

DDD Today

A Publication of the Division of Developmental Disabilities

Chris Christie, Governor
Kim Guadagno, Lt. Governor

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dddnewsletter@dhs.state.nj.us

Jennifer Velez, Commissioner
Dawn Apgar, Deputy Commissioner

February Message to Department of Human Services Stakeholders from Commissioner Jennifer Velez

February 21, 2012

Dear DHS staff and stakeholders:

Governor Chris Christie has presented his Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Address – part of which includes a proposed reorganization of certain state government agencies. The Department of Human Services plays a critical role in this reform effort, which presents a wonderful opportunity to enhance and realign this Department's mission and delivery of social services to New Jersey's residents.

A significant part of the proposed plan involves a consolidation of services for seniors. Many of you may recall that in 1996, certain services from four government agencies had been reorganized to form the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS). The Governor's proposed reorganization recognizes that seniors and people with disabilities have similar needs for long term supports and services and will benefit from a continuum of coordinated and integrated long term care. As a result, programs and services that now serve seniors will move from DHSS to DHS and form a new Division of Aging Services, which will work closely and coordinate with our entire department – most particularly with our Division of Disability Services.



Another significant part of the Governor's plan is to integrate all programs, services and supports that serve children into the Department of Children and Families. Over the upcoming fiscal year, all children – including those now served by the Divisions of Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health and Addiction Services – will transition from the Department of Human Services to the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Finally, Graduate Medical Education and the Hospital Relief Subsidy Fund, currently managed by the Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services in our Department, will transition to the newly renamed Department of Health, which is also responsible for the distribution of Charity Care funding.

The Legislature will consider the Governor's proposal and vote on it by June 30, 2012. We believe this is an exciting time for our Department, and we will continue to provide updates, as appropriate, on the progress of these important transitions.

Regards,

Jennifer Velez

STATUTE WILL SEEK TO ENHANCE AWARENESS OF SERVICES OFFERED BY DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

NEW DATABASE TO BE IMPLEMENTED FOR TRACKING PURPOSES

Governor Christie recently signed into law S-2028/A-2878, which requires the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities (Division) under the NJ Department of Human Services to collect and maintain a database of information about individuals with developmental disabilities who are eligible to receive services from the Division.

The database will include basic demographic information on each individual as well as a list of the services they currently receive, services they would like to receive, and their anticipated needs over the next 10 years. The database is to be created over a 12 month period. Newly qualified individuals will be added into the system as presented.

The new legislation also requires that the Division conduct a database-wide needs and service re-assessment to help ensure that the individuals they serve receive relevant notifications in writing. For example, the Division must annually provide information to eligible individuals with developmental disabilities on the type of services that are available and where to obtain them. These individuals also must be notified of their status on any waiting lists, and they are to be made aware of the best way to update their vital statistics.

Ultimately, the goal is to increase awareness of and enrollment in the programs offered by the State to improve the lives of those served by the Division as well as their families.

Additionally, the new law requires publication of an annual report containing non-identifying aggregate data about eligible persons with developmental disabilities.

Dare to Dream in 2012 - High School Student Leadership Conference

The Office of Special Education Programs is sponsoring 8 regional Dare to Dream Student Leadership conferences that highlight the importance of student self-advocacy and leadership. We would like to draw special attention to the May 21st conference at Rutgers University that will be targeted for the community of New Jersey high school students living with neurological disorders such as OCD, ADHD, Aspergers, Tourette Syndrome and beyond. These leadership conferences feature presentations from accomplished students and adults with disabilities who have demonstrated exemplary self-advocacy and leadership skills. Additionally, the conference program includes a variety of concurrent breakout sessions that include goal setting, self-discovery, self-advocacy, and planning for a career or college. Parents are welcome to attend with their district. The Dare to Dream Student Leadership conferences have long been a positive and empowering experience for thousands of New Jersey's students. There is no cost for registration. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. The following is the link to register for the Dare to Dream Conference series:



<http://education.state.nj.us/specialed/index.php>

New Jersey Developmental Center News

Submitted by José A. Cuebas Jr., Supervisor of Volunteer Services at NJDC

I hope that your holiday season was filled with warmth and treasured memories with those you love! May we work and participate in activities that will fill our new year with hope and compassion for those we care for and those we work with.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed in helping to make events at the North Jersey Developmental Center (NJDC) in December both memorable and successful. One hundred twenty-two toys were donated through the "Toys For Tots" campaign and brought to the Picatinny Arsenal Visitors Center. Also, 57 gifts were donated to our clients via the "Pick A Holiday Stocking" program. Our goal is to eventually receive a gift for every one of our family of clients.

Additionally, our first "Tree of Lights" celebration was held on December 22 and delighted all those who attended.

The "Tree of Lights" celebration is NJDC's small version of the Rockefeller Center tree lighting. We have a 50 ft. Scotch pine tree in front of our Administration Building, which we decided we would use to start our own tradition of lighting the tree.

The celebration turned out to be an "illuminating" experience for our family of clients, staff, volunteers and our local community, who helped to make it a total success. We sang songs, had hot cocoa and cookies, and enjoyed a wonderful visit from jolly old St. Nick when he made an early stop at NJDC to spread some holiday cheer. The clients were happy to see him as they shared with him all their holiday wishes.

Come this November, we will share the tradition and cheers with our NJDC community of volunteers and friends again when they join us in participating in our next "Tree of Lights" celebration.

News & Announcements from The Boggs Center

Winter 2012 Issue of New Jersey Workforce Development Insider Now Available

We are pleased to announce that the second issue of New Jersey Workforce Development Insider is now available. In this newsletter, stories about the impact DSPs have on the lives of people with disabilities are told; agencies share how they are using the College of Direct Support to enhance the knowledge and skills of their staff; and other topics related to DSP workforce development are addressed.

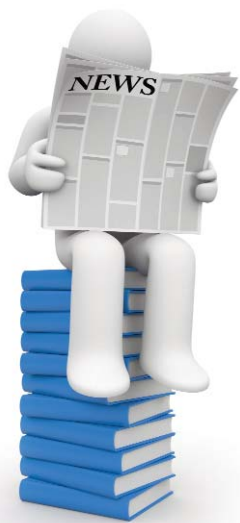
[View the Winter 2012 issue of the Workforce Development Insider](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Able Newspaper is an established, widely known publication in the disability community and a monthly newspaper that is published for, by, and about those with disabilities. The newspaper features:

- News that pertains to people with disabilities
- A calendar of events
- Columns written by various experts
- A variety of informative articles, in a large type format
- Personal ads

The New Jersey edition of Able can be read online for free. Visit www.ablenews.com and click on the “[Click Here for Free Edition](#)” at the top of the page.



STORY IDEAS?

E-MAIL US AT:

DDDnewsletter@dhs.state.nj.us

We will happily consider your request!

GET FIT PROGRAM LAUNCHES AT BANCROFT TO IMPROVE HEALTH OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

CHERRY HILL - Bancroft, a leading provider of programs and supports for persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, adopted Get FIT's core concepts and procedures as of Monday, January 23, by introducing a 12 week wellness program tailored for persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and their caregivers.

"If I can do it, you can do it. Apply yourself to learn how to do something and you're going to feel really good. Never say I can't. I love the way I am now," explained Laura Campbell, a participant of the Get FIT Program.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) 2008 article on Self-Rated Health Status, 40.3% of adults with a disability (compared with 9.9% of adults without a disability) identified themselves to be in fair or poor health. Additional CDC data, as cited in Healthy People 2020, indicates people with disabilities, compared to those without, are also more likely to: experience difficulties or delays in getting the health care they need; not engage in fitness activities; use tobacco; be overweight or obese; and, have high blood pressure.

As a result, Healthy People 2020 Disability and Health objectives state that people with disabilities should receive well-timed interventions and services, interact with their environment without barriers, and participate in everyday life activities.

Launched in October to address the limited accessibility of daily recreational activities for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, the Get FIT initiative of the Family Resource Network aims to improve the health and fitness of this population through the promotion of diet, exercise, and behavioral modifications. Although specific programs vary based on the abilities of each facility, all include health screenings, pre- and post- evaluations of participants, analysis of data findings and staff and participant training in Get FIT core concepts.



Rowan Health and Exercise Science Student aiding a Get FIT Participant in using free weights.

The Family Resource Network continues to promote the Get FIT mission through building local and statewide coalitions across New Jersey. Current partners include Rowan University, Volt Fitness USA, Hometown Trainers, and now Bancroft. For more information and statistics regarding Get FIT and its partners, visit www.getfitnj.org or contact Adeola Sonaike, Get FIT Coordinator, at (609) 392- 4900.

DDD TO HOST TRANSITION WORKSHOP AT FACING THE FUTURE CONFERENCE

The 20th annual Facing the Future Conference sponsored by The Boggs Center and NJ APSE will be held on Friday, March 23, at the Doubletree Somerset Hotel. This year's theme is "Employment 1st: Expect. Explore. Earn."

Keynote presenters are advocates MaryAlice Mowry and Scott Chesney. Workshops will focus on job development/coaching, education/transition, employer perspectives, career exploration, program management, self-direction, and technology. Patricia Brennan, MSW, Statewide Coordinator for Self Directed Day Services and Self Determination with the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities, will be moderating the workshop My Life After 21: Stories from Students Who Have Transitioned from School to Employment. This presentation will provide an explanation of how a person can work and receive DDD Day Services, particularly Self Directed Day Services, at the same time by working within the confines of the Memorandum of Understanding between DDD/DVRS/CBVI. Stories from students who have transitioned from school to employment with support from DVRS and DDD will be presented, providing a firsthand account from individuals who are currently working and receiving Self-Directed Day Services.

"The focus is going to be on real stories of recent graduates who are both working and self directing their day," Brennan said. "Many individuals are not able to obtain jobs that fill their whole week and would like to enhance other skills in their everyday life. So, people are working part-time and then also taking a cooking class or hiring an individual support person to teach them banking skills or go to the gym with them, and so forth."

"Attendees will get a better understanding of how these individuals work and use their Self Directed Day Services budgets to continue to enhance skills of everyday living in the hours they are not working. They will talk about their jobs in addition to the other activities that they participate in and tell their individual success stories," Brennan added.



For additional information, please go to:

http://rwjms.umdnj.edu/boggscenter/conferences/Facing_the_Future.html

Award nomination forms and exhibitor information are also available on the conference page. Continuing education credit will be available from the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification and the NJ Department of Education.

NEW JERSEY HAS “GAINED” AN ADVOCATE FOR DISABILITY PREPAREDNESS***Kelly Rouba Named New Chair of “NJ Group for Access and Integration Needs in Emergencies and Disasters” (NJ GAINED)***

TRENTON, NJ – The New Jersey Office of Emergency Management recently announced that Kelly Rouba, a Communications and Emergency Management Specialist for the NJ Department of Human Services, was selected as Chair of the NJ Group for Access and Integration Needs in Emergencies and Disasters (NJ GAINED). The committee was formerly known as the New Jersey Special Needs Advisory Panel (NJSNAP), but members determined the name did not accurately reflect its mission.

“The term ‘special needs’ is a misnomer and was exclusive in its definition,” said Major Dennis McNulty, Assistant State Director of the NJ Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM). The NJOEM, the NJ Department of Human Services, and all of our collaborative partners are advocating so that individuals with access and functional needs be proactively and appropriately integrated into state and local emergency plans. It’s simply the right way to manage whole-community emergency response, in contained and broad-scale situations.”

Individuals with access and functional needs (AFN) may have issues related to communication, medical care, supervision, transportation and/or maintaining independence before, during, and after disasters. NJ GAINED was formed to identify issues likely to affect AFN populations as they prepare to respond to a large-scale emergencies or disasters, as well as emergency management personnel as they attempt to assist persons with AFN before, during, and after adverse conditions.

The group is made up of representatives from various state and federal agencies, service providers, advocacy groups, and consumers. Members make recommendations, develop solutions, review policies, and launch products and programs to increase the level of inclusive emergency preparedness in all of New Jersey’s communities.

The new Chair Kelly Rouba works for DHS’ Division of Developmental Disabilities. Ms. Rouba has juvenile rheumatoid arthritis and has been involved in the field of emergency management as a preparedness spokesperson, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) member, FEMA Disaster Assistance Employee, member of the International Association for Emergency Manager’s Special Needs Caucus, and as an employee of an emergency management consultancy that focused on AFN populations.

For more information about emergency planning for access and functional needs populations, visit:

NJOEM Website (www.ready.nj.gov) AFN Page: - <http://bit.ly/w8XgnM> - contains information and links for consumers, agencies, first responders, and government agencies.

FEMA READY.GOV AFN Page: <http://www.ready.gov/individuals-access-functional-needs>

NATIONAL NON-PROFIT RINGS NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE OPENING BELL
SUBMITTED BY COMMUNITY OPTIONS

National non-profit organization Community Options was the proud opening bell ringer of the New York Stock Exchange on January 26. Community Options used the opportunity to help celebrate and kick off their headline event, the Cupid's Chase 5K Run.

The Cupid's Chase 5K Run, which took place on February 11, is the largest charity 5K event in the country. Funds raised benefitted Community Options. With runs held in 25 cities across 10 states on the same day and same time, the organization hosted about 15,000 people this year. Participants got to choose from "available" or "unavailable" shirts to display their relationship status and also received great gifts. There was entertainment in each city as well.

Founded in 1989, Community Options develops homes and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The organization supports thousands of people with disabilities and their families with the help of over 2,600 employees.

"What an honor it is to ring the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange," says Robert Stack, President and CEO of Community Options. "To have the ability to share our major headline event with the world in this way only brings greater recognition and awareness to our mission of supporting people with disabilities and we are grateful for that."

To learn more about Community Options, please visit www.comop.org.



PROGRESSIVE CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING PARTNERS WITH OPEN DOORS ORGANIZATION PROVIDES DISABILITY SENSITIVITY TRAINING TO AMTRAK EMPLOYEES

Submitted by Jerry Carbone, of the Progressive Center for Independent Living

In mid-January 2011, the Progressive Center for Independent Living (PCIL) began a partnership with Open Doors Organization (ODO). ODO is based out of Chicago, IL and was founded by Eric Lipp. The mission of ODO is to increase accessibility in the travel and hospitality industry. The main reason for the partnership between PCIL and ODO was to provide Disability Sensitivity Training to all frontline Amtrak employees across the county.

Two PCIL employees Jerry Carbone and Bob Riskamm were part of the extensive trainer network that ODO put together to tackle the large project of training over 8,000 Amtrak employees. Each trainer attended a class to get certification from ODO in order to give these trainings. PCIL staff was sent on a total of 30 trainings located in Philadelphia, New York City, Albany, and Washington, DC.

Overall, it was a very successful endeavor that provided training to the 8,000 employees in 17 different cities across the United States. Not only did the trainings cover the requirements of the ADA, it also covered the Amtrak policies. The main focus of the trainings was how to handle wheelchairs and other mobility equipment safely as well as how to assist the individuals that use them in a dignified manner. The training evolved over time with input from participants and trainers.

This partnership provided the opportunity not only to share knowledge about traveling with a disability but to network with individuals from around the country. All trainers were also required to utilize Amtrak when traveling to trainings. This traveling experience was very valuable in terms of providing feedback to both Amtrak and ODO on how the trainings were helpful and what else could be done. In fact, the ODO program was such a success that negotiations are underway to renew the contract. Other negotiations have started to expand the program to airlines and other rail companies.

There are two other points to note. First, anyone who is interested in traveling with Amtrak should know that if you are willing to provide proof of your disability, you will be eligible for a discount. Also, please make sure you call 1-800-USA-RAIL (1-800-872-7245) to book your trip. This reservation line will make sure the necessary accommodations are put in place to make your trip as hassle-free as possible.

For more information about the Open Doors Organization or Amtrak, please check out their website at: <http://opendoorsnfp.org> or <http://www.amtrak.com>

THE COLLEGE OF DIRECT SUPPORT INCREASES TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS ACROSS NEW JERSEY

Published by the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities

The College of Direct Support (CDS), an online learning system for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) and others working in the field of developmental disabilities, has been in use statewide for more than a year now. This cutting-edge training curriculum provides competency-based training aimed at providing DSPs with the information they need to be confident and competent in their work, thereby increasing the quality of supports provided.

Provider agencies across New Jersey continue to exceed expectations when it comes to CDS utilization. To date, more than 45,000 online CDS lessons have been assigned to staff across nearly 90 New Jersey provider agencies and DDD Developmental Centers. Some of the most popular courses include: Direct Support Professionalism, Cultural Competency, Safety at Home and in the Community, and Everyone Can Communicate. The courses found within the College of Frontline Supervision and Management are also

being used a great deal with more than 5,000 lessons being assigned.

Training plays an important role in any organization, whether it is a large corporation or small human service agency. The creation of a learning culture can lead to positive outcomes for agencies, staff, and people using support. Through the availability of both online and classroom-based training, agencies are better able to tailor educational opportunities to meet the needs of their staff and those being supported. The addition of on-the-job discussion and follow-up based on training content further enhances the ability to meet these needs and improve competency. Providers are moving forward with innovative ways to build use of the CDS into training plans to do just that.

Providers are encouraged to network in order to share ideas of how to use the CDS coursework to meet their needs. Many organiza-

tions are currently reviewing the curriculum to determine how to best meet the training needs of their staff, while some organizations have already started using the system to assign courses where they see the need.

Moreover, providers have shared ways they are including CDS coursework in their orientation procedures, requiring that specific lessons be completed in a given timeframe. Additional agencies have demonstrated ways to use the curriculum to reinforce information to address deficiencies and provide refreshers. Many have also used the training in a seminar format, projecting the lessons on a screen and holding discussion with the group. Additionally, the College of Frontline Supervision and Management is commonly being used to prepare recently hired or promoted managers for their new role. Technical assistance and training focused around use of the CDS is also available through the Boggs Center.

For more detailed information on innovative workforce development endeavors across the state, please go to: <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/programs/cds.html>

To view the New Jersey Workforce Development Insider Newsletter, go to: www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/documents/Documents%20for%20Web/DSPNewsletterWinter2012.pdf

BE AN AUTISM AMBASSADOR

CREATE CHANGE - EDUCATE, INSPIRE, LEAD THE WAY!

April has been designated as National Autism Awareness Month, and it provides the perfect opportunity for individuals and organizations across the nation to educate their communities about autism. Autism New Jersey's "Autism Awareness Ambassador Program" enables individuals concerned about autism to raise awareness in their neighborhoods, workplaces, schools, and local communities.

Our Autism Awareness Ambassador program provides tips and tools to help you get involved and spread awareness in your school, workplace, or community! Free kits will be mailed out starting this month. To register, visit: <http://www.autismnj.org/SNBeanAutismAmbassador.aspx>



ENABLE CONSUMERS PROUD TO RECEIVE PACESETTER AWARD

Submitted by Enable, Inc.

Enable's Princeton-based Day Program participants were recently honored as Hometown Heroes and presented with a Pacesetter Award for their dedication to the Meals at Home/Weekend Mobile Wheels, which is run by the American Red Cross of Central New Jersey. Anthony Rocco, who helps deliver meals, attended a special ceremony to receive the recognition along with Enable's Day Program Manager Meghan Montague.

Enable's consumers and their care staff deliver meals to the same three families on a weekly basis. Montague commented, "The consumers really enjoy giving back to the community and have made rewarding connections with the meal recipients."

FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER OF NJ'S LIFE SPAN SERIES SCHEDULE

The Family Support Center of NJ currently conducts three trainings through collaboration with the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities, they are:

Life Line for the Journey

This is an interactive training session assisting families of children from infancy through age 14. Please click here to read a full description, to see dates/locations and to register.

Pathways to Adult Life

This training is dedicated to the needs of children between the ages of 14 and 19. Please click here to read a full description, to see dates/locations and to register.

Preparation for Life After 21 - Part 2

This Spring we will be offering Part 2 of the two-part training series designed to specifically address the concerns of students with developmental disabilities ages 19 through 21 and their families as they quickly approach the end of their education entitlement. Please click here to read a full description, to see dates/locations and to register.

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**DDD Information and DHS
Central Registry Hotline:
1-800-832-9173**

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) was created in response to the need for better and more effective services for state residents with developmental disabilities. Advocates for those services included many parents and other family members who wanted community-based alternatives to the institutional care that had been their only option for many decades.

Today, more than 43,000 individuals are eligible to receive services funded by the division, including a growing number who are under the age of 22. Most DDD-eligible individuals live in the community, either with family or in a community residence such as a group home or supervised apartment or in a Community Care Residence with a family caregiver. Almost 2,600 individuals reside in one of the seven developmental centers now administered by DDD.

Visit us on the Web at: www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd