



MISSISSIPPI COUNCIL
ON
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Promoting a Better Quality of Life for People with Developmental Disabilities

2017 Annual Report

October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017

www.mscdd.org

601-359-6238

**Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living,
Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

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- * Dr. Jane Taylor
- + Dr. Armerita Tell
- * Dr. Alma Turner

- * *Person with a disability or family member*
- + *Agency representative*

Staff

Charles Hughes, Jr., Executive Director
Christy Ashley, Program Coordinator
Comma McDuffey, Administrative Assistant

Areas of Emphasis Grants



Farm Entrepreneurship and Independence Initiative recruited high school students with disabilities to a youth leadership program which provided on-the-job training in farming and payment for work performed. The program has continued successful growth. During 2017, the cooperative certified that all food suppliers (farmers) were handling the products with safety and healthy practices through the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). Many of the students with disabilities working on the farms were taught the Good Handling Practices for the packing facility but now have the certification for the GAP for farm/field operations. Students helped to expand the program across six more

counties to assist farmers in developing written plans and preparing farms for audits. They employed and provided services to over 50 people of whom 66% had some form of developmental disability. Seven of the 13 farms served are owned or controlled by people who have family members with disabilities. Over 40 individuals were positively impacted as part of this farm initiative. Leadership and skilled positions are now occupied by people with developmental disabilities. The program was located in the Mississippi Delta region.



Student Transition to Work Program provided employment preparation and engagement of students with developmental disabilities who attend Yazoo County High School and Yazoo City High School. Warren-Yazoo Mental Health partnered with these schools and the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services to implement a comprehensive transition model that provided individualized supports and services for the preparation and engagement of employment activities; integrate person-centered planning in the development of skills discovery, training, and development; and offer opportunities for job discovery, coaching, and integrated work experiences and career skills that lead to gainful employment. The

Transition to Work program had an average of 10 students in the Yazoo County and Yazoo City School Districts this year. The outreach helped these students develop skills in a variety of employment areas which include janitorial, yard maintenance, housekeeping, van washing, hospitality, service positions and other individual contracts. The program developed its own business opportunities in the Yazoo area of the Mississippi Delta region. The students set up a booth multiple times in Yazoo County selling snow cones and ice cream at different times during the year. They also sold wreaths to the community. This allowed the teaching of skills such as working with the public and managing money. The program helped all students over the past year with social experiences, skill development, and financial understanding. It continued to give the students a confidence in themselves to do many things in the job industry.



Project SEARCH USM targeted 10 young adults ages 18 and older with developmental disabilities. The program consisted of daily employment preparatory skills training and working internships. Ten internship opportunities were provided during the program. The program used person-centered planning for all participants in the development of employment-focused goals and internships based upon future employment interests. Participants had inclusive mentoring experiences with university students and attended a bi-weekly support group focused on the transition to adulthood. Upon completion of the training program, participants engaged in community-based employment interviews and pursued integrated employment. At the end of the program, eight interns had secured employment.

The Employment Connection expanded and provided activities to help people with developmental disabilities with entrepreneurship. The program identified 20 people with developmental disabilities who were interested in becoming self-employed. Staff mentored for employment by providing assistance with identifying skills, resume preparation, on-line applications, matching skills to job openings, and providing the tools and training they need for employment. They also interviewed applicants for intake and discovery to determine best type of business for individuals who will then be provided with self-employment workshops, financial literacy classes, computer classes, and materials needed to begin a business. They hosted 12 entrepreneur workshops with approximately 740 total individuals attending. Currently, nine individuals and their businesses are being hosted. The businesses include painters, AVON representatives, arts and crafts makers, jewelry makers, and a comic book store.



Entrepreneurship for Economic Self-Sufficiency: 6th- 12th Grade provided training to special education teachers about how to teach their students about financial literacy which they could then use in their classrooms with students. The curriculum used was *Never Too Young* and *\$martPath*. The program supported advocacy and capacity building for the education and early intervention of students with developmental disabilities that need assistance in addressing their substantial functional limitations in learning, capacity for independent living and economic self-sufficiency. This year, 54 special education teachers received professional development on teaching personal finance to their students. Two more special education teachers implemented *\$martpath* without attending the developmental workshops. With this many teachers receiving the training, if all is implemented, the program will have reached 250+ students with developmental disabilities.



Holmes Health and Nutrition Program was created to promote lifestyles for healthy living, to inclusively train youth with and without disabilities on nutrition and exercise, and to foster relationships between youth with and without disabilities throughout the community. This was done through aerobics, swimming, sensitivity training, cooking classes, and workshops on nutritional value. The program promoted health and wellness by teaching nutrition and weight management to rural high school students with and without disabilities. The program served 23 people. This program was implemented in the Mississippi Delta region.

PCIT to Treat Behavioral Problems in Children with Neurodevelopmental Disabilities

is a program that focuses on Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT). This is an effective treatment for children ages 3-7 with developmental disabilities and behavioral problems. It is different from ABA in that it teaches caregivers specific behavior management skills through intensive, real-time coaching that emphasizes a positive parent-child relationship. During 2017, 60 families were provided clinical services. CARE training, a training that provides providers with knowledge on recognizing behaviors that may warrant referral to PCIT, was provided to all of University of Mississippi Medical Center's Speech, Physical, and Occupational Therapists; medical students, and physicians. Currently, 121 providers have been trained in CARE.



Project STICK was a recreational program for children and adults with developmental disabilities. Activities included Adventure Therapy which utilized high and low rope courses, kayaking, and indoor rock climbing; Art on the Go, Kayaking Club, GeoCaching Club, Inclusive Quidditch, and Operation Aptitude Gaming. Art on the Go was provided in six school districts with more than 50 participants monthly. Approximately 213 people with developmental and other disabilities participated across all activities.

Creating a Spectrum of Possibilities: Behavioral and Academic Services for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities provided Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) therapy sessions, academic services, and comprehensive psychological and psycho-educational assessment services to people with developmental disabilities through weekly, one-hour



intervention sessions. Over 120 children, adolescents, and/or emerging adults received services weekly. Included in this program is a training component for undergraduate and graduate students. Over 30 graduate and over 25 undergraduate students received direct training in both intervention and assessment. Thirty-one comprehensive evaluations were completed.



Advocacy Jumpstart continued to conduct an aggressive campaign for self-advocacy targeting youth and young adults with disabilities from ages 13-34. They coordinated with individuals and groups throughout Holmes County and the surrounding counties of Attala, Carroll, Humphreys, and Yazoo in the Mississippi Delta to identify youth with developmental disabilities who are considered leaders or who display leadership characteristics and train them on how to self-advocate and how to train others. The program opened leadership channels for people with disabilities in private, public, and non-profit sectors. They provided outreach to five middle schools, six high schools, and five school districts across five counties; ten churches, community, and civic organizations; and three health clinics. During this year, they trained 40 families on the significance of the supporting role of family members with disabilities on their journey toward self-determination.

FRIENDS was a project launched to educate children without disabilities about Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and help them learn how they can support and befriend children with ASD. Participants included those with and without autism. The goal was to bring awareness to children within the community and promote understanding of people with ASD, while providing social skills training for children with ASD. It focused on topics such as starting, continuing, and ending a conversation; it is okay to be different; and qualities of a good friend. These skills were completed through two weekend FRIENDS camps. The children were given the opportunity to learn new skills in small groups then were brought back together throughout the day to practice their newly learned skills. Seven children with ASD participated along with 11 family members.

Changing Traditional Teaching to Treatment provided training to parents and educators on treatment procedures for increasing verbal behavior milestones. Participants were trained on how to identify verbal behavior deficits that interfere with learning and how to increase appropriate functional skills. This was offered to parents and educators across the state of Mississippi. Goals of the training included identifying characteristics associated with autism, learning how to administer multiple types of preference assessments, identifying potential reinforcers in the environment, identifying functions of behavior, analyzing behavior, developing a meaningful behavior support plan, assessing verbal behavior milestones, modifying an environment using visual support to foster independence, and identifying different types of work systems that are most appropriate for a client based on skill level.

Community Collaborations

The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies - Mentoring Day Events
Tupelo, Falkner, and Hancock High Schools - Educational Field Trips
The Arc of Mississippi - Supported Decision-Making Training with Jonathan Martinis
The Arc of Northwest Mississippi - IEP Boot Camp
Rankin County School District - Mississippi Council for Exceptional Children Conference
Disability Connection - Community Resource Fair for Health, Employment, and Inclusion
National Federation of the Blind of Mississippi - Annual Conference
Autism Center of North Mississippi - Autism Awareness Events
Mississippi Youth Wheelchair League, Inc. - Mississippi Wheelcats Event
Mississippi disAbility MegaConference - Stipends and Conference
Golden Eagle Intertribal Society - 2017 Petal Southern Miss Powwow
Behavior Analysis Association of Mississippi - 2017 BAAM Inaugural Annual Conference
Whole School Initiative - Summer Institute
The Arc of Northwest Mississippi - Camp BOLD
MSU Autism and Developmental Disabilities Clinic - Bully's Autism Spectrum Event
Jackson Zoological Park Inc. - Dream Night
Epilepsy Foundation of Mississippi - Alvin P. Flannes Summer Camp
Center Mississippi Down Syndrome Society - Community Event
Institute for Disability Studies - Special Olympic Summer Games
The Arc of Mississippi - Journey Skyward
Mississippi APSE - Fall Conference
Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities - Autism Conference
Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities - Special Education Law Conference/Family Picnic
NAMI Mississippi - Community Event
Mississippi Department of Mental Health - Trauma Informed Care Conference
Alzheimer's Association of Mississippi - Conference for the Care
Special Olympics Mississippi - 2017 Special Olympics Games
LIFE of Mississippi - Bridging the Gap
Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services - Disability Awareness Conference 2017

Advisory Boards and Other Coalitions

National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities Board of Directors
Institute for Disability Studies Community Partnership Advisory Council
Institute for Disability Studies Housing Advisory Council
Mississippi disAbility MegaConference Planning Committee
Mississippi Sibling Leadership Network (Brothers and Sisters Together)
Central Mississippi Sibshops Planning Group
Mississippi Autism Advisory Committee
Mississippi Hearing-Vision Project Advisory Council
Hudspeth Human Rights and Advocacy Committee
Mississippi Department of Mental Health, Bureau of IDD Advisory Council
Mississippi AAIDD Chapter

Award



The Council was honored to receive the Business Award from the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services, presented at the Disability Employment Awareness Conference.

Mississippi Community Resource Directory

The Council continued to manage the Mississippi Community Resource Directory. This online resource provides a searchable database for people with disabilities, family members, providers, and others in the community.



Supported Decision-Making Training

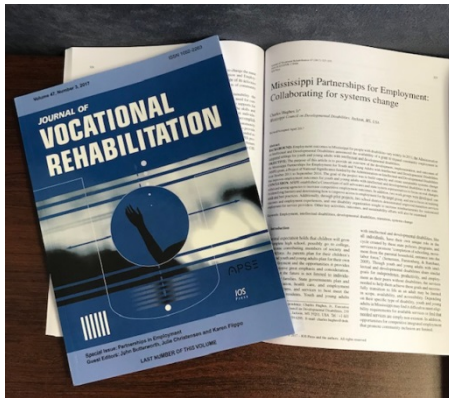
The Council sponsored a training event featuring Jonathan Martinis. 25 attendees representing key agencies and organizations across the state learned how Supported Decision-Making plays a role in advocating for choice for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



The **first** Central Mississippi Sibshops were held at Pear Orchard Presbyterian Church in Ridgeland.




The Council provided assistance to start a chapter of the National Sibling Leadership Network. Mississippi's chapter name is Brothers and Sisters Together. Two representatives went to the national conference.





Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation Article

An article titled *Mississippi Partnerships for Employment: Collaborating for systems change* (Hughes, 2017) was published in the Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation.



FUSE
Winter 2016
Volume 6, Issue 1





**MISSISSIPPI
disAbility
MegaConference**
●Knowledge●Hope●Choice●Fulfillment●

**Empowerment
Through Knowledge**
www.msmeconference.org
June 15-16, 2017
Marriott Downtown
Jackson, Mississippi

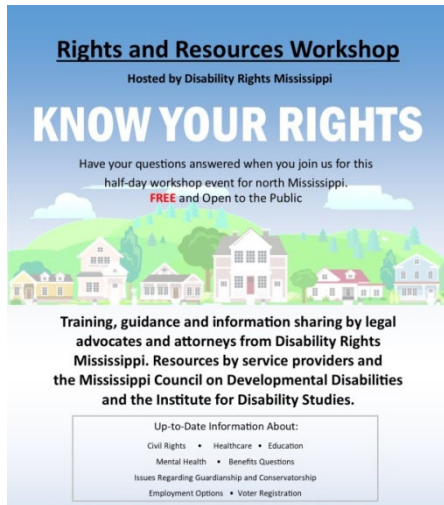
Pre-Conference Event! Dream Night at the Zoo, June 14, 2017

The Mississippi disAbility MegaConference is the state's largest conference for people with disabilities, their families, and professionals. At the conference, speakers and vendors will share the latest information and innovations on many topics such as health care, education, employment, mental health, safety, and much more! The conference is a great way for people to make new friends and learn about services which will benefit the lives of people with disabilities in the future.

Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities	P. 2	FUSE is a collaborative publication of the Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities, The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies, and Disability Rights Mississippi with funding from the Administration on
The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for	P. 3	

FUSE Newsletter

The FUSE newsletter is a collaboration between Developmental Disabilities Network partners. This includes the Council, Disability Rights Mississippi, and The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies.



Rights and Resources Workshops

Community forums were held during the month of August in Meridian, Natchez, and Holly Springs. These events provided resources and discussion of needs for people with disabilities and families. These events were a collaborative effort of the Developmental Disabilities Network (Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities, Disability Rights Mississippi, and the Institute for Disability Studies at The University of Southern Mississippi).

Mississippi ABLE Act

Governor Bryant signed the Mississippi ABLE Act into law.



Over 350 people with disabilities, family members, and professionals attended the 2017 Mississippi disAbility MegaConference. Jonathan Martinis and Don Zielenski were keynote speakers. Mr. Martinis presented on Supported Decision-Making.



Alternate formats are available upon request. Please call 601-359-6238.