eileen Baker**, who works part-time with CDS on the Positive Behavior Support project, has published a children’s picture book called ***Chunkin Punkins*** about the annual Punkin Chunkin contest in Delaware. It has beautiful water color illustrations by Colleen Lowe, who is an art

teacher at Cape Henlopen High School in Lewes. More information about the book and where to order it is available [online](#).

EVENTS

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

- **September 14. Prentke Romich Workshop**, A.I. duPont Hospital for Children, Wilmington, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. This seminar will focus on the Unity language program available in the Vantage Lite. Participants will be given an overview of the assistive technology program, as well as teaching strategies and lesson plans that support the speech-generating device. Another session will be held in November. Please visit the [PRC website](#) for more information.
- **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. 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 Delaware’s Victim’s Rights Task Force and the Domestic Violence Task Force’s Prevention Subcommittee. Please visit the [website](#) for more information about the Prevention Subcommittee or the conference.
- **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 and to sign up as a participant or helper.
- **October 8. National Down Syndrome Society Buddy Walk**, Rehoboth Beach, 9 a.m. Participants in this one-mile walk are required to register for this event. The registration deadline by mail is October 4; [online registration](#) is due October 7. Although registration is free, donations benefit research, education and family support for those with Down syndrome.
- **October 10. CDS Lunchtime Learning**, Center for Disabilities Studies, 12 noon–1 p.m. See description under “Project Updates” for more information.

- **October 22. Special Olympics Delaware Fall Festival**, University of Delaware Field House. This annual event features competitions in various sporting events, lunch and educational activities. More information about this and other events can be found on the Special Olympics Delaware [website](#).
- **October 24. Self-determination workshop, Embassy Suites**, Newark, 11:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. See description under “Project Updates” for more information.
- **Save the Dates: 2012 Annual Conferences**, Sheraton Dover Hotel, Dover.
 - **January 19.** LIFE Conference
 - **March 15.** Inclusion Conference
 - **April 3.** Transition Conference

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.

- On August 17, Governor Markell signed into law three important bills that encourage greater sensitivity and awareness about people with disabilities. CDS staff members **Terri Hancharick** and **Jamie Wolfe** attended the ceremony, which celebrated the efforts of state legislators and disability advocates who worked on the bills. Representative Debra Heffernan introduced House Bills 91 and 214: Implementing People First Language in Delaware Code and Regulations. Governor Markell, seen in the photo with self-advocates Aaron Deede and Brigitte Hancharick, also signed into law House Bill 123: Creating Disability History and Awareness Month in October.



ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

The next issue of Project Bridge will appear in October. If you want to share information about your project or professional activities or announce events that will occur in October or November, please contact Meredith Cooke at mercooke@udel.edu by **September 9**.

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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