



**MISSISSIPPI COUNCIL**  
ON  
**DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

*Promoting a Better Quality of Life for People with Developmental Disabilities*

**Fiscal Year 2018**  
**Annual Report**

**October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018**

**[www.msccd.org](http://www.msccd.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**

## **Council Officers and Membership**

- \* Shirley Miller, Chair
- \* Quess Hood, Vice-Chair
- + Dr. Armerita Tell, NACDD Delegate
- \* Dr. Jane Taylor, Evaluation & Monitoring Chair
- \* Mary Allsup, Past Chair

- \* Josie Alston
- \*Teresa Ayers
- + Melinda Bertucci
- + Dr. Beth Bryant
- + Laureta Cameron
- \* Jim Gallaspy
- + Lavonda Hart
- + Nick Hartley
- \* Vicki Killingsworth
- \* Shanickey Kirkwood
- + Ashley Lacoste
- + Ann Maclaine
- \* Charlotte Myers
- \* Annette Rinehart
- \* Glenn Sanford
- \* Dr. Alma Turner

- + *Agency Representative*
- \* *Person with a disability for family member*

## **Staff**

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

## **Vision**

*All people with developmental disabilities should have the opportunity to be contributing members of their communities; to make real choices; to have confidence to strive; to have freedom to excel; to have supports to achieve individual goals; to influence policy; to determine services that affect their lives; and to recognize that they have the same rights, privileges, and power to make a difference in their own lives and the lives of others.*

## Areas of Emphasis Grants



**Farm Entrepreneurship and Independence Initiative** continued to recruit and integrate high school students with disabilities into a youth leadership program which provided on-the-job training in farming and payment for work performed. The program has continued successful growth. Mileston Cooperative Association realized that people with disabilities are often left out and underserved in the workplace. The unemployment rate is higher much more so than the general population, even though all individuals with disabilities are not limited and are eager, ready and available to work. One solution for people with disabilities who are struggling to find the right work environment is to start a business. This year Mileston set out to assist individuals in the opening of five businesses and additional four agricultural systems all designed to improve the quality of life for those individuals while increasing their income levels. Mileston was successful in helping to identify businesses and match them with the person's passions, experiences, skills and talents. They also assisted in providing business space, writing business plans, providing infrastructure, start-up capital, financial management, money smart, legal, consulting business development and sustainability. The technical assistance provided to these citizens was so crucial as it relates to business planning and development. Leadership and skilled positions are now held by people with developmental disabilities.



**Project SEARCH USM** targeted 10 young adults ages 18 and older with developmental disabilities. The program was implemented by the Institute for Disability at The University of Southern Mississippi and 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. In addition to training and internships, participants had inclusive mentoring experiences with The University of Southern Mississippi 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.

**Read – Up** was an initiative that involved selecting students with intellectual or developmental disabilities of any age that have never been taught to read or are reading below grade level due to their disability. Selected students were assisted in improving reading skills as Disability Connection believes reading will improve the social, practical, and life skills needed to fully feel included in all society offers and for some to get employment. This program was developed as a new pilot project to provide group and individualized tutoring for improved reading skills. The program partnered with Millcreek Long Beach in Harrison County. The program consisted of weekly tutoring classes with goals to improve their reading. The program included periodic testing, free reading materials, and family supports in using the community library. Teaching was done on computer and through written materials on subjects that provide fun, life skills lessons

such as food choices, sports, fashion, fitness, art, music, health/dental health, cooking, gardening and more. Some group classes were taught by guest instructors from the community. Students were encouraged to progress through free reading materials, regular recognition gifts, and reading celebrations.

### **Achieving a Better Life Experience through Entrepreneurship Education (ABLE 3)**

was implemented by the Mississippi Council on Economic Education to encourage and assist the saving of funds in tax-exempt accounts to pay for the qualified disability expenses of eligible people with disabilities. The project took the success from 2015-2016 and incorporated participation in accounts allowed by the ABLE Act. Goals/outcomes included entrepreneurship and financial education professional development being provided to 30 special education teachers who impacted 200 students with developmental disabilities. After teachers receive professional development, they had the opportunity to apply for seed funds to start classroom-based businesses. These businesses gave students with developmental disabilities the opportunity to learn skills needed to either operate a business or to be a good employ for another organization. Funds generated by the operation of the school-based businesses were distributed to the students working in the business as a paycheck. Dollars saved by the student and placed in an ABLE account received \$1:\$1 match from the requested funding. This encouraged the use of ABLE accounts as well as reinforced the personal finance habit of saving.



### **PCIT to Treat Behavioral Problems in Children with Neurodevelopmental Disabilities**

at the University of Mississippi Medical Center was 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. In Year 3 of this grant, PCIT has continued to be offered daily to accommodate patients' schedules. Clinical services were provided to 38 new families. In addition, CARE trainings that provide Speech, Physical and Occupational Therapists (SPOTs), teachers, early childcare providers, physicians, nurses and mental health techs with effective behavioral management strategies based in part on PCIT were scheduled or provided. To date, CARE training was provided for a total of 124 providers. Also during this year, trainings were scheduled with a total of four agencies consisting of teachers, early childcare workers, nurses and physicians to be conducted in quarter 1 of Year 4.



**Project STICK** at The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies-Gulf Park was a recreational program for children and adults with developmental disabilities. Project STICK not only continued to offer Adventure Therapy, Art on the Go, Kayaking Club, GeoCaching Club, and Inclusive Recreation events, but also expanded the outreach of new programs such as Inclusive Quidditch and Operation Aptitude Gaming to increase recreational offerings and community participation. The following was provided over the year: 20 sessions of adventure therapy, 25 sessions of art-on-the-go, 10 kayaking trips, creation of the CeoCaching Club, 10 inclusive Quidditch sessions, and 20 Operation

Aptitude Gaming sessions. All of these programs have created great inclusive opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to socialize, try new things, and create new skills. Partnerships continued with the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities, The Arc of the Coastal Counties, Mississippi Gulf Coast Down Syndrome Society, Pass Christian School District, Bay-Waveland School District, Harrison County School District, Pearl River School District, Biloxi School District and other local agencies.

**Creating a Spectrum of Possibilities: Behavioral and Academic Services for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities** at Mississippi State University Autism and Developmental Disabilities Clinic 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. They continued to provide high quality services to over 100 people with disabilities from birth through emerging adulthood each week, as well as provide training and education to over 1,000 participants annually on how to positively help and support those with disabilities in educational settings and communities. The services expanded so much, that Mississippi State University provided a second clinical space on campus to meet the needs of people with disabilities. They collaborated and worked with a number of organizations, including Mississippi Department of Human Services, Mississippi Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Mississippi State University Panhellenic and Inter-fraternity Councils, Disability and Student Support Services, Health Services, campus police, and others to better meet the needs of people with developmental disabilities on campus and in the surrounding communities.



**Advocacy Jumpstart** at Wesley Youth Foundation in the Mississippi Delta continued to conduct an aggressive campaign for self-advocacy targeting youth and young adults with disabilities from ages 13-34. They coordinated with citizens and groups throughout Holmes County and the surrounding counties of Attala, Carroll, Humphreys, and Yazoo 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. They developed sufficient resources to conduct activities and media coverage of problems faced by people with developmental disabilities and possible solutions that put issues on the political and public agenda. This program helped to identify approximately 40 individuals/families that needed services. They collaborated with Mallory Health Clinic who serves three of the five counties and was helpful in assisting implement the program. Through the increasing network and collaboration with other organizations and churches, there was an increase in improved treatment outcomes for people and families dealing with disabilities.

**Behavioral Intervention for Feeding Disorders in Children with Special Needs** at the University of Mississippi Medical Center had two goals: (1) to bridge the gap by increasing access to evidenced-based Behavioral Intervention in the treatment of feeding disorders and (2) to train parents to implement treatment to ensure that long-term positive changes are sustained. This project increased access to evidenced-based behavioral intervention by training a behavioral psychologist to implement treatment and then teaching caregivers to implement treatment in the clinic first and then home setting.

**Creation of the Mississippi Job Skills Trainer Manual** at The Arc of Mississippi was a project focused on employment. The collaboration of several agencies reviewed best practices in job coach training and developed a specific Mississippi job skills trainer curriculum. The new curriculum was competency-based and is the latest training regime for all persons in any job coach or related position in Mississippi.

**Community Garden** at The Arc of Northwest Mississippi was a collaborative garden project located in Olive Branch. The Olive Branch YMCA donated the use of approximately one acre of land located behind their facility, parking, a metal awning, and bathroom facilities. The three local day programs from DeSoto County, REM Mississippi Blossoms, Millcreek, and Region IV Helping You Bridge (The HUB), was the primary “gardeners” in this project. There were approximately 120 participants served between the three-day program agencies that benefited from this garden project. The garden consisted of a straw bale garden which was an economical and efficient gardening method where straw bales were used as the container for the plants. They organized the lay-out of the garden, purchased the tools and materials needed for gardening, and oversaw the storage, use, and maintenance of the garden tools. The garden will also include a covered area with picnic tables perfect for resting and/or eating out of the sun. The participants chose the vegetables and/or flowers to be produced. The gardeners visited the garden two to three times per week to do maintenance and water their plants. At harvest time, each participant chose what to do with their product: send it home to the gardener’s families, prepare and consume it at their agency, sell it at a local farmer’s market, or donate it to another entity.

**Mill Village Outpost** at Our Art Works was a project that turned two acres of donated green grassy land into a thriving green space with outdoor activities where people with and without disabilities could enjoy. The area included a flower and vegetable garden. Produce included tomatoes, peppers, sunflowers, potatoes, greens, corn, eggplant, squash, and zucchini. This included raised beds so that people using wheelchairs could participate in planting seeds and weeding the beds. A wheelchair-accessible chicken coop was a big part of the program.

Maintaining chicken coops was a popular trend that hoped to be capitalized on. Backyard chickens were believed to be healthier, produce more nutritious and delicious eggs, and provide fertilizer for the garden. Raising chickens was a great lesson for the students and helped them to understand the importance of the connection to their food and understand the farm-to-plate chain. There were also wood working projects. The students were trained on how to properly use wood and garden tools, including necessary accommodations for disabilities. Items made included slider benches, birdhouses, chairs, tables, and canvases, along with other designed projects. The students decorated the cut wood by painting and staining. Music was another offered activity. An area with a small rustic stage for musicians and wooden bench seats for the audience was planned. The stage provided opportunities for singers and players of music to help develop talents. There were musical performances from local musicians. Yoga was the last activity offered. This was based on an ancient art on harmonizing system of development for the body, mind, and spirit. There was an area to exercise in the sun or use the trees for shade to practice yoga taught by certified instructors.

## **Other Community Supports and Collaborations**

The University of Southern Mississippi, Institute for Disability Studies (IDS) - National Disability Employment Awareness Month Events  
National Federation of Blind of Mississippi - Annual Conference  
Golden Eagle Intertribal Society - 2018 Petal Southern Miss Powwow  
Mississippi State University Foundation Inc. - I Can Bike Camp  
The Arc of Northwest Mississippi - Camp Bold Summer Program and Arc in the Park  
Autism Center of North Mississippi - Autism Awareness Events  
Mississippi Council on Economic Education, Mileston Cooperative, and Mississippi State University - Grantee Presentations at NACDD Annual Conference  
Mississippi Home of Your Own Program, IDS - Homebuyer Education Workshops  
Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities - Mississippi Sibling Leadership Network  
IDS - 2018 South Mississippi Area III Special Olympics Summer Games  
Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities - Special Education Law Conference  
MH/IDD Joint Conference - Conference Speakers  
Epilepsy Foundation of Mississippi - Alvin P. Flannes Summer Camp 2018  
Mississippi Parent Training and Information Center - Autism Conference  
Mississippi Department of Mental Health - Trauma Informed Care Conference  
Brain Injury Association of Mississippi - Salute to Our Heroes Gala  
Central Mississippi Down Syndrome Society – Community Resource Event  
NAMI Mississippi - Community Resource Event  
The Arc of Mississippi - Journey Skyward  
The Arc of Northwest Operation Opportunity  
LIFE of Mississippi - Bridge the Gap Event  
Mississippi State University Foundation - CHARGE Syndrome Family Event  
Special Olympics Mississippi - Special Olympics Unified Games  
Disability Connection - 2018 Art Ability Fair

## 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

## Awards

The Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities was honored to receive the following awards:

Mississippi APSE Employment First Award  
Humanitarian Award - Step UP to Leadership (The University of Southern Mississippi)  
Professional Achievement Award – Rehabilitation Association of Mississippi



## Developmental Disabilities Network Collaborations

Mississippi's Developmental Disabilities Network includes the Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities, Disability Rights Mississippi, and the Institute for Disability Studies at The University of Southern Mississippi. Several collaborative events and projects were completed during FY2018.

### **Coordinating ADA Accommodations in Higher Education** Jackson, Starkville, and Hattiesburg



### **Community Conversations** Greenwood, Flowood, and Gulfport



# Developmental Disabilities Network Newsletters

<http://www.msccd.org/products-and-newsletters/>

February 2018  
Volume 7, Issue 1

## DD Network News

(Developmental Disabilities Network News)

A Collaborative Publication from MSCDD, DRMS, and IDS

### 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.

If you have information or news you would like to be included in the next issue, please email Tin Lou Crosby at [tin.mcdenslon@usm.edu](mailto:tin.mcdenslon@usm.edu).

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

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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 Missisippians 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 Missisippians 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 Missisippians 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 Missisippians 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!



#### Mississippi Community Resource Directory

[www.msccd.org](http://www.msccd.org)

Find resources by topic, county or keyword.

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The Institute for Disability Studies (IDS) is Mississippi's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Research, Education and Service (UCEDS). Core funding for UCEDS 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 Missisippians 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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#### 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 601-988-0600 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](http://www.drms.ms) or email us at [info@drms.ms](mailto:info@drms.ms).



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## NACDD Annual Conference

Three MSCDD grantees presented at the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities Annual Conference in Maryland. Presenters included Dr. Dan Gadke from MSU Autism and Developmental Disabilities Clinic, Selena Swartzfager from the Mississippi Council on Economic Education, and Calvin Head from Mileston Cooperative.



## National Board of Directors

Charles Hughes, MSCDD Executive Director, was elected to continue serving as Secretary of the board for the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities.



## **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. The website to access the directory is [www.mscred.org](http://www.mscred.org).



## **Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day at the Capitol**



## **Project SEARCH Rankin County School District**

The Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities supported the implementation of a new Project SEARCH site. This will be the second site in the state. Rankin County School District has students at the University of Mississippi Medical Center attending classes and completing internships. Most will be employed at UMMC when their program is completed.



*Alternate formats of the 2018 Annual Report are available upon request. Please call 601-359-6238.*