



ANNUAL REPORT 2012



# TIME TO MOVE FORWARD



The Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD) is pleased to present its annual report for the period from October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012. During this period, GCDD began implementing its new five-year plan, which is built upon five major goals: (1) to enhance the capacity of communities to build relationships among people with and without disabilities; (2) to increase awareness of the issues important to people with developmental disabilities through earned media, cultivating relationships with members of the media and the use of social media networking tools; (3) to support young adults with disabilities graduating from school to have the skills and knowledge to be engaged in their community; (4) to support self-advocates who are working toward creating communities that are welcoming of all people; and (5) to promote public policy that results in authentic choice, opportunities for self-direction and enhanced capacity for the caregiving efforts of families.

Additionally, GCDD continues to invest in its Real Communities Initiative. Over the last year, seven communities around the State worked to build relationships among people with and without disabilities by supporting a variety of activities. We believe these efforts create opportunities for everyone involved to become participating and contributing members

of their communities. For too long, many of us have worked to make sure people were “in” communities but not “engaged” in communities. Our expected outcomes are to foster relationships among all people that allow them to be fully “engaged” in the community.

As technology changes, the ability to provide people information and connect with the new medias that are emerging is important. GCDD continues to build on efforts that allow us to share the stories of people with developmental disabilities who are contributing and participating members of communities. At the same time, we are using our website, social media outlets and traditional news and media sources to create a common message on the need for change in the systems and communities.

Throughout this annual report, we feature advocacy work with youth with developmental disabilities who are becoming engaged with their peers in schools across our State. With programs such as Partnerships for Success, Project SEARCH and the Kennesaw State University Academy for Inclusive Learning and Social Growth, we are supporting our future leaders to understand what it means to lead, have a job and be a member of a university community. We believe supporting these efforts can ensure that the next generation of leaders in the disability movement will

increase awareness  
ENHANCE THE CAPACITY

SUPPORT YOUNG ADULTS

support self advocates

PROMOTE PUBLIC POLICY

**VISION:** The Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD) envisions 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 full potential.

never accept segregation and isolation, but instead will advocate for accepting and welcoming communities.

GCDD will also continue to support People First of Georgia and its annual conference, while cultivating young self-advocates through the efforts mentioned above. We believe it's vital to strategically move forward individuals with developmental disabilities to become engaged with the formal and informal associations in their communities and be recognized for their leadership, gifts and talents.

Finally, GCDD will carry on its leadership in the public policy arena. We will work to develop a coherent policy agenda based on the values of the Developmental Disabilities Bill of Rights

and Assistance Act. This means recruiting and supporting advocates across the State to collaborate in discussions about the issues and sharing these stories to policymakers at every level. We must ensure that policies and programs offered throughout the state and federal systems reflect the values of independence, productivity, inclusion and integration in the community and self-determination.

GCDD will actively work to move ahead on these goals over the next five years. We want to be a flexible organization that is ready to respond to the issues and needs of people with developmental disabilities, their family members, advocates and policymakers throughout our State and we look forward to working with you.

Eric Jacobson  
Executive Director

Tom Seegmueller  
Chairperson



Eric Jacobson  
Executive Director



Tom Seegmueller  
Chairperson

“AS TECHNOLOGY CHANGES, THE ABILITY TO PROVIDE PEOPLE INFORMATION AND CONNECT WITH THE NEW MEDIAS THAT ARE EMERGING IS IMPORTANT.”

## GCDD'S NETWORK OF FUNDED AND SUPPORTED PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES



GCDD collaborates with, supports and funds many projects across Georgia that promote best practices demonstrating innovative programs and activities that create opportunities to enhance the quality of life for Georgians living with disabilities. GCDD provides information to help educate decision makers,

legislators and the general public about the benefits and ways of including people with developmental disabilities in all aspects of community life. The following are our funded and supported programs and activities in alphabetical order.

**Conference Sponsorships** are GCDD grants dedicated to supporting local, state and national organizations that host a wide range of developmental disability events in Georgia that coincide with the values, mission and program efforts of GCDD.



**Disability Day at the Capitol** is a widely attended public event held annually during Georgia's official legislative session and is sponsored by GCDD to promote advocacy, opportunity and meaningful community living for individuals with disabilities and their families. Each year advocates from across Georgia join family members, friends and supporters – with and without disabilities – to meet with elected officials and rally on the steps of the State Capitol to make their voices heard. The Governor gave the keynote to more than 2,000 attendees at GCDD's 14th Annual Disability Day and American Association of People With Disabilities (AAPD) President and CEO Mark Perriello, also addressed the crowd.

VALUES

mission

PROGRAM EFFORTS

Employment First Georgia is a network of people who can provide technical assistance to others who are interested in customized employment, which is a strategy that provides individuals with disabilities with alternatives to traditional, competitive jobs.



Georgia Microboards Association provides training and ongoing assistance to small, nonprofit organizations called microboards throughout the State, whose mission is to plan and oversee the supports and services of one individual with a disability.



The GCDD Website offers Georgia's disability community up-to-date information on GCDD, its projects, disability issues, resources and news information, photos and videos. GCDD recently launched new and improved website tools including an online community, open forum, enhanced blog section and access to sign petitions and declarations to help people in the disability community connect, engage and tell their stories.



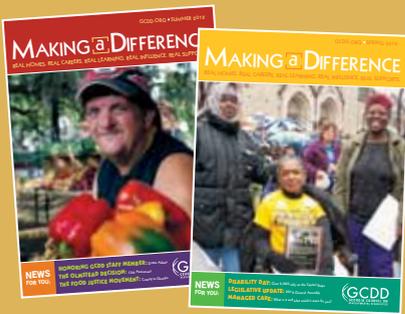
**Innovative Grants** are small, renewable GCDD grants awarded for unique projects intended to help people with developmental disabilities in overcoming obstacles and providing access to an inclusive life involving homes, careers, learning, support and influence.



Kennesaw State University Academy for Inclusive Learning and Social Growth is a post-secondary, on-campus college experience for students with intellectual disabilities who have graduated from high school. The students participate in the typical freshman orientation seminars and then enroll in non-degree audit classes of their choice alongside degree-seeking students. The two-year program provides the necessary supports and accommodations and includes social integration, career exploration and training resulting in a Certificate of Social Growth and Development. GCDD is advocating for funding to replicate this model in four more Georgia universities.

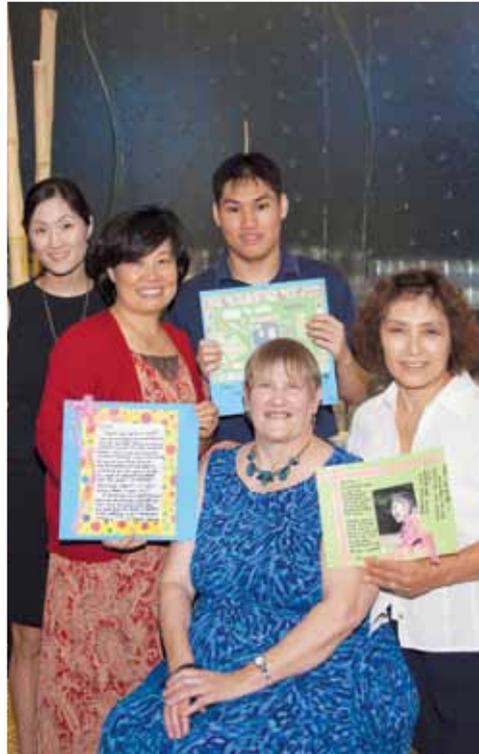


SUPPORTS  
modations  
CAREER EXPLO  
ntegration



*Making a Difference* is a quarterly magazine published by GCDD dedicated to advocacy and education to inform various audiences about critical issues affecting people with developmental disabilities, as well as promote activities and create opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to exercise their right to live, learn, work, play and worship in Georgia communities.

*Making a Difference* Annual Appreciation Ceremony is held every July to recognize the distinguished work and dedication of Georgia legislators, media professionals, disability advocates and outstanding GCDD Council members for efforts that improve community life for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in Georgia communities. This year, for the first time, the C.A. Anthony Cunningham Award for exemplary service was presented to a staff member, Individual and Family Supports Director Dottie Adams.



**Media Roundtables** are organized by GCDD in conjunction with its quarterly council meetings held throughout the State. In 2012, media roundtables were hosted in the cities of Gainesville and Savannah. Local print, online, radio and television news media representatives met with disability groups and families to talk about policy, programs and personal stories from the community, with an emphasis on People First Language, a way of writing and speaking about people with disabilities that communicates knowledge and respect.



*Moving Forward* is a weekly legislative newsletter produced by GCDD during the Georgia General Assembly to offer public policy updates throughout the session and keep developmental disability advocates informed on the legislative process and the progress being made.

Partnership Funds are small GCDD grants awarded to individuals with disabilities and their family members to attend advocacy training events and conferences to learn and share how to make life better for people with disabilities.

Partnerships for Success is a high school-based program designed to promote relationships between young people with disabilities and their peers through leadership-building, recreation and social activities, community service and other shared experiences that allow all students with and without disabilities to make contributions to their school and community at large. This project teaches Self-Determination through Person-Centered Planning, Futures Planning and student-led IEPs (Individual Education Plans) to help young people set their goals and use their voice to express what is important to them. This comprehensive approach to supporting students with disabilities helps ensure the student has a successful school experience and a positive transition as he or she plans for life after high school. Currently, Partnerships for Success is being implemented in high schools and some middle schools in 12 districts across Georgia.



SELF-ADVOCATES  
create opportunities  
exercise their rights

People First of Georgia is an organization made up of self-advocates who are people with disabilities working together to exercise their rights and support each other, to advocate for social change and to create opportunities that will improve their lives.



Project SEARCH is a unique, business-led, school-to-work transition program designed for students with disabilities whose main goal is employment and will benefit from career exploration. The program provides real-life work experience combined with training in employability and independent living skills to assist youths with disabilities to make successful transitions from school to meaningful employment. Students will experience total workplace immersion through classroom instruction, career exploration and relevant job skills training through strategically designed internships. Currently in Georgia, there are 15 Project SEARCH sites across the State with five others in the planning stages.

Public Forums are sponsored by GCDD in conjunction with its quarterly council meetings to welcome community residents throughout the State to share ideas with GCDD Council members, interact directly with State and local officials and get updates on policy and programs that affect people with disabilities. Public forums were held in Gainesville and Savannah in 2012.





**Unlock the Waiting Lists!** is a targeted advocacy movement established 15 years ago by a coalition of Georgia disability organizations to educate the public and change public policy to reduce and/or eliminate waiting lists for thousands of people with disabilities, the elderly and their families who need home and community-based services. The campaign goals are: (1) to bring together stakeholders from the different disability groups throughout Georgia to work together; (2) to create a unified partnership among individuals, advocates, providers and governmental leaders, agencies and legislators to address Georgia's challenges; (3) to provide a focus for consistent and successful strategies to be used throughout the State; and (4) to bring media attention and public awareness to the critical needs of people with disabilities and their families.



EDUCATE THE PUBLIC  
Eliminate waiting list  
campaign goals



**Voices Beyond the Mirror** is a series of online public awareness videos produced by GCDD profiling the everyday realities of people living with disabilities. The 10-part series featuring candid reflections and personal stories from individuals with disabilities has garnered more than 6,100 views and won a 2012 national Telly Bronze Award for excellence in the non-broadcast productions/social issues category. **Voices Beyond the Mirror** was created to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Developmental Disabilities Bill of Rights and Assistance Act of 1971. It can be viewed at [gcd.org](http://gcd.org) in the news and media video section.

# DD GRANT: FY 2012 BUDGET – EXPENDITURES



PERIOD COVERED OCTOBER 1, 2011 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2012

EXPENDITURES ..... EXPENDED

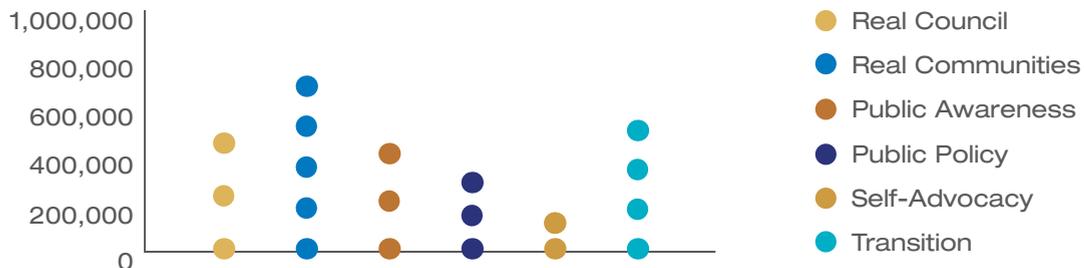
### Council Administration

Real Council .....	\$555,911
Total Council Administration .....	\$555,911

### Priority Areas

Real Communities .....	\$744,884
Public Awareness .....	\$536,391
Public Policy .....	\$366,198
Self-Advocacy .....	\$159,232
Transition .....	\$569,208
Total Priority .....	\$2,375,913

Total ..... \$2,931,824



# GCDD COUNCIL MEMBERS



Tom Seegmueller,  
*Chair, Parent Advocate*

Tameeka Hunter,  
*Vice Chair, Self-Advocate*

Commissioner Michael A. Beatty,  
*Georgia Department of Community Affairs*

Commissioner Mark Butler,  
*Georgia Department of Labor*

Commissioner David Cook, *Georgia*  
*Department of Community Health*

Commissioner Clyde L. Reese, III Esq.,  
*Georgia Department of Human Services*

Commissioner Frank E. Shelp,  
*Georgia Department of Behavioral Health*  
*& Developmental Disabilities*

Jamie Cahill, *Self-Advocate*

Kim Chester, *Parent Advocate*

Tom Connelly, *Self-Advocate*

Scott Crain, *Parent Advocate*

Daniel Crimmins, PhD,  
*Center for Leadership &*  
*Disabilities, Georgia State University*

Renee Feldman, *Parent Advocate*

Carl Flair, *Parent Advocate*

Christine Fleming,  
*Georgia Department of Labor –*  
*Vocational Rehabilitation Designee*

Deborah Gay,  
*Georgia Department of Education*

Allan Goldman, *Georgia Division*  
*of Aging Designee*

Julie Lee, *Parent Advocate*

Lenora Maynard, *Self-Advocate*

Ruby Moore, *The Georgia Advocacy Office*

Margaret Nichols, MD, *Parent Advocate*

Rhonda Page, *Georgia Department*  
*of Public Health Designee*

Ron Pounds, *Georgia Department*  
*of Community Affairs Designee*

James Risher, *Parent Advocate*

Beverly Rollins, *Department of*  
*Behavioral Health & Developmental*  
*Disabilities Designee*

Denny Spear, *Parent Advocate*

Zolinda Stoneman, PhD,  
*Institute of Human Development*  
*& Disability – University of Georgia*

Ken Whiddon, *Parent Advocate*

## ADVISORY MEMBERS

Scott Bales, *Self-Advocate* • Esma Campbell, *Parent Advocate* • Stacy Franklin, *Parent Advocate* • Randy Grayson, *Parent Advocate* •  
Dorothy Harris, *Self-Advocate* • Cheri Pace, *Parent Advocate*



THANK YOU

thank you  
thank you

**GCDD STAFF** (FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT) Gary Childers, Chief Financial Officer • Eric Jacobson, Executive Director • Dottie Adams, Individual and Family Supports Director • Valerie Meadows Suber, Public Information Director and *Making a Difference* Magazine Editor-in-Chief • Eric Foss, Front Receptionist (BACK ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT) Dee Spearman, Public Information Assistant • Kim Person-Hudson, Executive Assistant/Meeting Planner • Patricia Nobbie, PhD, Deputy Director • Anna Watson, Planning and Policy Specialist • Caitlin Childs, Organizing Director – Real Communities Initiative • Dreda Mackey, Grants Manager

## WELCOME TO OUR INCOMING COUNCIL MEMBERS & ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

Josette Akhras, *Parent Advocate*

Jason Bearden, *Local Nonprofit / Provider*

Commissioner Frank Berry, *Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities*

Becky Brightwell, *Institute of Human Development & Disability – University of Georgia Designee*

Jay Bulot, *Georgia Department of Human Services – Division of Aging Services*

Katie Chandler,  
*Georgia Advocacy Office Designee*

Farah Chapes, *Local Nonprofit / Provider*

Commissioner Peggy Fitzgerald,  
*Georgia Department of Public Health*

Teresa Ann Heard,  
*Local Nonprofit / Provider*

Deborah Hibben, *Parent Advocate*

Geniece McCoy, *Parent Advocate*

Evan Nodvin, *Self-Advocate*

Mitzi Proffitt, *Parent Advocate*

Greg Schmiege, *Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Executive Director*

Eddie Towson, *Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities Designee*

### ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Teresa Brenner, *Self-Advocate*

Teresa Johnson, *Parent Advocate*

Kylie Moore, *Self-Advocate*

Lisa Newbern, *Parent Advocate*

Colleen Pirkle, *Local Nonprofit / Provider*

## GCDD'S REAL COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

Launched in 2009, the Real Communities Initiative is GCDD's signature concept that has received national attention for its innovation and diversity. Real Communities provides cutting edge, intentionally inclusive activities throughout the State with a focus on projects that create opportunities for all people – with and without disabilities – to work together as full partners in the social life and the civic development of their communities.



The goal is to build inclusive communities throughout Georgia and connect people with developmental disabilities and their organizations to other citizens and their associations to act collectively on community issues. GCDD commissioned six videos to celebrate its Real Communities Initiative projects and share the stories of people with and without disabilities working together to achieve common goals that strengthen community life for everyone.



Scan the QR code to visit GCDD's collection of Real Communities Initiatives' video projects.

Real Communities Videos  
INNOVATION AND DIVERSITY

work together

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

act collectively



THE MISSION of the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD) is to bring about social and policy changes that promote opportunities for persons with developmental disabilities and their families to live, learn, work, play and worship in Georgia communities.



404.657.2126 • [gcdd.org](http://gcdd.org)

2 Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 26-246, Atlanta, Georgia 30303