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FUSE is now DD Network News!

Welcome! Thank you for reading the first issue of DD News, a joint publication of the Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities (MSCDD), Disability Rights Mississippi (DRMS), and the Institute for Disability Studies (IDS) at The University of Southern Mississippi. All three agencies are funded by the federal Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to ensure that people with developmental disabilities receive services as required by the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act. You can learn more about the agencies by researching their websites, listed on the agency pages of this newsletter.

The collaboration among our three agencies continues to expand and increase to benefit people with disabilities in our state. The more closely our agencies work together on issues to create the change that ultimately improves the lives of people with developmental and other disabilities, the greater the impact for all of Mississippi. We continue to collaborate with self-advocates, families, and professionals as evidenced by some of the work highlighted in this edition.

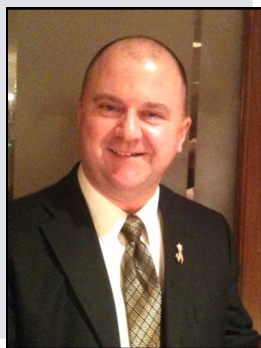


"Disability is a matter of perception. If you can do just one thing well, you're needed by someone." -**Martina Navratilova**

If you have information or news you would like to be included in the next issue, please email Jin Joo Crosby at jin.mcclendon@usm.edu.

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MISSISSIPPI COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The **Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities** is a 24-member board appointed by the Governor. This body of advocates promotes improved quality of life for people with developmental disabilities, their families, and the community at large. Board membership is composed of 60% or more of persons with developmental disabilities and/or family members. The Council also includes government representatives from public and private agencies.

Celebrating Mississippians with IDD Campaign During IDD Awareness Month Announced

The Department of Mental Health and the Bureau of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (BIDD) Advisory Council, comprised of service providers and advocacy organizations including the Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities and Disability Rights Mississippi, are launching an IDD Awareness Campaign in recognition of March as IDD Awareness Month. The campaign titled, "Celebrating Mississippians with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities," is the first of its kind for Mississippi, and highlights the connection between people with intellectual or developmental disabilities and their communities.

Throughout the month of March, Celebrating Mississippians with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities will begin rolling out videos, stories, posters, and information graphics about people with intellectual or developmental disabilities who are embracing choices and enriching their lives through employment, home ownership, entrepreneurship, physical fitness and a variety of other methods. Celebrating Mississippians with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities promotes awareness about IDD, and illustrates that people with disabilities have the ability to contribute significantly to their schools, families, relationships, neighborhoods, faith communities, and the workforce and the right to work, worship, learn, and enjoy life wherever they choose.

It is the intention of organizers to build on the campaign and continue to celebrate the lives of these Mississippi residents for years to come!



**Online
Resources**

Mississippi Community Resource Directory

www.mscred.org

Find resources by topic, county or keyword.

Self-Advocacy Resources



What is Self-Advocacy?

Self-Advocacy is learning how to speak up for yourself, making your own decisions about your own life, learning how to get information so that you can understand things that are of interest to you, finding out who will support you in your journey, knowing your rights and responsibilities, problem solving, listening and learning, reaching out to others when you need help and friendship, and learning about self-determination.

Why is Self-Advocacy Important?

So that you have the knowledge needed to succeed and are given the chance to participate in decisions that are being made about your life.

- Wrightslaw's definitions -

http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/self_advocacy.htm Wrightslaw's self-advocacy website

<https://www.azdisabilitylaw.org/guides/> Self-advocacy guides

<http://selfadvocacyonline.org/learning/> Learn about self-advocacy

<http://selfadvocacyonline.org/research/> Answers to important questions that can make your life better

<https://www.facebook.com/SelfAdvocacyOnline/> Facebook - Self-Advocacy Online

<https://scdd.ca.gov/ssanwebsites/> Websites of interest to self-advocates

<http://www.thearc.org/self-advocates> National Council of Self-Advocates

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/priority-selfadvocacy/> Best practices in self-advocacy skills building

<https://teachingselfadvocacy.wordpress.com/description-of-self-advocacy/> Teaching self-advocacy

<http://autisticadvocacy.org/> Autism Self-Advocacy Network

<https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/self-advocacy/the-importance-of-self-advocacy> Self-advocacy for children

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/36140889219/> Facebook - Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered

<http://www.selfadvocacyinfo.org/self-advocacy/> Self-Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center

<http://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/independent-community-living/self-determination.asp> Self-determination for transition age youth and young adults

<http://www.ngsd.org/everyone/what-self-determination> Importance of self-determination for people with disabilities



MSCDD does not endorse specific websites listed. Please provide additional resources at <http://www.msccd.org/contact-us/>
Thank you!



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The **Institute for Disability Studies (IDS)** is Mississippi's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Research, Education and Service (UCEDD). Core funding for UCEDDs is provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities \(AIDD\)](#). IDS is headquartered on The University of Southern Mississippi campus in Hattiesburg, with offices in the capitol city of Jackson and at the Technology Learning Center (TLC) on the University's Gulf Park campus in Long Beach. Under the leadership of Interim Director, Dr. Rebekah Young, and Interim Associate Director, Dr. Jerry Allison, IDS strives to enhance the quality of life for all Mississippians with disabilities regardless of age, culture, ethnicity, or socioeconomic background through collaborative efforts emphasizing education, research, and service in four key areas of 1) early childhood inclusion and education; 2) housing; 3) transition to adulthood; and 4) wellness.





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DISABILITY RIGHTS MISSISSIPPI

Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Disabilities

Change can be good!

I keep telling myself that as the calendar moves on I began as Executive Director at DRMS on July 1. Many of you know Ann MacLaine who was our ED for over nine years. She officially retired over the summer and is enjoying traveling and spending time with her family. She is missed and, thankfully, only an email or phone call away!

As an introduction, I have worked at DRMS since 1990. I received my master's degree in Clinical Psychology and worked at MS State Hospital for several years before coming to DRMS. At DRMS I have worked in several capacities.

Since I became director, we have had to make major shifts in our work. For a variety of reasons, we are moving away from individual education work and will focus on larger group changes. Over the years DRMS has been known for helping parents through the IEP process. We will still do that, but we will no longer be able to attend as many IEPs as we have in the past. But, we intend to make certain that parents and students know their rights and understand how to exert them. DRMS is involved in filing complaints against districts and will follow to assure that special education services are delivered to all who need them. We remain committed to this mission!

Another major change is that our office relocated. I hope you will drop by to see us anytime. We are now easier to get to at 5 Old River Place (Suite 101) off Fortification in Jackson. Our phone number is still 601-968-0600 and 800-772-4057.

We are always open to hearing from you. While our mission will remain to protect and advocate for people with disabilities, we want to hear how your life can be made better. Please, check us out on facebook, our website www.drms.ms or email us at info@drms.ms.



RARE



RESPONSE AND RECOVERY
for **EVERYONE**



The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) created the Disabilities Integration Office in September 2016. Its purpose is to ensure people with disabilities are prepared during an emergency or disaster. Christy Dunaway is the director of this office and has made great strides in making sure people with disabilities are provided equal access in emergency management, receive timely and appropriate services and are fully integrated into planning, response, and recovery activities in a disaster. This office formed a committee to help with this process, Response and Recovery for Everyone (RARE). RARE was established to ensure people with disabilities have a voice in MEMA's plan for Mississippi. RARE is available to work with any entity on emergency plans. Make sure you and your family are prepared for anything! For more information check out www.msema.org/be-prepared/ or www.ready.gov/kit.

BUILD YOUR KIT

Be prepared by building your kit. Get tips at:
www.msema.org/be-prepared/



- Weather Radio
- Non-perishable food for at least 3 days
- Bottled water (1 gallon per person per day)
- First Aid Kit with prescription medications
- Flashlight(s) with extra batteries.
- Cash
- Copies of important documents.

