IN THE NEWS

CDS helps Sesame Street develop character with autism

In October Sesame Workshop introduced Julia, a character with autism, as part of “Sesame Street and Autism: See Amazing in All Children.” This initiative, which offers ways for families to overcome common challenges and simplify everyday activities, was developed with the input of parents of children with autism, people who serve the autism community, and people with autism. Last October, CDS project coordinator Annalisa Ekbladh worked with Autism Delaware to gather a group of Delaware parents of children with autism ages 2 to 5 to provide input and review materials, such as daily routine cards and a storybook, for Sesame Workshop’s initiative. Parents also gave feedback to Sesame Workshop staff on the challenges they face and how Sesame Street could play a role in fostering friendships and inclusion for children with autism. For more about “Sesame Street and Autism: See Amazing in All Children,” watch this video about the initiative.
Disability Mentoring Day expands in Delaware

CDS hosted Delaware’s Disability Mentoring Day gathering in Newark for the seventh year on Oct. 21. Twenty-three students from Christiana High School, Glasgow High School and UD’s Career and Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program each paired with a mentor and participated in job shadowing experiences with 22 employers. Their work spanned landscaping and photography to retail and public policy. This was also the first Disability Mentoring Day to have job shadowing sites in Kent and Sussex counties.

Two CLSC students related their experiences at CDS’s Inclusion blog. To read their blog post, click here.

CDS’s Artfest honored with ACCESS award

The Access Wilmington Committee bestowed its 2015 Access to the Arts award in October on CDS for its Artfest program. Jennifer Gunther, a member of the Mayor’s Committee on People with Disabilities, nominated CDS, citing the annual event for giving people with disabilities access to creative art projects, accessible art tools and UD student volunteers. The ACCESS Awards recognize those in metro Wilmington who create opportunities for people living with disabilities and their families. CDS Director Beth Mineo accepted the award at the Access Wilmington Awards Reception on Oct. 29. Accompanying her at the reception were Artfest partner Lisa Bartoli of Art Therapy Express and CDS staff who coordinated Artfest this year.
National Center on PBIS co-director speaks at DE-PBS conference

Keynote speaker George Sugai urged educators to emphasize quality over quantity when selecting interventions for use within a multi-tiered system of support in their schools at the 2015 Delaware Positive Behavior Support Conference on Oct. 29 in Dover. Sugai, professor of special education at the University of Connecticut and co-director of the National Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), added that schools should only use evidence-based strategies that meet their particular data-based needs and can be implemented effectively. The conference also featured presenters from Delaware schools. They shared experiences in building positive school climate and promoting student success though the development of the three tiers of behavioral support.

Curtain rising on “Disability Cinema”

A new program this winter will bring UD students and community members together to analyze and discuss cultural representations of disability in film. The program, Disability Cinema, will convene weekly public gatherings centered on a disability-based theme. Each gathering will feature a guest speaker with a disability to talk about that evening’s theme, a screening, and a discussion of issues in the film. Disability Cinema is an extension of a new experimental course, Disability and Film, offered during UD’s five-week winter session. The public film festival is funded by a Student Life Unidel Grant for Winter Session 2016 co-curricular programming, and is being developed by School of Education Associate Professor Laura Eisenman, Department of English Associate Professor Stephanie Kerschbaum, CDS Director Beth Mineo and CDS staff.

Parents and educators fill Lunchtime Learning on standards-based IEPs

Project leader Susan Veenema of CDS and parent consultant Mila Wells of the Parent Information Center of Delaware addressed one of the largest Lunchtime Learning crowds of the year on the rollout of standards-based IEPs (SB-IEPs) in Delaware’s schools on Oct. 15. The pair noted that SB-IEPs address the unique needs of all students who use them. They added that “standards-based” doesn’t mean "standardized," accommodations will be "individualized" and the creation of SB-IEPs will be collaborative.
CDS to select UD students for diversity fellowship

CDS is one of 14 University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs) to receive an Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities grant to fund a one-year diversity fellowship. Those selected for the fellowship will work to improve the engagement of under-represented groups with disability-related issues and increase diversity and build cultural competence within the UCEDD network. CDS will be selecting two junior or senior Disabilities Studies minor students who identify as members of an under-represented group to begin their fellowship in mid-November.

CLSC turns heads on campus and at the Inclusion Conference

On Sept. 30, special education students from the Columbia Heights Education Campus in Washington D.C. came to Newark to learn about UD’s Career and Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program. They discussed with CLSC program staff and students the difference between high school and college classes, what college life is like and which supports are available for students with disabilities on campus. The visit concluded with a tour of the UD campus.

On Oct. 27, CLSC students were on hand to talk about their college experiences at the Delaware Community of Practice Transition Conference in Dover. The students discussed college life, navigating UD’s campus, class experiences and their post-graduation hopes during a panel presentation moderated by CLSC graduate assistant Skye Beckley. If you weren’t at the Transition Conference, you can meet the students and their instructors at the CLSC Open House on Nov. 18 (see more information in “Events”, below).

CDS expands approach that helps students with complex communication needs

CDS’s Systematic Processes for Enhancing and Assessing Communication Supports (SPEACS) held its first training session for members of the initiative’s third cohort from Oct. 21 through 23, in Dover. SPEACS is a team-based approach that helps students with complex communication needs progress from using pre-symbolic communication, such as crying, to symbolic communication. The third cohort includes 16 teams from six school districts that support students ranging from pre-kindergarten to 12th grade. Ten of the 16 SPEACS teams are new to the initiative. This is the first SPEACS cohort to include teams from outside special needs schools.
Jae Chul Lee to help determine national health research needs

CDS Health and Wellness Unit director Jae Chul Lee has joined the Health and Wellness (H&W) Working Group of the U.S. Administration for Community Living’s Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR) initiative. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires the ICDR to develop a comprehensive government-wide strategic plan for disability, independent living, and rehabilitation research. The H&W Working Group, co-chaired by members from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities and National Institute on Aging, will collect and review stakeholder input, identify health and wellness research needs, and propose solutions to address those needs.

CDS director joins Accessible Education Materials advisory committee

Beth Mineo has been appointed to the advisory committee of the National Center on Accessible Educational Materials for Learning. The committee will support the national center’s work related to the availability and use of print and digital accessible materials and technologies within early learning, K-12, higher education, and workforce preparation environments.
CDS staff join Art Therapy Express board of directors

CDS project coordinator Audrey Rossi and communication specialist Ben Szmidt have accepted positions on Art Therapy Express' board of directors. The pair will work with other board members to help guide the Wilmington non-profit's programs, special events, fundraising and marketing. Rossi and Szmidt have been involved in the planning and presentation of Artfest, an annual CDS-Art Therapy Express event that gives people with disabilities the opportunity to participate in a variety of accessible art projects and UD student volunteers the chance to help them express their creativity.

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 address jobs, paratransit, the ADA, accessible athletics

At CDS’s Inclusion blog in October …

Cory Nourie first blasted Delaware’s paratransit system for its frequently late pickups, then suggested a way forward: accessible Uber service. The alternative, “waiting 75 minutes for a bus, alone or with a colleague, is never acceptable and isn’t going to move us forward to a more inclusive world,” she wrote.

Brian Freedman called for greater resources and energy to go toward the struggle to get more students with disabilities jobs. Progress made through Disabilities Mentoring Day and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act are but starts, he wrote. More is needed to overcome “low expectations and negative stereotypes.”
Brian Bard slammed "selfish people," "frivolous lawsuits" and the ADA's inclusion of "marginal disabilities" for making it difficult for people with challenging disabilities to gain benefits from the landmark legislation in employment and transportation. The "line is getting longer" for people with "real, challenging disabilities," he wrote.

David Lynch wrote glowingly of a Special Olympics program that gives people with limited mobility the chance to participate and be recognized for doing their best in athletics. The noncompetitive program David witnessed at Mary Campbell Center in Wilmington made winners of all its participants.

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!

CDS's Inclusion blog.

SOCIAL MEDIA

CDS on Facebook

If you're among the growing number of people who like CDS on Facebook, you learned how hundreds of immigrants with intellectual disabilities who had been deported will get the chance to contest their expulsion with legal representation; you read how new "unified" flag football games in Delaware could soon become standard practice throughout the state; and you heard about plans to make Newark's train station more ADA compliant.

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

CDS on Twitter

In September, followers of CDS on Twitter saw Target's Halloween ad that prominently features a child with disabilities; read about Julian Medina, a
Cape Henlopen High School football player with autism who is challenging stigmas about people with disabilities in sports; and learned about new, low-cost prosthetics for children with designs inspired by popular films such as Frozen and Star Wars.

Get social, and follow CDS on Twitter!

RESOURCES

Apple update adds feature that could benefit those with disabilities

The launch of Apple’s iOS 9 in October offers consumers with blindness, epilepsy, and learning disabilities a feature they may find useful. Automatic, flashing advertisements and videos can cause seizures in people with epilepsy and can keep the visually impaired from accessing their text to speech software. The Apple iOS 9 update, however, allows ad-blocking software to work on mobile browsers. Learn more here.

New book offers women with disabilities reproductive health advice

Women with disabilities face many barriers to accessing reproductive healthcare. A Chicago advocacy and support group called the “Empowered Fe Fes” has published “Take Charge!,” a downloadable guidebook to reproductive health for women with disabilities. The guide is advertised as the first of its kind and includes sections on reproductive rights, keeping up with one’s reproductive health, and more. View the guide here.
November 5

**Lunchtime Learning: Better health outcomes for Delawareans with Disabilities** - Join us as we highlight the state’s ambitious new plan to achieve health equity for Delawareans with disabilities – and give you an update on how the plan is being implemented. Jae Chul Lee and Eileen Sparling of UD’s Center for Disabilities Studies and Gerard Gallucci of the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services will discuss current health disparities affecting people with disabilities and the strategies that should make better health outcomes a reality. The session will take place from noon to 1 p.m. at the Center for Disabilities Studies, Rm. 132, in Newark. Please enroll [here](#).

November 10

**Delaware Summit on Educational Services for Students who are Visually Impaired** – CDS, the DE Department of Education and the DE Division for the Visually Impaired will host a summit to initiate the process of developing a statewide plan for improving and coordinating educational services for infants and students who are visually impaired. The summit will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Dover Downs Conference Center. Workgroups will be forming after the summit to work on developing a strategic plan. If you are interested in participating on a workgroup, please contact Annalisa Ekbladh at [annalisa@udel.edu](mailto:annalisa@udel.edu).

November 16-18

**2015 AUCD Annual Conference** – The Association of University Centers on Disabilities will host its annual conference at the Renaissance Hotel in Washington, DC. The “Growing Leaders, Driving Change” gathering will feature more than 225 concurrent and poster presentations on topics ranging from policy to research to state and community projects. As of this date, registration for the conference can only be made in person at the event.

November 18

**CLSC Open House** - Join the Career and Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program students as they present a typical day in their lives at UD. They will share personal experiences, moments of success and the challenges they face. The event is an exploratory opportunity for students and families to consider if this postsecondary option is a good fit for them. The event happens from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Center for Disabilities Studies in Newark. Contact [clsc-info@udel.edu](mailto:clsc-info@udel.edu) or 302-831-6974 to RSVP.

Visit the CDS calendar for more upcoming events.
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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Core funding for the Center for Disabilities Studies originates from Grant # 90DD0688-03-00 from the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD). AIDD is part of the Administration for Community Living, a branch within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.