The January-February 2013 issue of Project Bridge includes project updates from the past few months and events that will take place in January and February. Please send news and events for the March issue to khoffman@udel.edu by January 22.

PROJECT UPDATES

- The next session in the CDS Lunchtime Learning series, which focuses on issues addressed by CDS and topics related to disabilities, will be held Wednesday, February 27 from 12 noon to 1 p.m. at the Center for Disabilities Studies. The Center’s Adapting Curriculum and Classroom Environments for Student Success (ACCESS) project staff members will present “Delaware Content Standards: What They Mean for Students with Significant Disabilities.” They will introduce participants to the ACCESS project, which is designed to provide educators with the tools they need to improve the educational outcomes of students with significant intellectual disabilities.

  Presenters will explain the Delaware Content Standards and how they are being adapted and implemented for students with significant disabilities. The session will also include a review of the adapted curriculum materials and other resources the ACCESS project team has developed for use by Delaware teachers. ACCESS project staff members presenting the session are Project Leader Julie Bowers, Training Coordinator and Parent Liaison Judi MacBride, and Instructional Coaches Stephanie DeMayo and Esley Newton.

  This Lunchtime Learning workshop is free, but registration is required. Contact Katie Hoffman at khoffman@udel.edu to register and indicate if you need an accommodation. You are welcome to bring a bag lunch. Water and snacks will be provided.

- The LIFE (Legislation, Independence through Assistive Technology, Families, and Education) Conference will be held on January 17 at the Sheraton Dover Hotel from 8 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. The LIFE Conference is Delaware’s premier conference for persons with disabilities and those who support them. The keynote speaker, Aaron Bishop, executive director of the National Council on Disability, will give an overview of the changes in the federal budget and how they will impact service for people with disabilities and their families. The Center for Disabilities Studies is a sponsor
of this event. CDS staff members and partners presenting at the conference include Julie Bowers, Sarah Celestin, Annalisa Ekbladh, Terri Hancharick, Suzanne Milbourne, Beth Mineo, Sonja Rathel, Eileen Sparling and Marvin Williams. Instructions for online registration for the LIFE Conference, as well as a detailed conference schedule, are available on the conference website.

- Three CDS staff members offered presentations about their work at the 2012 Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) Conference in Washington, D.C. in December.
  - CDS Director Beth Mineo presented a poster titled Accessible Instructional Materials: A Powerful Means of Curricular Access. Beth’s presentation detailed the federal mandate for provision of materials in appropriate formats for students with print disabilities and described how Delaware has responded to the mandate. Beth’s co-author was Karen Jones, who recently retired from the Delaware Department of Education.
  - Brian Freedman, project director, and Laura Eisenman, principal investigator for the Transitions and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) project grant, shared two posters related to the project. Mary Culnane, a graduate assistant on the TPSID project, and Linda Grusenmeyer, former project evaluator, helped to develop the poster content. The presentations were titled Rethinking Social Network Assessment for Postsecondary Students with Intellectual Disabilities and Developing Undergraduate Peer Mentors for College Students with Intellectual Disabilities.
  - Also at the AUCD Conference, Ilka Riddle, former director of the Center’s Health and Wellness unit, received the 2012 Young Professional Award in recognition of her contributions to the disabilities field. An excerpt from Beth Mineo’s nomination letter describes Ilka as “an academic scholar and a front-line professional, supporting individuals with disabilities and their families to improve quality of life.” Ilka’s friends at CDS congratulate her on receiving this prestigious honor from AUCD.
  - Research on Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) by Brian Freedman, director of the Transition, Education and Employment Model (TEEM) unit, was noted in the November 2012 issue of the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) Alumni newsletter. Brian is a co-author of the following recently-accepted or published articles:
    - “Determinants of appointment absenteeism at an outpatient pediatric clinic” was published in the November/December 2012 issue of Journal of Development & Behavioral Pediatrics. An abstract of this article is available online.
    - “A diagnosis of autism is not a prognosis for divorce” was published in the fall 2012 issue of Autism Advocate. A digital version of this magazine is available online.
    - “Psychiatric-related emergency department visits among children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder” will be published in the next issue of Journal of Pediatric Emergency Care. A pre-publication abstract is available online. This study was the first to compare mental health-related emergency department visits between children with and without autism spectrum disorders. More information about the results of the study is available from the Kennedy Krieger Institute.
The Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative’s AT Specialists Dan Fendler and Marvin Williams recently helped Delawareans learn about assistive technology resources at community events: Dan at the Arthritis Foundation Expo in Lewes and Marvin at the Senior Health Fair at Absalom Jones Senior Center. Dan introduced members of the Sussex County Multiple Sclerosis Shore Group to a wide variety of tools that may improve their daily lives when they held their November meeting at the Sussex County Assistive Technology Resource Center (ATRC). A photo taken at the meeting is on the Cape Gazette website. Marvin presented an AT overview for Wilmington University and conducted a tour of the New Castle ATRC for the Christiana Care Speech Therapy department.

Assistive technology in the news
- The latest issue of the UD Messenger included an article about the ATRC at CDS.
- Beth Mineo was quoted in an article about assistive technology in the December 2012 issue of MetroKids.

Terri Hancharick, research associate in the Health and Wellness unit, conducted a healthy transitions workshop in Sussex County at Howard T. Ennis School during the month of December. She is presenting a similar four-part workshop for Autism Delaware in January.

The subcommittees of the State Transition Task Force for Emerging Adults with Disabilities and Special Healthcare Needs have been meeting monthly to put together their priorities for the new Legislative Session. The task force has four subcommittees, each of which focuses on one aspect of the transition process: health care, education, employment and housing/transportation. The task force is meeting monthly to receive reports from the subcommittees and will write a report before the end of June for the Governor, Legislature and Department of Health and Social Services. The meetings are open to all interested parties. For more information, contact the task force’s co-chair, Terri Hancharick, at terrih@udel.edu.

Ira Shepard, a student in the Career and Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program, and Brian Freedman were part of a panel discussion titled, “College Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities.” This panel was held at Howard Community College in Maryland in December.

Applications for the third class of the Career and Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program are now available on the CDS website. The deadline for submitting applications is January 31, 2013. For more information or to request an application, contact the CLSC program at 302-831-6974 or CLSC-info@udel.edu.

Applications for the 2013 Junior Partners in Policymaking® program, which will be held June 16 to June 21, 2013, must be submitted by February 14, 2013. The program is looking for a diversity of youth with developmental disabilities and/or an interest in advocating on behalf of those with disabilities. This program was created by the Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council and is funded by the council, the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, the Delaware Department of Education and the Delaware General Assembly. Contact Grace Wesley at jrpartners@udel.edu or 302-722-7066 for an application form or if you have any questions. More information can be found on the CDS website.
JPIP will hold three information sessions for the community to learn more about the program and the application process. Young adults, their families and educators are invited to attend.

- **New Castle County**: January 15, 7-8 p.m. at the Center for Disabilities Studies, 461 Wyoming Road, Newark, DE 19716.
- **Kent County**: January 24, 5-6 p.m. at the University of Delaware, Cooperative Extension Office, Paradee Center, 69 Transportation Circle, Dover, DE 19901.
- **Sussex County**: Check CDS website for date and time.

The CDS **2011-2012 Annual Report** has been published as a calendar for 2013. This year’s calendar includes artwork from 2012 Artfest participants, as well as from other community members with disabilities who were invited to submit artwork. If you did not receive an annual report or would like additional copies, please contact Michele Sands at msands@udel.edu. The report is also available for viewing in the publications section of the CDS website, [www.udel.edu/cds](http://www.udel.edu/cds).

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**HIGHLIGHTED PROJECT OF THE MONTH**

**UD Central Complex partners with CDS on delAWARE Project**

This year Central will be supporting UD’s Center for Disabilities Studies by engaging in disability awareness activities and providing opportunities for you to meet and support Center program participants.

Reach out to your RA or sign up on the blog to find out how your talents and strengths can help us with the delAWARE project.

This poster was designed by Student Engagement Adviser Meghan Morrow to introduce Central Complex residents to the delAWARE project when they returned to campus in August 2012.

- **Central Complex**, which consists of 10 residential halls on the UD campus, has chosen CDS as the organization it is supporting throughout the 2012-2013 school year. The complex is home to a diverse body of about 1,000 residents and is the primary residence of upper-division students. Through a student-run initiative called the delAWARE project, the complex aims to strengthen the student population’s disability awareness and participation in various CDS events.
As part of the partnership, Central Complex is hosting bi-weekly events that engage the students in disability awareness activities. Some events were geared towards challenging students to put themselves in the shoes of a person with a disability. For instance, students were encouraged to try using a wheelchair on an accessibility ramp for Kent Dining Hall. Students were also encouraged to put on a blindfold and pour a cup of water, using their other senses to determine when the cup was full.

Central is also providing opportunities for the residents to meet and support CDS units and program participants. Central has invited students in the Career and Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program to attend community service events within the residence halls in Central. Central Complex residents also helped the School Age unit prepare appreciation bags to distribute to teachers and school professionals who lead Positive Behavior Support teams.

Looking ahead, Central is planning to have a disability awareness and inclusion trivia event on campus during the spring semester. The students also are looking to host a "Cultivate Inclusion" event in which attendees may choose to plant a flower as they commit to creating an inclusive community wherever they live in the future. Student Engagement Adviser Meghan Morrow, a senior in the College of Arts and Sciences, hopes that by the end of this academic year “Central residents understand that they can use their abilities and talents to give back to our community on campus through events in which they can learn more about disabilities.”

Although the Central Complex commitment to CDS will officially conclude at the end of May, the project coordinators hope to continue the partnership into the next academic year. Rebecca Krylow is the Complex Coordinator for Central Complex.

For more information about ongoing activities throughout the year, visit the Central Complex blog.

RESOURCES

- The Community Connectors program has joined forces with The Knights of Columbus Coffee Council of Hockessin. Members of Connectors will be collecting canned goods and nonperishable items as part of the annual Souper Bowl Drive. Donations will be accepted until January 29 and can be placed in Debbie Bain’s office at CDS. For more information about donations, contact Debbie at dbain@udel.edu.

- The Delaware Citizen Corps, a funder of the Center’s Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities (EPID) project, has won special recognition from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for its Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) program. CERT trains people about what to do if emergency workers can’t reach them. The training, which is taught by volunteers—including CDS’ Gary Mears—focuses mainly on natural disasters. A training session for UD faculty, staff and students and others in surrounding neighborhoods will be held Friday night, March 1, and Saturday, March 2. Contact Gary at gmears@udel.edu for more information. To learn about other
CERT sessions or to request a training program for your organization or neighborhood, contact Robert George at robert.george@state.de.us or Marny Lee at 302-659-2243.

- **Sleeping Bag Drive.** The Governor’s Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens and Newark High School have teamed up to collect sleeping bags for homeless children through **February 28**. With over 5,000 children in Delaware living without shelter, sleeping bags provide crucial protection from discomfort, illness and death. Drop locations and information about making a monetary donation are included in the Sleeping Bag Drive flyer.

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**EVENTS**

- **January 15.** Junior Partners in Policymaking® Information session – **New Castle County.** See Project Update section for more information.

- **January 16.** Disability Day in Legislative Hall. See Advocacy Corner for more information.

- **January 17.** LIFE Conference, Sheraton Dover Hotel, 8 a.m.–3:45 p.m. See Project Update section for more information.

- **January 22.** Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) seminar, 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Duncan Center, 500 West Loockerman Street, Dover. DDDS will host a one-day seminar featuring the internationally-renowned behavioral support specialist, David Pitonyak (see his website). His topic is *Beyond “Behaviors”: Supporting Competence, Confidence and Well-being*. The seminar, which is free of charge, is open to all DDDS and DDDS-contracted agency employees, service recipients, family members, advocates and other interested parties. Seats are limited. Contact 302-836-2131 or Ramona.Savage@state.de.us to register.

- **January 24.** Junior Partners in Policymaking® Information session – **Kent County.** See Project Update section for more information.

- **January 24.** National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Conference, 8:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m., Christiana Hilton, Newark. This year’s conference, titled “United on the Path to Recovery,” will focus on local and national mental health topics. Featured speakers include Carol A. Kivler, founder of Courageous Recovery and author of *The ABC’s of Recovery from Mental Illness*, and Donald Lipstein, peer mentor coordinator for the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors. Visit the event website for more information on registration.

- **January 26.** Resource and Information Fair, 9 a.m.–1 p.m., Easter Seals, 61 Corporate Circle, New Castle. The fair features exhibitors from local organizations and businesses—including the Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative of CDS—that provide services to people with disabilities,
the aging population and family caregivers. Contact Erin Warren at 221-2087 or ewarren@esdel.org for more information.

- **January 29. Focus Group Meeting for parents of a child with one or more chronic health conditions**, 6:30–8 p.m., 61 Corporate Circle, New Castle, Easter Seals Conference Room A. Delaware Family Voices (DEFV) invites parents of a child with diabetes, a chronic respiratory condition and/or a chronic cardiac condition to share their knowledge and experiences in order to help DEFV improve care and services for other families. Participants will receive a stipend for their time. Registration by **January 15** is required. Contact Kerry Doyle-Shannon at p2p@defc.org or 302-221-5361.

- **January 30. Focus Group Meeting for parents of a child with one or more chronic health conditions**, 12:30–2 p.m. See January 29 listing for further information.

- **January 31. Deadline for CLSC Applications.** See Project Update section for more information.

- **February 14. Deadline for Junior Partners in Policymaking® Applications.** See Project Update section for more information.

- **Save the dates** for these conferences:
  - **March 14, 2013.** Inclusion Conference
  - **March 23, 2013.** Self-advocacy Conference
  - **April 15–16, 2013.** Transition Conference
  - **April 26, 2013.** Easter Seals Caregiver & Respite 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 khoffman@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 legislative priority issues each year and is responsible for planning the annual **Disability Day at Legislative Hall.** This year’s event will be held on **January 16**, from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at 411 Legislative Avenue, Dover. It provides an opportunity for Delawareans to meet with legislators and discuss important disability issues. Those who are planning to attend should schedule appointments in advance with their representatives and senators. Contact Jamie Wolfe at jlw@udel.edu if you have any questions or would like to participate in Disability Day at Legislative Hall.

The disabilities-related issues targeted for change through legislation or policymaking, as selected by the Legislative Planning Committee for this legislative session are:

- Developmental disabilities
- Family support waiver
- Seclusion and restraint
- Dental care insurance
- Accessible taxi service
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) trust fund
- Regulation of Delaware Autistic Program group homes
- Physical health for all students
- Equal accommodations law
- Accessible medical equipment
- Services for new high school graduates
- Employment
- Guardianship for people with disabilities

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), send an email to ud-cds@udel.edu or visit our website at www.udel.edu/cds.

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