



Center for
Disabilities Studies

2019–2020
Annual Report

Greetings, from CDS

2020 tried our patience, challenged our optimism, separated us from those we love and wrought unspeakable heartbreak as lives and livelihoods were lost. At the [Center for Disabilities Studies](#), we persevered by responding to the needs of our constituents – UD students, K-12 educators and students, people with disabilities who were isolated and whose well-being was threatened in so many ways by the virus, and families – with compassion, sensitivity, strength and hope. CDS also joined in solidarity with individuals, agencies and organizations in powerful advocacy for civil rights and equitable access to healthcare.

You can access much of this work in the following pages. And you can be assured that whatever challenges 2021 brings, every one of us at CDS will continue to do all we can to support the community.

It is how we react to the challenges that confront us that becomes our legacy. When we look back on this year, it is clear that we are strongest when we are united in pursuit of access, equity and inclusion.

Beth



[Beth Mineo](#) served her 12th year as director of CDS in 2020.

New worlds of communication

When Delaware schools went remote as a coronavirus precaution, many students with complex communication needs couldn't access existing video- and text-based schoolwork and services.

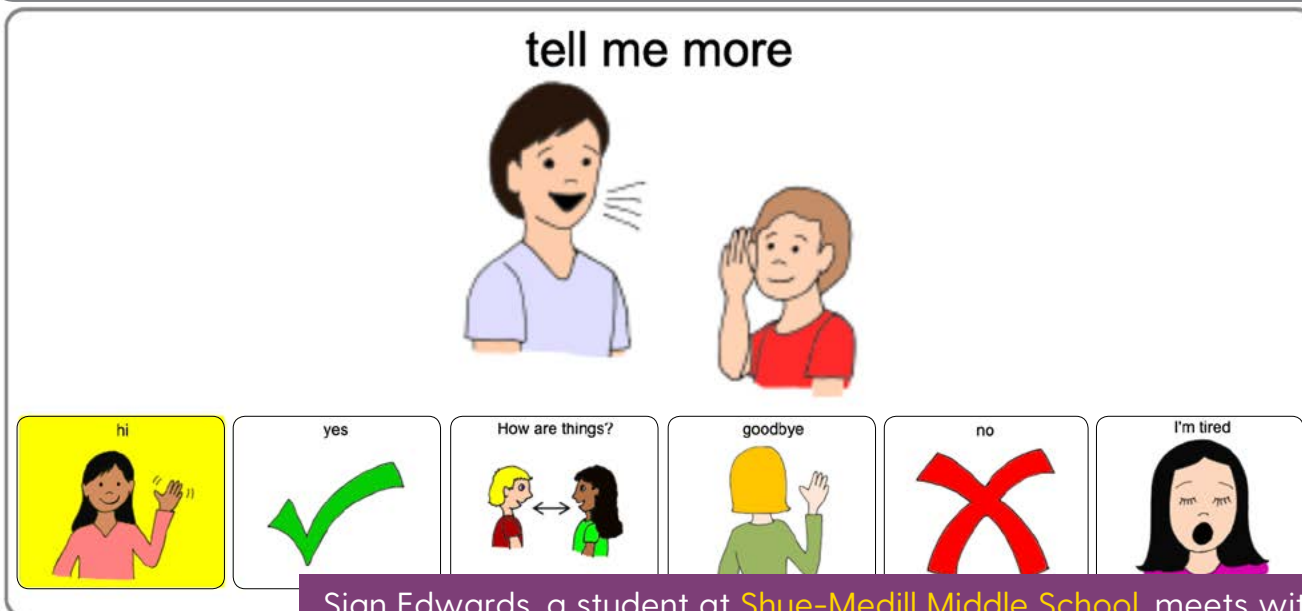
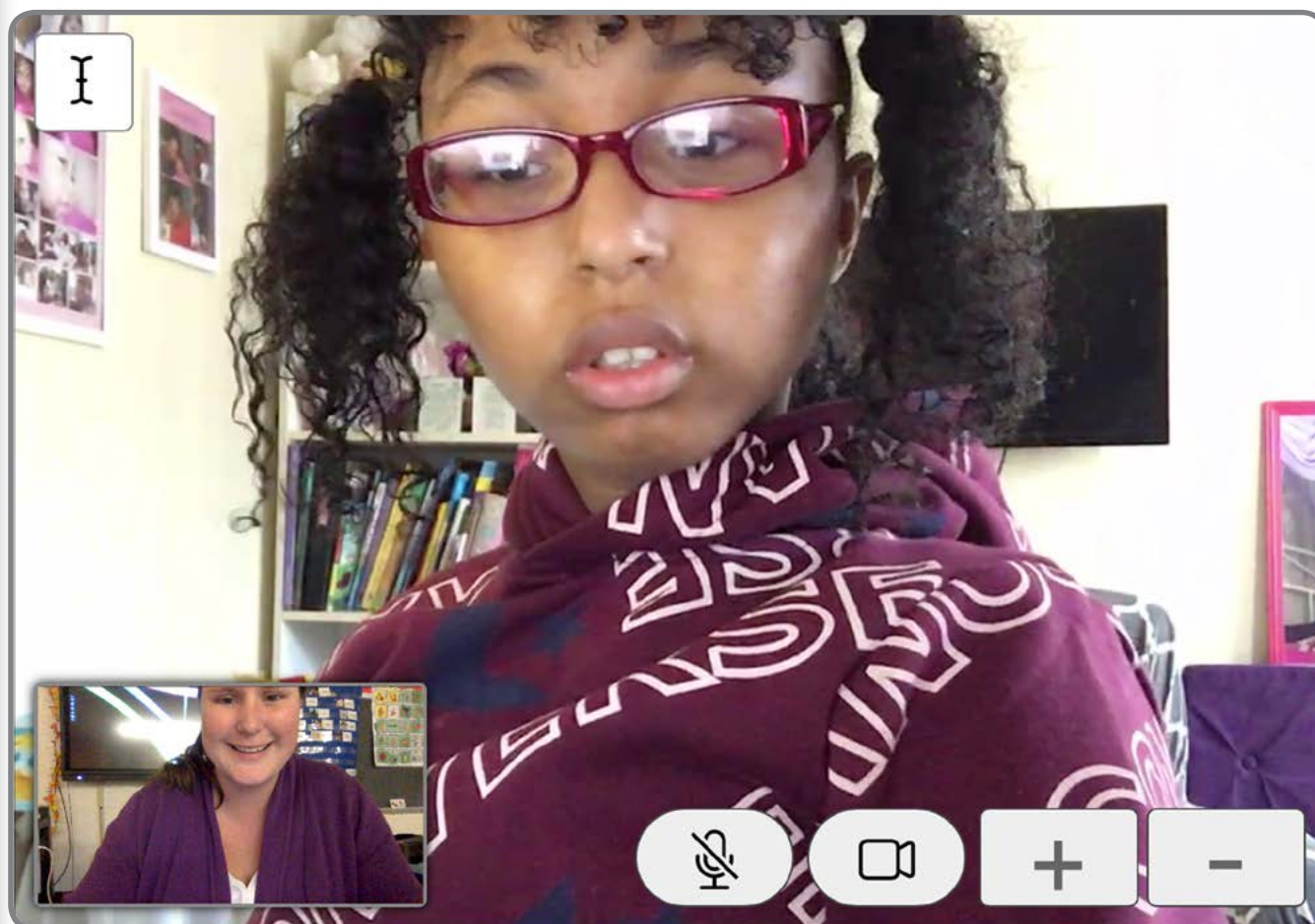
Then [Megan Conway](#), the program manager for CDS's [Adapting Curriculum and Classroom Environments for Student Success \(ACCESS\) program](#), discovered [Co-VidSpeak](#). A video chat app initially developed for intubated hospital patients, Co-VidSpeak shows both speaker and communication partner "boards" with preset words and phrases. Conway realized it could be effective in remote instruction, allowing teachers to program boards and to see students point at the choices with their hands or eyes.

Conway contacted the developer, Brian Whitmer, who offered a deal: free access to Co-VidSpeak in exchange for user feedback.

Starting in spring 2020, ACCESS coached about a dozen educators in remote teaching via Co-VidSpeak. By the end of the summer, almost three times as many had been trained.

Whitmer says educators' suggestions led to "multiple improvements" in the app, from shareable boards to auditory prompts.

Wanting to see it in wider use, MaryAnn Mieczkowski, director of the [Delaware Department of Education's Exceptional Children's Resources Workgroup](#), says Co-VidSpeak "can open up new worlds of communication."



Sian Edwards, a student at [Shue-Medill Middle School](#), meets with her teacher Lindsey Ferrero via the Co-VidSpeak video chat app.

The backbone of Spectrum Scholars

Andrew Martin can do things most people can't – excelling at applied molecular biology and applied biotechnology, for one. But the seemingly simple act of boiling an egg?

"I thought I'd probably screw that up," Martin says. That was before he received encouragement from [Wes Garton](#), his coach with the CDS-run, [JPMorgan Chase](#)-supported [Spectrum Scholars program](#) for UD undergraduates with autism. Now, Martin's boiling them, frying them, scrambling them.

"It's not about the egg; it's about gaining more self-confidence," says Garton. Martin gained it by confronting challenging tasks outside the classroom, enabling him to better achieve his goal of living independently.

The "backbone" of Spectrum Scholars, coaching empowers participating students by having them establish their own goals and find ways to achieve them, says program director [Pam Lubbers](#).

One scholar opted to pursue a healthier lifestyle so he can withstand the rigors of his business classes. A computer science major aimed to raise her communication skills so she can plan social events. An undeclared major sought to boost her leadership abilities so she can become a resident assistant.

Martin took a crack at independent living in the kitchen. "After exams," he says, "I'm tackling tortellini."



Andrew Martin displays his handiwork during a Zoom meeting. In twice-weekly coaching sessions, Spectrum Scholars develop skills that can aid them in the classroom and beyond.

Preparing special education leaders

Eileen Baker, an elementary interventionist in [Cape Henlopen School District](#), has a doctorate, a decade in Delaware schools and a national certification as a school psychologist. However, she says, that wasn't enough to give her "the necessary expertise, knowledge and leadership [experience]" to comfortably take a more senior special education role.

Before 2020, she would not have had a clear way to fix that. Says [Debby Boyer](#), CDS's [School-age unit](#) director: "The primary track for leadership certification had no option for people who wanted to aim specifically for special education."

That changed when CDS, the [Delaware Department of Education](#) and other UD education centers created the [Special Education Administrative Leadership \(SEAL\) program](#).

Funded by a five-year, \$1 million grant from the [U.S. Department of Education](#), SEAL will offer 55 Delaware special education leaders classroom learning on special education topics, leadership training, mentoring, research opportunities and internships.

Baker is a member of the inaugural group of SEAL participants. "It's one thing to have the credits," she says, "but something else to feel prepared mentally and in your heart."



Debby Boyer coordinates the Special Education Administrative Leadership (SEAL) program for CDS and its partners.

Race and culture take center stage

The civil unrest that boiled over in May 2020 following the killing by police of [George Floyd](#) led CDS to see what more it could do to advance its mission of promoting opportunity and inclusiveness. “You can’t champion equity for people with disabilities if you’re not holistic in your approach and mindful of race and culture,” says Center Director [Beth Mineo](#). “They’re essential ingredients.”

CDS sought to heighten its awareness by inviting its team members to engage in critical conversations about race and systemic oppression led by UD Assistant Professor [Janine de Novais](#). That generated the formation of an internal committee seeking to attract a more diverse applicant pool to CDS which, committee co-chair [Jessica Bass](#) anticipates, should “help the Center gain the trust” of more people of color. That trust, Bass says, could afford the Center more chances to support disenfranchised communities.

CDS also aimed to build relationships with underserved individuals burdened by disparities in education, employment and health care. For example, CDS offered educators and administrators online resources and training webinars that addressed racism and, more particularly, the disproportionate disciplining of minorities in schools.

“Recognizing how disability, race and culture intersect,” Mineo says, “is now a permanent element in any work we do.”



A sociologist in UD’s [School of Education](#), Janine de Novais works at the intersection of race, culture, education and democracy.

Collaborating amid the pandemic

As the U.S. Congress worked to craft a coronavirus relief bill in late spring 2020, organizations like the [Association of University Centers on Disabilities \(AUCD\)](#) – to which CDS belongs – called for stories illustrating the needs of people with disabilities. CDS shared testimonials from Delawareans, which AUCD posted under the hashtag [#WhatWeNeed](#).

Campaigns like [#WhatWeNeed](#) demonstrate the “value we realize from being part of many different networks,” says CDS Director [Beth Mineo](#).

Those relationships positioned CDS to aid the Delaware disability community early in the coronavirus pandemic by sharing information, creating resources and planning projects.

Working with the [Delaware Department of Education](#), CDS’s [School-age unit](#) produced a webpage of resources addressing families’ pressing questions and offered webinars on topical issues such as virtual crisis response.

Responding to another urgent need, CDS’s [Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative](#) and the [Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council \(DDC\)](#) began a project to distribute communication technology to those experiencing social isolation.

“Partners with different sets of knowledge and expertise can work together to provide better service,” says Kristin Harvey, the director of the DDC. “That was never more important than during Covid.”



[Gail Hamblin](#), a CDS assistive technology specialist, shared how the pandemic imperils the care of her son, Calvin, with the [#WhatWeNeed](#) advocacy campaign.

Spotting students' emotional needs

Most children in need of mental health services don't receive them, a crisis compelling schools to identify kids whose symptoms go unnoticed, says Sandra Syglowski, a project coordinator at the Delaware Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services (PBHS).

To better recognize and support these children, CDS, PBHS, the Delaware Department of Education and others kicked off in 2018 the five-year, federally funded Project DeLAWARE initiative. Part of the larger goal of expanding schools' mental health supports, it engaged Capital, Colonial and Indian River school districts in universal screening, an approach that identifies mental health risk factors by analyzing data from students, teachers and families. Districts identified new survey tools, enabling educators to make informed choices about supporting students' mental well-being.

The coronavirus pandemic interrupted the districts' universal screening plans, but CDS Instructional Coach Niki Kendall says she worked with district staff "to be proactive," looking for preexisting data that could serve the same purpose. Colonial Behavior Support Coach Christina MacKerchar says the work should "not just support students' academic needs, but their behavioral, social and emotional needs, too."

The goal is to "prove how valuable [these mental health supports] are," says Syglowski, "then bring them to other districts."



CDS Instructional Coach Niki Kendall helps school districts identify risks to students' mental well-being.

Increasing access, maintaining security

In 2020, CDS continued advocating for accessible elections in the press and in a public affairs forum. Two years earlier, during the 2018 midterm elections, the Center's civil liberties conference and [media appearances](#) had probed barriers people with disabilities face as they try to vote. This time, amid the 2020 primary election season, the Center examined a fledgling online Delaware initiative that sought to make voting easier for people with disabilities.

However, on the eve of CDS's [Make Your Vote Count forum](#), Delaware abandoned the [OmniBallot elections pilot](#) in the face of mounting criticism from cybersecurity experts that the system could fall victim to undetected hacking and malware.

[The "disability community is eager to see access barriers eliminated from the voting process," CDS Director Beth Mineo told NPR, but "we can't afford to sacrifice the security of that process."](#)

Neither, in the end, could the state elections office. At CDS's event, state Election Commissioner Anthony Albence announced that Delawareans could, as planned, receive and mark their ballots with tablets or smartphones and return them by postal mail, encrypted email, fax or in-person – but not via the OmniBallot app, as the state previously intended.

The state took a "measured approach" towards greater accessibility, said the [Disabilities Law Program's](#) Laura Waterland.



Concerns about security led election officials to alter Delaware's online voting pilot program.

Teaching lessons in flexibility

When the pandemic caused most in-person classes at UD to go virtual, CDS undergraduate and graduate programs faced serious challenges: coordinating class discussions, offering events, arranging clinical observations.

They met the challenges through their embrace of online resources, several of which the programs will tap beyond the pandemic. Faculty and students found “ways to get involved, even [without] meeting in person,” says UD Professor [Laura Eisenman](#), who coordinates CDS’s [Disability Studies minor](#) and [Access:Ability Scholars](#).

Zoom video breakout rooms proved to be one way, providing a more comfortable option for previously reticent students to contribute in discussion-based classes like the minor’s Senior Seminar.

Future professionals in the CDS-run [Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities \(LEND\) program](#) found that conducting observations remotely gave them access to new clinical settings.

Students in Access:Ability Scholars, an undergraduate enrichment program that provides disability-related event programming, discovered a weekly web series on disability justice. It inspired four to sign up for independent studies.

“I learned to be flexible,” says LEND trainee Julianna Danese, who finished her bachelor’s degree and started toward her master’s degree in special education while taking classes remotely. “Now I’m teaching my students the same thing.”



Julianna Danese takes a momentary break from observing a clinical coaching session at UD that supports undergraduate students with autism.

Empowering all students' voices

Her extraordinary devotion to accessible early childhood education won Rebecca Vitelli [2020 Delaware Teacher of the Year](#) honors.

Her preternatural success in getting her [Colonial School District](#) pre-kindergarten students to appreciate their varied abilities and differences established Vitelli, in the words of Maryann Koziol, the district's [Early Educational Program](#) coach, as Colonial's "inclusion queen."

Her drive to "support, lift up and advocate for" students with disabilities, Vitelli says, is an outgrowth of her associations with CDS and UD. Previously as a UD undergraduate [minoring in disability studies](#) and a CDS graduate assistant, and now as an advisor to a CDS-run [special education leadership program](#), she learned, and then let others know, why everyone's voice matters, no matter how they communicate. Educators and advocates in classrooms and communities, Vitelli says, can help empower those voices.

"She shows students how each has something to contribute," says Koziol. "When they need support, Rebecca models it." Vitelli's support recently enabled one of her students with autism to press a button that started the class's morning song. "He exhibited such pride," Vitelli says. "And his classmates? They cheered!"



Rebecca Vitelli provides support to one of her pre-kindergarten students. Photo courtesy of [Evan Krape](#), University of Delaware.

Succeeding in the real world

As a student last year in CDS's [Career and Life Studies Certificate \(CLSC\) program](#), Kristen Shields found time to educate the educators.

Her CLSC classmate Mike Massello chose to educate his peers.

Shields and Massello are two of the many students from CDS-led college programs for UD students with disabilities who decided to apply skills and lessons they learned to advocate for disability acceptance and community inclusion.

“When students give of themselves to help other people, it empowers them and creates an impactful image for others,” says [Brian Freedman](#), who directs CDS's [Transition, Education and Employment Model](#).

Shields presented on a panel at a [national conference in Reno, Nev.](#) for university professionals to discuss her personal and social growth while living in an inclusive UD residence hall. She told audience members to be “open minded to [opportunities]” available to their students.

Massello shared his perspective on life as a person with an intellectual disability with students enrolled in UD's [Disability Studies minor](#). He liked sharing his life story with others on campus, he says, because it showed them that “no matter what disability somebody has, they can overcome their challenges and succeed in the real world.”



Kristen Shields in front of Memorial Hall on UD's Newark campus.

Trainings that create community

Whenever CDS's [Megan Pell](#) began a virtual training session for educators last year, she and her fellow [Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project](#) instructional coaches would invite audience members to reflect on their current emotional states.

Whenever their CDS colleague [Sarah Mallory](#), an assistant professor at UD, ended a virtual training session on autism, she and her team would devote half-an-hour to meeting with attendees to discuss real-world applications.

Providing educators with such foundational support, then focusing on proven strategies the educators could employ with their students, made trainings from Pell, Mallory and other CDS professionals personal yet practical amid the pandemic.

"We check in to create community," says Pell. "Those calm moments can help educators and other professionals stay grounded in unsettling times and non-traditional training settings."

"We spent a lot of time organizing our trainings to ensure attendees could walk away and use what they learned," says Mallory.

[Capital School District](#) Supervisor of Instruction Jocelyn Brown says she adapted activities from CDS training sessions to use in meetings of school-based mental health teams.

"We decided to practice what we preach," says Brown. "When you're taking care of your own emotional health, you become a model and you also become available to support others."

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t Grieving Stud



CDS Instructional Coach Megan Pell works to help educators stay grounded in unsettling times.

The Year in Review

Funding and Financials

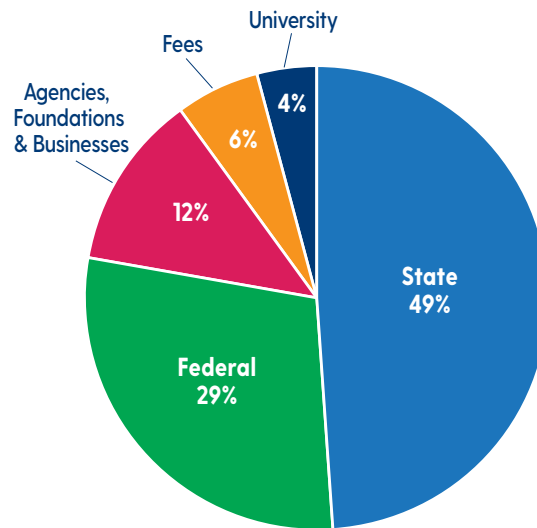
The Center for Disabilities Studies had an operating budget of \$6,323,613 from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.

Sources of funding

More than 95 percent of CDS funding is realized through grants and contracts from federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations, foundations, businesses and fees. Included in the federal portion is \$566,123 from the Administration for Community Living, Administration on Disabilities for our core funding as a University Center For Excellence in Developmental Disabilities. This U.S. government organization is responsible for implementation of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000. CDS also benefits from gifts made by individuals and organizations.

Funding by Source—FY 2020

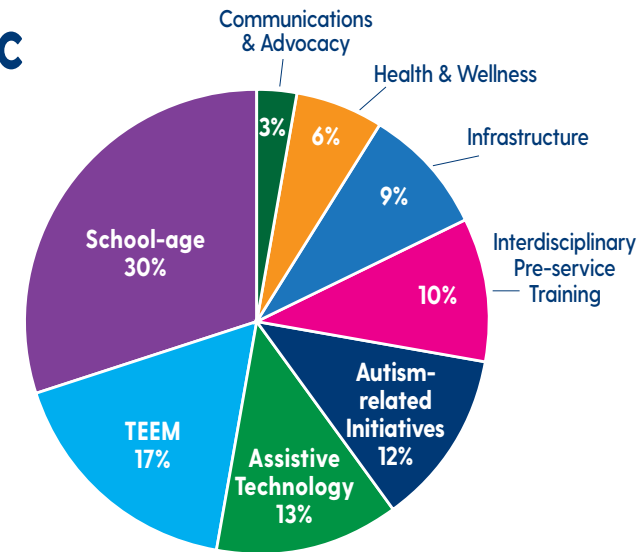
Source	Amount
State	\$3,067,971
Federal	1,820,015
Agencies, Foundations & Businesses	756,864
Fees	375,038
University	271,544
Center for Disabilities Studies	32,108
Gifts*	73
Grand Total	\$6,323,613



*This amount indicates what was spent from gift funds.
New gifts to CDS in the 2019-2020 reporting year totaled \$4,777.

Project-specific funding by domain

This chart shows the proportion of the budget expended in support of each of the Center's programmatic domains. The infrastructure domain includes those funds that support overall Center operations rather than domain-specific activities.



Funding by Domain—FY 2020

Domain	Amount
School-age	\$1,909,807
TEEM	1,043,727
Assistive Technology	824,825
Autism-related Initiatives	752,204
Interdisciplinary Pre-service Training	649,180
Infrastructure	537,715
Health & Wellness	397,527
Communications & Advocacy	208,638
Grand Total	\$6,323,613

FUNDERS

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Federal Communications Commission

U.S. Department of Education

- Office of Special Education Programs

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

- Administration for Community Living
- Health Resources and Services Administration

STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Delaware Department of Education

Delaware Department of Health and Social Services

- Division of Developmental Disabilities Services
- Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance
- Division of Public Health
 - Bureau of Maternal and Child Health

Delaware Department of Labor

- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Department of Safety and Homeland Security

- Delaware Emergency Management Agency

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS, SCHOOLS, FOUNDATIONS AND BUSINESSES

- Association of University Centers on Disabilities
- Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation
- JPMorgan Chase & Co.
- University of Delaware
- University of South Carolina

DONORS

We would like to give special THANKS to those listed here for their generous support through gifts received in the year beginning July 1, 2019 and extending through June 30, 2020.

GIFTS TO THE CDS GENERAL FUND

Heidi L. Beck '99M	Katherine Hughes
Timothy F. and Martha A. Brooks	Amy D. Lane
Sharon A. Feucht '75 and Gary E. Miller	Yolanda H. McKinney '07M
Anne Remley Harris '77	Megan M. Pell '16PhD
Gary H. Heckert '72 '76 and Beth A. Mineo	Anthony J. and Marie D. Sheridan

GIFTS TO THE CLSC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Gary H. Heckert '72 '76 and Beth A. Mineo
Donald L. and Lynn A. Peters

GIFTS TO THE TOBIN FUND FOR VISUAL ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Gary H. Heckert '72 '76 and Beth A. Mineo
Karen L. Latimer
Shirley R. and Allen E. Smith
Sandra L. Walls

GIFTS TO THE UNDERGRADUATE ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

Tracy L. Beird
Gary H. Heckert '72 '76 and Beth A. Mineo

GIFTS TO SPECTRUM SCHOLARS

Sheela P. Dattani '91 and Suken A. Shah

GIFTS TO ARTFEST

William K. '72 and Janet P. Klingaman
Jeffrey C. Rosenthal '15

To donate to CDS, please visit cds.udel.edu/give.

The Year in Review

Who we are and what we do

The Center for Disabilities Studies works to enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families through education, advocacy, service and research. It promotes empowerment and opportunity, accessibility and inclusiveness, so all may fully participate in – and enrich – their communities.

The Center for Disabilities Studies is...

- One of 67 University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service nationwide, with core funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Disabilities.
- The administrative home to the interdisciplinary Disability Studies minor, the largest minor on campus with enrollment this past year reaching 538 students from 33 majors across five colleges at the University of Delaware.

In 2019–2020, CDS staff and faculty cultivated student learning by...

- Teaching or co-teaching 44 courses/course sections and independent studies, reaching a total of 211 graduate and 508 undergraduate students.
- Delivering 11 guest lectures to 115 UD graduate students, 141 UD undergraduate students and 61 students at two other institutions of higher education.
- Providing assistantships/traineeships to 14 graduate students from the School of Education and the

Departments of Physical Therapy, Communication Sciences and Disorders and Behavioral Health and Nutrition.

- Engaging 26 undergraduate students and three additional graduate students in the work of the Center.

In 2019-2020, CDS staff and faculty fostered the development of new knowledge—and the translation of existing knowledge—by...

- Developing 30 project proposals internally and with external partners.
- Offering 34 conference presentations and publishing nine journal articles and three books/book chapters.
- Providing editorial support for 16 journals and serving as proposal



Rebecca Jewell of CLSC (right) and DATI's Sandy Walls

reviewers for three conferences and three funding agencies.

In 2019-2020, CDS staff and faculty engaged with national, state and local communities by...

- Serving on 48 boards, committees and task forces external to the university (23 percent of these at the national level).
- Collaborating with 25 state agencies, 22 national and international agencies and organizations, 50 other units at UD, 38 community-based organizations and 15 other institutions of higher education.
- Contributing to media coverage about disability issues and the work of the Center in six print articles, radio and television pieces and other mechanisms.



Left: Ed Head (front) and the UD students who built him a prototype scooter in the Newark Assistive Technology Resource Center.



Right: CLSC student Kiyuan O'Neal (center) with family members during Disability Mentoring Day.

Visit cds.udel.edu for more information about the Center for Disabilities Studies.

Staff and Faculty

Igbal Attaelmanan

Jessica Bass

George Bear

Tracy Beird

Allison Berdoulay

Blake Bossert

Debby Boyer

Amy Brown

Megan Conway

Teresita Cuevas

Zachary Davis

Laura Eisenman

Brynn Fallah

Roseann Ferri

Alisha Fletcher

Brian Freedman

Doretha Freeman

Kristine Fry

Weston Garton

Heather Godwin

Candy Greenleaf

Gail Hamblin

Sarah Hearn

Pat Heineman

Rebecca Jewell

Stephanie Kaznica

Niki Kendall

Erin Konrad

Amy Lane

Karen Latimer

Pam Lubbers

Judi MacBride

Loretta MacLaren

finnigan madison

Sarah Mallory

Karen Marsh

Beth Mineo

Jessica Monahan

Megan Pell

Brittany Powers

Kittie Rehrig

Victor Schaffner

Alexandra Schmied

James Sellers

Mackenzie Shane

Melanie Sipko

MaryEllen Stephens

Bhavana Viswanathan

Sandy Walls

Graduate Assistants

Kelsey Baldwin

Cassidy Edmondson

Brealyn Garrison

Brenna Gause

Fiona Lachman

Rebecca Silver

Undergraduate Students

Amber Anderson

Sarah Bailey

Jessica Baliatico

Sarah Belden

Maxwell Berman

Emily Brown

Natalie Brown

Jenn Caplan

Kathryn Catalino

Jennifer Cirillo

Julia Dank

Teresa DeSantis

Taylor Hallacy

Becca Horowitz

Lauren Izenberg

Elaine Kaplan

Aidan Kedzierski

Mackenzie Koenig-Zanoff

Alexis Lawrence

Rebecca Linnemann

Nicole Lipset

Shelby Luria

Brittany MacKnight

Emily Marsh

Sofia Mazza

Megan Meyer

Nicole Moldenhauer

Kaitlyn Myers



Talia Rennert-Ariev

Ally Sacher

Blair Schnitzer

Rocky Simon

Sarah Sturgill

Kylie Thomas

Emma Thwaites

LEND Trainees

Elaina Abramson

Kelsey Baldwin

Kelly Bankert

MaryBeth Clancy

Emily Curtin

Julianna Danese

Cassidy Edmondson

Emmanuel Jenkins

Kathryn Johnson

Megan Kelly

Amanda Kopetsky

Andrea (Ande) Kulish

Erica Lehman

Jessica Lorenzo-Gaier

Kristen McMillen

Kelsey McMunn

Brynn Michalcewiz

Tauheedah Mohammed

Danielle Newman

Aurora Reible-Gunther

Elizabeth Scheinberg

Meg Seifert

Vanessa Stansbury

Alana Telesford

LEND Core Faculty

Anjana Bhat

Laura Dewey

Brian Freedman

Olga Goncharova-Zapata

Persephone Jones

Sarah Mallory

Anthony Middlebrooks

Beth Mineo

Angela Mitchell

Jillian Trabulsi

Individuals whose service concluded during the past year

Staff and Faculty

Kellene Copeland

Kara Downey

Lauren Irwin

Rebecca Lloyd

Richard Lytton

Karl Malgiero

Sonja Rathel

Pialee Roy

Betsy Wahlquist

Megan Drohan

Justin Drzal

Chayanna Gallardo

Emily Killian

Taylor Kligerman

Olivia Lolk

Claudia Meyer

Maaseidvaag

Samantha Marino

Shannon McAlister

Olivia Merced

Corey Moore

Zumana Noor

Jacqueline Pierre

Aubrey Pilotte

Aaron Pomerantz

Aurora Reible-Gunter

Samantha Rosenthal

Mackenzie Ruiz

Michelle Salvatore

Samantha Shafer

Benjamin von Duyke

Mckenna Winnie

Samantha Yocum

Undergraduate Students & Interns

Phoebe Balascio

Caroline Cano

Sophia Dell'Oso



Bottom of page (clockwise from top left picture): Spectrum

Scholars' Doretha Freeman (left) and finnigan madison.

Spectrum Scholars' Pam Lubbers. Graduate assistant Kerry Pini

(left) with School-age's Teresita Cuevas. School-age's Brynn

Fallah.

Personnel joining or leaving CDS

after June 30, 2020 are included

in these listings.

Top of page (clockwise from bottom left picture): UD School of Education

faculty members Sarah Curtiss (left) and Laura Eisenman. LEND Co-director

Brian Freedman (left) and trainee Roger Mercado. CLSC student Lizzy

Phillips with UD Best Buddies member Kathleen Hermansader.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

OUR COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Members of the [Community Advisory Council](#) partner with the [Center for Disabilities Studies](#) to advance its mission. The council includes individuals with developmental and related disabilities who serve as self-advocates; parents and other family members of individuals with developmental disabilities; representatives from disability-related training, service and advocacy organizations; state agency representatives; and others who advocate on behalf of people with disabilities.



Karen Doneker



Alyssa Cowin



Ira Shepherd II



Wendy Strauss

CAC Executive Committee

Cory Nourie, chairperson, [Division of Developmental Disabilities Services](#)

Alyssa Cowin, self-advocate

Deborah Dunlap, parent

Terri Hancharick, [Endless Possibilities in the Community](#), parent

Ira Shepherd II, self-advocate

CAC Members

Karl Booksh, [University of Delaware](#), self-advocate

Charles Bryant, [Division of Developmental Disabilities Services](#), parent

Anthony Carter, [JEVS Support for Independence](#)

Karen Doneker, parent

Susannah Eaton-Ryan, [The Arc of Delaware](#)

Carmella Giddins-Jones, [Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services](#), parent

Stephen Groff, [Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance](#)

Brigitte Hancharick, self-advocate

Kristin Harvey, [Developmental Disabilities Council](#)

Kathy Hughes, family member

Nancy Lemus, parent

Jane Luke, parent

Daniel Madrid, [Office of the State Treasurer](#)

Daniese McMullin-Powell, self-advocate

John McNeal, [State Council for Persons with Disabilities](#), self-advocate

MaryAnn Mieczkowski, [Department of Education](#)

Sandi Miller, [Division for the Visually Impaired](#)

Dava Newnam/Melissa Smith (designee), [Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities](#)

Wendy Strauss, [Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens](#)

Meedra Surratte, [Parent Information Center of Delaware](#)

Laura Waterland, [Disabilities Law Program](#)

Despina Wilson, [Independent Resources, Inc.](#)

Members whose service concluded during the past year:

Lisa Bond, DHSS Office of the Secretary

Linda Heller, Hearing Loss Association of Delaware, self-advocate

2022

JANUARY

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FEBRUARY

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JUNE

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			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

JULY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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AUGUST

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	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

SEPTEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
**CENTER FOR
 DISABILITIES STUDIES**

FRONT COVER: *Melanie Sipko*, an instructor and coach with CDS's [Career and Life Studies Certificate \(CLSC\) program](#), and two of her students, Davon Rollins (left) and Mike Massello, embrace at the 2020 Spread the Word inclusion event on UD's campus.

BACK COVER: The new normal: Center for Disabilities Studies staff connect from their homes via Zoom early in December 2020.



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