Project Bridge is a periodic newsletter for the Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS) within the University of Delaware’s College of Education and Human Development. This issue includes project updates from the past few months and events that will take place in September and early October.

Please send news and events for the October issue to Victoria Clark at vlnclark@udel.edu by September 15.

NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

Get Ready! September is National Preparedness Month

September 2013 marks the 10th annual National Preparedness Month, sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA hopes to educate the public about how to prepare for emergencies such as natural disasters, biological and chemical threats, radiation emergencies and more.

The Center’s Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities (EPID) project, as well as several other disaster and disability-related organizations across the state, have been working hard to ensure that people with disabilities, their families and caregivers, and emergency personnel are well-equipped to handle emergency situations.

As part of National Preparedness Month, CDS will share tips and resources on disaster and emergency preparedness for people with disabilities on its Facebook page, and EPID will assist with community training events on September 5 and 25 (see Events for more details). Also be sure to check out Resources and Advocacy Corner for more information and news about emergency preparedness for people with disabilities.
New graduate students join the CDS family

The Center is pleased to welcome five new graduate students. Sara Shaw and Marisa Kofke began their assistantships with the Career and Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program over the summer. Sara is a doctoral student in human development and family studies, while Marisa is a doctoral student in education, focusing on sociocultural and community-based approaches. First-year school psychology students Anna Rutledge, Samantha Gralla and Jessica Kradjel are joining the School Age Unit; Anna and Samantha are working on the Adapting Curriculum and Classroom Environments for Student Success (ACCESS) project, and Jessica is assisting with the Delaware Positive Behavior Support (DE-PBS) project. Ben Wallace, who is pursuing graduate studies in disaster science and management, will also be joining the Center in coordinating a new project for the Transition, Education and Employment Model (TEEM) Unit.

Three graduate students are returning this year, including Katie Hoffman (Dissemination & Advocacy), Krista Jensen (CLSC) and Lindsey Mantz (DE-PBS). Kara Magane, a first-year graduate student in health promotion, is continuing to work with the Healthy Delawareans with Disabilities (HDWD) project.

Needs assessments underway for health and wellness

- This fall, the Center’s First State Equal Access to Safety project is completing its needs assessment report. The findings will guide the strategic plan to build capacity for service delivery for victims at the intersection of domestic violence, disabilities and mental health problems. Through collaboration with the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence and NAMI Delaware and with funding from the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office on Violence Against Women, the project’s goal is to ensure effective services for people with disabilities who are victims of domestic violence.

- Healthy Delawareans with Disabilities is also wrapping up its statewide needs assessment this fall. The project’s assessment focuses on health status and issues of access for people with disabilities in Delaware. The results will be used to create the First State’s profile of the current health status of Delawareans with disabilities. The three-year project will generate a strategic plan to address health disparities and improve the health of individuals with disabilities in Delaware. This project is being conducted in collaboration with the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services and is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
Also visit the CDS calendar for more information about upcoming events.

**Fall Workshops sponsored by the Parent Information Center of Delaware**

This fall, the Parent Information Center (PIC) of Delaware is sponsoring several workshops to help parents of children with disabilities navigate the rights of their children at school, including “What is Section 504?” and “Engaged Families Make a Difference.” For more information about these workshops, visit the PIC events calendar.

**September 5**

**Emergency Preparedness Community Workshop**, Modern Maturity Center, Dover, 9 a.m.–noon. Independent Resources, Inc. (IRI) is partnering with the Modern Maturity Center, Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA), CDS and others to hold a free workshop on emergency preparedness and planning for people with disabilities. IRI staff will serve as “navigators” to assist people with disabilities, seniors and other community members in preparing a personal emergency plan. This event is open to the public and continental breakfast will be served. Participants are encouraged to register in advance by calling IRI at 302-735-4599 or the Modern Maturity Center at 302-734-1200.

**September 12**

**National Alzheimer’s Plan Town Hall**, Modern Maturity Center, Dover, 6 p.m.–7:30 p.m. Join the Alzheimer’s Association, Delaware Valley Chapter to learn more about the National Plan and current efforts to address Alzheimer’s in Delaware. You are invited to share your views, comments and perspective about what is needed for successful implementation of these initiatives. Registration is required as seating is limited. Please RSVP by September 10 by contacting Katie Macklin at 800-272-3900 or katie.macklin@alz.org.

**September 12**

**Delaware’s Annual Direct Support Professional’s Day**

Executive Banquet and Conference Center, Newark, 11 a.m.–2 p.m. This event is designed to promote the valued role direct support professionals (DSPs) play in supporting people with disabilities, as well as provide them with networking opportunities. Lieutenant Governor Matthew Denn is the keynote speaker and four DSPs in Delaware will be honored for their outstanding service. Tickets are $15 per person and lunch will be provided. To register or find out more information, visit the DelARF website.

**September 16**

**Sports Club for You**, Carpenter Sports Building, University of Delaware, Newark, Mondays from 6:15–7:45 p.m. Sports Club for You (SCY) is an inclusive program that provides youth with and without disabilities (ages 5–21) with the opportunity to develop their athletic skills and physical fitness, and socialize in a positive learning environment. Children work one-on-one
with their own instructors for most of the session and break into group activities for the last 15 minutes. Registration is $35 for one child or $70 for 2 or more children. You can register online or contact Dr. Iva Obrusnikova at obrusnik@udel.edu for more information.

**September 20**

**37th Annual Beach Day**, Rehoboth Convention Center, Rehoboth, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Beach Day is hosted by CHEER, an organization that offers services for seniors to live full and independent lives as they age. The event features a Healthy Living Expo, 2.4-mile walk, live music, vendors and complimentary food. As a vendor, the Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI) will host an exhibit demonstrating how assistive technology can help seniors live safely and independently as they age. More information about Beach Day is on the CHEER website.

**September 21**

**7th Annual Family Emergency Preparedness Day**, Delaware Agriculture Museum and Village, Dover, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. This event is free to the public and features numerous exhibits, interactive demonstrations and free food. For more information, visit the Delaware Citizen Corps event website.

**September 26**

**The DCAS-Alt 1: Grade Band Extensions and Test Scores**, Webinar/Audio-conference, noon–1 p.m. This workshop is for parents whose children are not taking Delaware’s standardized test—the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS)—and are instead taking the DCAS-Alt 1 test. This test is designed to assess the student’s capabilities, which are based on grade band extensions (GBEs). Parents will learn how GBEs are applied for the DCAS-Alt 1 and how to interpret their child’s test score. Registration information and more details can be found on the PIC website.

**September 28**

**Artfest**, New Castle County Absalom Jones Community Center, 310 Kiamensi Road, Newport, 11 a.m.–1 p.m. This annual workshop brings together people with disabilities, UD students and staff, community members and volunteers. Participants and volunteers have the opportunity to create a variety of art projects, meet other people and help create artwork for CDS’s 2014 calendar (also the 2012-2013 Annual Report). There is no charge for the program, but registration is required. Participants and volunteers can register by completing the online form at bit.ly/cdsartfest or by contacting Katie Hoffman at 302-831-3632 or khoffman@udel.edu.

**October 4**

**2nd Annual Delaware Educator Fall Symposium**, Dover Downs Conference Center, Dover, 8 a.m.–3:30 p.m. The Center’s ACCESS project is hosting the Delaware Educator Fall Symposium, which is themed “Gaining Momentum: Moving From Perceptions to Practice.” The symposium is an all-day event featuring two exciting presentations which focus on students with significant intellectual disabilities. For more information or to register online, visit the ACCESS website.
**RESOURCES**

**Resources for people with disabilities on ready.gov**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s community preparedness website has information and resources for people with disabilities. In addition, the website has a virtual community with additional resources for participating in National Preparedness Month. Visit [ready.gov](http://ready.gov) or join the National Preparedness Community online to get involved.

**Just In Time Disaster Training video library**

The Disaster Resistant Communities Group (DRCG) has added additional disability emergency preparedness training videos to their video library. The online library provides a single, easy-to-search source in which individuals, agencies and organizations can access videos that cover disaster-related preparedness, response and recovery training for a wide variety of areas. The library can be accessed on the [DRCG website](http://drcg.org).

**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.

**Legislative and advocacy updates**

After a year-long investigation, Senator Tom Harkin, chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, unveiled a report that measures the progress made by states to transition Americans with disabilities out of institutions and into community-based living. The report reveals that many states are failing to live up to the integration mandate of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). You can [read the full report online](http://www.help.senate.gov).

If you have any information you would like shared with legislators or questions about the process, please contact the Center’s disabilities specialist Jamie Wolfe at [jlw@udel.edu](mailto:jlw@udel.edu).

**Applications open for Partners in Policymaking**

The Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) is accepting applications through December 19 for the 2014 Partners in Policymaking (PIP) class. PIP is an innovative leadership training program for adults with disabilities and parents of young children with developmental disabilities. Classes will be offered on the following weekends:

- February 14–15
- March 14–15
- April 11–12
- May 16–17
- June 13–14
- July 25–26
- August 22–23
- September 12–13

Visit the [Partners in Policymaking website](http://partnersinpolicymaking.org) for additional information or to complete the application online.
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), send an email to ud-cds@udel.edu or visit our website at www.udel.edu/cds. You’ll also find CDS on Facebook at www.facebook.com/UDelCDS.

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