PROJECT BRIDGE

AUGUST 2015

Project Bridge is the periodic newsletter of the Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS) within the University of Delaware’s College of Education and Human Development. This issue includes updates from the past few months and a look forward to upcoming events.

Please send news and items for the next issue to Ben Szmidt at bszmidt@udel.edu by September 15.

IN THE NEWS

UDaily previews approaching Artfest

The Sept. 26 community celebration and workshop, which offers people with disabilities access to adaptive art tools, a variety of art projects, and the support of UD student volunteers, is featured at the UDaily website. In the article, participant Haley Shiber and volunteer Natalie Pesetsky hail the creativity and camaraderie on display at Artfest. Last year, they painted hats, made clay molds and worked on a floor mural.

This year’s event includes spin art, mask decorating, a floor mural, and several other offerings.

Artfest will be held at the Absalom Jones Community Center, 310 Kiamensi Rd., in Newport. It’s made possible through a collaboration of CDS, Art Therapy Express of Newport and New Castle County Department of Community Services. For more information and to register as a participant or volunteer, visit the event’s flyer.
CDS looks to fill void in oral health care for people with disabilities

CDS is embarking on a three-year project to improve access to oral healthcare in Delaware for people with disabilities in Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), population areas where there are 5,000 or more people for every one dentist. Jae Chul Lee, director of CDS’s Health and Wellness unit, will lead the development of two surveys in the project’s first year; one to determine the oral health needs of people with disabilities in Dental HPSAs and another to gauge the readiness of Delaware’s dentists to meet those needs. CDS will use the survey findings to create training courses for oral health professionals so they can better care for people with disabilities. The project is funded by the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services through the Health Resources and Services Administration.

CDS has also received a new, six-month contract to provide management support to the Delaware Oral Health Coalition (DOHC). DOHC has identified goals, including improving access to oral health care for children, seniors and people with disabilities, and building a collaborative network of advocates to improve oral health in Delaware. DOHC also has organized action groups that will develop strategies to accomplish these goals. CDS will help DOHC facilitate the meetings of the action groups, the DOHC board, the Bureau of Oral Health and Dental Services and external organizations.

DE-PBS aims to support positive social skills at home and in school

CDS’s Delaware Positive Behavior Support (DE-PBS) project and the Delaware Department of Education hosted two workshops educating parents and educators on how to teach and support positive social skills in children on Aug. 5 and 6. The first workshop gave parents resources and explicit instruction on developing positive social skills, such as charts that help children show their feelings and tips on how to teach what information is appropriate to share with others. The second workshop provided educators with lesson plans that enforce positive social skills, such as considering other people’s feelings and appropriate ways to manage emotions. Jill Kuzma, a renowned speech and language pathologist and social-emotional teacher from the Minnesota public school system, presented both workshops.

CLSC to start its biggest year yet

UD’s Career and Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program, a two-year, non-residential offering that provides young adults with intellectual disabilities access to a college education, is welcoming 11 first-year students for the 2015/2016 school year. This is the largest incoming CLSC class since the program’s founding class in 2011. Ten second-year
CLSC students will also be returning for a total of 21 students, the greatest number enrolled in CLSC at any single time since its inception.

IEP institute celebrates second year

CDS’s ACCESS project hosted its 2nd Annual Standards-based IEP Institute on July 22 at Dover Downs in Dover. The Institute allowed participants to share successes and troubleshoot issues related to the development of Individual Education Plans (IEP), create IEP "action plans" for the upcoming school year and schedule professional development sessions with ACCESS coaches. Ninety-five Delaware educators from 10 school districts across the state attended the Institute.

STAFF UPDATES

Staff arrival

Jamie Caruso has joined CDS’s School Age unit as a limited-term researcher for the Positive Behavior Support (PBS) project. She will be coaching educators in the Prevent-Teach-Reinforce (PTR) method of behavioral support. Before arriving at CDS, Jamie worked as a school psychologist in the Colonial School District.

Graduate assistant arrivals

Skye Beckley will be working with UD’s Career and Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program, where he will co-teach courses and conduct life-skills coaching. He is looking forward to exploring the options that students with disabilities have after high school. Skye earned a B.A. in psychology at Temple University and is pursuing an Ed.S. in school psychology.

Marisa Cheng is working with CDS’s Healthy Delawareans with Disabilities (HDWD) project. She will be participating in health policy activities and conducting healthcare transition research. Marisa is looking forward to gaining more experience, advocating for programs and resources and helping to improve the health of people with disabilities in Delaware. Marisa earned a B.S. in...
health behavior science from UD and is pursuing a M.S. in health promotion.

Laura Davidson will be working with CDS’s PBS unit, where she will support the project’s professional development activities and help conduct data collection and fidelity evaluations in the schools. She is looking forward to meeting new people who are striving to make a difference in the lives of children. Laura earned a B.S. in psychology at Tulane University and is pursuing an Ed.S. in school psychology.

Angela Harris has joined CDS’s Delaware Positive Behavior Support (DE-PBS) unit. Angela will be assisting the Delaware School Climate Survey and helping to put together training modules for the project. She is looking forward to the experience and knowledge that she will gain working for the PBS project. Angela earned a B.S. in psychology at Lebanon Valley College and is pursuing a Ph.D. in school psychology.

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.

Bloggers tackle police encounters, schooling for students with blindness

At CDS’s Inclusion blog, writers also took on people who insist on texting while driving, and offered solutions for people with disabilities who’ve given up on reading. In August:

Former police officer Charles Bryant discussed new crisis intervention training for law enforcement officers in Delaware. Bryant, who today works as an administrator in the developmental disabilities field, predicts the training should reduce tragic encounters involving law officers and people with IDD.

Debbie Harrington, who serves on the Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council to the Division for the Visually Impaired, noted that many secondary students with blindness may soon be entitled to an extended school year program, as are students with several other disabilities.
Blogger David Lynch took readers on a personal journey through technology that can help people with disabilities overcome obstacles that might otherwise keep them from reading.

And Cory Nourie, like Lynch a member of CDS’s Community Advisory Council, kicked off her grass-roots campaign to stop people from texting and driving.

CDS launched its Inclusion blog in June to engage the disability community, the public and policy makers in a provocative discussion of issues with the potential to bring about positive changes in the lives of people with disabilities.

Our bloggers include advocates and experts, people with disabilities and people without disabilities, staff at CDS and writers outside CDS.

Visit the blog at http://blog.cds.udel.edu. And please don’t just read what’s there, comment!

SOCIAL MEDIA

CDS on Facebook

If you’re among the growing number of people who like CDS on Facebook, you learned how UD’s physical therapy program helped the Bear-Glasgow YMCA acquire special harnesses that make it easier or possible for members with disabilities to exercise in an inclusive environment; you read about a summer vocational program in Delaware that trained 17 teenagers with disabilities in skills that span culinary arts and hotel security; and you heard that Facebook’s mobile app is receiving criticism from the disability community for not being accessible enough for many people with vision loss.

If you haven’t yet liked CDS on Facebook, what’s keeping you? Connect with us now!

CDS on Twitter

In August, followers of CDS on Twitter got word that four Special Olympics World Game athletes from Delaware brought home 11 medals, including four golds; saw Delawarean Kayla Kosmalski, a 9 year-old with Down syndrome, model Ellen Degeneres’ new Gap clothing line; and discovered
that some Canadian advocates are calling on their government to create a law similar to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Get social, and follow CDS on Twitter!

RESOURCES

Tech-savvy teens help children with autism remember daily tasks

Teenagers with autism at Tech Kids Unlimited (TKU), a non-profit organization in Brooklyn, have created a smartphone app to help children on the spectrum remember to perform daily tasks. The app, called LOLA, allows users to set a certain number of daily tasks, or “challenges” per week, such as brushing their teeth and putting on deodorant. LOLA then reminds the users about their challenges via notifications that feature humorous images from popular cartoons, such as Spongebob Squarepants. The app is expected to be released on iTunes in September. Read this Observer article for more information about LOLA.

EVENTS

September 3

Reducing Problem Behaviors – Behavior analyst Kelly Adams-Denson from Behavior Interventions, Inc. of Dover will host a free workshop from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Residence Inn, 600 Jefferic Blvd., of Dover. Participants will learn to identify the antecedents and functions of problem behaviors, as well as proactive and reactive strategies to reduce problem behaviors. This workshop is appropriate for parents, caregivers and professionals. To register contact Kelly at kad@behaviorinterventions.org or call 302-857-0848 Ext. 111.
September 10

**Lunchtime Learning: Volunteering in the Disability Community** – UD students will learn how they can volunteer with the 16 registered student organizations (RSOs) on campus that benefit people with disabilities. Representatives from five RSOs – American Sign Language Club, Autism Speaks, Best Buddies, Canine Companions for Independence, and Special Olympics College – will discuss the great work UD’s RSOs do in the disability community, why the work is so enriching for student volunteers, and how students can get involved. The event runs from noon to 1 p.m. at Alison Hall, 240 Academy St., in Newark. For more information and to register, [visit the event website](#).

September 15

**Preparing for a Successful School Year** – The Parent Information Center (PIC) of Delaware will host a workshop beginning at 6 p.m. at Frederick Douglass Elementary School, 1 Swain Road in Seaford, where participants may create a “tool-kit” that can help support student success. The kit includes tips on advocacy and communication that can help parents engage in their child’s school experience. For more information and to register, [visit the event website](#).

September 19

**Road to Better Services** – The Delaware Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services will present a workshop on getting better services from doctors, schools, insurers and agencies from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 261 Chapman Road, Stockton Building, Suite 200 (2nd floor conference room), in Newark. This interactive class is full of practical strategies and taught by parents. Lunch will be served. For more information and to register call 302-892-6408 or email Barbara.Messick@state.de.us

September 26

**Artfest** – See above.

Visit the CDS calendar for more upcoming events.

CONTACT US

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