The March 2013 issue of Project Bridge includes project updates from the past few months and events that will take place in late-February, March and April. Please send news and events for the April issue to khoffman@udel.edu by March 10.

PROJECT UPDATES

- The next session in the CDS Lunchtime Learning series 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. This project is conducted in conjunction with the Delaware Department of Education.

  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.

  Lunchtime Learning sessions are free, but registration is required. Contact Katie Hoffman at khoffman@udel.edu to register. Please reply by February 21 if you need an accommodation. You are welcome to bring a bag lunch. Water and snacks will be provided.

- Additional Lunchtime Learning sessions have been scheduled for March 22 and April 22. The March session will feature Mia Papas, UD Assistant Professor of Behavioral Health and Nutrition, and Irene Soucy, Registered Dietician, in a program about obesity and other health risks in people with disabilities and special health care needs and how proper nutrition can improve their health.
In April, **Annalisa Ekbladh**, CDS Program Coordinator and the State Lead for the Autism State Planning Initiative, will present the autism strategic plan that was developed for Delaware. More information about both Lunchtime Learning sessions will be available in the near future.

- CDS extends a warm welcome to two new staff members. **Tori Clark** joined the Dissemination and Advocacy unit as Communications Specialist on January 28. Tori received bachelor’s degrees in music and English from UD in 2010. She has begun work on a new CDS website. **Sharon Wiegner** joined the Center’s staff as Administrative Specialist on February 11. Sharon has a Master’s in Business Administration in Management from Strayer University. She serves on the Center’s management team and will provide administrative support for the entire Center.

- **Suzanne Milbourne** will work with CDS Director **Beth Mineo** on a newly-funded federal Department of Education project called the **Delaware Early Childhood Assistive Technology Demonstration project (DECATD)**. Suzanne previously worked on the National Children’s Study at CDS.

- Congratulations to **Pat Maichle**, director of the Developmental Disabilities Council and a member of the Center for Disabilities Studies Community Advisory Council for being named to the **Hall of Fame of Delaware Women**. She will be inducted at the 32nd annual award ceremony and reception, which will take place March 21 at the Hilton Christiana Hotel in Newark. Additional event information, as well as registration details, can be found on the event website.

- Since the nationwide launch of **text4baby** in February 2010, more than 491,000 moms throughout the country have enrolled in this service. With over 2,300 subscribers from Delaware, the First State has the fourth highest rate of enrollment of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, announced Project Coordinator **Karen Zalewski**. Karen noted that approximately 4.1% of the estimated number of pregnant women and new moms in Delaware have enrolled in text4baby since its launch in late 2010. Delaware currently has the 6th highest rate of infant mortality among all states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. This statistic highlights the need for innovative strategies to address maternal and child health, including the type of accurate and timely health information provided by text4baby.

- **Family Support and Healthcare Alliance Delaware (Family SHADE)** launched a comprehensive new website in February that provides important information in a single place for families of children with disabilities and chronic health conditions. The new website, [www.familyshade.org](http://www.familyshade.org), includes information on events and workshops across the state, as well as a searchable database of resources. Families can also call Family SHADE’s new hotline, 1-855-755-SHADE (1-855-755-7423) to receive help navigating the website, as well as to receive help searching the database or connecting with services. The hotline is staffed by parents of children with disabilities and chronic health conditions.

- On April 6, United Cerebral Palsy Delaware and the Brain Injury Association of Delaware will host a health fair, **A Healthy Life without Limits**, at the Doubletree Hotel, 700 N. King Street, Wilmington, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. This event aims to connect families of children with special health care
needs to the supports and services that are available in Delaware. The health fair is funded by Family SHADE through generous support from the Maternal Child Health Bureau within the Delaware Division of Public Health. Admission is free and open to the public. Organizations interested in becoming sponsors or vendors can find information on the event website. For more information, email info@ahealthylifewithoutlimits.org or call 302-764-2400.

HIGHLIGHTED PROJECT OF THE MONTH

UD offers Community Emergency Response Team Training

- Emergency preparedness has been a focus of CDS for more than three years, but recently the larger UD community has become more involved in this effort through Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) trainings.

According to the Citizen Corps website, the CERT program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace, following an event, when professional responders are not immediately available to help.

Marcia Nickle, Manager of Emergency Preparedness in the Office of Campus and Public Safety, commented on the CERT training the University will be offering. She believes that emergency preparedness has greater support now than in the past, with recent natural disasters proving that people need to be prepared. “I have been a CERT trainer for many years now and I think this program is a good one,” Marcia said. “Because of the partnership we now enjoy with CDS, we are able to reach a larger audience. Through the help of students in our graduate program, we finally have enough hands around the table to host the training this year.”

CERT training helps people take better care of themselves and their families in the event of a natural disaster, said CDS staff member Gary Mears, who serves as a volunteer trainer. “Participants will learn actions to take prior to, during and after a major disaster occurs,” he noted.

UD’s first training session, scheduled for early March, has received an overwhelming response from the community, and all slots have been filled. The next training will be held Tuesday, April 9 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. There is no charge. UD trainings will be conducted by Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA), Citizen Corps and the state CERT instructor team. 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 CERT program.

Contact Marcia Nickle at mnickle@udel.edu or 302-831-0383 to register for the April 9 training or receive additional information about CERT trainings.
UPCOMING CONFERENCES

- **March 14. 19th Annual Inclusion Conference**, Sheraton Dover Hotel, 8 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. The Inclusion Conference is designed for educators, parents, policymakers and service providers who are interested in promoting inclusion for all from birth to age 21. With the theme, “Shared Responsibilities = Shared Benefits,” the conference features Laura Riffel, Ph.D. as the keynote speaker. Laura specializes in training adults to make data-based decisions to change behavior. She will discuss creating a foundation of behavioral support for all students.

  Conference attendees will have a choice of five workshops to attend following the keynote presentation. Additional information on these workshops is available in the event brochure. Online registration is available on the DATI website. The deadline for registration is February 28. For more information, contact Roseann Ferri at rferri@udel.edu or 302-739-6885 or Sonja Rathel at rathel@udel.edu or 302-856-1081.

- **March 23. Self-advocacy Conference**, Sheraton Dover Hotel, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. This conference is designed to introduce and celebrate the self-advocacy program in the state of Delaware. With the theme, “It’s Your Life, Speak from the Heart,” the conference is about people with all disabilities having a voice, standing up for themselves, building their independence and self-determination, and advocating for support for themselves and others. Information about registration and transportation will soon be available on the conference website. If you’d like to be put on a list to be notified when registration information is available, please contact Mary Thomas at maryt@udel.edu.

- **April 4–5. 22nd Annual Brain Injury Conference**, Doubletree Hotel, 700 N. King St., Wilmington. The theme is “Brain Injury Across the Lifespan.” This event is organized by the Brain Injury Association of Delaware (BIAD). The conference will begin the evening of April 4 with a Mix & Meet Reception and will continue on April 5 with the keynote speech and other sessions. More information about this conference will be available on the BIAD website.

- **April 15–16. “Shared Work, Shared Vision” Delaware Community of Practice Transition/Self-Determination Conference**, Sheraton Dover Hotel, 8 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. The conference is for students aged 14–21 receiving special education services, their parents, educators and professionals. The conference will feature a different keynote speaker each day. On April 15, Anindya “Bapin” Bhattacharyya of the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths & Adults will speak about using technology to gain independence. Bapin will focus on numerous technological advances that provide individuals with a means toward greater independence. On April 16, Sheila Radziewicz, a self-advocate, will speak about understanding the rights of people with disabilities.

  CDS staff members and programs presenting at the conference include:
  - **Dan Fendler, Beth Mineo** and **Marvin Williams**, Assistive Technology: Considering Tools for School and Beyond
  - Students in the **Career and Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program**, Maximizing Access to Higher Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities
Registration is available on the [DATI event website](http://www.udel.edu/cds/index_calendar.html). For more information, contact Valencia Harper at vharper@doe.k12.de.us or 302-735-4210.

- **April 26. Easter Seals Caregiver & Respite Conference**, Easter Seals Conference Center, 61 Corporate Circle, New Castle, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be a full day of interactive presentations designed to help family caregivers. **John Schall**, CEO of the National Family Caregiver Alliance, will deliver the keynote address. Contact **Erin Warren** at ewarren@esdel.org or 302-221-2087 for more information.

**EVENTS**

Also visit the CDS website calendar at [http://www.udel.edu/cds/index_calendar.html](http://www.udel.edu/cds/index_calendar.html).

- **February 27. CDS Lunchtime Learning.** See Project Update section for more information.

- **February 28. Brandywine Special Needs PTA Special Event**, 7 to 8:30 p.m., Springer Middle School Library, 2220 Shipley Road, Wilmington. **Brian Touchette**, acting director of Accountability Resources at the Delaware Department of Education, and **Judi MacBride** of the ACCESS project will present “Common Core: Standards Across Learning Differences.” They will share the state’s vision of inclusion to make certain that all students are exposed to and learn the Common Core Standards through Grade Band Extensions. Regular and special educators, administrators and parents are welcome to attend. Additional information about the Brandywine Special Needs PTA is on its [website](http://www.udel.edu/cds/index_calendar.html).

- **February 28. Sean Forbes performance.** 7 p.m., Delaware School for the Deaf, 630 E. Chestnut Hill Road, Newark. Sean Forbes, founder of the Deaf Performing Artists Network (D-PAN) and deaf performing artist, will give a special musical performance in American Sign Language (ASL). This event is presented by Delaware Statewide Programs Association (DSPA), a non-profit organization that focuses on translating popular artists’ songs into ASL music videos for the deaf and hard of hearing communities. Sean’s performances bridge the gap between the music industry and deaf people. General admission tickets are $12 and are available on the [Delaware Statewide Programs for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind home page](http://www.udel.edu/cds/index_calendar.html). For more information, contact 302-454-2301 or sheak1@christina.k12.de.us.

- **March 6. Spread the Word to End the Word.** This event is a part of an ongoing effort by Special Olympics to raise consciousness of the hurtful effects of the word ‘retard(ed)’ and to encourage people to stop using the ‘R’ word. More information about this movement is available on the [Special Olympics Delaware website](http://www.udel.edu/cds/index_calendar.html). CDS will join with the University’s Best Buddies chapter to spread the word to UD students and encourage them to pledge to show respect to everyone.

- **March 22. CDS Lunchtime Learning.** See Project Update section for more information.

- **April 6. A Healthy Life without Limits.** See Project Update section for more information.
- **April 22. CDS Lunchtime Learning.** 12 noon to 1 p.m., Center for Disabilities Studies. A presentation about the autism strategic plan that was developed for the state of Delaware.

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**RESOURCES**

- As part of **National Low Vision Month** in February, National Institutes of Health (NIH) released a large-print booklet and videos to help people with low vision. The booklet, "Living with Vision Loss: What you should know," encourages people with vision loss to get help from a low vision specialist and gives tips on getting the most out of remaining eyesight. The videos feature stories about people living with low vision. Additional information is on the NIH website. The Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI) of CDS operates the BOLD ((Borrow-to-Own Low Vision Devices) program to provide assistive devices to Delawareans with vision loss. See the DATI website for more information.

- A new online community called **I CAN’T GET IN!** seeks to help people who routinely struggle with access to public buildings and other environments. On the I CAN’T GET IN! website, visitors can use a simple rating system to assess a building’s accessibility before they arrive, as well as rate buildings they have visited. The website posts reviews from those who have visited buildings. The website also provides information to businesses that are willing to take the steps to make their buildings more accessible. Contact Philip Adams at 302-290-0866 or icantgetin.usa@gmail.com for more information.

- The **Collaboration to Promote Self-Determination** (CPSD) has launched a new website, http://thecpsd.org. CPSD seeks to empower citizens with disabilities to become self-sufficient, productive members of society through employment in jobs and environments that are typical in our society. Visitors to the new website can find information about how to become more involved in advocacy efforts, including updates on the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act. Secretary of Delaware Health and Social Services Rita Landgraf and DHSS staff member Alyssa Cowin are featured on the CPSD homepage.

- **United Cerebral Palsy of Delaware (UCPDE)** is accepting applications for staff and volunteers for **Camp Manito.** This summer camp program is for children and young adults (ages 3–21) with orthopedic disabilities. More information and applications, can be found on the UCPDE website.

- **$tand By Me®, United Way of Delaware and Goodwill of Delaware** are partnering to offer a web-based tax preparation program called **MyFreeTaxesDE** at no charge to taxpayers with household income at or below $57,000. Visit www.standbymede.org and make an appointment to meet with a free financial coach.
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.

- Congress recently passed Rosa’s Law, which changes references in specified Federal laws from “mental retardation” and “a mentally retarded individual” to “intellectual disability” and “an individual with an intellectual disability.” Social Security has also created a Notice of Public Rule Making, a proposal to change wording of its documentation to adopt the term “intellectual disability.” These changes occurred after many advocates contacted Michael Astrue, Commissioner of the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. The entire proposed public rule to change terminology in Social Security legislation is available for viewing on the Regulations website.

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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