PROJECT BRIDGE

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER FOR DISABILITIES STUDIES

MAY 2012

The May 2012 issue of Project Bridge includes project updates from the past few months and events that will take place in May and June. The next issue will be a combined issue for June and July and will be sent in early June. Please send news and events for the June-July issue to mercooke@udel.edu by May 17.

PROJECT UPDATES

- CDS Director Beth Mineo attended the Disability Policy Seminar in Washington, D.C. April 23 and 24. She was joined by Ralph Ferretti, a professor in the School of Education who will teach the Disabilities Studies Minor senior seminar (HEPP 465) in the fall. CDS staff member Terri Hancharick and her daughter, Brigitte Hancharick, who is a self-advocate, also attended as members of the Governor’s Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens.

- Beth Mineo and Karen Jones, a Delaware Department of Education (DOE) staff member, presented “The Digital Rights Manager: An Essential Role in Complying with IDEA and Supporting Student Success” to individuals designated by their school districts as Digital Rights Managers (DRM). These individuals play an important part in the provision of accessible instructional materials (AIM) to students with print disabilities. They serve as “brokers” between Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams and the Delaware AIM Center, an initiative of CDS, DOE, and the Division for the Visually Impaired. The trainings, held in New Castle County and Kent County in April, clarified the legal and ethical responsibilities of a DRM.

- Marvin Williams and Joann McCafferty, staff members with the Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative at the Center for Disabilities Studies, exhibited at the 55+ Active Adult Expo on April 19 at Dover Downs. The 55+ Expo is an annual trade show that focuses on the growing 55 and over population. It is designed to connect these individuals with organizations, products and services that may benefit them.

- Beth Mineo and Annalisa Ekbladh, a CDS project coordinator, were quoted in an article in The News Journal on April 17. The article, “Research and debate shape autism discussion,” discusses
the recent finding by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that one in 88 children has an autism spectrum disorder.

- The April 2012 issue of the UD Messenger included an article on CDS’ 2011 Disability Mentoring Day. The Messenger is a quarterly University of Delaware publication for alumni, contributors and others who support the University.

- UDaily has an article about how members of Community Connectors are experiencing community integration on campus. It features the third annual car wash, which takes place on May 2 (see events).

**HIGHLIGHTED PROJECT OF THE MONTH**

Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project Holds Annual Celebration

- Nearly 200 educators, administrators and other school professionals celebrated the success of Positive Behavior Support programs in their schools at the Delaware Positive Behavior Support (DE-PBS) Annual Celebration Conference on April 25.

  The conference theme was “Give a Hoot about DE-PBS!” Participants were encouraged to “Owl-ways be wise, use DE-PBS” and reminded that “Owl you need is DE-PBS.” The vision of the DE-PBS project is to create safe and caring learning environments that promote the social-emotional and academic development of all children. This vision requires comprehensive, systematic and individualized interventions and supports.

  Teams from four schools presented their schools’ way of delivering these individualized interventions and supports. At Eisenberg Elementary School in the Colonial School District, at-risk students formed grade level groups focused on the development of social skills. Newark High School in the Christina School District utilizes a PBS student organization to make PBS events and character education lessons an integral part of the school community. Millsboro Middle School in the Indian River School District implemented a PBS Rocks kids club that uses monthly incentives and “golden tickets” to encourage students to share what they know in a positive way. At Etta J. Wilson Elementary School in Christina, the PBS team focuses on sustaining the program from year to year. They used information from school climate surveys and student behavior referrals to adapt PBS to fit the needs of their students and school.

  Laura Riffel, Ph.D., was the keynote speaker at the conference. Dr. Riffel is a behaviorist who specializes in positive behavioral interventions and effective strategies for classroom teachers of students with academic or behavioral difficulties. She offered recommendations and information to
the participants about motivating staff at their schools to promote PBS and the importance of building relationships with students in order for interventions to be effective. Many participants noted that they were inspired by all the ideas presented, and they were excited to get back to their classes and implement new strategies immediately.

Other schools shared aspects of their PBS programs through poster presentations. Participants were encouraged to visit each poster during breaks to learn how other schools promote PBS with diverse groups of students. For example, Brandywine Community School—an alternative setting in the Brandywine School District—uses art therapy techniques to deliver visual and tangible interventions to help all students develop coping skills. At Warner Elementary School in the Red Clay School District, the PBS team targets bus referrals by having staff members take ownership of the bus behavior on their “adopted” bus. Morris Early Childhood Center in the Milford School District implements PBS at the kindergarten level using the school motto, ABC—Act Safely, Be a Friend, Choose Manners. One attendee was pleased that so many wonderful ideas were shared during the poster presentation time, and it was most helpful to “be able to speak with other teachers to see how successful PBS is in their school.”

Staff from the Milford School District and Morris Early Childhood Center proudly display information about their DE-PBS Program.

Materials and resources from Dr. Riffel’s presentations are available online as a free download from her organization’s website, Behavior Doctor Seminars. Visit the DE-PBS website for more information about the Positive Behavior Support project.

RESOURCES

- The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities has introduced an application for iPhones or Android smart phones called DisAbilityConnect. This free “app” provides contact
information for organizations relating to disabilities, special education, early intervention, support groups and other disability-related topics. Visit the Apple App Store or Android Market websites for more information or to download.

**EVENTS**

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.

- **May 2. Community Connectors Car Wash**, 11 a.m.–3 p.m., Elkton Road Sunoco (Elkton Road at Murray Road), Newark. Members of Community Connectors, Sigma Kappa Sorority and Sigma Pi Fraternity will wash your car for $7 to benefit Connectors.

- **May 4. CDS staff meeting and potluck lunch**, 10:30 a.m.–1 p.m.

- **May 9. Conducting Safe and Accessible Focus Groups**, 11 a.m.–2 p.m., Center for Disabilities Studies, 461 Wyoming Road, Newark. The First State Equal Access to Safety Initiative, a collaboration of CDS, Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence and National Alliance for Mental Illness, Delaware Chapter, are conducting this training session. It will be beneficial for members of an initiative focus group team, focus group note-takers, staff members and students designing or participating in research. To learn if space is still available, contact Alisha Boyd at alishab@udel.edu or 302-831-4612, or Lisa Becker, lbecker@dcadv.org or 302-658-2958. Participants should bring lunch.

- **May 20. 9th Annual Buddy Walk**, 11 a.m.–3 p.m., University of Delaware Athletic Complex. Hosted by the Down Syndrome Association of Delaware, the 2012 Buddy Walk is a one-mile walk to promote the understanding, inclusion and acceptance of people with Down syndrome. More than 1,500 people are expected to participate by walking, volunteering or collecting donations in the name of their Buddy or Team. Following the walk are free activities and entertainment for toddlers to teenagers. As in years past, CDS will have an information table at the Buddy Walk. Anyone who is interested in helping at the table should contact Michele Sands at msands@udel.edu or 302-831-3038. Additional information and registration details for the walk are available [online](http://www.udel.edu/cds/index_calendar.html).

- **May 30–June 1. 2012 National Transition Conference**, Washington, D.C. The theme of this annual conference is “College and Careers for Youth with Disabilities.” Participants will hear directly from young adults and their family members about strategies that lead to successful transition. Sessions will cover various transition topics, including: strategies for college success for young adults with disabilities; using new technologies such as iPads and iPhones to increase success at school and work; how Project Search supports successful transitions to employment; and ways to support young adults in foster care or the juvenile justice system as they transition to postsecondary education and employment. Keynote speaker Ann Wilson Cramer, director of IBM
Americas, will give a talk titled “Preparing Today’s Youth for Tomorrow’s Workforce.” [Online registration](#) is currently open. This conference is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS).

- **June 1–3. UD Annual Alumni Weekend 2012.** This fourth annual celebration for all UD alumni and family members features a number of events throughout the weekend. On Friday, June 1, the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) is hosting an Alumni Reception from 5:30–7:30 p.m. on the lawn of Willard Hall to offer alumni and friends the opportunity to meet with the leadership of the college and reunite with other alumni. See the new CEDH website [Alumni Weekend page](#) for more information about the reception. Other Alumni Weekend event highlights include: Friday’s Mug Night Dela-bration, UD President Patrick Harker’s State of the University address, the Blue Hen 5K, reunions for the Classes of 1962, 1987, 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2007, and the Blue Hen Picnic on The Green. Visit the Alumni Weekend [website](#) for more information or to register for the weekend.

- **June 4. UDid It! Annual Employee Appreciation Picnic,** 11 a.m.–1 p.m. UD employees are encouraged to attend this fourth annual event. The picnic will take place in a large tent on The Green.

- **June 8–9. Special Olympics Delaware Summer Games.** This annual event, sponsored by DuPont, will take place at the University of Delaware. Athletes and unified partners compete in six sports—aquatics, bocce, powerlifting, softball, tennis, and track and field—over two days. The Opening Ceremony at the Bob Carpenter Center begins June 8 at 7 p.m. Admission is free and open to the public. Visit the [Special Olympics Delaware website](#) for more information.

- **June 15. Community Advisory Council meeting,** 9:30–11:30 a.m. This meeting of the Center’s Advisory Council will be held at CDS at 461 Wyoming Road, Newark.

- **June 23. 57th Annual Blue-Gold All Star Game,** University of Delaware Stadium, Newark. Parking ($5 per car) opens at 2 p.m. and children’s pre-game activities begin at 4 p.m. The pre-game celebration will start at 6 p.m. for the general public. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. Sponsored by DFRC, this annual football game showcases high school students who participate as football players, cheerleaders, band members and school ambassadors. As a frequent beneficiary of DFRC grants, CDS supports the organization’s mission to promote understanding of people with intellectual disabilities and to support programs that encourage individuals with intellectual disabilities to maximize their independence and enjoyment of life.

- **July 19–22. 40th Annual National Down Syndrome Congress Convention,** Washington, D.C. The convention features educational workshops, plenary sessions, social events and opportunities to attend preconference sessions for those who wish to focus on a single topic in-depth with a nationally known expert. Visit the [conference website](#) for more information or to register for the event.
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 mercooke@udel.edu.

- The State Senate has passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 34, implementing the State Transition Taskforce for adults with disabilities and special health care needs. This Task Force will be housed within the Governor’s Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) with research support from CDS and the Catalyst Center at the Boston University School of Public Health. The Task Force will study the transitional needs of children and youth with disabilities and special health care needs and develop strategies to ensure successful transition from child and adolescent services into adult services. The Task Force will present a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly within one year of the passage of this Resolution.

- On April 19, 2012 Governor Markell signed HB 245 into law, which amends Title 11 of the Delaware Code relating to the adoption of People First Language in the criminal code and the removal of insensitive and offensive language from the criminal code. This bill was sponsored by Representative Debra Heffernan.

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.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The University of Delaware does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation in its programs and activities as required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable statutes and University policies. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and related statutes and regulations: Tom Webb, Director, Office of Disabilities Support Services, 240 Academy Street, Alison Hall Suite 119, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716, 302-831-4643. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies and to serve as the overall campus coordinator for purposes of Title IX compliance: Bindu Kolli, Chief Policy Advisor, Office of Equity and Inclusion, 305 Hullihen Hall,
University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716, 302-831-8063. The following individuals have been designated as deputy Title IX coordinators: for Athletics, Jennifer W. Davis, Vice President for Finance and Administration, 220 Hullihen Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716, 302-831-2769; and for Student Life, Dawn Thompson, Dean of Students/AVP for Student Life, 101 Hullihen 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 \( \text{http://wdcrbobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm} \) 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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