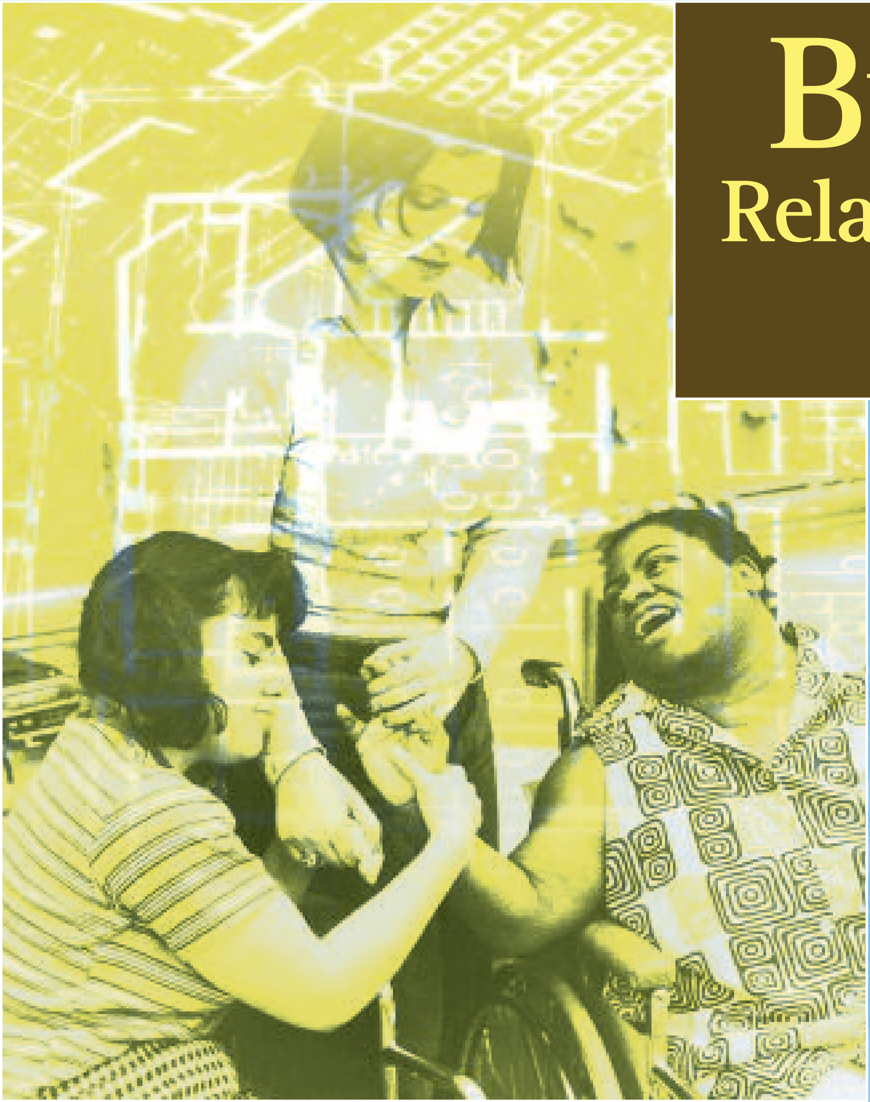
GEORGIA GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Making a Difference

SUMMER 2006



Building Relationships Key to Future

Plans to Release Children Unveiled

Get Smart. Vote Smart.

Marchers Celebrate Olmstead, Demand Freedom

www.gcdd.org

Real Homes. Real Careers. Real Learning. Real Influence. Real Supports.

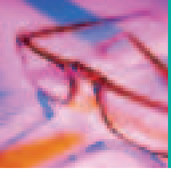
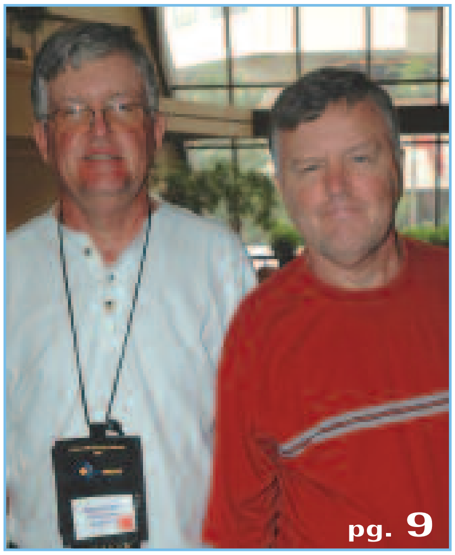


TABLE OF CONTENTS



Features

In Each Issue

Departments

Making a Difference
Volume 7, Issue 1
Summer 2006

A quarterly magazine of the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities

The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities collaborates with Georgia's citizens, public and private advocacy organizations and policymakers to positively influence public policies that enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities and their families.

GCDD provides this through education and advocacy activities, program implementation, funding and public policy analysis and research.

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Tom Seegmueller
Chairperson
tms@dhr.state.ga.us

Eric E. Jacobson
Executive Director
eejacobson@dhr.state.ga.us

Valerie Meadows Suber
Editor-in-Chief &
Public Information Director
vmsuber@dhr.state.ga.us

2 Peachtree Street NW, Suite 26-246
Atlanta, GA 30303-3142
Voice 404-657-2126
Fax 404-657-2132
Toll free 1-888-275-4233
TDD 404-657-2133
www.gcdd.org

Valerie Smith Buxton
Managing Editor
O'Neill Communications, Inc.
val@oneillcommunications.com

O'Neill Communications, Inc.
Design & Layout

Brandon D Hunt
Cartoonist

Key Progress in Meeting the Needs of Georgians with Developmental Disabilities

We have made great progress over recent years in meeting the needs of Georgians with developmental disabilities and their families including responding to the Olmstead mandate. During this next year we expect 100 people to move from state institutions into the community with the necessary support. This includes 44 children under the age of 21 who have been growing up in state facilities instead of with loving, supportive families.

We have substantially increased the number of Medicaid Waivers that support individuals with developmental disabilities. In 2005, funds were available to support 925 waivers; an unprecedented 1,500 were awarded this year, and we are committed to building on this progress in the future.

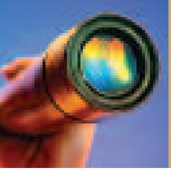
Georgia currently has the oldest Medicaid waivers in the country, ones for the most part, require that people fit into existing program. Today, the Department of Human Resources Office of Developmental Disabilities is rewriting the waiver program in order to give more people with developmental disabilities support based on their exact needs. Under the new waivers, people with disabilities such as Down syndrome, cerebral palsy and autism will be able to have more control over the types of home and community-based services they receive and who provides those services.

Instead of investing in outdated facilities, buildings and programs that segregate people with disabilities, Georgia is investing directly in individuals and families – individuals who want employment, housing, membership in civic and community organizations and families who want to keep their young children at home.

As a result of the new waivers, and consumer-driven services, Georgians with developmental disabilities and their families will have greater control and choice. You can expect the State of Georgia to continue its progress toward providing home and community-based services for our citizens with disabilities. And, as Governor, I look forward to our working together to improve the lives of individuals and families.

Sonny Perdue

Sonny Perdue
Governor



GCDD Poised to Act on Its Vision

This year, the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities is required by federal law to submit a five-year strategic plan. This is an opportunity for GCDD to review what it has supported and accomplished during the past five years and decide what it can do to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities. GCDD spent the last year thinking about its role, the programs it supports and the possibilities for the future.

We believe that ① everything we do should improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families; ② we are leaders in the advocacy effort; ③ policymakers and the media should come to GCDD about issues concerning people with developmental disabilities; and ④ we need to operate as an effective and efficient organization.

The Developmental Disabilities Bill of Rights and Assistance Act provides much guidance to GCDD on our efforts and what we support. It says that the purpose of Developmental Disability Councils is to support the inclusion, integration, independence, productivity and self-determination of people with developmental disabilities in the community. This provides direction for GCDD to work toward developing better public policies, implementing innovative programs and supporting advocacy efforts that result in people with developmental disabilities living, working and playing in the community. It means that you can expect to see GCDD working on efforts to move people from institutions into the community; developing policies that allow people to continue working and keep their Medicaid; funding projects that support people living in their own home; supporting jobs that pay competitive wages; and, giving individuals and families more control over the resources available to purchase supports.

GCDD will also be reaching out to the culturally diverse communities that exist throughout our state. Atlanta and the rest of Georgia have seen dramatic increases in immigration from regions all over the world including Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. We need to do a better job of understanding their cultures and their relationship to disabilities.

Finally, over the next five years GCDD will be working to improve its technology and how it collects and provides information to people all over Georgia. We believe that a major part of our role is to provide individuals and families with information, and we need to do a better job using the Internet and other methods. You can expect to see us working with others to develop more closely connected Web sites and ways to ask you for information and provide you with information.

> "We have the vision and an understanding of the action that is necessary to make that vision a reality."

We have the vision and an understanding of the action that is necessary to make that vision a reality. I hope that you will contact us with your ideas on how we can improve the lives of people with disabilities and let us know how we are doing in making our vision a reality. I invite your comments; please reach me at eejacobson@dhr.state.ga.us or 1-888-275-4233.

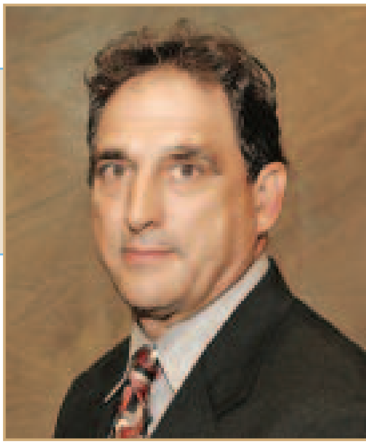
Eric E. Jacobson

Eric E. Jacobson
Executive Director, GCDD

> "Vision without action is merely a DREAM. Action without vision is just WASTING TIME. But vision WITH action can change the world."
>
> Joel Baker

How Should Advocates Measure Success?

ad•vo•ca•cy:	**Active support, as of a cause, idea or policy**
ad•vo•cate:	**To speak in favor of; recommend. 1. A person who argues for a cause; supporter or defender. 2. A person who pleads in another's behalf; intercessor.**



Recently I seem to hear these words bandied about and debated wherever I am, planning sessions, conferences, public hearings and a wide variety of other forums. Generally speaking, everyone agrees on the meaning and many, if not all participating in the discussion, consider them to be somewhat self-descriptive. For many it is an all-defining term. However clearly we may believe that we understand or exemplify these definitions, things may not be as simple as they appear at first glance.

One of the first problems comes in trying to measure our advocacy efforts. Is the bottom line merely the sum of activities in which we are involved and the number of windmills we attempt to tilt, or should it be the actual change that results from these seemingly Quixotic efforts? Is it enough to merely be a personal advocate? Must we advocate for others? There is no doubt that until we meet with some success in our personal advocacy, we may have no time for more global issues. However, is there some point when these efforts are not necessary for real systemic and lasting changes in our lives? Are federal issues more important than efforts for statewide or local changes? Is the mere process of advocating for others or ourselves an end in and of itself, or must there be some kind of quantifiable result, measured in dollars, slots or numbers on a list?

If we have received training to become better or more effective advocates, must we begin to put these refined skills and abilities to use immediately or is it enough to use them at some indeterminable time in the future? Again do we use them only for our own gain or is there some unwritten obligation to use them for more global change? Do we also have any responsibility to document and report our efforts and successes in some manner to those that were responsible for our training so that they might evaluate their training programs and justify the expense incurred with the training of advocates?

There is no doubt as to the power and necessity of self-advocacy. However beyond our own personal crisis, is there not some greater result when we become part of a larger advocacy effort? Would there really be any significant change if a wide array of advocacy groups were able to come together and speak with one voice delivering one message? Are our goals that different?

Recent events relating to statewide advocacy issues have illustrated the power that we can have on a variety of issues. How do we respond in a similarly unified manner to other issues? The recent actions relating to the issues revolving around Katie Beckett is a good illustration of this. Another illustration is the turn out of "Partners" graduates when they feared that the Partners In Policymaking program was threatened by the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities' recent planning process. How do we illicit this unified response from these advocates on the myriad other issues we face?

Too frequently it seems people are aware of the things we as disability advocates are against, but unfortunately they have little, if any, understanding about what we are for.

During an impromptu discussion relating to these issues recently, Bruce Lindemann, a GCDD member, broached an interesting concept. Would we be more effective as advocates if we became more proactive? Instead of waiting to react and oppose legislation and legislative issues, would we not be better served by thinking ahead and working with legislators to craft legislation that would improve the lives of Georgians and Americans with disabilities?

I do not pose these questions in an effort to question the sincerity, integrity or commitment of any of us that assume the title, advocate. I offer no answers.

However, I believe that our personal and combined answers to these questions are pivotal to our personal growth as advocates and the success of advocacy efforts as a whole.

Tom Seegmueller

Tom Seegmueller
Chairperson, GCDD

Self-Advocates Man PBS Pledge Drive

Members of the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities and disABILITY LINK helped give back to their community June 6, by participating in Georgia Public Broadcasting's (GPB) televised pledge drive, raising $6,400 in one hour, from 52 pledges.

"In April, individuals from GCDD and disABILITY LINK participated in the radio membership campaign. DisABILITY LINK President and CEO Rebecca Ramage Tuttle made remarks during a 30-second spot interview. It went so well, they asked us back for live TV," explained GCDD Public Information Director and Editor-in-Chief of *Making a Difference* Magazine Valerie Meadows Suber, who organized the event.

GCDD ex officio member Dawn Alford participated in the drive and served as a spokesperson for the group. She felt the experience was positive. "Too often people see what people with disabilities can't do. This allowed people to see us giving back to our community," she said.

Cheryl Laurendeau, a member of GCDD, agreed. "One of the things we press for most is inclusion in the community. Any opportunity we have for people to see us in the community is good."

But being seen in the community wasn't the only good thing about the night. "It was fun. I signed up to go to the next one," Laurendeau said.

The groups' efforts were appreciated by Willard Barnett, GPB's volunteer coordinator. "I think it went very well. I'd love the opportunity to do it again."

Barnett invited the two groups to do the television pledge drive after they had helped with the radio membership drive. He didn't have any concern whether participants would be able to do the job. "I believe people can do whatever they choose to do," he said.

DisABILITY LINK, which is one of Georgia's centers for independent living, provided many of the pledge workers. The organization's Assistant Director Hilary Elliott was pleased with the experience.

"Some of us could answer phones but couldn't write, and some could write but were nonverbal. GPB accommodated us so everyone could participate. It was inclusive," she said.

In addition, GPB gave both GCDD and disABILITY LINK the opportunity to talk about their organizations.

"This was an important opportunity to positively impact public perception by having the two organizations represented by a diverse group of people with and without disabilities, self-advocates and parents, giving back to the community in a highly visible, yet non-stereotypical setting," Suber said.

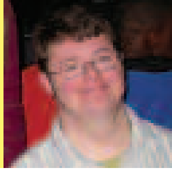
GPB Pledge Drive Participants:

Dottie Adams • Dawn Alford • Norma Asheber • Michelle Aulthouse • Vallorie Butler • Joe Delozier • Tonya Delozier • Hilary Elliott • Cheryl Laurendeau • Jessica Long • David Mapp • Millie Powell • Ashley Rhinehart • Empish Thomas • Margo Waters

Community Advocates Sought for Project

The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities and Project South are recruiting established and emerging community leaders to participate in a two-part Organizing Institute comprised of a five-month training period followed by a seven-month paid fellowship.

Although no previous experience is required, this Institute is best suited for people with a demonstrated interest in organizing and advocacy around issues like housing, education, fair employment, self-advocacy and transportation. The Institute specifically seeks to engage community leaders who are actively participating in or who are looking to



join the Disability Rights Movement. Graduates of Partners in Policymaking and Georgia Voices that Count are strongly encouraged to apply.

Ten participants will be trained in organizing skills with the expectation that they will return to their home communities to put these skills to practice. The training is designed for inclusion and accessibility for people with a variety of learning styles and moves people toward a place of action. Upon successful completion of the training, participants may apply for fellowships to continue as paid community organizers at local organizations.

The purpose is to promote systems change around issues that affect people with disabilities in Georgia and to expand the circle of those involved in those issues beyond the traditional disability community. By connecting disability issues to the “bigger picture,” organizers will build a new movement for social and economic justice with allies inside and outside the disability community.

Applications are due August 15, 2006. Participants will be notified by September 1.

Applications are available on the GCDD Web site, *www.gcdd.org*. The direct link is *http://www.gcdd.org/home/OrganizingInst/Application%20Form.doc*. Please contact Susanna Mitchell at 404-656-6593 or sumitchell@dhr.state.ga.us with any questions about the Institute or the application process.

Georgians Support Universal, Comprehensive Health Care For All

Georgia representatives of national and local organizations joined thousands around the country June 7 in support of U.S. House Resolution 676 (HR 676), which aims to establish an American-style national health insurance program by expanding the highly successful Medicare program.

HR 676, also known as the United States National Health Insurance Act, was introduced by Rep. John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI) and has been endorsed by Georgia Rep. John Lewis (D), Rep. Cynthia McKinney (D) and 71 other congressional representatives. In the 2006 Georgia legislative session, Representatives Stephanie Stuckey (D-Decatur), Pat Gardner (D-Atlanta) and Mary Margaret Oliver (D-Atlanta) introduced a resolution in support of HR 676.

State Rep. Bob Holmes (D-Atlanta), a long time supporter and author of proposed single-payer legislation for Georgia, said, “Recent studies have shown that single-payer health insurance is fiscally responsible, quite feasible and provides a real basis for solving many of our health care problems.”

Representatives of the following organizations support efforts to cover millions of uninsured and underinsured Georgians: Physicians for a National Health Program, Statewide Independent Living Council, Planned Parenthood, the Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network, the National Nurses Organizing Committee, Georgia Citizens Coalition Against Hunger, AIDS Survival Project, Project South, Health Students Taking Action Together (H-STAT), Healing Circles, Inc., Georgians for a Common Sense Health Plan, the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, Health Care NOW and more.

Dr. Karen Hochman, assistant professor, Emory University School of Medicine said, “Health care is widely recognized as a basic human right throughout the world. The United States pays more for health care than any other country. It is time for the people of the United States to get what they are paying for; high quality, comprehensive coverage that is not tied to employment, health status or income. HR 676, which expands Medicare coverage to everyone, is equitably financed, cost effective and has comprehensive benefits including mental health, prescription drug coverage, physician/provider choice and long-term care, with an emphasis on community-based support.”

> **“Too many consumers have to choose between health care and basic necessities, such as food and housing.”**

Small businesswoman Vanessa Jackson added, “Our health care system is failing us. Even the so-called well-insured are confronted with constant increases in insurance costs and decreases in coverage. Too many consumers have to choose between health care and basic necessities, such as food and housing. For many of us, health care under this system of commercial insurance is a luxury we can no longer afford!” ●

Discovery Tour Slated for September

The Home Depot, Southern Company and the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities are sponsoring a half-day executive briefing about how people with developmental disabilities contribute to corporations and small businesses.

The Sixth Annual Making a Difference Discovery Tour is scheduled for September 21 from 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM. "This is a perfect time to explore powerful opportunities to tap into one of the largest, most reliable, yet overlooked, pools of qualified, available workers," revealed GCDD Public Information Officer and Editor-in-Chief of *Making a Difference,* Valerie Meadows Suber.

"This unique experience helps executives discover how people with disabilities can add value to their bottom lines at every professional level. Our mission is to engage attendees in a demonstration of true diversity and ways in which businesses and communities can benefit by including everyone. We hope attendees will come away from the tour realizing that hiring people with developmental disabilities is a win-win solution," she explained.

The tour is designed to enlighten top executives, chief diversity officers and human resource officers.

Those who are interested in attending or sponsoring the sixth annual Discovery Tour should contact Suber at (404) 657-2122 or via email at vmsuber@dhr.state.ga.us.

GCDD Honors Advocates at Award Ceremony

With many great strides taken in the past year, choosing award honorees was a difficult task for the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities. After careful consideration, the following people were recognized for the difference they make in Georgia during an awards ceremony July 20 in Atlanta:

C. Anthony Cunningham Leadership Award
Cheryl Laurendeau

Media Professionals of the Year
Lisa Crane, Fox 5 Atlanta
Gracie Bonds Staples,
Atlanta Journal Constitution

Advocates of the Year
Al Duvall
Linda Wilson

Legislative Leadership Awards
Rep. Ben Harbin (R-Evans)
Sen. Greg Goggans (R-Douglas)
Sen. Regina Thomas (D-Savannah)

Letters to the Editor

Letters should include the writer's full name, address, phone number, and may be edited for purpose of clarity and space.

Contact Our Editor:

Valerie Meadows Suber,
vmsuber@dhr.state.ga.us,
404-657-2122
Fax 404-657-2132

or: 2 Peachtree Street, NW
Suite 26-246
Atlanta, GA 30303-3142

Audio or Large Print Versions:

For an audio version of *Making a Difference*, please contact GCDD. A large font version is available for download at *www.gcdd.org.*

Sponsorship:

For sponsorship opportunities contact: Christina Rosell at 770-578-9765 or christina@oneillcommunications.com

Subscriptions / Back Issues:

Visit us at our Web site: *www.gcdd.org* or call us: 404-657-2126

It is our policy to publish readers' comments. Contents do not necessarily reflect the opinions of GCDD, the editors or state government.

GOVERNOR'S
COUNCIL ON
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES

Empowered Advocates Unite at SABE Conference

By Christina Rosell

The 8th Annual Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) conference was held in Atlanta this May and hosted by People First of Georgia and People First of Atlanta. The national conference is biannual, and advocates flood in from across the U.S. to learn how to better advocate.

"Being in Atlanta reinvigorates us because it is the birthplace of many movements," said Charlene Jones from Sacramento, Calif.

A People First adviser, she attended the conference to get an idea of what other states are doing to help people take more control of their services.

> "Being in Atlanta reinvigorates us because it is the birthplace of many movements."

Jones was accompanied by Nicole Patterson of Sacramento. A self-advocate and coordinator for consumer services for the California Department of Developmental Services, she came to learn more about self-determination and how to ensure customers make their own choices. Patterson said the 2006 conference is "…like a revival for advocates, and I need this to do what I do – advocate."

Sam Gage from the Tennessee Microboards Association in Selmer, Tenn., made a presentation about self-providers becoming directors of their own services by creating what is called a "microboard." Essentially, a company is created and a board is put into place.

"You can hire your own staff," he explained. "You're your own director."

Gage planned on learning more about finding jobs in the community and how to close down segregated workshops.

One of Georgia's own self-advocates at the conference was Matthew Barnes of People First of Albany. He came to better learn and encourage others how to speak out for rights.

"We've been silent too long on the issues," he said, including employment, transportation, medical coverage, Social Security, Medicaid and health insurance from the workplace, or more often, lack thereof.

But the conference wasn't all work and no play. Many advocates rallied together for the sake of fun.

Elisha Buss from Lyndonville, VT, and his friend David McKinstry from St. Johnsbury, VT came to their first SABE conference to learn, but mostly to socialize. Buss said he had started learning how to dance at a workshop that morning, and he planned to practice his moves at a social later that weekend.

Until the next SABE conference in 2008, empowered self-advocates have plenty of fellow advocates to network with, and enough knowledge and advice to start making a difference in each of their respective states.

If you're interested in membership or learning more about SABE, visit www.sabeusa.org or email the organization at sabeusa@hotmail.com. ●

Nicole Patterson (top photo) and Charlene Jones (bottom photo) traveled from California to attend the conference.

Georgia Advocate Elected Regional Representative

One of Georgia's self-advocates was elected to a regional post during the 2006 SABE conference. People First of Georgia President Bernard Baker will serve as a regional representative for Region 6 of SABE, which encompasses Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee and Kentucky.

"I believe in doing what the people want done," he said when discussing his new four-year-long post.

A veteran self-advocate, Baker's duties will include working cooperatively with the other states in the region to organize quarterly meetings, SABE activities, find grants and other monies and to network with other representatives within the region.

Bernard Baker was elected to serve as regional representative.

By Valerie Smith Buxton

Building Relationships Key to Future

GCDD Unveils Five-Year Plan

After an exhaustive, two-year process that included surveying and talking to advocates across the state, the Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities has developed a comprehensive, five-year plan that seeks to assure a bright future for Georgians with developmental disabilities.

Dawn Alford hopes the plan will have a positive impact on all Georgians with disabilities.

“We asked what the issues were for people with developmental disabilities in Georgia, and how could they be improved,” explained GCDD Executive Director Eric Jacobson.

Forums were held in Atlanta, Gainesville, Macon, Savannah and Albany to discuss top disability issues in Georgia, and people also filled out online and paper surveys to give their opinions.

“Education and employment were the top issues identified,” Jacobson said.

After gathering information on the vision that disability advocates had for Georgia, GCDD split into work groups during its April 2006 meeting to prioritize the 60 objectives identified during the public input process.

Dawn Alford, a self-advocate and ex officio member of GCDD, said, “It was difficult for all of us to narrow these things down. They were all great ideas, goals and objectives.”

GCDD Chairperson Tom Seegmueller was excited about the process. “It was a good opportunity to take a breath and determine where we’ve been and where we want to go.”

Eventually GCDD identified five major focus areas, under which they listed several goals and objectives:

- Real Homes
- Real Learning
- Real Supports
- Real Careers
- Real Influence

These areas are similar to past goals, with two exceptions. Real Careers used to be Real Jobs and a new focus area, Real Supports, was added. GCDD’s Family and Individual Support Director Dottie Adams explained, “Often people’s status comes from the work positions that they hold, and we want to ensure that people have careers based on their interests and not just settle for any job they can get. We believe people with disabilities’ work potential is much greater than the entry-level fast food, janitorial or grocery store bagger positions.”

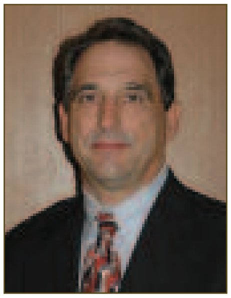
> **“We believe people with disabilities’ work potential is much greater than the entry-level fast food, janitorial or grocery store bagger positions.”**

Alford, a student at Georgia Institute of Technology, is studying chemical engineering and is excited about the emphasis on careers, not just for herself, but for all Georgians.

“There’s not a lot of great incentives for people with disabilities to go to work. You have to be extremely poor to receive Medicaid and get community supports. People with disabilities can’t live in the community without Medicaid. If they work and make too much money, they lose

> **“We need everyone focusing on some key points and using the same terminology and repeating the same message so it’s heard.”**

01 REAL CAREERS
02 REAL HOMES
03 REAL INFLUENCE
04 REAL LEARNING
05 REAL SUPPORTS


Tom Seegmueller

support,” she explained. “Private insurance won’t provide attendant care.” On the other hand, she said, “We want to work and give back to our communities.”

To deal with this issue, GCDD plans to support and participate in coalitions that are working to develop and implement a Medicaid buy-in program in Georgia. This type of program would establish new Medicaid eligibility categories for workers with disabilities whose income might make them ineligible for Medicaid.

Building coalitions with other organizations to effect change is a key element throughout the plan. “We speak with so many voices, instead of a unified voice,” Seegmueller said. “We need everyone focusing on some key points and using the same terminology and repeating the same message so it’s heard.”

Jacobson agreed. “There are such limited tax dollars available – we find ourselves fighting over the same dollars. We should work together toward expanding resources or finding ways to make resources fit everyone’s needs.”

Other groups GCDD is considering partnering with on issues include aging, low income, children, education or other groups with a common agenda.

“Coalitions are necessary for the future,” Jacobson said.

GCDD plans to build coalitions as part of its Real Influence goal, to better educate legislators on important topics. Currently GCDD works with several leadership programs to identify advocates who will help educate legislators. Now, GCDD wants to take that a step further. “We want to be more involved in the public policy arena than in the past,” Jacobson said.

“The Council has done a good job on advocacy on a number of issues from a reactive position. We need to proactively help craft legislation that

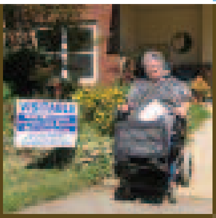
REAL CAREERS

Priority: GCDD’s priority for Real Careers is that there needs to be a vision that people with significant developmental disabilities can work and this can take place by replicating best practices in employment such as customized employment. These employment opportunities will be enhanced by building relationships with business leaders and employers as well as through policies and practice that acknowledge the value of people with developmental disabilities in the work force.

Goals: State policy and practices will support people with developmental disabilities working in competitive, integrated employment settings.

People with developmental disabilities will have Real Careers through customized, integrated and competitive employment opportunities.

01



REAL HOMES

Priority: GCDD’s priority is to promote policies that recognize that housing is inherently linked to income. This means ensuring that there are enough resources so that Georgians with developmental disabilities can acquire accessible and affordable housing, especially for individuals transitioning from institutions and nursing homes.

Goals: People with developmental disabilities will live in Real Homes with adequate support.

People with developmental disabilities will live in Real Affordable Homes.

02

REAL INFLUENCE

Priorities: GCDD wants to increase awareness of its activities and promote initiatives supporting its goal and mission. In addition, GCDD wants to support coalitions and advocates in promoting coherent public policies for integrated life in the community for people with developmental disabilities and the people who support them.

03

Goals: People with developmental disabilities, family members, advocates and others have the necessary information to become better advocates.

Develop a comprehensive and cohesive public policy and governmental structure which: encourages choice and self-direction in the lives of people with developmental disabilities; increases opportunities to become self-sufficient and to be included in the community; and strengthens and supports the care-giving efforts of families.

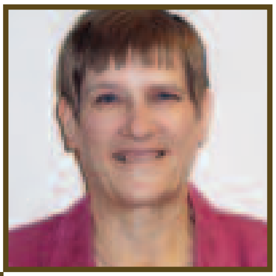
People with developmental disabilities and their families will have opportunities to exercise leadership in organizations and in the disabilities rights movement.

will promote systems change," Seegmueller said.

Jacobson also wants to ensure change is happening at the local levels. "We need advocates to create kitchen table conversations about disability so we can create warm, welcoming communities for people with disabilities."

One of the big issues at the local level is a lack of services and supports for families and individuals with developmental disabilities. To address the issue, GCDD created the new focus area of Real Supports.

"Supports, both formal and informal, are critical for people to have the quality of life that they desire. A person may have a house to live in, but without the necessary supports to keep that person safe and healthy, the house will never become the real home. A person may have a job, but without the transportation support to get to and from the job, it will not be sustained. If a person has funding for services, but there are no qualified workers to provide those supports, then the funding is useless. Our Council has many efforts that relate to building the capacity of both the formal service system and the community to help address the needs of people with developmental disabilities in Georgia. The Real Support category provides a place for those efforts to be highlighted," Adams said.



Dottie Adams

> **"Supports, both formal and informal, are critical for people to have the quality of life that they desire."**

Alford was pleased with many of the objectives included in the Real Supports goal. "I'm glad we're still supporting Unlock the Waiting List!, and I'm excited to see Money Follows the Person included," she said.

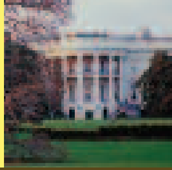
The Unlock the Waiting List! campaign encourages legislators to increase funding for waivers to allow more than 5,000 people with developmental disabilities to receive services and supports in their communities. Money Follows the Person is legislation that ensures that money used to house a person with a disability in an institution follows that person into the community, where it can be used to purchase self-determined services and supports.

Under the Real Supports focus area, GCDD also plans to continue its work with the Direct Support Professional Alliance to help improve services available to people with developmental disabilities through training, advocating for better salaries and helping to develop standards.

"As a person who utilizes direct support professionals, I'm excited about them having access to training and better wages," Alford said. "It affects my quality of life if I don't have good, reliable and consistent care. Direct support professionals don't have the incentives they need to stay, like salary, benefits and training."

GCDD also wanted to ensure it reached all Georgians with disabilities. "I was excited that the Council wants to reach out to multiculturally diverse groups – some people may not speak English, but we represent all Georgians with disabilities," Alford said.

Once the first draft of the plan was complete, the public had a chance to



Coalitions Support Federal Objectives

Emergency preparedness committees created in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks and Hurricane Katrina have helped the Federal Administration on Developmental Disabilities not only ensure people with disabilities are safe during disasters, but has also offered the agency the opportunity to develop relationships that could be beneficial in other situations.

"I've been spending a lot of time on emergency preparedness committees, and it has value beyond the obvious," explained Dr. Patricia Morrissey, commissioner of the Administration on Developmental Disabilities. "It's an opportunity to work with a lot of different agencies, such as health care and housing. We're developing relationships beyond emergency."

Morrissey noted that once a relationship has been established in one area, picking up the phone and discussing a different issue, such as community inclusion, becomes much easier.

Building coalitions with all related agencies is a priority for Morrissey, who is trying to solve the problem of low graduation rates and high drop out rates of children with developmental disabilities with other federal departments such as education, health and human services and labor. She feels if the agencies work together to solve this problem for children with disabilities, it will pay off for other vulnerable children down the road.

"There's a strong interest at the federal level to deal with this in a coordinated fashion," she said.

Currently, Morrissey said a number of projects are going on across the country to strengthen education for children with disabilities. "Some community colleges are offering courses to help (people with developmental disabilities) prepare for jobs and life."

About 15 - 20 colleges are trying a program that includes "how to write a resume" and "how to prepare for a job interview." Classes also expose students to career paths they may not have considered before. "One student in Hawaii became an accomplished photographer," Morrissey said.

> **"I've been spending a lot of time on emergency preparedness committees, and it has value beyond the obvious."**

Morrissey also wants to see more collaboration amongst teachers in different grade levels so each teacher will be aware of what the teacher at the next grade will be expecting and what they should be focusing on. "Teams of teachers should meet periodically to see what they can do to prepare."

When children are in high school, a vocational rehabilitation representative joins the Individualized Education Program teams to let the teachers know what they are expecting. This is the same type of collaboration Morrissey hopes will occur within the education system.

Once people with developmental disabilities graduate from high school and want to live on their own, the issue of where to live and how to pay for it becomes an issue. "Nationally, we are teaching families and individuals with disabilities to build assets without jeopardizing their Social Security," Morrissey explained.

Again, her agency is partnering with others to accomplish this goal, including the Office of Community Services, that administers Individual Development Accounts (IDA), which were authorized by the Assets for Independence Act. Every dollar a person with a disability puts into an IDA account may be matched by governmental or other sources. In Georgia, people can open these accounts, but their contributions are not matched at this time. The money can be used to purchase a home, start a business or pay for higher education, but Morrissey hopes in the future more uses will be approved.

Advocacy at the federal level is also an issue Morrissey wants to address. "Informally, there is strong interest about how to build new leadership among young professionals and how to recruit them into the developmental disabilities field so they can develop relationships with legislators," she revealed. "States have been more effective in connecting people with disabilities with legislators."

Community services and supports is one area she would like to discuss with legislators. She said it is an issue both Democrats and Republicans are starting to notice. "You get more bang for your buck putting people with disabilities up in the community," she said.

She also plans to encourage more states to adopt a "money follows the person" ideology that moves people with disabilities out of institutions and gives them more control to self-direct the services they want in their own communities. She admits to having some stiff opposition to this from those who lobby for people who work in institutions, as well as a parent group called Voices of the Retarded who also oppose the closure of institutions.

She may look to Georgia for inspiration. "In the areas of educating legislators and housing, Georgia is a national leader," she said.

REAL LEARNING

Priority: A Georgia where high school students with disabilities experience effective transition planning that includes the practice of self-determination, alternative diploma routes, professional collaboration and positive parental support that leads to better post-school outcomes is the priority for GCDD in this area.

Goals: Students with developmental disabilities receive appropriate high school education and transition planning that leads to productive post-school activities.

Education professional leadership shares and promotes information on best practices for educating students with disabilities in regular education settings.

Parents of children with special needs have increased access to positive education, advocacy, resources and strategies through the coordination of activities in the Parent Leadership Coalition.

04

REAL SUPPORTS

Priorities: GCDD will continue efforts to increase funding for home and community-based services as well as the quality of those supports. GCDD also wants a Georgia where children are prevented from going into institutions/facilities or are brought home safely from institutions/facilities into homes and families.

05

Goals: People with developmental disabilities and their families will have the resources to access needed services and supports.

People with developmental disabilities and their families will have more control over the flexible resources needed to meet their needs.

Direct Support Professionals will have the training and wages that result in a valued career path.

Ensure that no children in Georgia reside in public or private institutions or nursing homes.

comment on it via an online survey or during a public meeting June 1. GCDD is now in the process of compiling those comments and revising the plan accordingly.

Council members will review the plan during the July quarterly meeting, and upon approval, the completed plan will be submitted to the Federal Administration on Developmental Disabilities by August 15, in accordance with the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000.

Once approved at the federal level, the plan is scheduled to begin implementation in October. "I'm glad we're coming to an end of the planning so we can take the road map and start to use it. Staff is ready to help us with that, and the Council is excited about getting started," Seegmueller said.

Alford agrees and hopes the plan will bring herself and other Georgians with disabilities a little closer toward a future of full inclusion. "People don't want to live in nursing homes and institutions. We want to live in the community, and these programs support that," Alford said.

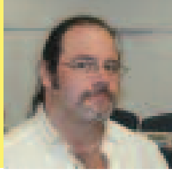
Advocates Comment on GCDD Plan

GCDD members Tom Connelly, Cheryl Laurendeau and Tom Seegmueller prepare to hear public comment.

Concern over whether the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities would continue to fund the Partners in Policymaking (PIP) and Georgia Voices That Count (GVTC) programs spurred many self-advocates and family advocates to attend a public comment session June 1.

In his introduction to the meeting, GCDD Chairperson Tom Seegmueller sought to clarify GCDD's intention toward the two advocacy development programs.

"I know many of you are here to speak about Partners in Policymaking and Georgia Voices That Count. It seems many believe that the Council has already decided not to fund either of these



programs. I want to assure you that is not the case, and no such decision has been made," he explained.

GCDD is planning to evaluate its advocacy activities, but also plans to continue funding current projects until the results of its evaluation are complete.

Seegmueller urged the crowd, "If you address these two issues, please just don't give us you're for it, you like it or you're against it. Let us know in some detail how it has helped you – how you've become a better advocate or how you've been able to help others advocate so we know how these things are working."

People with disabilities, advocates and other organizations came to express their opinions of the plan.

Advocate Joy Norman of Columbus is a graduate of GVTC and said the experience helped her become more involved in the wider disability community. "The advocacy project pushed me to do more than I would have done on my own. I decided to have a job fair for people with disabilities in Columbus. Thirty-five people with disabilities attended, and seven got jobs," she said.

Partners in Policymaking graduate Jill Alexander took what she learned and applied it in South Georgia to help her son. "This year is my son's first year in a regular classroom. This year he's on a Little League team after being turned down year after year."

But Alexander didn't stop there. She also began teaching other families about the Individualized Education Program process and helped organize her town's first resource fair. "It's important to let parents know what's available," she said.

"Our training tentacles are out throughout Georgia," she said.

Percy Hardy, Jr., a member of People First, feels the same about Georgia Voices That Count. "(GVTC) is teaching me to be a leader and pass on what I learn to other people," he said.

Linda Pogue, who works with disABILITY LINK, and helped form GVTC, reminded the crowd, "Some people who were living in institutions when they took the class are now living in the community."

In addition to graduates from the Partners in Policymaking and Georgia Voices That Count programs, several advocates spoke about other issues they would like to see addressed.

Maurice Alligood, a member of the Community Service Board of East Central Georgia, has a daughter with disabilities and feels institutions are the best place for some people, and that "there should be a place for helpless people," he said.

Though the GCDD does not support keeping institutions open, Seegmueller thanked Alligood for his comments and said, "There are no right or wrong opinions today, or this whole process is worth nothing."

Mark Gasaway attended on behalf of the visual and hearing-impaired community. "I want to see the deaf and blind populations more integrated with disability community as a whole to understand each others' needs," he said.

Members of the aging and disability coalition urged GCDD to support efforts to educate service providers who do not know how to care for individuals with disabilities who age faster and may need services normally reserved for elderly people as young as in their 20s.

Other issues brought for consideration for inclusion in the plan included a push for wheelchair accessible hospital rooms and development of a computer program that assists in coordinating services for people with disabilities.

"There are no right or wrong opinions today, or this whole process is worth nothing."

As advocates were leaving, Seegmueller said, "I want to emphasize that the (Developmental Disabilities) Act is up for reauthorization right now. It would be great if you would share the stories of how this has impacted you, your life and your family with your federal legislators so they know how critical it is that they not only reauthorize the DD Act, but they fund it appropriately so we can continue these efforts." ●

PERSPECTIVES

Leadership Training Effects Change from the Top Down

By Colleen Wieck, Ph.D.

Photo by: Ann Marsden

Colleen Wieck, Ph.D., has been Executive Director of the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities of the Department of Administration, for 25 years.

She is the primary creator of Partners in Policymaking. The outcomes of Partners in Policymaking have been documented with quantitative results of increased citizenship activities as well as qualitative reports of life changes.

Georgia's Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities funds the Partners in Policymaking program in Georgia through the Atlanta Alliance on Developmental Disabilities. For information, call 404-881-9777.

The Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities is approaching the 20th anniversary of the Partners in Policymaking® program by reflecting upon the lessons learned in leadership development and thanking all those allies who helped develop leadership, including Georgia's Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Partners in Policymaking is an innovative, value and competency-based leadership training program designed for parents of young children with developmental disabilities and adults with disabilities. The program teaches leadership skills and the process of developing positive partnerships with elected officials and other individuals who make policy decisions about services.

The Partners program is about creating systems change – creating, working towards and achieving a vision of shared values about people with disabilities. It is based on the belief that the most effective and enduring public policy decisions are made by the people who need and use services in partnership with elected officials and other policymakers.

> **"The Partners program is about systems change – creating, working towards and achieving a vision of shared values about people with disabilities."**

The Partners program is about gaining self-confidence, becoming competent in the knowledge and information that is presented and sharing the life experiences and expertise that each participant brings to the program. Eight weekend sessions and 128 hours of training in best practices give participants the opportunity to learn and practice new skills in a comfortable and safe environment, build a network of people from diverse cultural backgrounds and life experiences and learn from national experts.

The program was created by the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities in 1987. Its origins are rooted in the complex problems faced by people with disabilities and their families:

- There was no centralized, organized education and training that provided best practices information and experiences.
- Systemic training was needed to develop competencies that could effectively influence public policy and strengthen grassroots advocacy.
- Few training programs prepared people for leadership positions in local, state or national organizations.
- A shared vision was needed for self-advocacy among motivated, well-informed and active individuals.
- There was no mechanism for state and national disability leaders to discuss issues with people with disabilities, those who are traditionally underserved and unserved.
- There was little opportunity for adults with disabilities to know parents of children with disabilities and share their respective experiences.

In response, the Partners program was developed. Participants begin making changes in their own lives, then work towards changes that affect others. Graduates are expected to be agents of long term change and successes.

In the words of 2006 graduate Deborah Jendro, "I watched my fellow Partners flourish and grow. The fearful person mustered up his voice and declared that he would find a place to live away from the institution, and before all was said and done, he had moved.

"The woman who had a visual disability took her advocacy skills to the voices of her city and before long, chirping stop lights were in place on the main street. These are just a few of the tales that can be found among the most recent graduating class of 2006!" Jendro said.

Partners programs have been replicated in 49 states, two territories and several sites in the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, the Netherlands and New Zealand. There are more than 15,000 graduates nationally and internationally. They comprise a growing network of community leaders serving on policymaking committees, commissions and boards at local, state/regional and national levels. ●

Two Experts Share Their Thoughts on Creating Lasting Change

Changing Hearts Key to Community Building

By Bruce Anderson

Most advocacy groups depend on the age-old technique of influencing legislators to create political and social change – gathering a large crowd of like-minded people and demanding outcomes. When this is effective, there is a feeling of overwhelming jubilation. WE WON! However, once the crowd goes away, the legislators may not continue to champion their cause. This is because traditional organizing relies on positional power – lots of people who demand change – and that kind of power only works as long as you are watching and can continue the pressure.

> **"The focus for this kind of change rests not in the facts that rest in your brain, but in the story that rests in your heart."**

There is another kind of change strategy which relies not on large crowds, loud voices or long-term attention. You have been affected by this kind of power in your own life. It is the genuine power that is built when you come to a conclusion, either through your own story or listening to someone else's story, that it's time for a change. The focus for this kind of change rests not in the facts that rest in your brain, but in the story that rests in your heart. And people who have a change of heart are people who have changed for the long term. You can depend on them to act in your interest when you are not watching, and perhaps even to expand your original idea beyond what you ever thought was possible.

How do you create opportunities for a change of heart? There are many techniques, but I want to mention five strategies that all start within you – the most important place to begin any change effort. They are at the top of my list, because I have done all of them wrong and had to learn the hard way over the years:

1. Know your core gift, and give it. That sounds easy, but first you have to be clear what your gift really is. Once you know it, focus on giving it rather than trying to do a lot of other things. If you have a gift for compassion, find the people who need to be listened to and help to make their stories known. If you have a gift for creating plans and structures for change, become the one who helps organize events. If you have a gift for unconditional love, go talk to the legislator that everyone says won't listen. Give your gift and don't worry so much about what everyone else is doing.

2. Resist the urge to let people know you are standing on higher moral ground that they are. Everyone has a logic for what they do, and you won't get very far by insulting their sense of values, no matter how disagreeable they are to you.

3. Use your passion wisely, because it can run you dry. Martyrs have a limited shelf life in change efforts, and are usually forgotten long before the actual change. It's more fun if you are around for the victory party!

4. Develop one story from your own life about a time when you felt like you didn't belong. Keep it short and to the point. That story will take you further with citizens with disabilities, legislators, professional social service people and other community members than you ever dreamed. Stories of inclusion and belonging teach us how to do the work, but they are not enough. Stories of not belonging remind us of the reason why, and they change our hearts.

5. Remember daily, at the deepest part of who you are, that your abilities do not come just from your hard work. Generations of your family and community have prepared you, for better or for worse, to give your gifts. If you have a spiritual life, depend on it to remember that your gifts have been a gift to you.

Changing hearts is something we all learn about throughout our life. Think back to times in your life when you have a significant change of heart. What caused it? Remembering our own change of heart moments also reminds us just how much a heart wants to change. We simply encourage it forward, removing the shadows that hold it back. ●

Bruce Anderson is a partner in Community Activators, a Vashon, Wash.-based company working to implement innovative individual and community empowerment ideas across the United States. The organization supports local groups in organizing and implementing neighborhood-strengthening ideas, manages innovation projects in rural and urban areas and provides more than 100 learning events per year.

In addition to degrees in Teaching and Rehabilitation Administration, Bruce brings a unique blend of experiences including being the mayor of a town, teacher, manager of disability employment agencies and commercial fisherman.

He is the author of "The Teacher's Gift: Discovering and Using Your CORE GIFT to Inspire and Heal".

By Valerie Smith Buxton

PLANS TO Release Children Unveiled

Callie Moore lives at home in Danielsville with her loving family, despite the fact she is medically fragile. Her mom, Pam Moore, has worked tirelessly to ensure her daughter remains in her community.

Stephen Hall, Zolinda Stoneman, Ruby Moore and Pat Nobbie participated in the discussion.

"Without the support we have for Callie, she'd be in an institution," Moore, who serves as vice president of Georgia ARCH, said.

A Partners in Policymaking graduate, Moore has had to advocate for the support she receives for her daughter. "A lot of families are not getting what they need. They don't know how to advocate," she said.

In fact, this lack of support has resulted in 44 of Georgia's children under the age of 21 to be placed in state-run institutions and hospitals. A first draft of a plan to release these children, in accordance with House Resolution 633, was unveiled to the Children's Freedom Initiative Oversight Committee June 9.

Created by the Department of Human Resource's Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Disease's Office of Developmental Disabilities Director Dr. Stephen Hall and Sally Carter, the plan outlines a strategy for placing the 44 children, who are medically fragile or have developmental disabilities, with permanent, loving families, who will have community supports in place to help them care for the extraordinary needs of the children.

Hall and Carter hope to have all 44 children back in their communities by June 2007, if the proper services and supports are in place by then. They expect the first children to be released in November, after comprehensive person-centered planning is completed and an exhaustive inventory of support needs identified.

> **"Determining the order in which the children are released will be based on the circumstances of the family environments."**

Person-centered Planning, Life Style Planning and Supports Intensity Scale documents will be used to determine the unique needs for each child, and an individual budget will be developed based on those needs. In addition, each child and his or her family will have an "ambassador" who has had similar experiences, to guide them through the process. Ambassadors may be self-advocates, Partners in Policymaking graduates, Direct Support Professional Alliance members or members of families who are already successfully caring for their children at home.

Determining the order in which the children are released will be based on the circumstances of the family environments.

"We know families who want their children back," Hall said. He expects a "bubble" of children returning home at first, then a slow down as living arrangements are identified for the children whose families are not capable of meeting their needs.

The plan outlines three family-based alternatives to institutionalized care for the children:

- Support for a child's birth family or extended family to enable the child to live and thrive at home.
- Support for an unrelated family to provide a loving home for a child who cannot live with birth or extended family.
- Support for a joint effort of using a shared family model where both the birth family and an unrelated family work together to meet the needs of the child.

"We want children to be with their biological families, but it's just great if they're with a loving family, even if it isn't their biological family," Hall said.

"The Department of Family and Children's Services said they would help find families for kids who don't have them," Hall said, but also told the committee, "We really need help on the ground finding families that might be interested (in caring for children whose families cannot care for them)."

Because they did not receive the services they needed in the past to support their children, some families are resistant to bringing their children home.

"We can't take for granted that our vision is shared by everyone," said Ruby Moore, executive director for the Georgia Advocacy Office, and a member of the committee.

Part of the implementation plan includes a public relations component that helps educate the families and their communities on what to expect when their children leave the institutions. Opportunities for families to meet with providers and other families whose children are successfully and safely living at home will be provided.

Zolinda Stoneman, PhD, director of the Institute on Human Development and Disability suggested people who were formerly in institutions could help by sharing their experiences with families and communities. "They have a very powerful story none of the rest of us could tell."

Ashley Rhinehart and Pam Moore provided feedback on the plan.

Hall hopes to overcome any fears families have about bringing their children home by discussing those fears. He said he would tell them, "If you would tell us what you like about the services and supports your child is getting in the hospital, we will get you those same supports in the community.

"Some parents say, 'No one in the community would want him,' but that's just not the case. Strangers fall in love with these citizens and want to help them become members of society," Hall said. "These children shouldn't be kept away from society. Parents don't live forever, but society and community does."

Committee member and self-advocate Ashley Rhinehart, who works with disABILITY LINK, agreed. "The goal of people with disabilities is to change the whole attitude of society. If children with disabilities live at home, it teaches the family it can be done. Then neighbors, and the people they go to church with realize it can be

done, too. I see this happen all the time in my neighborhood," she said.

Ensuring proper supports are available in the community, especially in rural areas, is a key concern. "I know a mom whose son is in Gracewood. She wants him to come home to Bacon county, which is very rural. We will ensure services and supports for her son. The 1,500 waivers (approved in the state budget for people with developmental disabilities) will help others move home to Bacon, too," Hall said.

> **"This is an opportunity for us as a state to make a statement about how we view the value of our children."**

Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities Deputy Director Patricia Nobbie, DPA, a committee member, noted, "The infrastructure is not just for the 44 kids; it will create capacity for everyone. It's an investment in the community."

The committee was pleased with the initial plan as presented by Hall and Carter and asked for a few additional pieces:

- Define what is being done to educate families
- Add a description of the new waiver program
- Identify how awareness will be increased
- Include how DHR will collaborate with other state agencies

Those items were incorporated and the plan delivered to members of the House of Representatives July 3.

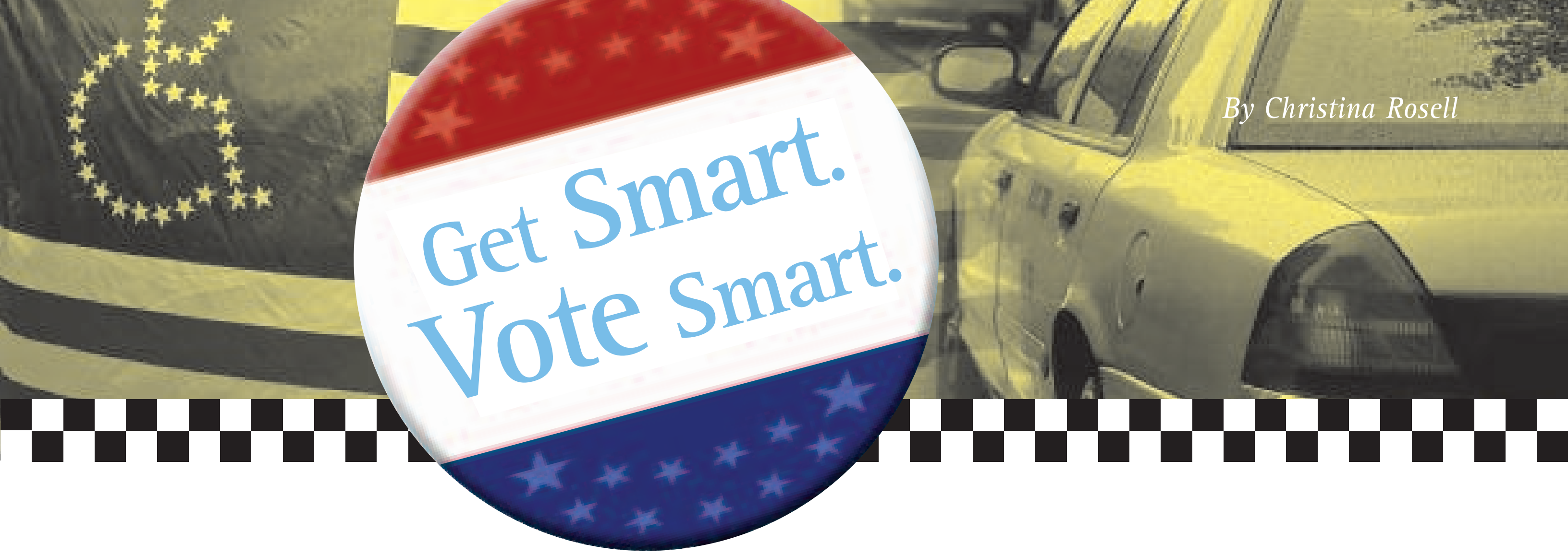
Children's Freedom Initiative Oversight Committee Chair Jerry Weiner's brother was institutionalized as a child. "He was only in for a short time – nine months – but to this day I can see the emotional scars," he said. "This is an opportunity for us as a state to make a statement about how we view the value of our children. We can help kids get out of institutions and stay out of institutions, and give them the best shot."

Committee member Yvette Sangster, director of the Georgia Advocacy Office's Protection and Advocacy of Individuals with Mental Illnesses program, agreed, saying what the Children's Freedom Initiative is doing now will have lasting effects on Georgia. "Today's children are tomorrow's adults."

Pam Moore and her daughter Callie hope the initiative will not only free the 44 children currently living in state institutions, but prevent the need for institutions for children in the future. "If families have support from the beginning, they can stay together and participate in the community," she said. ●

PROJECTED IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE*
for Placing 44 Children Into the Community

*Schedule may change based on availability of services and supports.



Get Smart. Vote Smart.

By Christina Rosell

Virginia Harris has helped people exercise their right to vote for several elections now. But she says more importantly, she has helped make sure those voting knew who they were voting for and how they related to the disability community and its issues.

"We need to make sure voters are educated when they vote because they may be voting for someone they know nothing about," she explained. "We don't want to persuade them in any way to vote for one candidate or the other; we want to give them good information on how a candidate feels about the issues."

As the director of Bainbridge Advocacy Individual Network (BAIN), making sure people who have disabilities are empowered to vote is critical to Harris.

"We can talk about the Medicare and Medicaid benefits and technology in the work place. All of those things are very important in the quality of life for people with disabilities, but unless you have a voice, and until we start coming together as one and advocating and want to make changes, we're going to be left behind," she said.

In 2002, Harris organized the Quality of Life Forum in Bainbridge as part of a campaign to get people to the polls. She set a date for the forum and invited all of the candidates to participate by mailing them a package that included a form with questions that the candidates could expect to be asked.

"I wanted to see how they addressed issues that people with disabilities face," she said.

The candidates who couldn't attend were invited to send representatives in their stead to listen to the issues and report back.

Meanwhile Harris invited people to the forum through mail, newsletters, newspapers (free), local radio (free) and television stations (free), and by posting flyers at churches, public libraries, doctors' offices, disability agencies, school cafeterias, civic organizations and anywhere else she could think of.

"We have a good working relationship with the media," she smiled. "Any local activities that are going on – they will announce it or cover it. We went to the radio station, and we answered questions about the forum and why people with disabilities should come."

Over 60 people showed up to the forum, a tremendous turnout for a small town.

Of course she made sure everyone could get there. Since public transportation was not an option, she asked the taxi drivers and other transportation providers of Bainbridge to volunteer their services for the day so that everyone who wanted to come to the forum had a ride to get there, if they submitted an RSVP. She encouraged anyone who wanted a ride to call her in advance so she had time to arrange the pick up addresses and times with the drivers.

> **"We need to make sure voters are educated when they vote because they may be voting for someone they know nothing about."**

The forum was one of many educational efforts by BAIN. Serving 11 counties, the organization spent a week in each county holding educational sessions about voting, registration and the candidates. They also scoped out poll sites to make sure they were accessible to all voters.

Walton Options Advocacy Director Shelia Kitchens has had some experience with inspecting poll sites as well. Because of her agency's strong interest in making sure the poll sites were accessible in Augusta, the Board of Elections ended up contracting with her organization to assess the sites for accessibility. In return, the agency submitted a report of how poll sites were inaccessible and suggestions on ways to remove obstacles.

> **"People just don't realize what kinds of little things they can do to make things accessible."**

Kitchens explained that a simple solution can usually fix an inaccessibility problem. "People just don't realize what kinds of little things they can do to make things accessible," she said. She gave examples:

- Create accessible parking by blocking off an area in the parking lot and putting up a sign.
- Make sure chairs and other objects aren't blocking doorways.
- Hoist a voting booth onto cinder blocks to create clearance for someone in a wheelchair to slide under.

She remembered that someone had told her retrofitting the polling machines for people with disabilities was a form of segregation. But, she pointed out, "anyone can use the machine, so it's not segregation."

About two months before elections, Walton Options holds a voter registration drive complete with on-site demonstrations and information on upcoming forums. Registration forms and absentee ballots are handed out. Emails are collected so voters will be reminded to vote through email "blitzes" within the last two weeks before election day.

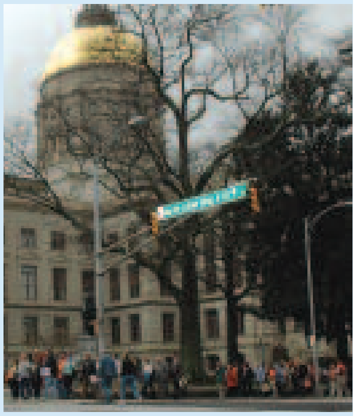
Kitchens and her organization also have found forums a useful tool in getting to know the candidates. Her organization usually holds them 30-60 days before election day. And she had some advice for new voters this year.

ID For E-Day

A new voter ID law (SB 84) was passed by the Georgia Assembly this January, making Georgia one in seven states in the country to require photo identification at polling places.

Bill sponsors Senators Cecil Staton (R-Macon), Tommie Williams (R-Lyons), Jeff Chapman (R-Brunswick), Chip Rogers (R-Woodstock), Ronnie Chance (R-Tyrone) and several others say that photo IDs are necessary to avoid fraud in elections. In previous years, IDs without photos were acceptable at the polls.

Critics of the law say it is unconstitutional because it discriminates against the elderly, poor and people with disabilities who may have a hard time acquiring a photo ID. A coalition of civil rights organizations plans to fight the law in court.



Recently, the Secretary of State's office reported that nearly 700,000 registered voters in Georgia do not have a driver's license, the most common form of photo ID. The law provides for other forms of identification to work in place of a driver's license, including a new form of ID issued by the state for free.

Citizens who don't have at least one of the required forms of identification can acquire one for free from the Board of Registrars office in their respective counties.

The new photo ID law will be enforced for the first time during the July 18 primaries, where voters will be required to have one of the following forms of photo identification:

1. **A Georgia driver's license which was properly issued by the appropriate state agency.**
2. **A valid Georgia Voter Identification Card issued under Code Section 21-2-417.1 or other valid identification card issued by a branch, department, agency or entity of the State of Georgia, any other state or the United States authorized by law to issue personal identification.**
3. **A valid United States passport.**
4. **A valid employee identification card containing a photograph of the elector and issued by any branch, department, agency or entity of the United States government, this state, or any county, municipality, board, authority or other entity of this state.**
5. **A valid United States military identification card, provided that such identification card contains a photograph of the elector.**
6. **A valid tribal identification card containing a photograph of the elector.**

The identification rules vary for new voters in the state who registered by mail and for absentee voters. Please visit www.sos.state.ga.us for details.

> "Start with yourself – pick out what would you like to happen in the community, and based on that, decide which candidate's platform stands for what you want in your community."

"Start with yourself – pick out what would you like to happen in the community, and based on that, decide which candidate's platform stands for what you want in your community," she said.

Registration for the 2006 general election is October 10, and election day is November 7. For information on absentee ballots, how to register, what paperwork will be needed and how to find your poll site, visit *www.sos.state.ga.us*. To learn how to organize a voters drive, visit *http://gdvp.org*, and to learn about hosting a forum for state legislators, visit the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities' Web site at *www.gcdd.org* and click on Public Information on the left side of the page. ●

How Do I Organize a Voter Registration Drive?

Source: Secretary of State Web site
www.sos.state.ga.us

1. **Inform the board of registrar's office in the county where the drive will take place of your voter registration drive. This office can provide you with helpful information**
2. **Pick up Georgia voter registration forms from the county registrar.**
3. **Ask the county board of registrar's office for information on how to properly store the completed voter registration forms; arrange how and when to drop-off the completed registration forms.**
4. **Be creative with your table and signage - decorate with bunting, balloons and anything else attention-getting to encourage people to "Register to Vote Here." No campaign material of any type is allowed to be displayed on or around the table.**
5. **Stock up on the necessary supplies for the voter registration drive, such as pens, clipboards, forms and volunteers.**
6. **Don't be shy - have some volunteers standing with clipboards and registration forms in-hand, ready to ask passers-by if they are registered to vote.**
7. **Have fun! You are helping the citizens of Georgia fulfill one of their most important civic responsibilities - feel good about what you are doing!**

NOTE: Georgia law prohibits any benefit or "reward" (such as balloons, candy, school credits, etc.) from being provided in exchange for registering to vote or voting.

By Christina Rosell

Marchers Celebrate Olmstead, Demand Freedom

Advocates with and without disabilities celebrated the 7th Anniversary of the Olmstead v. LC and EW landmark case during a two-day event in Rome, Cartersville and Atlanta on June 21 and 22.

Advocates celebrated the Supreme Court decision that mandated Lois Curtis and Elaine Wilson, two women with disabilities who lived in Georgia nursing homes but who wanted to live in the community, should have community support options.


Jaime Powell recently started usign her wheelchair and plans to do whatever it takes to remain independent.

"We vowed to march until we have full compliance of Olmstead in Georgia," said Kate Gainer, advocacy coordinator at disABILITY LINK, and organizer of the Long Road Home March.

The two-day celebration was kicked off on June 21 when advocates marched in Rome, Ga. Advocates spoke against the treatment – the starvation and dehydration – that killed Terri Schindler Schiavo last year.

Zen Garcia, chairman of Endeavor Freedom, Inc. said, "Terry Schiavo was not the first person this has happened to, and she will not be the last."

Garcia explained how ADAPT, a civil rights organization advocating for people with disabilities, collaborated with Sen. Nancy Schaefer (R-Turnerville) to create Senate Resolution (SR) 1067, the Starvation/Dehydration Act, which was introduced a few months ago. Garcia reached out to the disability community to take the protection of their lives into their own hands instead of letting someone else make life and death decisions for them in the future.

"A Living Will takes rights and control from its signer and gives decision-making authority to a physician. It also gives a physician complete immunity from civil or criminal liability for his or her action or inactions," he said.

According to Garcia, the "Will to Live" and the "Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare Decisions" are two alternatives to the Living Will.

"These protect your life and they protect your family from being convinced that it's OK to starve and dehydrate you," he explained.

The following day, around 70 advocates gathered to march to Starcrest of Cartersville Nursing Home. Their purpose was to demonstrate that thousands of people who live in nursing homes across Georgia don't want to live there, but instead, want the choice to live in the community.

"GET US OUT! KEEP US OUT! DON'T PUT US IN!" shouted the demonstrators.

According to the Spring 2006 Minimum Data Set (MDS), a federally mandated survey of all residents in Medicare or Medicaid certified nursing homes conducted by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 5,774 individuals in nursing homes in Georgia would prefer to live independently with community supports.

> **"These are my friends and my neighbors, and I want them in the community."**

Carol Jones, a direct support provider for 35 years, and advocacy specialist at the Shepherd Center in Atlanta was a vocal activist at the march.

"These are my friends and my neighbors, and I want them in the community," she said. "The community is where they want to be."

First time marcher Jaime Powell of Cartersville, a 28-year-old woman who recently injured her spinal cord and now uses a wheelchair, said that the march will be the first of many for her.

"What do we want?

FREEDOM!

When do we want it?

NOW!"

Diane Scogin doesn't want others to be institutionalized like she was.

"I do everything I can do to become more independent," she said.

"There was a lot of physical and mental abuse."

Another marcher, Diane Scogin, has been advocating for community living and supports since she was placed in an institution at age 13.

"There was a lot of physical and mental abuse," she said. She was forced to take medication that kept her mind hazy. She finally convinced the director that she would have a better life living in the community after refusing her medication.

After seven years in the institution, Scogin was released and went to nursing school, was married, adopted a daughter, had a son and enjoyed a much higher quality of life. Later, when she lost the use of her legs, her peer supporter Mark Dyer (who was at the march, too) encouraged her to be independent.

"He gave me the courage to drive again," she remembered, squeezing his hand as they stormed toward the nursing home together at the march.

"WHAT DO WE WANT? FREEDOM! WHEN DO WE WANT IT? NOW!" they shouted with the crowd.

Marchers were asking for freedom, but more specifically, they were asking for support for Money Follows the Person – legislation that ensures Medicaid dollars used to fund institutions would "follow" people with disabilities into their communities and pay for community supports instead.

And in the wake of the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005, signed by President George W. Bush on February 8, 2006, advocates are in a strong position to negotiate community supports as an option for Medicaid recipients. The DRA calls for Medicaid reform to be "person centered," increasing accessibility to community supports and promoting independence and individual choice.

Many meetings have been planned involving the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) and Abel Ortiz, Gov. Sonny Perdue's policy adviser for health, human services, juvenile justice and veteran's affairs, to explore new opportunities for Medicaid long-term care in Georgia under the new act.

In the long run, it appears that the DRA will help advocates accomplish what the Supreme Court deemed a constitutional right in the 1999 Olmstead decision – the choice of people with disabilities to live independently in the community.

The third issue that was highlighted by Long Road Home participants this year was the Children's Freedom Initiative, a joint effort between the Georgia Advocacy Office (GAO), the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities and the Institute on Human Development and Disability (see related article on page 18) to free all of Georgia's children from nursing homes. At the Atlanta press conference that wrapped up the annual celebration of the Olmstead decision, GAO Executive Director Ruby Moore said, "The Olmstead decision was a positive step in the right direction in bringing the children home to loving families. Not only is it a moral imperative, but it's also the law."

"I do everything I can do to become more independent."

Then Lois Curtis, the "LC" from the Olmstead case, led a final chant, "FREE OUR BROTHERS, FREE OUR SISTERS, FREE OUR PEOPLE NOW!"

Thousands of adults and children are living in nursing homes and institutions in Georgia even though they'd rather live with supports in the community, and they're not being silent about it.

For more information on the Long Road Home celebration and surrounding issues, use the resources listed on page 29 under the Independent Living section. ●

StraightTalk

What's Next for the Disability Community?

By Mark Johnson, Director of Advocacy Shepherd Center

At the beginning of each New Year, people like to predict what is going to happen. Several days later, of course, these predictions are usually forgotten or never tested. In 1982, John Nesbitt identified 10 societal trends in *Megatrends, Ten New Directions Transforming Our Lives*. Today, all of these trends have become part of our vocabulary.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 51.2 million Americans, or 18 percent of the U.S. population, report some level of disability. For 32.5 million of them, the disability is reported as severe. In 2006, nearly half of our country is dealing either with their own aging or that of a loved one.

The Future

What's next for this emerging political force? You can be proactive about the future; you don't have to be reactive. The whole point of having ideas is that those things you can envision and describe can actually be created. Do you envision:

- Access, opportunities, inclusion and acceptance **OR** isolation for people with disabilities?
- Life **OR** people with disabilities being killed either actively (refusal of medical powers to resuscitate people, manipulation into agreements to end life, etc.) or passively (prevention of infection, refusal to fund life sustaining equipment, basic level of assistance at home, etc.)?
- Health coverage for all **OR** more and more restrictive policies like the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services' recent decision on durable medical equipment?
- Application of stem cell research **OR** more political posturing?
- Empowering service delivery not dependent on diagnosis or silo funding **OR** subsistence levels of support for poor people?
- Support to make care giving a profession and career **OR** increased pressure on families, communities and nonprofits?
- No waiting list for home and community-based services (HCBS) and an end to the institutional bias **OR** fewer funds and cuts to more and more social programs?
- Aging in place with HCBS and assistive technology **OR** systems that foster dependence?
- Access to the job market **OR** a 70% plus unemployment rate?
- More accessible, affordable and integrated housing **OR** inaccessibility?
- Reliable and cost effective transportation **OR** isolation?

To convert disability from what some people think is a medical problem into a political issue is central to improvement. Action must lead us toward normalizing disability, community building and citizen action. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, "The time is always right to do what is right." I happen to believe disability advocates are right. We are the experts and we are leading this world into the future.

Be Part of the Solution and Work Together

Simply put, the best way for people with disabilities and their families to predict the future is to invent it. As Buckminster Fuller said, "You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete." Will you make it happen, watch it happen or say, "what happened?" Will you embrace a can do attitude and work with other advocates? It's your choice. We won't always agree, but I hope you will respect and join others regardless of the differences and be part of the solution.

JULY

July 18-22
Association on Higher Education & Disability Annual Conference
San Diego, CA
www.ahead.org/training/conference/index.htm

July 19-23
10th International Fragile X Conference
OMNI Hotel
Atlanta, GA
www.fragilex.org

July 20-21
Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities Quarterly Council Meeting
Atlanta, GA
888-ASK-GCDD
www.gcdd.org

July 21-23
National Annual Down Syndrome Congress Convention
Atlanta Marriott Marquis
Atlanta, GA
800-232-6372 or 770-604-9500
www.ndsccenter.org

July 26, 2006
National Council on Disability's National Dialogue on the State of Disability
National Press Club
Washington, DC
ncd@ncd.gov

AUGUST

August 9-11
National Coalition Building Institute Welcoming Diversity/ Prejudice Reduction
202-785-9400
ncbiinc@aol.com

August 12-13
National Coalition Building Institute
Leadership Clinic
202-785-9400
ncbiinc@aol.com

August 18-20
Abilities Expo Real People Real Challenges Real Solutions
Detroit, MI
www.abilitiesexpo.com

SEPTEMBER

September 10-12
American Network of Community Options and Resources 2006 Governmental Activities Seminar
Hyatt Regency Hotel
Crystal City, VA
703-535-7850
www.ancor.org

September 13-15
Partners for Youth with Disabilities Conference
Boston, MA
www.pyd.org

September 24-26
Georgia Spinal Cord Injury Summit
Omni • Atlanta, GA
www.ciclt.com/bsitf/

September 27-29
Third Annual Statewide Policy Academy & Conference on Homelessness
Macon Centreplex • Macon, GA
877-243-1576
www.gahomeless.org

OCTOBER

October 4-6
US Business Leadership Network 2006 Conference
Minneapolis Marriott City Center
Minneapolis, MN
www.usbln.com

October 5-6
The Future of Disability Statistics: What We Know and Need to Know
Doubletree Hotel • Crystal City
Arlington, VA
www.StatsRRTC.org

October 8-10
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
Pittsburgh, PA • *www.nacdd.org*

October 15-18
National Spinal Cord Injury Association Second Spinal Cord Injury Summit
Hyatt Regency • Bethesda, MD.
www.spinalcord.org

October 19-20
Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities Quarterly Council Meeting and Public Forum
Savannah, GA • 888-ASK-GCDD
www.gcdd.org

David drops his vote into his "accessible" ballot box.

Good Dental Care Should Start Early

Dr. E. Jayni Bradley

About 9.4 million children have disabilities (13% of children under age 18 in the United States), and a recent study found dental care was the most commonly reported needed service that was not received. More than 3.5 million children aged 2 to 17 years had unmet dental needs because their families could not afford dental care, and of the children who were insured, about one third were not able to receive needed services due to inadequate access to benefits or providers. With access being so limited, early routine care and good homecare are essential for a child with disabilities to enjoy a lifetime of healthy smiles.

Parenting a child with disabilities can be overwhelming, and caring for their teeth seems to be last on the list of priorities. Trying to brush an uncooperative child's teeth is a challenge that few are willing to do. There are ways to do the job with minimal effort that a trained pediatric dentist can teach you. First and foremost, it takes a conscious decision on the part of the primary caretaker that oral hygiene is important enough to be addressed daily. The decision to have a beautiful smile that lasts a lifetime needs to be made at a very young age. Brushing and flossing has to be a daily task because plaque continues to build up on the teeth daily. If this plaque is not removed, bacteria will rot the teeth and cause gum disease. This disease process is slow and not noticeable until it is a huge problem. That is why early care is so important. Cavities and gum disease are preventable with good daily homecare and routine professional care.

Because daily brushing and flossing for a child with disabilities can be difficult, more frequent visits to the dentist are recommended. Children with disabilities should have a professional teeth cleaning every three months. This allows the child to become more relaxed in the dental environment and with time, any resistant behavior should improve, even for more difficult procedures. The usual resistant behavior of a child with a disability becomes an extra challenge for the dentist as well. As a child reaches adolescence, their size and strength become a force to reckon with when they are in pain and scared. Some children do not understand the dentist's need for them to sit still and cooperate for their own safety as well as that of the dental team. Often, costly sedation medications or treatment under general anesthesia is required. Not every dentist has had the special training needed to safely manage these needs, and more and more state dental boards require additional licenses for these procedures, which can increase costs.

For a disease that is so preventable, it's heartbreaking that most children with disabilities end up having their permanent teeth pulled in young adulthood. Sixteen-year-old Meagan, who has epilepsy, was taken to the dentist recently with the complaint of a toothache. It was her first dental visit. In a strange environment, she was very resistant to anyone coming close to her mouth. A very limited exam was performed. After putting her under general anesthesia, a complete exam and x-rays revealed cavities in 16 teeth, three of which were very large, requiring caps. Two of these teeth had decayed down to the nerve, the source of her pain. Her medical costs were over $10,000 and dental costs just under $4,000. Had she had early preventive care, all of this could have been avoided.

"Deciding what you want for your child's future begins now."

The best time for a child to begin routine professional hygiene appointments is at age one. When these appointments continue every three months, dental disease does not have a chance to get started. Other benefits: the cost is minimal, the child learns that dentistry does not have to hurt, the child becomes comfortable with a dentist and the dental environment and the child's behavior is much less resistant. The old cliché is so true: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

To parents, nothing is more beautiful than the smile of their own child. Studies have shown that a person's first impression is subconsciously affected by the condition of a person's smile. Deciding what you want for your child's future begins now.

E. Jayni Bradley, DMD, received her dental degree and pediatric dental specialty from the Medical College of Georgia. She taught at the Medical College of Georgia from 1989 - 1992, while practicing in Augusta. She also practiced in Athens and currently works out of Watkinsville, GA. Bradley is a founding member of the Project Smile Team in Belize, Central America. Bradley is married and has three children.

Below, please find further resources of information related to the articles in this edition of *Making a Difference* magazine.

Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD)
www.gcdd.org
404-657-2126 or
888-275-4233 (ASK-GCDD)

State Government

Department of Community Health
www.dch.state.ga.us/
404-656-4507

Department of Human Resources
www.dhr.georgia.gov
404-656-4937

Department of Labor
www.dol.state.ga.us

General Information
www.georgia.gov

Georgia General Assembly
www.legis.state.ga.us/

Georgia House of Representatives
www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/2003_04/house/index.htm

Georgia Senate
www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/2003_04/senate/index.htm

Georgia Governor's Office
www.gov.state.ga.us/
404-656-1776

Georgia Lieutenant Governor's Office
www.ltgov.georgia.gov/02/ltgov/home/0,2214,2199618,00.html
404-656-5030

Elections

2006 Georgia Candidates' Forum: A Guide to Hosting Forums for State Senate and Representative Seats
GCDD
www.gcdd.org/pi/index.html
888-275-4233 (ASK-GCDD)

Office of the Secretary of State
www.sos.state.ga.us
404-656-2871

Georgia Disability Vote Project
http://gdvp.org
404-521-1742

GCDD Plan

GCDD Plan Draft
www.gcdd.org

Medicaid buy in
http://www.ncsl.org/programs/health/Forum/tickettowork.htm

Money Follows the Person Legislation
http://www.congress.gov/cgi-bin/query/ z?c108:S.1394:

Georgia Voices That Count
www.disabilitylink.org/docs/voices/voices.html

Federal Administration on Developmental Disabilities
www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/add/

Federal Developmental Disabilities Act
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/add/ddact/DDACT2.html

Partners in Policymaking
www.aadd.org/newsite/programs/partners.html

Self-Advocacy

ADAPT (American Disabled for Attendant Programs Today)
www.adapt.org

disABILITY LINK
www.disabilitylink.org
404-687-8890

Endeavor Freedom, Inc.
www.endeavorfreedom.org

People First of Atlanta
David Mapp, president
disABILITY LINK
404-687-8890

People First of Georgia
706-542-6086

Self Advocates Becoming Empowered
www.sabeusa.org

Perspectives

Partners in Policymaking
www.partnersinpolicymaking.com

Community Building
www.communityactivators.com

Independent Living

Association of University Centers on Disabilities Medicaid Resource Page
www.aucd.org/aucd_medicaid.htm#DRA
301-588-8252

BAIN (Bainbridge Advocacy Individual Network)
www.baincil.org
888-830-1530

Endeavor Freedom, Inc.
www.endeavorfreedom.org

Long Road Home March
www.lgtinc.org/authors/12/Kate-Gainer

Unlock the Waiting Lists!
www.unlockthewaitinglists.com
877-WAIT-LIST

Walton Options
Augusta, GA
waltonoptions.org
706-724-6262

Thanks to OUR SPONSORS for their Support.

If you are interested in being a sponsor for *Making a Difference* magazine, please call Christina Rosell @ 770-578-9765

AlbanyARC
Advocacy Resource Center

Albany Advocacy Resource Center

Albany ARC,
serving our community
since 1963,
promotes the general
welfare of people with
disabilities and fosters
the development of
programs on their behalf.

(229) 888-6852
(24-hour on-call)
www.albanyarc.org

CHILDREN'S SPECIAL SERVICES, LLC

"Complete developmental occupational therapy for children – toddlers through teens."

770-394-9791 • www.childrens-services.com

Wheelchair Getaways®
Accessible Van Rentals
Toll Free: 1-800-554-6893
Local: 770-457-9851
www.wheelchairgetaways.com

catea
The Center for Assistive Technology & Environmental Access

Promoting independence and participation of people with disabilities through assistive technology and environmental access

CATEA advances its mission through a variety of projects which focus on:

- Research & Development - on workplace accomodations, wheeled mobility devices, and pressure ulcer incident reduction
- Information Dissemination - on disability, assistive technology, disability-related legislation and policies, and effective accomodations
- Training & Education - on assistive technology, accessible distance education, disability, and disability policy
- Design & Technology - on accessible environments and accessible electronic and information technology, with a particular focus on universal design

www.catea.org

CATEA ▪ Georgia Institute of Technology ▪ College of Architecture
490 Tenth Street, NW ▪ Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0156 ▪ USA
Toll-free: 1.800.726.9119 ▪ Phone 404.894.4960 (v/tty) ▪ Fax 404.894.9320

United Cerebral Palsy of Georgia

Supporting people with all developmental disabilities throughout Georgia

UCP United Cerebral Palsy
Life without limits for people with disabilities

Email: info@ucpga.org
(770) 676-2000 or 1-888-UCP-WILL
www.ucpga.org

thanks thanks thanks thanks thanks thanks thanks thanks thanks thanks thanks thanks thanks thanks thanks

---

JF&CS Division of Disabilities

Your Tools for Living from JF&CS
Jewish Family & Career Services

***Residential**
(Highly Individualized, community support with all ADL Skills)

***Supported Employment**
(Individualized supports to find & maintain competitive employment)

***Day Program**
(Creative alternative to supported employment)

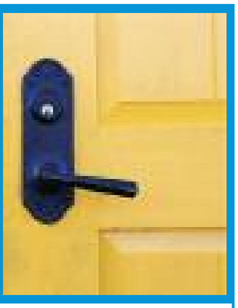
***Transition Program**
(Life Skills Development)

For more information call 770-677-9379
or visit us on the web at www.YourToolsforLiving.org

Georgia Housing Search

Georgia Housing Search.org

providing Georgians with access to rental housing opportunities



Are you looking for an available, affordable rental unit?

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs' Georgia Housing Search can help and it is easy and convenient!

dca
Georgia Department of Community Affairs

Log on and search for units at
www.georgiahousingsearch.org
or call 1-877-428-8844

Equal Housing Opportunity

Making a Difference Discovery Tour

Thursday, September 21, 2006 • 8 AM - 1 PM

A half-day executive briefing designed for business leaders to explore powerful opportunities to tap into one of the largest, most reliable - yet overlooked - pools of qualified available workers.

For more information on sponsorship or to request an invitation please call
404.657.2122 or email
vmsuber@dhr.state.ga.us

Making a Difference

The quarterly magazine of the Georgia Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities

Volume 7, Issue 1 • Summer 2006

LONG ROAD HOME MARCH

Advocates celebrated the 7th Anniversary of the Supreme Court's landmark Olmstead decision at the Long Road Home March on June 21 and 22 in Rome, Cartersville and Atlanta. The outcome of Olmstead v. LC and EW was the decision that Lois Curtis and Elaine Wilson, two women with disabilities who lived in Georgia nursing homes but who wanted to live in the community, should have the choice to live independently with community support options. More on page 24.

JUNE 21 & 22, 2006

Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities
2 Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 26-246
Atlanta, GA 30303-3142
404-657-2126, **www.gcdd.org**

Address Service Requested