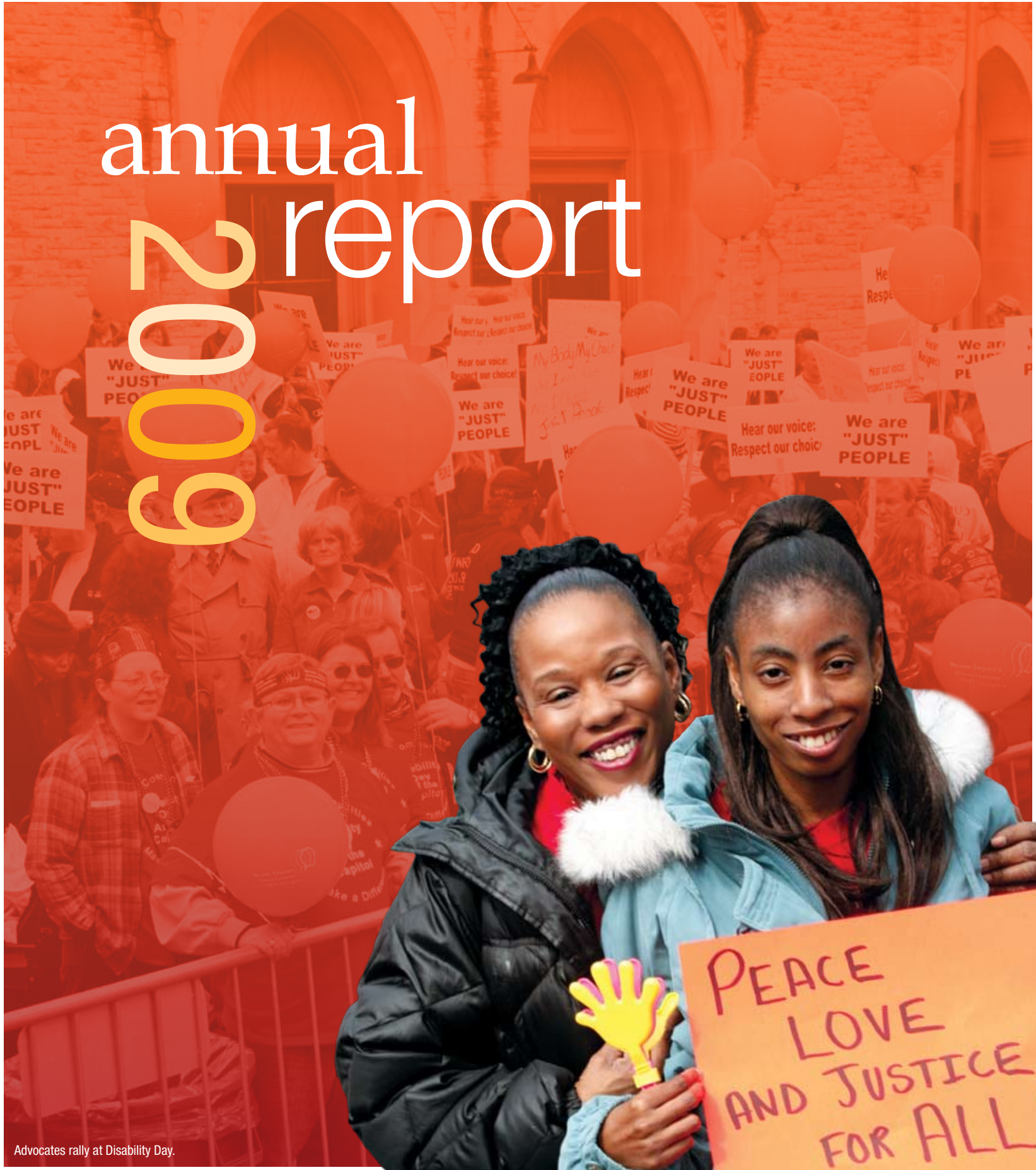


annual report

2009



Advocates rally at Disability Day.

**GEORGIA
COUNCIL ON
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES**

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vision

We see a state in which all persons are included in all facets of community life, have choices while exercising control over their lives and are encouraged to achieve their maximum potential.

strategic vision

The Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities for Georgia promotes activities and creates opportunities which enable people with developmental disabilities to exercise their right to live, learn, work and play in the place and manner of their choice.

mission

The mission of GCDD is to collaborate with Georgia citizens, public and private advocacy organizations and policymakers to positively influence public policies that enhance the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities and their families. GCDD provides collaboration through information and advocacy activities, program implementation and funding and public policy analysis and research.



core messages

- Too many Georgians don't live in their own homes, can't get a good education, can't find satisfying work or have a voice in their future – just because they have a developmental disability.
- GCDD is a resource for leading, supporting, joining and developing welcoming communities across Georgia for people with disabilities, families, friends and neighbors.
- GCDD advocates for Georgians with developmental disabilities so they can live, learn, work, play and worship where and how they choose by engaging community and business leaders, lawmakers and the general public – people like you and me.
- To this end, GCDD funds pilot projects, conducts public policy research and analysis, provides training and distributes public information.



The Tumlin family presented the annual Self-Advocate of the Year award to Virginia Harris.



Virginia Harris,
Executive Director of BAIN

focus

new name

same mission

This has been a very exciting year for the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities. First, you notice that we wrote “Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities” as opposed to “Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities.” As part of the legislation that created the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the name of our organization was changed. We believe this better reflects that our role is to advocate for public policies that improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families. While, the Governor will continue to appoint members to the GCDD, this name change reflects that our policy recommendations and advocacy may be different from the policies advocated by the Governor. The GCDD will be working on a new brand that will reflect these changes in the coming year.

The second exciting change for the GCDD was the role that evolved out of its “Real Communities” Initiative. For over a year, GCDD staff and members researched, discussed and met with people across the United States to get a greater understanding of how GCDD could create places that are more welcoming to people with developmental disabilities and create local change to improve lives of individuals and families. We wanted to build on our values that the focus of services and supports should be on the gifts and talents of people with developmental disabilities. Building on the values surrounding individuals, GCDD agreed to focus on the assets that each community possesses as opposed to the traditional focus on needs. Finally, for many years GCDD has helped individuals and families continue learning about the possibilities that exist. We wanted to build on this and formally include opportunities for learning as a part of the Real Communities Initiative. Person-centered services and supports, asset based community development and purposeful learning is the foundation we hope to build in communities across the state. It is also our hope that as we move forward all GCDD projects will focus on supporting local communities working toward collective action and utilizing the gifts and talents of all its members to address common issues.

Finally, while GCDD continues to grow and increase our capacity to create change in Georgia, we recognize that this has been a very trying year for many. There was great promise with the creation of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities and the

...the name of our organization was changed. We believe this better reflects that our role is to advocate for public policies that improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families.

implementation of the new NOW and COMP Waivers. Both brought the expectations of greater visibility for issues important to people with developmental disabilities and greater control over supports and resources. Yet, implementation has had its problems: three directors of developmental disabilities in just over six months and the new waivers have left individuals, families and providers struggling to navigate the process in order to receive services and get

paid for those services. Also, because of the economy many families struggle day to day, week to week to meet basic needs of food, housing, transportation and medical care. The economic downturn also impacted state government which has had to cut billions of dollars because of declining revenues and most state services have experienced either cuts or no-growth.

We can only hope that the future will bring better days than ones many are experiencing now and we hope that the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities will be there to partner with individuals with developmental disabilities, families, advocates and policy makers to continue improving lives and building a Georgia for all its residents.



ERIC E. JACOBSON
Executive Director, GCDD



TOM SEEGMUELLER
Chairperson, GCDD



real learning

students win with IEPs

In May 2009, the GCDD-funded Partnerships for Success hosted a meeting for nine school districts to train school officials in self-determination and student-led Individual Education Plans. These IEPs consist of the student, his parents and his teachers to learn more about what the student likes and what his future plans are.

“We wanted to show teachers how to create a continuum of self-determination and IEP starting in elementary school through high school,” said Cindy Saylor, program coordinator for Partnerships for Success. Saylor conducted the training, and has been heavily involved with the IEP program.

engage

real supports in support of each other conference

In December 2009, GCDD and the DSP Alliance met with several advocates from across the state in St. Simon's Island for a two-day event that stressed involvement in one's community. Rather than a formal professional conference, this engaging event led attendees to share stories with each other of their different communities and personal experiences in advocacy.

Bruce Anderson of Community Activators, based in Washington State, facilitated the event. Ruth Wright, program coordinator at All About Developmental Disabilities (AADD) was recognized at the conference as the Direct Support Professional of the Year.

real careers opportunities abound with project search

Project Search, a GCDD-funded program, seeks to place high school students living with disabilities in job positions that use the person's unique talents and skills. It's currently in seven sites across the state.

"We're making headway," said Colleen Pirkle. "As part of Project Search we set up potential employees with mentors who provide the proper training to transition into the workplace. There has definitely been a shift in the attitudes of several employers, especially when it comes to the thoughts of accommodations."

Project Search has placed several people with disabilities in employment situations, particularly in medical environments such as hospitals. Advocates and students such as Perla Rodriguez are thriving in these situations, and Project Search is expecting to expand the program in 2010.

"There has definitely been a shift in the attitudes of several employers, especially when it comes to the thoughts of accommodations."



June Fletcher of Northeast Georgia Medical Center with Perla Rodriguez.

real influence

legislative successes & report

The 2009 legislative session was extremely challenging, with legislators working on the 2010 Fiscal Year budget up until the last minute, and the restructuring of the Department of Human Resources which moved GCDD into the newly created Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD). Highlights included:

- A resolution to urge Medicare to eliminate the 24-month waiting period for Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) recipients passed the Senate.
- There was a reduction in funding for training for the Georgia division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases (MHDDAD) – this was part of the restructuring of DHR.
- The only new money appropriated was for 150 Money Follows the Person slots to support people moving out of the state hospitals, and 100 Independent Care Waivers to support people moving out of nursing homes.
- Funding was not restored for 135 New Options Waivers.
- The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities was renamed the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities.



gcdd encourages community

In June 2009, GCDD organized and hosted a two-day training session that brought together 90 people from across Georgia to learn how to identify what people in their communities care about, and how different advocacy groups can work together to initiate changes.

The event was led by community organizing experts Mike Green of Asset Based Community Development Institute; Bruce Anderson of Community Activators; and Amanda Bell of Living our Visions.



real communities launch

After more than a year of planning and gaining community input, GCDD took a bold new turn in its advocacy programs by launching the Real Communities Initiative in 2009 to help advocates create more community support across Georgia. The Initiative relies on a model of community organizing called Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) to help people with disabilities work with others in their communities to find common solutions to common problems. Mike Green, author of *When People Care Enough To Act*, helped GCDD learn how to successfully motivate communities to action with three basic principles including:

- supporting efforts that encourage collective action in communities
- assisting members of communities to come together and engage in purposeful learning
- focusing on assets in the community that can be used to solve problems

The Real Communities Initiative works towards inclusion of people with disabilities with an overall goal of enhanced community health and greater participation from all community members.

lead

real homes ten years since olmstead

2009 marked the 10-year anniversary of the United States Supreme Court decision on *Olmstead v. L.C. and E.W.* – this decision stated that segregating individuals with disabilities in institutions may be discriminatory and that according to the Americans with Disabilities Act, states should provide community-based services to their residents. This court battle instantly opened doors, literally and figuratively, for thousands of Americans to move into their communities.

GCDD partnered with other organizations to sponsor a series of advocacy events across the state to mark the landmark ruling which originated from the case of two Georgia women with developmental disabilities. “Ten Years Since *Olmstead*,” was a theme of this year’s Disability Day at the Capitol. And, for the first time, as part of its annual appreciation ceremony, GCDD included a silent auction to benefit People First of Georgia and to support the Long Road Home planning committee’s work on behalf of people with disabilities who want to exercise their right to living the community rather than continue to reside in institutions and nursing homes. Long Road Home events took place in front of state institutions so that all residents could take part in demonstrations and activities.

self-advocate: lois curtis

It’s hard to think about self-advocacy without bringing Lois Curtis to mind. Lois is one of the most famous self-advocates in the disability rights movement, as the surviving plaintiff in the famous *Olmstead v. L.C. & E.W.* case.

Lois spent much of her youth and early adult years in various hospitals and institutions across Georgia, until she finally sued the state after repeated attempts to be moved into residential housing. Lois, along with co-plaintiff, the late Elaine Wilson, eventually took her case to the United States Supreme Court, where it was declared unconstitutional to keep someone in an institution when they could be assimilated into a community.

Today, Lois takes full advantage of her new surroundings. An acclaimed artist, she shows her artwork in various locations across the state and is often seen at many advocacy events, including the recent Long Road Home event at the state Capitol in summer 2009. She’s usually the one chanting: “Free our brothers! Free our sisters! Free our people NOW!”



Long Road Home events took place in front of state institutions so that all residents could take part in demonstrations and activities.



Lois Curtis lets her voice be heard.



gcdd honors award winners

The 2009 Annual Making a Difference Appreciation Ceremony, held July 16, honored Georgia legislators, media professionals, disability advocates, and one outstanding GCDD council member for distinguished work that enhances the lives of Georgians with developmental disabilities and their families. 2009 winners included:

Legislative Awards: Sen. Johnny Grant (R-Milledgeville) and Rep. Pat Gardner (D-Atlanta) were recognized for their advocacy. Gardner played a pivotal role in both the reorganization of DHR and the proposed expansion of PeachCare for Kids™. Grant was also a driving force behind the DHR reorganization.

Advocate of the Year: Dave Zilles of the State Independent Living Council of Georgia, Inc., was applauded for his work in advocacy. Zilles was instrumental in introducing Senate Bill 244 which would modify the Georgia Nurse Practice Act so that certified nursing assistants could complete health maintenance activities normally done by licensed nurses.

Excellence in Media: Frank Ski of V103 FM radio was honored, as was the Dalton Daily Citizen of Dalton, GA. The Daily Citizen ran a piece titled 'People with disabilities stress need for aid,' written by staff writer Rachel Brown. Ski was honored for his work within the disability community, and using his morning radio show to spread awareness throughout the Atlanta community.

C. Anthony Cunningham Council Member of the Year: Jill Alexander was honored with this achievement, as a leader for the Ben Hill-Irwin Navigator Team and as a member for Ben Hill County's Project Search team, as well as a parent trainer for Parent to Parent of Georgia.

Jill Alexander



One of the most valuable players on the Council, Jill Alexander has turned advocacy upside down with her go-getter attitude, Southern charm and relaxed demeanor. As a mother of three, Jill serves as a parent advocate, and has played a key role in Council initiatives and events.

Jill is employed with Communities in Schools of Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County as a coordinator for the Parental Information Resource Center and program assistant. She is also a 2006 graduate of Partners in Policymaking and an advisory member of the Jessamine Place. Jill also leads the Ben Hill-Irwin Navigator team, which has worked closely with GCDD's latest Real Communities Initiative.

Dave Zilles



Devoting most of his life to advocacy, Dave Zilles is one of the most valuable members of the Unlock the Waiting List! advocacy team. During the 2010 Winter Legislative session, he's worked with Pat Nobbie, deputy director, as a legislative assistant on the Unlock! campaign.

Dave's son, Jonathon, relies on personal care services through the Independent Care Waiver program, and Dave credits his son for teaching him about services for people with disabilities.

Dave also has played a vital role on the Nurse Practice legislation, and was recognized as Advocate of the Year at the annual GCDD awards ceremony.

involve

disability day 2009

"This is the day that we vow to look forward," said Frank Ski, host of the 2009 Disability Day at the Capitol event and DJ of the popular morning program on V103, said to the crowd that descended upon the Capitol building. "It's time to close and never, ever reopen those institutions!" People cheered "Get us out! Keep us out! Don't let us in!"

The keynote speaker of the event, Brad Cohen, is a second-grade teacher in Cobb County. Cohen, who was named state teacher of the year, is most recognizable for having his story as a teacher with Tourette's syndrome featured as a Hallmark Hall of Fame movie, "Front of the Class."

Virginia Harris of Bainbridge Advocacy Individual Network was announced as the annual Self-Advocate of the Year, while the Samuel B. Mitchell Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Bernard Baker.



Discovery Day participants: Commissioner Kenneth Stewart of the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Eric Lipp of Open Doors Organization, Axel Leblois of G3ict, and John Kemp of U.S. Business Leadership Network.

discovery day 2009

The ninth annual Discovery Day organized and hosted by GCDD took on a different focus in 2009. Rather than highlighting employment issues, GCDD brought in experts from across the United States to discuss travel and tourism for people with disabilities.

Keynote speaker Eric Lipp, executive director and founder of Open Doors Organization in Chicago, shared how his organization has created an easy access guide to venues and locations in Chicago for people with disabilities, and how that is serving as a model for other areas across the country.

Discovery Day also served as the platform for the release of the "Georgia Inclusive Travel & Tourism Concept Paper," the debut piece from the Georgia Alliance for Accessible Technologies.



Legislators showed support for the rally.



Advocates rally at the Capitol.

"It's time to close and never, ever reopen those institutions!"



Keynote speaker Brad Cohen and Frank Ski of V103 inspired the crowds.

● funded programs & supported activities

- Alliance of Direct Support Professionals
- Asset Development and Enhancement
- Children's Freedom Initiative
- Conference Sponsorship
- Direct Support Professional Certificate Program
- Disability Day At the Capitol
- Disability Housing Partnership
- Easy Living Homes
- Employment First Georgia
- Georgia Microboards Association
- Innovative Grants
- Kennesaw State University Academy for Adult Inclusive Education
- Making A Difference Discovery Day
- Making A Difference Magazine*
- Media Round Tables
- Moving Forward* Legislative Newsletter
- Navigator Teams / Parent Leadership Coalition
- Partnership Funds
- Partnerships for Success
- Project Search
- Unlock the Waiting List!
- Workforce Developmental Evaluation

dd grant: fy 2009

budget – expenditures

october 1, 2008 - september 30, 2009

EXPENDITURES.....EXPENDED

COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION

Real Council	\$435,944
Total Council Administration.....	\$435,944

PRIORITY AREAS

Real Careers	\$189,788
Real Homes	\$122,371
Real Learning	\$285,479
Real Influence	\$714,641
Real Support.....	\$494,493
Total Priority.....	\$1,806,772

TOTAL \$2,242,716



●
impact

**GEORGIA
COUNCIL ON
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES**

“No professional, institution, business or government can substitute for the power, creativity or relevance of productive local citizens.”

John L. McKnight

From his forward to “When People Care Enough To Act”

“States across the country are realizing we have a crisis of resources, but we also have a crisis of imaginations. It’s a time that calls for changes, for doing new things. If the service systems can’t do something, it doesn’t mean we don’t do it. We just have to be more inventive and experiment with other options.”

Mike Green

From “When People Care Enough To Act”





Council Members

Commissioner
Michael Beatty,
Dept. of Community Affairs
* Don Watt

Jaime Cahill

Kim Chester

Tom Connelly

Scott Crain

Dan Crimmins, Center for
Leadership in Disability,
Georgia State University
* Stacey Ramirez

Renee Feldman

Carl Flair

Tameeka Hunter

Julie Lee

Bruce Lindemann

Lenora Maynard

Commissioner
Rhonda Medows
Dept. of Community Health
* Rhonda Page

Ruby Moore
Georgia Advocacy Office
* Jenny Holland

Meg Nichols

Nancy O'Hara
Dept. of Education –
Special Education Services

James Risher

Tom Seegmueller

Denny Spear

Commissioner
Frank Shelp
Dept. of Behavioral
Health and
Developmental Disabilities
* Olivia Garland
* Stephen Hall

Commissioner
Michael Thurmond
Dept. of Labor
* Susan Sherman

Commissioner B.J. Walker
Dept. of Human Services
* Jonathan Duttweiler
* Alan Goldman

Ken Whiddon

Zolinda Stoneman
Institute of Human
Development and Disability

Advisory Board

Jill Alexander
Riley Buckmaster
Toney Allen DuVall
Glen Friedman
David Glass
Randy Grayson
Nicholas Harris
Tiffany Nash
Madeline Ponder

Back Row, left to right:
Allen Goldman, David Glass
Carl Fair, Tom Seegmueller
Denny Spear, Bruce Linderman
Tom Connelly, Randall Grayson
Kim Chester, Jill Alexander
Renee Feldman, Scott Crain
Dan Crimmins, Jenny Holland
Eric Jacobson

Front Row, left to right:
Glen Friedman, Jamie Cahill
Tameeka Hunter, Riley
Buckmaster, Tiffany Nash

* designee

GCDD Staff FY08

Eric Jacobson, Executive Director • Patricia Nobbie, PhD,
Deputy Director • Dottie Adams, Individual and Family Supports
Director • Valerie Meadows Suber, Public Information Director
and Making A Difference Magazine Editor-In-Chief • Caitlin
Childs, Organizing Director • Dreda Mackey, Grants Manager
• Gary Childers, Fiscal Director • Kim Person, Executive Assis-
tant/Meeting Planner • Dee Spearman, Project Associate •
Will McKeen, Program Associate • Eric Foss, Front Receptionist