



MISSISSIPPI COUNCIL
ON
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

FY 2022 Annual Report

October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022

601-359-6238

www.msccd.org

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- * Josie Alston, Chair
- * Dr. Armerita Tell, Vice-Chair
- + Nick Hartley, NACDD Delegate
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- * Shirley Miller, Past Chair
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- + Polly Tribble
- * Dr. Alma Turner
- + KenYada Blake-Washington
- + Dr. Rebekah Young

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

Staff

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

Areas of Emphasis Grants

Organizations apply for grants through a competitive grant proposal process. The following grants were supported by Council funds during FY 2022:



Read-Up was a project in its fifth year that provided group tutoring to assist students with intellectual and developmental disabilities who need improvement in their ability to read. The project continued to develop and deliver fun learning assignments to the day centers twice a month until in-person classes could resume. The program served four centers with approximately 60 individuals participating. Teaching materials included Hooked on Phonics and Rock-n-Learn/Let's Learn to Read software that included music, games, stories, books, comic books, flash cards, workbooks, word bingo, and other hands-on materials. This year, they added one more center and approximately 10 additional participants. Staff dropped off reading assignments and homework to the centers remaining open and distributed a list of free reading apps.
Grantee: Disability Connections, Gulfport, \$14,952



Grassroots Network for Self-Advocacy was a project in its third year and continued to support individuals with developmental disabilities in total inclusiveness as it relates to economic and community development. The program focused on three goals: 1) to boost the morale and self-esteem of those with developmental disabilities; 2) serve as liaisons between those with DD and professional services and social workers; and 3) build economical and employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities. Program participants included 31 individuals with developmental disabilities, 52 family members, 52 professionals, and six other organizations. Accomplishments included consultants reaching out to social workers, social services agencies, community health centers, and Life Help to gather information related to services currently available; reading nights on Zoom focusing on building the morale of individuals with developmental disabilities; presentation by the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services on services they provide; and a presentation by Performance Therapy discussing what Performance Therapy does in relation to occupational therapy and what parents need to look for as their child grows to identify possible developmental concerns. The Performance Therapy speaker also discussed ways employers can help with job placement of employees with disabilities to ensure successful completion of tasks.

Grantee: Mileston Cooperative, Tchula, \$67,700



Higher Education for All was a project in its third year to increase the number of individuals with intellectual and other disabilities that attend postsecondary education and receive needed supports and services. This project focused on two target audiences: students with intellectual disabilities and students with autism. The project targeted up to 20 students: 10 with intellectual and developmental disabilities and 10 with autism. Participants attended a two-semester pilot program which consisted of undergraduate class, independent living skills development, community service, extracurricular activities, employment internships, socialization groups, and peer mentoring services. The project also offered a Postsecondary Education Boot Camp Webinar Series consisting of several webinars on preparing for college,

specifically on postsecondary education programs and opportunities for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism. Program participants included 186 individuals with developmental disabilities, 26 family members, 99 professionals, and 44 other organizations. Results included students successfully completing their classes, consultation continued with Cate Weir at Think College on program development and implementation activities, and recruitment efforts have continued with six other students. The Institute for Disability Studies raised \$70,000 towards the \$100,000 needed to get the program approved as an official postsecondary program for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities at The University of Southern Mississippi.

Grantee: The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies, Hattiesburg, \$70,000



Enhancing Support Structures for Students with Autism Spectrum

Disorder (ASD) in the Classroom was a project in its third year and had an overall goal of supporting students with autism through developing high-quality instructional supports, peer and caregiver support programs, and creating a sustainable model for the support of PK-12 students with autism. The ASD Specialist model continued to build the capacity of teachers, caregivers, peers, and community members to provide intentional academic and social supports to students with autism and other developmental disabilities. A focus was also placed on increasing social awareness and interpersonal skills through building

community and natural supports for those with developmental disabilities. Total program participation included 191 students with developmental disabilities, 144 family members, 130 professionals, and 12 other organizations. Results included modifying 20 Functional Behavior Assessments, creating or revising 11 Behavior Intervention Plans, conducting at least five observations for high-risk students, conducting 17 parent/teacher conferences, and completing 44 teacher observations. The sensory room continued to be used and had over 621 visits logged by students and 23 with teachers. The behavioral specialist conducted 12 training sessions on strength-based approaches, incorporating token economies in the classroom and extending to home usage, developing resilience in youth, and how to de-escalate and navigate high stress scenarios. Family and parent involvement continued to grow with the behavioral specialist sending 181 family and caregiver messages for those that cannot meet face-to-face. The school hired a resource officer in which the behavioral specialist worked very closely with to develop and implement school-wide strategies to prevent undesired and potentially harmful behaviors.

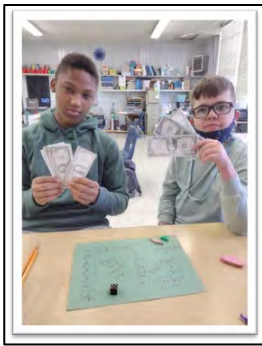
Grantee: Corinth School District, Corinth, \$62,970



Future Planning Resources was a project in its third year and provided families and their adult relatives with disabilities a program that guided them in the future planning process. Objectives included supporting aging caregivers to view future planning as an on-going process, meeting with the program coordinator to learn how to plan for future quality of life and participating in educational and informational sessions. The sessions consisted of five workshops: 1) taking the big step; 2) building relationships and skills; 3) housing; 4) work, retirement,

and leisure; and 5) who will be keeper of the dream. This curriculum and program equipped families and their adult relative with a disability with the communication skills and information to jointly plan for the future. Program participants consisted of 222 individuals with developmental disabilities, 42 family members, and 15 other organizations. During the program, the coordinator reached out to families and individuals and set up meetings to discuss the Mississippi ABLE Program, Medicaid, Social Security, Medicare, housing issues, and any other issues that arose during planning for the future.

Grantee: Warren Yazoo Behavioral Health, Vicksburg, \$37,746



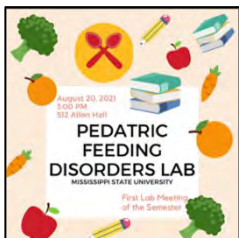
Danny Dollar Academy and Youth Entrepreneurship was a project in its second year. The Danny Dollar Academy was used to teach financial literacy with an emphasis on entrepreneurship. The program not only increased their reading skills but also continued to encourage and teach personal finance knowledge. Students were taught in areas of principles of credit, debit, banking, entrepreneurship, and marketing. Program participants consisted of 915 children and youth with developmental disabilities, 23 family members, 94 professionals, and 72 other organizations. Results included students reading the book together and completing lessons specific to the chapter for that week over a total of eight sessions. Ten families participated in the Empowered Program via Zoom. Students were taught important social-emotional learning skills, etiquette, and entrepreneurial thinking concepts. During this year, COVID still had an impact and due to this, staff took the Danny Dollar Academy and modified it for Canvas so that teachers could train as if they were at a workshop and then, in turn, teach the program principles to their students. Pre and post test data were collected on a test of 15 financial literacy questions. Special education students' pretest average was 31%. After participating in Danny Dollar Academy, students' posttest average on those same 15 financial literacy questions was 77%.

Grantee: Mississippi Council on Economic Education, Jackson, \$67,381



Cool Down Areas for Sudduth Elementary School was a project in its second year. As a demonstration project, the school provided a safe space for students with developmental disabilities to visit that need a place to cool down and regulate behaviors in the general education classrooms. This second year proposed to implement the program in second grade reaching an additional 175 students being IEP eligible. The project allowed students to be successful in practicing techniques learned in the past year such as social emotional learning, coping and calming skills, and practice with activities and manipulatives that are a part of a sensory diet to help reduce anxiety and self-stimulation while strengthening recognition of triggers and impulses. Program participants included 49 students with developmental disabilities, 68 family members, 58 professionals, and 11 other organizations. Results included families being trained on methods to use with their children as de-escalation and calming techniques and teachers learning how to appropriately use the cool down areas. The inside use was such a success that staff worked with an outdoor play company to purchase some items for an outdoor cool down area. This continued to provide students in outdoor activities a place to regulate their emotions.

Grantee: Starkville Consolidated School District, Starkville, \$25,000



Developmental Disabilities and Feeding Difficulties was a one-year project that provided applied behavior analytic services to children diagnosed with a developmental disability who experience feeding difficulties. Staff provided brief, intensive behavioral services to target the unique needs of children who present with feeding difficulties. The project also provided training to graduate and undergraduate students working towards degrees in school psychology, applied behavior analysis, or related fields experience in the use of behavior analytic treatments to address feeding difficulties.

This year, a total of 23 children with developmental disabilities and feeding difficulties, 32 family members, and six organizations participated in the program. Accomplishments included children participating in treatment for the improvement of oral motor skills and abilities to chew regular texture foods. Fourteen other children are participating in other protocols involving food sensitivity. Graduate and

undergraduate students were provided on-site supervision and feedback during each appointment. At the end of the program, there was a wait list of 25 children.

Grantee: Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, \$39,992



Transition to Adulthood Parent Resource Guide provided parents with answers to many immediate questions and provided clear and valuable information to help guide them through transition. The project addressed health concerns common in people with Down syndrome and discussed how to set up guardianship, a Mississippi ABLE account, and plan for a solid financial future. The guide presents how to prepare a child with a disability to be independent, have healthy relationships, and become a self-advocate. The Resource Guide was custom designed for families living in Central

Mississippi and include scientific information regarding Down syndrome, as well as other health-related topics. The successful completion of the guide was carried out by 24 family members, 15 professionals, and 18 other organizations.

Grantee: Central Mississippi Down Syndrome Society, Ridgeland, \$10,000



No More Waiting is a new grant that began July 1, 2022. The goal of the program is to provide children and families on the waiting list with some services. The waiting list currently has 152 children. This program will

empower parents and caregivers with information and skills to help their children at home. This is accomplished with a three-pronged approach. First, training will be provided to parents to help them better understand their child's behaviors, teach them new skills to deal with and decrease unwanted behaviors, and better understand communication and social skills. Second, a resource library will be provided with materials and assessment tools to empower parents to begin the therapeutic process with their children at home. Third, the well-being of the family members most likely to have the longest-lasting relationship with the autistic child are their siblings. This will be addressed through Sibshops workshops. Their first quarter fell in FY2022 with a total of five children with developmental disabilities, 10 family members, and six professional participating. Trainers purchased and completed Ever Learning Course and created the parent training Behavior Resource Series 1. Parents were educated on the initial identification of problem behaviors and how to teach children to identify and communicate needs appropriately.

Grantee: Autism Center of North Mississippi, Tupelo, \$90,000



College and Career Readiness for Special Education is a new grant beginning July 1, 2022 that proposes to work with high school teachers and their students to increase student readiness to transition from high school into adulthood. All students in Mississippi graduating from high school with a diploma are required to take a one-year class titled "College and Career Readiness." Currently, the Master Teacher of College and Career Readiness does not address accommodations needed by students with disabilities. The project had eight professionals and six other organizations participating. The grantee hosted a meeting with others

knowledgeable in high school special education to determine necessary steps to make the existing Master Teacher of College and Career Readiness (MTCCR) appropriate for high school special education students. The first amendment will modify the existing MTCCR program to equip teachers with the content needed to teach special education inclusion students. The second amendment will create a Master

Teacher of Career Readiness program specifically for special education teachers to provide content needed to teach transition skills to their students.

Grantee: Mississippi Council on Economic Education, Jackson, \$76,343



LEAPS Behavior Program is a new grant that began July 1, 2022. The primary goal is to improve the assessment process and intervention outcomes for children and adolescents with developmental disabilities in Mississippi public schools by helping schools conduct high-quality functional behavior assessments (FBAs) and develop function-based intervention plans for 8-10 students with chronic and severe behavior challenges. During the first quarter of the project, two individuals with developmental disabilities, four family members, 59 professionals, and 11 other organizations participated. Results included receiving applications on 15 students with chronic or severe behavior challenges and selecting the first four to participate. Many applications were received for students who staff felt would not benefit from the project and appropriate referrals were made. Due to the number of applications received, the scope of training was extended. In total, 40 educators from across the state, six graduate students, and five Mississippi State University faculty members attended a functional behavior assessment training workshop. Direct support was provided to two public schools serving students with severe behaviors. For each of these students, educators were trained on best practices regarding functional behavior assessments and experimental functional analysis.

Grantee: Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, \$79,028



Special Education Family Advocacy Network is a new grant that began July 1, 2022. The goal is to promote inclusion of families and children in the public school system regarding the development and appropriate implementation of Individualized Education Programs while also educating families on federal laws which protect the rights of their children. The Network staff will participate in Special Education Advocate Training offered through the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates. Utilizing a train-the-trainer model, each family advocate will receive training from staff to provide quality peer-to-peer advocacy support in and around their region regarding educational support for children and youth needing or receiving services through special education programs. A total of two individuals with DD, 22 family members, and two other organizations participated during the first quarter of the project. Twenty-two family members were contacted and were provided one-on-one and/or group consultation or training. Two project events were scheduled. Registration for the Special Education Advocate Training 2.0 course was completed.

Grantee: The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies, Hattiesburg, \$75,000



Project PAC 2.0 was a project funded initially in 2020 and the second part in FY 2022. This project provided dog obedience training for people with developmental and other disabilities and their dogs. The next step was to train service and emotional support dogs, provide group obedience training inside and outside of the metro-Jackson area, provide group responsible pet ownership training, and provide information to owners and their communities regarding the rights of pet owners with disabilities and the rights of public accommodations. In total, 18 individuals with developmental and other disabilities, 13 family members, 24 professionals, and 11 other organizations participated. Results included: six owners and dogs were enrolled; 30 training sessions were completed; one dog was enrolled to be trained as a service dog; two

dogs are being trained as emotional support dogs; and a demonstration was conducted at the Coalition's Born to Be Wild Picnic.

Grantee: Mississippi Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities, Jackson, \$20,596



WRAP for Developmental Disabilities was a short-term project which provided Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) Seminar I for individuals who have a developmental disability. The program was for anyone who deals with stress, anger, anxiety, or other difficult feelings. The intended outcomes offered participants the skills to: 1) apply key concepts of wellness into everyday life to improve health, wellness, and life satisfaction; 2) identify action plans to respond to stressful and distressing events or circumstances; and 3) improve responses to difficult thoughts and feelings as they move toward a wellness lifestyle. In total, 27 individuals with DD, four family members, 24 professionals, and nine other organizations participated.

Grantee: Mental Health Association of South Mississippi, Gulfport, \$10,010



Getting Ready to Work was a short-term project during FY 2022 which targets youth and young adults ages 14-30 from the Gulf Coast area. The overarching goal is to increase the number of youth and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to obtain community-based employment through entrepreneurship or self-employment. In total, 70 individuals with developmental disabilities, 12 professionals, and seven other organizations participated. Activities included researching best practices in leadership training, business plan development, employment training, workplace readiness training, self-advocacy training and work-based learning experiences, as well as researching entrepreneurship and business training curriculum that targets persons with disabilities.

Grantee: The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies, Hattiesburg, , \$24,417

Two Additional Grant Awards Received in FY 2022

Two additional grants received from the Administration for Community Living include:

- Expanding Disabilities Network's Access to COVID-19 Vaccines - \$34,494
- Expanding the Public Health Workforce within the Disability Network - \$95,319

For the "Expanding Disabilities Network's (DD Councils) Access to COVID-19 Vaccines" grant, the Council collaborated with DD Network Partners (Disability Rights Mississippi and The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies) to: 1) disseminate credible information about COVID-19 vaccines through various media, including television advertisements, videos, websites, social media, and printed materials; and 2) provide opportunities for vaccine access with assistance from local health departments and agencies. Three television commercials yielded almost 600,000 views. Facebook posts yielded almost 500,000 impressions with over 106,000 views and 2,000 video watches. The "Worth the Shot" website had over 1,500 page views. Five vaccine events were held with 46 vaccines administered. At three conferences and eight community events, over 250 masks and 2,000 educational pushcards were disseminated.

For the “Expanding the Public Health Workforce within the Disability Network: DD Councils” grant, the Council is collaborating with DD Network Partners to provide funding to support two new staff to carry out public health services and supports needed across the state. The total funds were split equally with The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies (IDS) receiving \$47,659 and Disability Rights Mississippi receiving \$47,659.

Community Collaborations

- ✚ The University of Southern Mississippi IDS, National Disability Employment Awareness Month
- ✚ Disability Connection, Arbor Day Disability Awareness
- ✚ Brain Injury Association of Mississippi, NeuroTrauma Symposium
- ✚ The University of Southern Mississippi IDS, Mississippi Wheelchair Tennis Tournament
- ✚ Autism Center of North Mississippi, Coffee and Collaboration Conference
- ✚ Mississippi State University T.K. Martin Center for Technology, Express Yourself Art Program
- ✚ The Arc of Northwest Mississippi, Camp BOLD
- ✚ Alzheimer’s Association of Mississippi, Mississippi Gulf Coast Caregiver Conference
- ✚ NAMI Mississippi, 2022 NAMI Mississippi Conference
- ✚ Mississippi State University Autism and DD Clinic, Summer and Academic Behavior Camp
- ✚ The University of Southern Mississippi IDS, Youth Spring Virtual Self-Advocacy Summit
- ✚ Gallant Hearts Guide Dog Center, Guide Dog/Handler Teams
- ✚ Living Independence for Everyone (LIFE) of Mississippi, Transition Training Day
- ✚ Canopy Children’s Solutions, Children’s Mental Health Summit
- ✚ The University of Southern Mississippi IDS, 2022 Youth Summer Self-Advocacy Summit
- ✚ Disability Connection, Family Resource Guide
- ✚ Mississippi Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities, Mississippi disAbility MegaConference
- ✚ The Arc of Mississippi, Assistive Technology Conference
- ✚ Mississippi Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities, Special Education Law Conference
- ✚ The University of Southern Mississippi IDS, Superheroes for Super Wellness Health Education
- ✚ The University of Southern Mississippi IDS, 2022 Youth and Young Adult Leadership Summit
- ✚ The University of Southern Mississippi IDS, Hurricanes Wheelchair Softball Team World Series
- ✚ Disability Rights Mississippi, Community Forums
- ✚ Central Mississippi Down Syndrome Society, Calendar and Awareness
- ✚ Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services, Mississippi ABLE Awareness
- ✚ The Arc of Northwest Mississippi, Healthy Relationships Training
- ✚ Epilepsy Foundation of Mississippi, 2022 Alvin P. Flannes Epilepsy Camp
- ✚ Disability Rights MS, Education Support Guide: Resources and Tools to Advocate for Your Child
- ✚ TEAAM Autism, Inaugural Autism Training Events
- ✚ University of Mississippi Medical Center, Parent Child Interaction Therapy with Toddlers Training
- ✚ University of Mississippi Medical Center, Parent Child Interaction Therapy Conference
- ✚ University of Mississippi Medical Center, Newborn Behavioral Observations System Training
- ✚ Mississippi Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities, Annual Autism Conference
- ✚ NAMI Mississippi, 2022 Mississippi Trauma Informed Care Conference
- ✚ The Arc of Northwest Mississippi, 2022 SuperABLE Weighs-In

Fiscal Year 2022 Grants Funded by Congressional District

Total \$771,135

District 1 - \$152,970

- Enhancing Supports for Students with ASD (Corinth School District) \$62,970
- No More Waiting (Autism Center of North Mississippi) \$90,000

District 2 - \$249,170

- Grassroots Network for Self-Advocacy (Mileston Cooperative) \$67,700
- Future Planning Resources (Warren-Yazoo Behavioral Health) \$37,746
- Danny Dollar Academy/Youth Entrepreneurship (Mississippi Council on Economic Education) \$67,381
- College and Career Readiness for Special Education (Mississippi Council on Economic Education) \$76,343

District 3 - \$174,616

- Cool Down Areas (Starkville Oktibbeha School District) \$25,000
- Project PAC 2.0 (Mississippi Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities) \$20,596
- Developmental Disabilities and Feeding Difficulties (Mississippi State University) \$39,992
- LEAPS Behavior Program (Mississippi State University) \$79,028
- Transition to Adulthood Parent Resource Guide (Central Mississippi Down Syndrome Society) \$10,000

District 4 - \$194,379

- Higher Education for All (The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies) \$70,000
- Read Up (Disability Connection) \$14,952
- Special Education Family Advocacy Network (The University of Southern Mississippi IDS) \$75,000
- Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) for DD (Mental Health Association of South Mississippi) \$10,010
- Getting Ready to Work (The University of Southern Mississippi IDS) \$24,417



The total federal funding for FY2022 was \$923,684.

Mississippi's Developmental Disabilities Network includes the Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities, Disability Rights Mississippi, and The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies. Collaborations for FY 2022 include the following.

Available at www.msccd.org/resources/dd-network-news

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES NETWORK PRESENTS

DD NETWORK NEWS

A Collaborative Publication from MSCDD, DRMS and IDS

SUMMER 2022 ISSUE

MEGA FUN at the MEGACONFERENCE!

After two years of virtual conferences, I was so glad to get back together again at the Mississippi Disability MegaConference. We enjoyed meeting and learning with hundreds of you. From Mississippians with disabilities and their families to service providers and advocates, our state's disability community thrived & blossomed out on the fun! Sky roared for oceans and oceans for 2023.



YOU'RE INVITED: MEET THE DD NETWORK!

MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES NETWORK
Community Listening Forums

Share what issues are important to you and learn more about disability organizations in Mississippi.

FLOWOOD AUGUST 8 4-6:30 P.M.
G. Chastaine Flynn Memorial Library, 103 Winners Circle

GUERTYFORD AUGUST 18 4-6:30 P.M.
Knight Neighborhood Center, 10375 Sweeney Drive

SOUTHAVEN AUGUST 26 4-6:30 P.M.
Southaven Public Library, 6554 Northwest Drive

(Open to the public,
for more information or accommodations request, contact janet@ddnms.org.)

It's summer, the time for Disability Studies Institutes (DSIs), through its Transition of Teens to Adults Life (TOTAL) Program, hosted its 15th Annual Summer Enrichment Academy to provide youth and young adults with the opportunity to prepare for future employment and participate in a paid internship experience. IDS staff were excited to offer this year's DSI one that featured academy as an inception experience after two years of complexity v. total offerings due to COVID-19. The Academy was designed with World Discovery. If you can dream it, you can do it! Youth in mid-level pants had the option of participating in person or, either live or watching on Gull Creek Campus of the University of Southern California. A virtual option was provided for those unable to participate in person. While other students were taking vacation, spending time with family and friends, and just hanging out, a group of 50 youth and young adults chose to participate in this multi-week training and internship experience. The Academy consisted of a general two-week training session followed by a qualified six-week work-based learning experience. Internships were provided in the students' local area and for those under age 18 and outside the local campus community the virtual educational internships were provided.

IDS offers a variety of work-based adaptive recreation and sports programming, including Quilts, wheelchair basketball and tennis. Two staff members, Sylviae Cooley and Robbie Sullivan, will be joining their Deep South teammates across the region to represent Mississippi in the 2022 Wheelchair Softball World Cup (WSWS) August 4-6 in Crestwood, Illinois. Teams from 10 states and three countries are expected to participate in this year's double elimination tournament. For more information about the 2022 WSWS, including live bracket updates, please visit: <https://wheelchairsoftballusa.co/>.

To learn more about IDS and its programs, please visit www.usm.edu/ids, call 601.266.5163 or email ids@usm.edu.

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DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES NETWORK PRESENTS

DD NETWORK NEWS

A Collaborative Publication from MSCDD, DRMS and IDS

WINTER 2022 ISSUE

Knowledge for a better tomorrow

SAVE THE DATE

Mississippi disability MegaConference

June 16-17, 2022

Hilton Jackson and Virtual

www.msmeconference.org

Have you gotten your COVID-19 vaccine?

The DD Network wants to remind you that it's **Worth the Shot!** The COVID-19 vaccine has been proven to be a safe, effective measure against the COVID-19 virus. Receiving the vaccine not only helps keep you safe, but it also can help protect your more vulnerable friends and neighbors in the community.

In the Jackson area? Join us for coffee & vaccines!

core part of Disability Rights' mission is to ensure Mississippians with disabilities have full inclusion in education. We are excited to have hired a new advocate to join the DRMS team to work with families and students with disabilities to ensure their right to a free and appropriate public education is protected. We continue to monitor COVID-19 policies in Mississippi school districts to ensure they do not violate the rights of students with disabilities.

DRMS is also excited to collaborate with ACCESS at Mississippi State University to spread awareness about this innovative, inclusive program in higher education.

ACCESS is a program developed at Mississippi State University in 2010 to provide post-secondary education to students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. ACCESS is the only post-secondary transition program in the state of Mississippi and truly offers students the opportunity to have the full, inclusive college experience!

ACCESS has recently expanded by developing ACCESS Online, which gives any student (no matter their academic level or disability) an opportunity to join the Building Future by enrolling in online enrichment courses such as Practical Money Skills, Career Exploration, Money Management, and Maintaining Employment. These courses are self-paced with weekly deadlines, taught by certified online education ACCESS instructors, and developed for students ages 14+. Courses are offered in conjunction with the MSU fall, spring, and summer semesters. This educational programming is designed for those who would benefit from developing functional life skills to grow independence and identify future career paths. Our team's mission here at ACCESS is to provide students with the knowledge and confidence necessary to become gainfully employed and live as independently as possible in their communities.

ACCESS Online registration is now open, and enrollment for the spring semester is November 8th through November 23rd. Additional information for the courses and registration can be found at www.access-mississippi.edu or by calling 662.516.0795

Protect yourself. Protect your community. Get the Covid-19 vaccine.
 Have you seen our campaign? Be sure to find them on our social media channels and share with your network!

The Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities currently has two grant opportunities to improve the lives of Mississippians with developmental disabilities and their families:

- 1) **Innovative Quality of Life Grant** applications are available now at www.msccdd.org. Grants may be used to \$25,000 for new, innovative projects in place or in efforts. The current opportunity is for short term grants of six or seven months.
- 2) **A Request for Proposals for New Area of Emphasis grants** is available at www.msccdd.org. The due date is March 15, 2022 by noon. Projects will start July 1, 2022 and end June 30, 2022. Approximately \$500,000 is available to fund several new projects.

The applications or proposals should address at least one of the following state plan outcomes:

- Developing self-advocacy and leadership of people with developmental disabilities.
- Improving services and systems for people with developmental disabilities.
- Meeting critical needs of people with developmental disabilities and their families or
- Future care planning for people with developmental disabilities.

For more information, contact Chrissy at 601-359-5533 or chrissy.ashley@dmh.ms.gov.

INSTITUTE FOR DISABILITY STUDIES

As part of the planning process for its next five-year COVID grant renewal, the Institute for Disability Studies conducted a survey in the fall of 2021 to identify top priorities and areas and gain COVID-19 experiences of Mississippians with disabilities. A total of 110 individuals responded to the survey. Of that total, 2% had been diagnosed with COVID-19 and 35% had not been vaccinated. Survey respondents indicated that protecting the health of themselves and those around them were the most important reasons for getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

#1	#2	#3
Protect my health & my family	Protect my community	Protect my health & my community
Reasons for getting COVID-19 Vaccine		
#4	#5	
Protect my business	Protect my family	
Reasons for getting COVID-19 Vaccine		
#6	#7	
Protect my community	Protect my business	
Reasons for getting COVID-19 Vaccine		

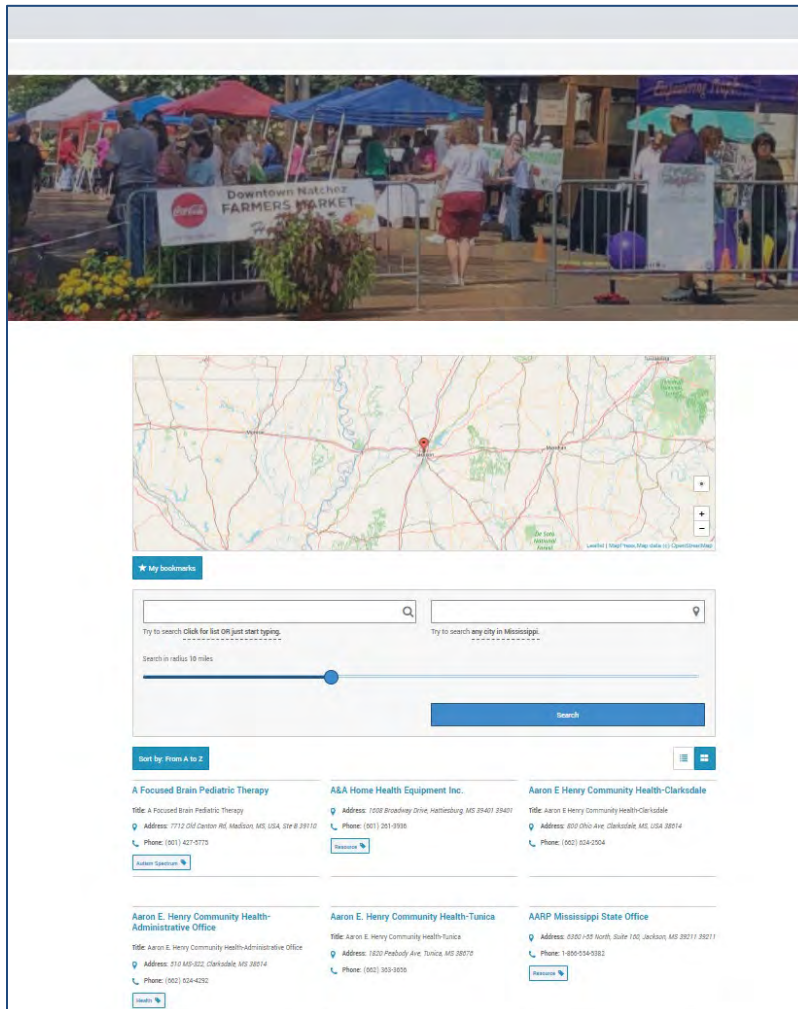
Find more information you would like to have included in our website at www.institutefor-disability-studies.org

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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, professionals, and others in the community. Technical assistance is provided through the Institute for Disability Studies.

www.mscred.org



Mississippi Community Forums

The DD Network Partners completed community forums in August. Cities participating included Flowood, Gulfport, and Southaven. Approximately 40 people with developmental disabilities, family members, and professionals attended. A needs survey was completed by attendees.

Mississippi disAbility MegaConference



The DD Network Partners and seven disability and community-based organizations plan the Mississippi disAbility MegaConference each year. The conference was held in person at the Hilton Jackson on June 15-16, 2022. Over 300 people with disabilities, family members, professionals, and others participated.

For more information, visit the MegaConference Facebook page @mississippi.megaconference or website at www.msmegaconference.org.

Featured keynote speakers for the 2022 Mississippi disAbility MegaConference included:

David Hale



Jill Jacobs, Commissioner
Administration on Disabilities



Dwight Owens



239 N. Lamar St. #1101
Jackson, MS 39201
www.msccd.org
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Alternate Formats Available Upon Request