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.

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+ Agency Representative
* Person with a disability, parent, or sibling

Staff

Charles Hughes, Jr., Executive Director
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NACDD COMMEMORATES 50 YEARS OF DD COUNCIL SUCCESS

OCTOBER 21, 2020

Congress amended the Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Mental Health Centers Construction Act of 1963 in the Developmental Disabilities Services and Facilities Construction Amendments of 1970,[6] a law that introduced the term “developmental disability” and expanded the population covered under the law beyond individuals with mental retardation to include individuals with cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and certain other neurological conditions that originate before the age of 18.

On October 30th, 1970 President Richard Nixon signed the Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Mental Health Centers Construction Act of 1963 Amendments establishing for the first time the State Planning and Advisory Councils, better known today as Councils on Developmental Disabilities (DD Councils). The Act went on to eventually be known as the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act and is more commonly referred to as the DD Act. While the name changed several times over the years, we are pleased and proud to celebrate the amazing achievement of the inclusion of the DD Councils into law in 1970. This October 30th marks the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the DD Councils.

For 50 years the DD Councils have worked tirelessly to improve systems in their states and territories helping people with Intellectual and developmental disabilities to live their best life in the community. By identifying gaps in the system and creating innovative solutions to problems that keep people with I/DD from fully accessing the community, DD Councils make communities more inclusive and improve opportunities for people with I/DD to live, learn, work, and play alongside their peers.

“Looking back in history it is amazing to me that in 1963 we were building bricks and mortar learning and research centers to study intellectual disabilities. Only a few short years later we passed a bill that instructed Governors to appoint people with lived experience to guide the way in their own states and territories. With federal money in hand people with I/DD were advising governors and legislators on how to build inclusive communities,” said Donna Meltzer, CEO of the NACDD. “that was a real game-changer.”

NACDD is excited to celebrate this anniversary and all the benefits and opportunities it has created for people and families with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

Source : https://www.nacdd.org/nacdd-commemorates-50-years-of-dd-council-success/#more-6277
Areas of Emphasis Grants

Read-Up was an initiative for students with intellectual or developmental disabilities of any age that have not learned to read or are reading below grade level due to their disability. Read-Up completed its third year of reading classes and had another successful year. During the year, 58 students participated in the program. Disability Connection held 29 classes at the Family Enrichment Center. Students received individualized attention according to their reading levels. Each week students meet with staff and a volunteer school teacher. The lesson was taught with the use of a Promethean board. The class moved through a fun learning time using Hooked on Phonics, Rock-n-Learn, Let’s Learn to Read, games, reading aloud in class, and other lesson plans. The students enjoy working together on lesson plans and fully participate in class discussions. Students selected from a variety of free reading materials to take home and earned prizes for word game participation. Staff made sure that the classes were fun with interesting subjects, including current news, sports, music, history, art, and sports, as part of the curriculum. Although there were challenges this year due to the COVID pandemic, staff made sure reading materials were delivered to students at the centers and online activities were offered.

PCIT to Treat Behavioral Problems in Children with Neurodevelopmental Disabilities focused 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 Applied Behavior Analysis in that it teaches caregivers specific behavior management skills through intensive, real-time coaching that emphasizes a positive parent-child relationship. During the fifth year of PCIT, the University of Mississippi Medical Center served 24 individuals and 34 family members. PCIT was provided to those individuals in the clinic until the pandemic hit and then alternative formats such as telehealth were utilized for those who could benefit. Trainings have continued to be provided to emerging PCIT therapists, such as interns, practicum students, fellows, and social workers, as well as continued consultation calls to conduct PCIT Level I trainer certification. Prior to the pandemic, staff continued to reach out across the state of Mississippi to recruit primary and secondary intervention settings in at least seven mental health regions. Over 20 different locations across the state have contracted with UMMC to provide trainings. In total, 30 trainings have been provided to different Head Starts, early learning centers, and Boys & Girls Club agencies, with 12 of those completed in 2020 alone. The reach across mental health regions has spanned six different regions with multiple trainings occurring in each. Currently in process is the scheduling/planning of a no-cost CARE training conference in the Jackson area for allied health providers and social workers. It was scheduled to take place on 6/13/2020, however due to COVID-19, planning for this event was put on pause. Staff continued to work on developing protocols for PCIT-telehealth so that PCIT can be provided to more underserved and rural communities. PCIT was delivered through telehealth for the first time in Mississippi history during the last quarter of this year. Due to COVID-19, changes had to take place which included all staff working remotely, all school-based TCIT interventions were ceased due to school closures, all in-person CARE trainings were suspended although some
sites were interested in doing a web-based version, and all PCIT therapy in person was suspended but phone-based consultation was provided as well as the very first internet-based session.

**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 DD through weekly, one-hour intervention sessions. During the fifth year of this project and the past few years, direct services have been provided to over 100 individuals each quarter, plus provided trainings and education to over 1,000 individuals annually. The project has had at least 22 graduate students as lead clinicians, approximately seven graduate students at secondary clinicians, as well as 40 undergraduates attached to cases. It has included 10 advance graduate students as lead clinicians. Multiple comprehensive assessments have been completed this year and currently eight cases are in progress. Social skills groups continued for pre-k, early elementary, elementary, middle-school, and high school with at least 17 participants enrolled for the first quarter it began.

**Grassroots Network for Self-Advocacy** was developed to assist individuals with developmental disabilities (ages 14-22) in transitioning from parentally guided youth to self-advocating adults. Activities will focus on support of policies and practices that promote systems change and other activities that further advance self-determination and inclusion. The project was implemented in multiple facets and the goals, outcomes and activities were all implemented from a grassroots perspective. Furthermore, a disability advocacy council was established, structured, and filled with individuals with DD who were the primary leadership and spearheaded the process. The process was highlighted, promoted, and supported by the cooperative and several collaborative partners. The initiative was implemented as follows: Collaborated with church officials, local/elected officials, universities, law enforcement, nonprofits, housing agencies, consumer advocacy councils, voting rights activists, civil entities, political candidates, local boards, and local government agencies. The project held several trainings and listening sessions to educate council members and families of individuals with DD about programs, services, processes and opportunities to share with individuals with DD and others. Additionally, council members were able to express their concerns and observations to bridge the gap to inclusiveness and accessibility. During this year, the project began the process to implement training and ensure access to processes to understand virtual sessions and systems to continue the implementation phases while working remotely.

**Higher Education For All** was established to increase the number of individuals with intellectual and other disabilities that attend postsecondary education and receive needed supports and services. The Higher Education for All program had a total of 255 participants that included individuals with intellectual disabilities/developmental disabilities, family members and professionals. A pilot program for adult learners ages 21 and older was established for the fall semester
2019 with five students participating, four as adult learners and one as full-time student needing extra assistance. Orientation sessions, individualized person-centered plans, weekly schedules and the exploration of extracurricular activities. In addition, community service and/or extracurricular activities with TRIAD AmeriCorps, STEP UP to Leadership Council, and Special Olympics College continued virtually through the DISCORD application, which allowed the students to participate in socialization, trivia nights, Crafting with Dawn, movie nights, and video game events. Weekly socialization groups on the Hattiesburg Campus were offered to up to 12 students/members in the fall semester in-person then virtually due to the pandemic. Each student received one-on-one peer mentoring services each semester from a fellow USM student, graduate-level only.

Enhancing Support Structures for Students with ASD in the Classroom served students with ASD, their parents, and their teachers through providing a dedicated ASD Specialist to create and implement programming and serve as an instructional coach through providing just in time guidance for teachers within the Corinth School District. Meeting the needs of students were supported through activities that encouraged academic excellence, facilitated peer relationships, included community support initiatives, and enhanced family relationships. Students with ASD were directly involved in the planning of services through representation in advisory council meetings and planning of peer mentoring programs. The program allowed for developing and/or improving approaches to systems and services and meeting other needs of people with DD and families. Through the hiring of an ASD Specialist, the Corinth School District has been able to provide quality supports and services for PK-12 students and teachers through building teacher capacity and efficacy in supporting students with ASD. Teachers demonstrated increased awareness of implementing EBP for students with ASD and higher levels of self-efficacy in implementing EBP for students with ASD based on a Teacher Observation Checklist and EBP Inventory survey administered in February 2020. Teachers also demonstrated successful integration of ABA principles in the classroom. After conducting trainings in the fall semester and classroom observations infused with just-in-time coaching, teachers reported an overall increase in efficacy and confidence in providing educational interventions that were highly personalized, contextual, and grounded in evidence-based practices. There have been 34 total teacher and 89 student observations this year. Throughout the observations, teachers were provided with individualized guidance and training on how to implement strategies included within student individualized education plans (IEPs), BIPs, and FBAs and were given both immediate and intermediate feedback based on results of the observations. The instructional coaching model has led to positive impacts on instructional practices and in creating a strengths-based classroom environment that is more supportive of students with ASD. From March 16-current date, schools were closed due to COVID-19. From that time forward, all activities were completed virtually.

Future Planning Resources will be used to guide individuals and families in the future planning process for individuals with developmental disabilities. This curriculum and program supports’ will equip families and their adult relative with a disability with the communication skills and information to jointly plan for the future. Participants learn how to overcome the emotional and systematic barriers to planning with the support of peer mentors who have made plans. The specific objectives of the program are: (1) increase concrete future planning activities taken by families (2) impact subjective appraisals of caregivers (decrease feelings of burden and increase
feelings of satisfaction and self-efficacy) (3) increase choice-making opportunities and inclusion of PWDD in the future planning and (4) individuals will increase employability through skill building, job coaching, and job placement. The expected outcomes are that the individual/family member will be able to (1) complete a letter of intent, (2) develop a special needs trust (which protects government and disability benefits), and (3) take action on future residential planning.

During the FY2020 grant year, presenters provided information on various topics to help individuals and caregivers plan for the future such as SSI Benefits, employment skills for employment, Mississippi ABLE program, Home and Community-Based Waiver Services and 1915i Waiver programs, and burial insurance. In March, the program could not have presenters or much face-to-face as Covid-19 shut down plans for presenters.

Innovative Quality of Life Grants (Mini-Grants)

Play into Practice is a program in which a kindergarten through first grade classroom setting is offered for students with special education eligibilities who have difficulty maintaining "appropriate" behaviors in the typical classroom. The school we will be creating the PiP classroom environment that will serve as a safe space wherein those students will receive instruction in social emotional learning, coping and calming skills, and practice with activities and manipulatives that are part of a sensory diet to help reduce anxiety and self-stimulation while strengthening recognition of triggers and impulses. The goal of the classroom will be to help those students learn to recognize anxious and/or impulsive feelings and use self-calming and self-monitoring techniques to maintain appropriate behaviors in a general education classroom on a full-time basis.

Training Tools: Empowering Parents Facing Autism will allow Canopy’s Autism Solutions program to provide resources to families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD or autism), several of which also experience challenges of other related neurodevelopmental and intellectual disabilities, who do not have current access to therapeutic resources or therapies. This project also seeks to provide our therapists with continuing education resources that can bolster training initiatives and be used and shared with families during day-to-day therapy sessions. The goal is to educate parents and caregivers of children with ASD who are currently on a waiting list to receive Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services at Canopy. More specifically, the goal is to provide caregivers with empirically-validated strategies for reducing barriers to learning, increasing compliance, and fostering teaching opportunities to improve language skills and challenging behaviors. The training will be provided in two-hour sessions over the span of ten weeks for up to 20 attendees. Each week, 1 of 10 training topics will be discussed. Trainings will be repeated quarterly.

Goodwill on the Go will provide transportation for individuals with developmental disabilities who are employed with Goodwill to and from the Goodwill’s Digital/Computer Skills Training and Retail Job Skills Training. Activities include transportation to and from Goodwill Select Store’s six locations to the Digital Training Career Center at Goodwill located in Clinton, MS or Jackson; provide 1 hour digital skills training through teaching basic digital/computer skills towards resume building, job application entry, interviewing, and overall computer skills usage; and training will be received 2 times a week.
Community Supports, Housing, and Transportation is a project that will expand transportation services to address the identified transportation service needs of people with physical and developmental disabilities that live in Canton Housing Authority communities in Madison County. The program will be developed with a daily transportation service route at a reduced rate per round trip in the city limits of Canton. It is estimated to serve at least 150 individuals with disabilities.

Sensory Relief for Students will consist of a sensory room in Falkner Elementary in North Tippah Schools to enable the students to be successful within the general education classroom. When utilizing the sensory room, students can learn to develop personal coping skills so that they might participate more actively in their least restrictive environment. It will be utilized by all sixty-eight students currently receiving services for disabilities and will be accessible to all students at Falkner Elementary.

Expanding Educational Outcomes is a project that provided parent training and assistance to the classroom through 1 additional teacher assistant and trainer. The teacher assistant provided parent trainings 1-2 times a month on Fridays for parents and community members and assisted with classroom academic and care duties. The teacher assistant-trainer worked alongside licensed teachers and allowed for the classroom numbers to increase by a total of 7 students. This program allowed a teacher assistant to provide a total of 43-45 students with direct care and instruction this school year. Several trainings were also provided for the preschool program, parents, and the general community. Each training had a direct impact on each family member/child with developmental disabilities in terms of skills gained, expanded knowledge, or resources provided for the future.

Designing Virtual Reality Employment is a project that will purchase virtual reality equipment, develop pre-employment training using virtual reality technology, pilot the training and then provide training to youth and young adults with disabilities including intellectual disabilities using the virtual reality equipment. Expected outcomes include the development of pre-employment training through virtual reality format created with input from youth and young adults, development of a new training option that uses the latest technology that is considered a promising and still emerging practice, development of a new training option that appeals to many learning styles, and the use of a training option that promotes skills development through repetition and retention strategies. Designing Virtual Reality Employment had 117 participants which included individuals with intellectual disabilities/developmental disabilities, family members and professionals. The identified pre-employment skills chosen included making introductions, giving handshakes, choosing appropriate/proper dress and interviewing. Ten staff and leaders were identified to participate in the Lobaki XR Academy which is 240-hour training on how to develop virtual reality training experiences. Virtual interviews were to take place in April with students in local high schools but services in school settings were postponed indefinitely due to COVID-19. Therefore, the following was completed: developed a process to use the virtual reality equipment in future in-person training activities and/or when travel is possible; completed video script drafts on how to use virtual reality equipment in regard to overall use, how to participate in mock interview activities and how to use video game experiences to work on pre-employment and other independent living skills.
Fiscal Year 2020 Grants Funded by Congressional District
Total $698,321

District 1 - $95,391
- Enhancing Supports for Students with ASD (Corinth School District) $62,488
- Sensory Relief for Students (North Tippah School District) $24,961
- Access for All (Pontotoc City School District) $7,942

District 2 - $272,826
- Grassroots Network for Self-Advocacy (Milestone Cooperative) $64,715
- Parent Child Interaction Therapy (University of Mississippi Medical Center) $97,021
- Future Planning Resources (Warren-Yazoo Behavioral Health) $37,746
- Goodwill on the Go (Goodwill Industries) $25,000
- Training Tools (Canopy Children’s Solutions) $23,344
- Community Supports/Transportation (Madison County Citizens Services Agency) $25,000

District 3 - $220,522
- Creating a Spectrum of Possibilities (Mississippi State University, Autism and Developmental Disabilities Clinic) $170,528
- Expanding Educational Outcomes (Mississippi State University, T.K. Martin Center) $24,994
- Play into Practice (Starkville Oktibbeha Schools) $25,000

District 4 - $109,582
- Higher Education for All (The University of Southern Mississippi, Institute for Disability Studies) $70,000
- Designing Virtual Reality Employment Training (Institute for Disability Studies) $24,582
- Read Up (Disability Connection) $15,000

Total Federal Allotment for FY2020 was $935,592.
Other Community Supports and Collaborations

Alzheimer's Association of Mississippi, Conference for the Caregiver
National Federation of the Blind of Mississippi, Annual State Convention
Disability Connection, 31st Arbor Day
The Arc of Mississippi, Assistive Technology Conference
The Arc of Northwest Mississippi, Camp BOLD
Autism Center of North Mississippi, Parent Liaison Community Support Team

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 FY2020.

DD Network News

Current and past newsletters are available on the Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities’ website: www.mscdd.org/products-and-newsletters
Mississippi Community Resource Directory

MSCDD continues to maintain the Mississippi Community Resource Directory. This is an online, searchable database of resources for people with developmental and other disabilities, family members, providers, and others in the community. Several new resources have been added over the year. Technical assistance continued to be provided by the Institute for Disability Studies.

www.mscrd.org

NADD Conference Presentation

The DD Network executive directors presented a poster session at the National Association for the Dually Diagnosed (NADD) Conference on October 23, 2019.

The Mississippi disAbility MegaConference was held virtually on June 18, 2020. Over 155 people registered. Presentations included:

- State Disaster Response for People with Disabilities
- Promoting a Continuum of Behavioral Health Care in Mississippi Using PCIT-Related Services for Children with Neurodevelopmental Disabilities
- Medicaid and Managed Care Appeals - How to Win
- An Update on the ADA, Olmstead and Mental Health Reform in Mississippi
- Mississippi ABLE Accounts: Saving Without Losing Benefits
- Your Right to Vote: Why it Counts!
Virtual Community Listening Forums were held on September 20, 2020 to hear from people with developmental disabilities, families, and other about needs of people with DD across the state. Approximately 25 people participated.

Governor Reeves signed the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Proclamation on March 3, 2020 at the Mississippi State Capitol.

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