

The Center for Disabilities Studies

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

College of Human Services, Education, and Public Policy

A University Center for Excellence

ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2000 - JUNE 30, 2001



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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

One of the primary tenets of family-centered services is that no single professional or agency can provide the supports necessary for a family who has a member with a disability. While this is true for providing services to families, it is especially true when working with agencies and within systems in the arena of disabilities.

As one of the more than 60 University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Research, Education, and Service, the Center for Disabilities Studies must work in partnership with individuals with disabilities, their family members, grassroots organizations, advocacy groups, community agencies, schools, hospitals, state agencies, businesses, institutions of higher education, and any other entity affecting those with disabilities and the communities in which they live. In fact, I would argue that an essential characteristic of a University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities is its ability to foster and maintain partnerships in order to enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families.



Even a cursory glance through this 2000-2001 Annual Report will show that partnerships that have been developed, fostered, and maintained by the Center for Disabilities Studies are both far-reaching and substantial. Our projects work in consort with local school districts and the state Department of Education, with community adult service providers and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, with private employers and the Division for Vocational Rehabilitation. The Center's largest program, Northern Delaware Early Head Start, has been nationally recognized for its unique approach to providing services to families and its partnerships with family child care providers and seven different agencies and programs.

Partnerships may take place between programs or agencies, but they do not happen without the work of individuals. The faculty and staff of the Center are outstanding collaborators. They have worked this past year to grow and foster new relationships while recognizing the importance of our long-term existing relationships. One of my personal sources of pride in the Center's staff is their ability to communicate the importance of collaboration, respect, and partnership to the scores of students who work with us.

One of those persons who is best at collaboration stepped down from the directorship of the Center this past year. Dr. Donald L. Peters, director of the Center since its birth in 1993, returned to a faculty position. One of the hallmarks of his leadership with the Center was his ability to forge partnerships with departments, agencies, and groups and to help create a common goal for individuals with disabilities and their families. We continue to use his model of collaboration in all of our undertakings.

Please take a few moments to look through this report and reflect on the vast number of partnerships that the Center has taken part in during the past year. As with all good collaborative efforts, we will work to continue these relationships and to strengthen the bonds that hold them together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M. T. Gamel-McCormick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael Gamel-McCormick, Ph.D.
Director

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Center for Disabilities Studies is to enhance the lives of individuals and families in Delaware through education, prevention, service, and research related to disabilities. We promote independence and productivity so individuals and families can fully participate in the life of the community.

The University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Studies (the Center) is Delaware's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Research, Education, & Services (UCE). A center for research and training of the College of Human Services, Education, & Public Policy (CHEP), the Center is part of a nationwide network of over 60 UCE's that provide leadership in the promotion of independence, productivity, integration, and inclusion of persons with disabilities into the community. With base funding from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, the Center actively seeks contracts and grants from federal, state, and private agencies to pursue these goals. The core functions of the Center are pre-service and community education, research and evaluation, model demonstration, technical assistance, and information dissemination.



PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS—AN INTRODUCTION

A very short eight years have passed since the Center first received \$200,000 in funding from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities to begin its work. Today, the Center is approaching a \$3 million budget with more than 50 faculty, staff, and students. We believe that our success over the past eight years is rooted in our partnerships and collaborations with a wide variety of federal and state agencies, community providers, private funding sources, and our growing relationship with the business community.

To be effective, partners must share common values and a vision for people with disabilities to live and participate fully in all aspects of community life. This is true for young children, children in school, adults, and for seniors. Individual organizations alone cannot make this vision come true. The goals can only be reached when we work together. This annual report, covering the 2001 Fiscal Year (July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2001), celebrates the partnerships and collaborations that have supported the positive changes occurring in Delaware for individuals with disabilities and their families.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

A major focus of the Center has always been to improve the lives of young children with disabilities. To meet this end, more than 50% of the Center's programming activities address early intervention, prevention, and the effectiveness of programs and services for young children. The emphasis on prevention allows the Center to offer education and technical assistance to a wide audience, resulting in identifying children with disabilities who may not otherwise be identified until much later in life. Prevention efforts increase the ability of community providers to serve young children with disabilities and their families. Recent surveys show that early intervention services and supports in Delaware are increasingly family friendly, family driven, and effective in supporting children and families accessing the services they want and need in the community. The early childhood prevention and services are supported by federal, state, and private agencies.

Wilmington Healthy Start

Partnering with Christiana Care Health Systems, Delaware's largest hospital and health care network, and the Wilmington community, the vision of the Wilmington Healthy Start (WHS) project was to facili-



Amy Summers of NDEHS on a home visit

tate a collaborative environment in which the people of Wilmington can lead lives that produce the healthiest babies and families in the nation. The WHS project ended this year after four years of focusing on building family outreach, creating support systems, and reducing risk for pregnant and postpartum participants. Serving over 1,000 women and children in FY '01, WHS increased prenatal and perinatal services and supports to parents within the poorest and most ethnically diverse areas of the city. The ethnic backgrounds of the families participating in WHS are estimated to be 74% African American and 19% Hispanic.

The Center's role in WHS has been to provide program administrators and local communities with information about WHS's progress toward meeting their goals and objectives. Emphasis was placed on working one-on-one with project staff to develop a system of data collection and processing that enabled key organizations to continue this self-sustaining data man-

agement system. Efforts are currently under way to continue the consortium component of the project.

Among Partnering Agencies: Brandywine Counseling, Christiana Care System, Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center, Latin American Community Center, Lutheran Community Services, Ministry of Caring, Neighborhood House, People's Settlement, Planned Parenthood, Saint Francis Hospital, University of Delaware, West End Neighborhood House, Westside Health Services, William Hicks Anderson Community Center

Northern Delaware Early Head Start

An even more complex collaboration effort is Northern Delaware Early Head Start (NDEHS), which brings together the federal government, the University of Delaware, community agencies, and child care providers in an effort designed to empower and support pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and their



On a home visit, Allison Miller plays with a toddler.

families. With its emphasis on both child care centers and family child care providers, NDEHS has set a new standard for the Center's collaborative efforts.

NDEHS has unique partnerships with seven organizations. Funded in October 1997 during the third national wave of federal support to develop Early Head Start programs, the NDEHS consortium of agencies employs an innovative program model bringing together the university with a diverse group of nonprofit community agencies to provide direct services to 107 children and families in New Castle County. The consortium also works to impact many more families and service providers by way of its capacity-building approach in the areas of child care, disability support, training, and coordination of services. During FY '01, NDEHS expanded its impact by working with additional child care providers and partnering with new agencies.

Partnering Agencies: Children and Families First, Delaware Association of Child Care Professionals, Inc., Easter Seal Society of Del-Mar, Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center, New Castle County Head Start, Southbridge Children's Center, University of Delaware Department of Individual and Family Studies

Project CREATE

Project CREATE (Caregiver Recruitment, Education, and Training Enhancement) offers family and center-based child care providers tuition-free college courses focusing on developmentally appropriate child care practices for infants and toddlers. During FY '01, Project CREATE expanded its modules to include six one-credit college courses with on-site technical assistance and academic supports for first time college students. Project CREATE students continue to benefit from this format, bridging their experiences with informal community-based training and formal college course work. The 40 students enrolled in the spring 2001 curriculum had a 100% completion rate. Project CREATE also began to track the training and support needs for center-based providers. Project staff collected data from 150 center-based providers. As the project continues, 150 family-based child care providers will also be surveyed. The information collected from these surveys will be used by the Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing to improve support to providers in the child care setting throughout the state.

Partnering Agency: Office of Childcare Licensing





NDEHS/Project CREATE Staff

Interagency Resource Management Committee

One of the original activities of the Center was to help early intervention and early childhood programs evaluate and improve their services. The Interagency Resource Management Committee (IRMC) – a Delaware state level governmental committee that includes the Secretaries of Education, Health and Social Services, Services for Children, Youth and families, and the state Budget Director and Controller General is instrumental in coordinating these evaluation services with the Center. The IRMC makes both policy and budgetary decisions for three major early intervention programs. For the fifth year in a row, the IRMC and the Center have collaborated to conduct evaluations of the Child Development Watch program, as well as evaluations of the Early Childhood Assistance Programs, and a longitudinal study of early intervention programs in Delaware. The IRMC also assisted the Delaware Child Development Watch program

with measuring family satisfaction and perception of program effectiveness. As part of the IRMC Early Intervention Outcomes Evaluation Projects, the Family Survey 2000 was distributed to approximately 200 families receiving early intervention services for children between the

ages of birth and 36 months. This year the survey asked families specifically how the services from Child Development Watch had impacted their quality of life. The results of this survey will be used to improve the program's responsiveness to families.

In addition to the family survey, the Child Development Watch evaluation included a series of six family and staff focus groups, a provider survey, and an on-going child outcome study.

For the third year, the Center assisted the 15 Early Childhood Assistance Programs (ECAPs) throughout Delaware to track both child and family outcomes. The ECAPs provide services to four-year-olds living in poverty, using a Head Start comprehensive services model. Over 400 children and families were tracked during FY '01 and each program was provided with an individually tailored report regarding the outcomes of the children and families served.

Finally, the Center concluded its fourth year of tracking over 700 randomly selected students who had entered kindergarten in 1997-

1998. Over a third of these children were identified as having disabilities and having received early intervention services prior to entering kindergarten. Comparisons between children who received early intervention services and those who did not will be made on such factors as grades, third grade state test scores, discipline referrals, and special service usage.

Partnering Agencies: Department of Education, Department of Health and Social Services, Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Families, the Interagency Resource Management Committee

Home Visiting Advisory Committee

The Home Visiting Advisory Committee project (HVAC) provides recommendations about needed resources and changes necessary for the implementation of an effective and valid training and evaluation system for home visiting programs. HVAC also identifies and prioritizes recommended practices for meeting the parenting needs of participants of home visiting programs offered by state agencies and nonprofit organizations of Delaware. This year, the HVAC worked on developing competencies, standards, and evaluation guidelines.

Partnering Agencies: Child Development Watch, Delaware Division of Family Services, Department of Education, Department of Health and Social Services, Parents As Teachers

Family Support Partners Training

Community Education staff worked with the Birth-to-Three system to recruit parents of children with disabilities to serve as Family Support Partners. Family Support Partners facilitate family forums sponsored by the Birth-to-Three early intervention system and provide support to families in a variety of other ways. To develop Family Support Partners, the Center offered three half-day trainings at the Delaware Technical and Community College.

Partnering Agencies: Birth-to-Three System, Child Development Watch, Department of Health and Social Services

Parents As Teachers

Parents As Teachers (PAT) is a first-time-parent home visiting program that is designed to help parents be their child's best first teacher. Annually the program serves between 1,300 to 1,500 families in Delaware, primarily those who have the greatest financial, educational, or social needs.

PAT concentrates on children's early years (prenatal to kindergarten). The services help to provide parents with an understanding of what to expect during each stage of their child's development and links these families to community resources. The Center assists PAT in implementation of a program monitoring and evaluation system that allows administrators and staff



Parents As Teachers Staff

to assess the project's capacity to address the needs of participants, to identify program strengths, and to identify areas in need of improvement.

Partnering Agencies: Department of Education, PAT Provider Agencies

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS IN EDUCATION

Over the past eight years the Department of Education (DOE) has become a major partner with the Center. Starting with joint conferences and summer institutes for teachers, this partnership now includes local school districts, students, and parents who have embarked on many innovative paths to improve education for students with disabilities. These collaborations have worked to support families, improve teacher training, promote inclusion across all ages and disabilities, and ensure that children with significant disabilities are included in Delaware's education accountability efforts.

Delaware Alternate Portfolio Assessment

As part of Delaware's effort on education reform, the Center has provided technical assistance and support to the Delaware DOE in the design, development, and implementation of the Delaware Alternate Portfolio Assessment (DAPA). The DAPA is an alternate assessment for students with moderate to severe cognitive disabilities enrolled in functional life skills curricula. It is a portfolio of an individual student's work and record of the learning opportunities provided to that student.

The DAPA has included collaborations that have grown beyond the initial work group to include parents, parent advocates, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel. With 365 student portfolios submitted during FY '01, the number of school district personnel participating in this project is now approaching 200 across all 19 Delaware school districts. Advisory council members include representatives from the Parent Information Center, the ARC of Delaware, and the Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens. During FY '01, the DAPA facilitated 22 teacher training sessions and parent information nights across the state, reaching more than 150 participants.

Partnering Agencies: All Local School Districts, The ARC of Delaware, Department of Education, Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens, The Parent Information Center of Delaware



Delaware Alternate Portfolio Staff

Transition Partnership Program

The Transition Partnership Program (TPP) is a university-local school district collaboration that provides a model program for students, aged 18-21, with moderate to severe disabilities as they transition from school to their communities. The collaboration involves an inter-agency agreement to allow a smooth transition between the public school system and adult service agencies such as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services. Red Clay Consolidated School District provides staff and all student educational services. The Center provides technical assistance and access to the University of Delaware facilities that offer the least restrictive, age appropriate environment for the enrolled students. Further collaborations have occurred through the Advisory Council whose members represent business, the university, parents, students, and state service agencies involved in the transition process.

During the year, 14 students were enrolled in TPP and six students completed the program at age 21. Two students learned to use public transportation (DART), and six became employed – one was employed full-time at MBNA, three were employed full-time at Russell Dining Hall, and two were employed part-time at the Center.

Additionally, Dr. Carol Denson, Associate Professor of Consumer Studies and Pre-service Training Director of the Center, highlighted the project in her “Leadership and Disability” class, involving U of DE undergraduates in the program. Other highlights included co-directors Jackie Gallagher and Diane Merrill completing the Supported Employment Certificate program through the Center, enhancing their skills in job match and job development.

Partnering Agencies: Adult Service Agencies, Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Red Clay Consolidated School District, The University of Delaware School of Education

Positive Behavior Supports

The Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) project was created in conjunction with the DOE with a goal of providing school districts and teachers with the skills to prevent and address challenging behaviors for all students. Seen as an important step toward supporting the



Sharohn Howard, TPP student

inclusion of all students with disabilities in general education programs, PBS focuses on promoting positive behavior interactions and ensuring that school district personnel are able to assess and intervene when students’ behaviors do not foster a positive learning environment.

The overall goal for the PBS project is to increase each school’s capacity to provide all students with positive behavior interventions, reduce suspensions, and reduce expulsions. A team of parents, state agency representatives, local school district personnel, and DOE staff serve in an advisory capacity for the project. During FY ‘01, the Center developed two additional PBS training modules, bringing the total to nine. Dr. Kathy Minke and Dr. Al Cavalier of the U of DE’s School of Education participated in the partnership by writing several of the modules.

During FY '01, the Center also field-tested seven PBS modules, training teams from 12 of the 19 school districts in Delaware. In addition to the training of over 200 school district personnel, the Center sponsored a statewide conference on Positive Behavior Supports in May 2001 with more than 60 school personnel in attendance. In the upcoming year DOE and PBS staff look forward to concentrating on providing technical assistance to the 12 trained school districts with the goal of implementing several school-wide PBS programs.

Partnering Agencies: Department of Education, The University of Delaware School of Education, 12 Local School Districts

PARTNERSHIPS IN PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION

Training students to be knowledgeable about disabilities and to understand their impact on individuals, families, and the community is an important part of the Center's



PBS Conference-Core team

mission. The Center, in partnership with academic departments in the University, offers a number of courses about disabilities. The College of Human Services, Education, and Public Policy, several University departments, and the Center collaborate to provide students with these opportunities. An interdisciplinary team of faculty associated with the Center, community agencies, and family members partner to teach these courses.

During FY '01, pre-service education has expanded its efforts, developing new curricula, and reaching out to more students.

Summer Institute: Quality Services for Individuals with Severe Disabilities

The Quality Services for Individuals with Severe Disabilities Certificate Program is a graduate level college credit program sponsored by the Center for Disabilities Studies, the University of Delaware Department of Individual and Family Studies, the Delaware Department of Education, and the Delaware Program for the Deaf/Blind. This Summer Institute is designed to deliver state-of-the-art knowledge and skills

to individuals who work with children and adults with disabilities in the community, education, work, and leisure settings.

The Summer Institute includes eight, three-credit courses offered over a four-year period. Courses focus on critical topics for the support of creating life-enhancing alternatives for individuals with severe disabilities. They are incorporated, on a rotating basis, into the University of Delaware curriculum. During FY '01, 11 students were enrolled in the Summer Institute courses.

Partnering Agencies: Delaware Department of Education, Delaware Program for the Deaf/Blind, The University of Delaware's Department of Individual and Family Studies

Interdisciplinary Minor in Disabilities Studies

The College of Human Services, Education, and Public Policy offers a Minor in Disabilities Studies, with courses taught by an interdisciplinary team of faculty associated with the Center.

This Minor is designed for students seeking to enhance their knowledge of disability issues. It provides a unique interdisciplinary opportunity for undergraduate students to pursue an understanding of the needs and challenges of individuals with disabilities.

HEPP 465, the Senior Seminar in Disabilities Studies, culminates the Minor in Disabilities Studies with an integrative seminar requiring a



John McNeal, Dean Dan Rich, Carol Bernard, and Karen Gallagher at a CDS event.

significant project in the student's area of specialization. Students focus and gather information on a specific topic through readings, discussions, and field experiences.

Twenty-nine students were enrolled in the minor during FY '01. Since 1998, 27 students have graduated with a Minor in Disabilities Studies.

University Partners: The College of Human Services, Education, and Public Policy, The Departments of Consumer Studies, Individual and Family Studies, Psychology, and Sociology, The School of Education

Disabilities and Differences (IFST 267)

Offered for the first time during the Fall 2000 semester, Disabilities and Differences (IFST 267) is an undergraduate level course sponsored in conjunction with the Department of Individual and Family Studies. The course focuses on characteristics that individuals with disabilities share with others,

how they are the same, and how they are different. Using first person accounts from persons with disabilities, demographic data, contemporary and classic literature, legislative and regulatory documents, and articles on the ethics of treating and working with individuals with disabilities, students enrolled in the course examine how disabilities are depicted and defined in our society. The course instructors included

the Center's Research Coordinator and two parents of children with disabilities. A total of 63 students completed the course.

University Partners: The Department of Individual and Family Studies, Family Members

Families and Developmental Disabilities (IFST 270)

Families and Developmental Disabilities (IFST 270) is an undergraduate course offered in conjunction with the Department of Individual and Family Studies. The course focuses on people with developmental disabilities in the context of their families and cultures and employs a multidisciplinary perspective. The IFST 270 curriculum covers disabilities and their causes; changing needs across the life span; gender, cross-cultural, and legal issues; and information about prevention/intervention, employment, inclusion,

and empowerment.

Cross-listed with the Departments of Psychology and Sociology, 50 students were enrolled in IFST 270 during the 2000-2001 school year.

University Partners: The Departments of Individual and Family Studies, Nursing, Psychology, Sociology, the School of Education

Leadership in Disability Policy (CNST 367)

Leadership in Disability Policy (CNST 367) studies disabilities from a consumer perspective. Laws and regulations are examined to illustrate how people with disabilities have been treated historically and how leadership in developing legislative initiatives can remove community and social barriers to accessibility.

CNST 367 was offered in Spring 2001 with an enrollment of 31 students.

University Partners: The Department of Consumer Studies



STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES AT THE CENTER FOR DISABILITIES STUDIES

The Center recognizes that learning about disabilities and associated issues occurs both through formal and informal mechanisms. Work, assistantships, and volunteer opportunities at the Center offer undergraduate and graduate students many chances to learn more about disability issues. Recruitment of students occurs across departments and colleges to support our transdisciplinary approach to services and training.

Undergraduate Student Opportunities

Undergraduate students provide support to many Center projects and often fulfill important roles in key Center programs such as maintaining the Library Resource Center or assisting in the development of training activities for Community Education projects. The Center actively recruits first and second year students for employment throughout their academic life and adds to their responsibilities over time. Students who come to the Center for a job often leave with a passion, either entering employment in the disability field or pursuing graduate studies to gain more formal education for employment.

Graduate Student Opportunities

The Center, with university and state legislative support through public service assistantships, offered 11 graduate assistantships at the master and doctoral level during FY '01. Assistantships cover student's tuition and pay a stipend in return for 20 hours per week of work. Rooted in Center projects, assistantships provide students with resume-building opportunities. Graduate assistants participate in developing research, writing journal articles, teaching, offering technical assistance, coordinating surveys and evaluations, and maintaining the Center's communications projects. As with undergraduate students, the Center recruits graduate students to work on projects over the length of their graduate career.

Partnering Agencies: Delaware State Legislature, The University of Delaware Department of Individual and Family Studies, The University of Delaware School of Education

PARTNERSHIPS IN ADULT SERVICES

The Center prides itself in working to meet the training and educational needs of direct support and other professionals working in the field of disabilities through our Community Education projects. With funds from a federal training initiative and the Division of

Developmental Disabilities Services (formerly the Division of Mental Retardation), Community Education offers a variety of certificate programs and other training opportunities designed to inform and inspire individuals to provide quality services to people with disabilities.



The Center's Graduate Students

New Visions I and II

Laying the philosophical foundation for supporting self-determination and informed choice-making, these one-day seminars offer an introduction to developmental disabilities and person-centered planning. Accepted as meeting three of the basic requirements for new staff orientation by the Delaware Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, 265 students participated in these training programs during FY '01. New Visions I and II are offered monthly throughout the state.

Partnering Agencies: Community Agencies, Delaware Division of Developmental Disabilities Services

Innovative Concepts and Practices

Innovative Concepts and Practices (ICP) is a 10-module course (15 seminars) on best practices across the lifespan. The curriculum includes a comprehensive look at the lives of people with disabilities that addresses person-centered planning, work, home, recreation and leisure, family, communication needs, and positive behavior supports. This past year 43 participants enrolled, 21 completed the certificate, and 22 are returning. A record number of 341 individuals attended this certificate program or individual modules.

Partnering Agency: The Division of Developmental Disabilities Services



Bev Stapleford and Carol Bernard at the Life Conference

Quality Management and Supervision in Human Services

Quality Management and Supervision in Human Services (QMS) is a 15-module course (18 seminars) designed to build man-

agement and leadership skills for mid-level supervisors and managers working in agencies that serve people with disabilities. During FY '01, 23 certificate participants enrolled, 14 completed the program, and nine are returning. An unduplicated total of 241 participants took this course.

Partnering Agency: The Division of Developmental Disabilities Services

Support Coordination

Support Coordination (SC) is a nine-module course (15 seminars) that combines components of ICP with self-determination and service coordination. SC ensures that service coordinators understand best practices and their role in providing support to individuals with disabilities. During FY '01, 14 certificate participants enrolled with six completing the program and eight returning, for a total of 24 participants.

Partnering Agency: The Division of Developmental Disabilities Services

Foster Care Certificate

The Foster Care Certificate (FCC) is designed for persons who provide in-home care to adults with developmental disabilities. The curriculum emphasizes enhanced quality of life for people with disabilities and addresses essential lifestyle planning, life span issues, families, supporting behavior change, natural supports, recreation and leisure,



The Community Education Team

and nutrition. During FY '01, Center staff, along with Intergenerational Links, developed a vision of distance learning that will better meet the needs of foster care providers.

Partnering Agency: The Division of Developmental Disabilities Services

Supported Employment Training

The Supported Employment Training (SET) initiative was the result of collaboration between the Sterck School, Delaware's School for Students with Hearing Impairment,



Mark Bernstein presenting a certificate to Loreli LaRocque

the Helen Keller Center, major adult service agencies, and the Center. Geared to professionals and paraprofessionals working in the school system and the adult service provider community, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Education funded this training to provide job coaches and job developers with skill development and experience with the transition process at the local level. Using a team approach, participants representing both schools and providers write assessments and job development plans on selected individuals. Supported employment training was offered twice during the FY '01 and had 41 participants.

Partnering Agencies: Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

OTHER COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROJECTS/PRESENTATIONS

Center staff also offered a variety of unique training programs and events designed for individual provider agencies.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

The Center's relationship with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) expanded to address DVR's quality improvement activities and a systems change project during the Spring 2001. DVR identified training needs and requested train-

ing support for change management and team building. The Center developed curricula around issues in communication, problem-solving, techniques for managing change, and building trust within the agency. This project provided 11 days of training to all division staff statewide.

Community Providers

Center staff also developed curricula and training sessions at the request of individual provider agencies, including the Brain Injury Board of Delaware, Goodwill Industries of Delaware, Easter Seals, Northern Delaware Early Head Start and Telemon.

As part of an outreach program, Community Education staff conducted a presentation on time management to employees of Telemon Head Start Corporation, based in Dover, and a New Visions presentation to staff at the Delaware School for the Deaf.

Family Support, Self Determination, and Disabilities

With support from the University Center for Excellence at the University of Vermont, the Center sponsored a two-part workshop called Family Support, Self-Determination, and Disabilities. Designed by Dr. Susan Yuan of the University of Vermont, this course offered 18 participants the opportunity to understand disability systems from both the family and pro-

fessional perspectives. They explored better ways for consumers, family members, and professionals to communicate. The course content included Philosophy of Family Support, Cultural Competence, Assessing Needs and Determining Supports, Identifying and Coordinating Resources, and Skills for Working Together with Families.

Sponsoring the course opened the door to applying for a federal grant on Family Support during the spring of 2001. The Center is working with University academic departments to incorporate this course, taught by family members, into ongoing undergraduate and graduate programs.



Dr. Susan Yuan of the University of Vermont teaches Family Support, Self-Determination, and Disabilities

DISSEMINATION

A major role of any university center for developmental disabilities is to ensure that consumers, professionals, and the general public learn about the knowledge and information generated by the



CDS Dissemination Team

Center. Individuals with disabilities and their families need information to be effective advocates. Busy service providers need access to research in order to keep their services and supports up to date and visionary. Legislators and policy makers need to understand the impact of funding and policy decisions on the lives of individuals with disabilities. For all these reasons, the Center has developed a number of communication strategies. Some of these activities are solely supported by the Center, while others are a collaborative effort with councils, agencies, and businesses.

deLAWARE

Since 1994 the Center's newsletter *deLAWARE* has brought Delawareans information they need to seek services and support for individuals with disabilities. While historically it has been a joint proj-

ect of the Center and the Disabilities Planning Council (DPC), in FY '01 the MBNA Helen F. Graham Grants Program entered the partnership by assisting with funding. Each year two issues of the four- to six- page newsletter are dedicated to bringing readers in-depth information about a disability issue or set of related issues. A third issue highlights activities of the Center and the DPC. *deLAWARE* is sent to more than 2,500 individuals, families, agencies, and legislators in Delaware.

Partnering Agencies: Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council, MBNA Helen F. Graham Grants Programs

deLAWARE: A Research Brief

This year the Center introduced *deLAWARE: A Research Brief*. This publication is a summary of research that highlights national information on key issues facing the disability community in Delaware, or a summary of original research completed at the Center. The intent is to bring critical information on current research to individuals in the field, families, and practitioners who may not have access to journal articles or other research. The first issue focused on staff turnover in the adult service community.

Web Page Update

The Center's web page has a new

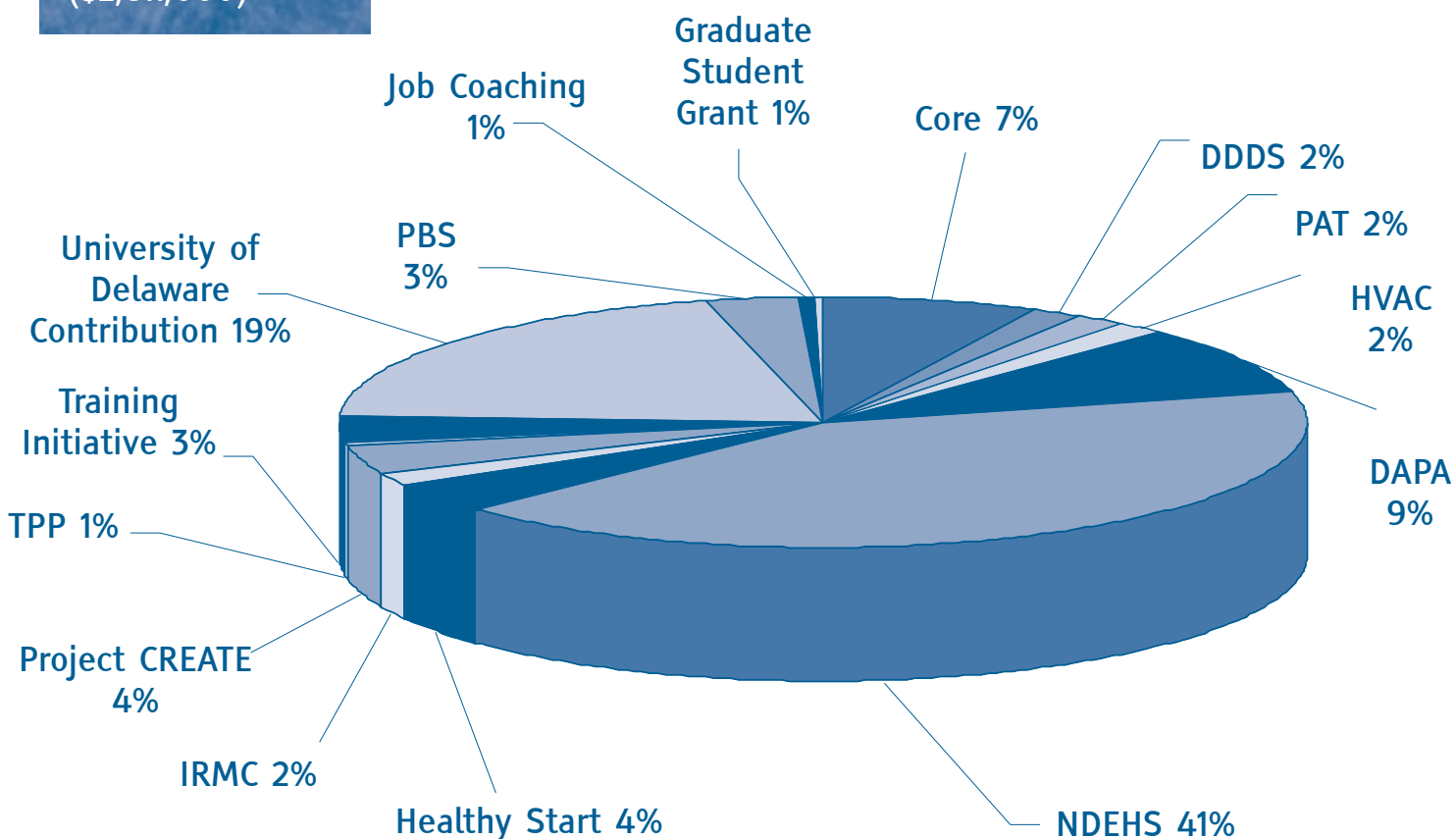
look and a new address but remains the place to find up-to-date information about the Center for Disabilities Studies. This new, accessible web page offers information about our university and community educational programs, current research and demonstration projects, publications, student opportunities, and contact information. In planning the new look of the web page, several avenues were examined to ensure its easy access to persons with disabilities. One aspect of this planning was to use the Tiresias screen font, which is recommended by the Royal National Institute for the Blind. The Tiresias font has been designed to have characters that are easy to distinguish from each other, which is especially important for individuals with visual impairments. The Center's new web page can be found at www.udel.edu/cds

LIFE Conference

On January 25 the Center was one of several sponsors of the LIFE Conference, a joint effort of many of Delaware's consumer-focused organizations. LIFE stands for Liberty and Independence for Everyone and addresses the topics of legislation, independence (through Assistive Technology), families, and education.

Partnering Agencies: Department of Education, Developmental Disabilities Council, Division of Developmental Disabilities Services

**CDS
FINANCIAL
STATEMENT**
JULY 1, 2000-
JUNE 30, 2001
(\$2,811,000)



PROJECTS INCLUDE:

- Wilmington Healthy Start
- Interagency Resource Management Committee (IRMC)
- Project CREATE
- Transition Partnership Program (TPP)
- Training Initiative
- University of Delaware Contribution
- Positive Behavior Supports (PBS)
- Job Coaching
- Graduate Students
- Core Funding from ADD
- Delaware Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS)
- Parents as Teachers (PAT)
- Home Visiting Advisory Committee (HVAC)
- Delaware Alternate Portfolio Assessment (DAPA)
- Northern Delaware Early Head Start (NDEHS)

A FAREWELL TO DR. DONALD L. PETERS



On December 13, 2000, the Center honored Dr. Donald L. Peters for his leadership and dedication to promoting high quality disabilities services and support in Delaware during his tenure as the Director for the Center for Disabilities Studies. Dr. Peters started the first phase of a three-year retirement in January 2001, stepping down as director but remaining with the Center as a senior policy advisor and principal investigator of the Delaware Alternate Portfolio Assessment project.

With support and encouragement from the Division of Mental Retardation as well as University of Delaware faculty member Dr. Penny Deiner, Dr. Peters began to plan for a university-affiliated program in the late 1980's. Funded as the University Affiliated Program for Families and Developmental Disabilities in January 1993, the Center began with funding of \$200,000, growing to \$2,400,000 by January 2001. Dr. Peter's vision for the Center was to promote sys-

tems change across the lifespan and recognize the following:

- Every period of life is important.
- Families are important across the life span.
- Community inclusion must be emphasized across the lifespan.
- Prevention is preferable to remediation.



This vision is expressed in the Center's major programs. In a few short years the Center has received national recognition for its innovative approach to Early Head Start programs. The State Board of Education has recognized Dr. Peters for his leadership in developing the Delaware alternative portfolio assessment for students with severe disabilities. The Center's direct support staff training for adult service agencies is widely acknowledged for its excellent quality. These strengths, combined



Dr. Donald Peters, former CDS Director, with Associate Director Theda Ellis at his farewell party

with the Center's work in evaluation and early intervention services, have prepared the Center to move confidently into the new century.



Dr. Martha Brooks of Department of Education presents Dr. Peters with an award from the State Board of Education

CORE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Consumer/Community Advisory Council offers policy input and direction to the CDS. Members represent consumers, families, and professional or advocacy organizations.

Marie-Anne Aghazadian

Director, Parent Information
Center of Delaware

Steven Amick

Delaware State Senate

Martha Brooks

Team Leader, Special Education
and Early Childhood Education
Delaware Department of
Education

Carla Dennis

Community Education Graduate
Delaware Special Olympics

Russ Dynes

Director, Lead Prevention
Program
Delaware Department of Public
Health

Andrea Guest

Director, Division of Vocational
Rehabilitation

Brian Hartman

Delaware Disabilities Law
Program

Linda Heller

Division of Services for Aging &
Adults with Physical Disabilities

Peggy Hirsh

Family Member

Ray Hunt

Independence Resources, Inc.

Brenda Kramer

Family Member

Sandy Reyes

Director, Developmental
Disabilities Council

Rita Mariani

Director, The ARC of Delaware

Paul Poplawski

Division of Drug Abuse, Alcohol,
& Mental Health

Marianne Smith

Director, Department of
Developmental Disabilities
Services (Formerly Division of
Mental Retardation)

Catherine Soles

Department of Services for
Children, Youth, and Families

Bill Viehman

Consumer

Note: 11 of 19 members are direct consumers or family members of individuals with disabilities

COMMUNITY EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Community Education Advisory Council meets quarterly. Its membership includes representatives from state, nonprofit and private agencies that support adults with disabilities in Delaware. The council updates the Community Education Team on current trends and training needs of their workforce, suggests programs and projects, reviews curricula, and helps to evaluate program effectiveness.

Holly Bounds

Kent Sussex Industries

Eileen Marvel

Delaware Elwyn

Sue Brown

Martin Luther Homes

Harriet Ann Litwin

Delaware Division of Vocational
Rehabilitation

Gary Cassedy

Easter Seals Society

Alisha Raiford-Hall

Mary Schrieber

Division of Developmental
Disabilities Services

Joe Foote

Dungarvin, Delaware

Sandy Reyes

Developmental Disabilities
Council

Becky Hudson

Ken Crest Services

Sonja Simowitz

Delaware Assistive Technology
Initiative

Todd Jarger

Community Systems, Inc.

Cindy Sterling

Opportunity Center, Inc.

Anne Laird

The Chimes, Delaware

NDEHS POLICY COUNCIL

The Policy Council is an elected group of parents and community members who share responsibility for overseeing the delivery of high quality services to families with infants and toddlers and pregnant women enrolled in programs supported by Northern Delaware Early Head Start. Council members have the authority and opportunity to participate in shared decision-making about the design and operation of the programs. Because it is important that families receiving services play an active role in making decisions about such services, at least 51% of the members of the Policy Council must be parents of currently enrolled infants and toddlers, or pregnant women enrolled in the program. They meet on a monthly basis.

The Policy Council works in partnership with the Northern Delaware Early Head Start (NDEHS) governing board and staff to:

- Represent families and children enrolled in NDEHS programs;
- Establish NDEHS program policies and ensure the program complies with Head Start federal regulations;
- Develop program personnel policies, including standards of conduct for program staff, consultants, and volunteers;
- Develop guidelines describing how the Policy Council and Governing Board will share in decision-making;
- Identify goals and objectives for NDEHS;
- Review financial statements and explore program resources;
- Determine ways to solve any complaints about the program;
- Serve as a link to the Parent Committees at the local programs;
- Foster positive community relationships and provide input on important community issues.

Dorenda Boger
Community Member

Barretta Britt
Parent – Hilltop Lutheran
Neighborhood Center

Sharon Brown
Parent – University of Delaware

Tanisha Brown
Parent – New Castle County
Head Start

Cathie Frost
Community Member

Michael Gamel-McCormick
The Center for Disabilities
Studies

Conquista Holmes
Parent – University of Delaware

Meryl Humphrey
Parent - University of Delaware

Monique Husser
Parent – Southbridge Children’s
Center

Nicole Johnson
Parent – University of Delaware

Diane Necastro
Community Member

Robert Perkins
Parent – Southbridge Children’s
Center

Shailyn Rodriguez
Parent – Hilltop Lutheran
Neighborhood Center

Ana Romirez
Parent – University of Delaware

Cynthia Slater
Parent – Southbridge Children’s
Center

Sue Snider
Community Member

Note: 58% are parents

TRANSITION
PARTNERSHIP
PROJECT
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

The Transition Partnership Project Advisory Committee includes representatives from state agencies, the school district, the Center and University, businesses, and service providers to address the needs of the project, to improve collaborations, and to ensure that students complete school with the skills needed to be as independent as possible. The committee has been instrumental in seeking solutions for issues concerning social security, Medicaid, and cross agency collaboration.

Becky Arnold
Family Member

Rita Mariani
The ARC of Delaware

Roberta Walker
Red Clay Consolidated School
District

Timothy Brooks
University of Delaware Dean of
Students

Lynne Meyer-Berlin
Red Clay Consolidated School
District

Arlene Dennison
Division of Vocational
Rehabilitation

David Michalik
Division of Social Services

Carol Denson
University of Delaware,
Consumer Studies

Trish Mitchiner
Family Member

Lachelle Pierce
Easter Seals

Theda Ellis
University of Delaware, Center
for Disabilities Studies

Tom Pledgie
Delaware Department of
Education

Michael Gamel-McCormick
University of Delaware, Center
for Disabilities Studies

Marcia Ranieri
DuPont Company

Sharohn Howard
Student

Mike Shriver
MBNA

Joanne Johnston
Family Member

Cheri Tyree
Family Member

Note: 5 of 18 members are direct consumers or family members

STAFF

CORE Staff

Director (starting Jan. 2001)
Michael Gamel-McCormick

Director (ending Dec. 2000)
Senior Policy Analyst (starting
Jan. 2001)
Donald Peters

Associate Director
Theda M. Ellis

Research Coordinator
Vacant

Pre-Service Coordinator
Carol Denson

Assistant to the Director
Rebecca Hardy

Records Specialist
Rebecca Fernandez

Administrative Assistant
Debbie Koch

Project Staff

Alternate Assessment (DAPA)
Alison Chandler
Shaunna Crossen
Donald Peters
Patricia Tressell
Janine Weber

Community Education
Carol Bernard
Mark Bernstein
Beverly Stapleford

Northern Delaware Early Head
Start
Ada Baker

Heidi Beck
Trudy Benally-Ho
Martha Buell
Michelle Cornwall
Norma Grice
Carolyn Graves
Allison Miller
Cynthia Monger
Amy Summers
Lidia Vela

Positive Behavior Support (PBS)
Sarah Hearn
Donald Peters
Karen Williams

Project CREATE
Jennifer Adams

Transition Partnership Program
(TPP)
Jackie Gallagher
Diane Merrill

Wilmington Healthy Start
Peter Antal
Teresita Mejia
Patricia Tressell
Donald Unger

Graduate Students

DAPA
Kellie Anderson
Angela Pietraniello

CORE
Jeromy Curry
Jennifer Raymond
Jennifer Torgersen

IRMC
Mary Liz Cummings

NDEHS
Nancy Bennett
Cheri Carter
Michele Francia
Eileen Malone
Ilka Pfister

PBS
Danielle Blanch

Project CREATE
Molly Malone
Ryan Pommerening

Wilmington Healthy Start
Adrienne Bey



CDS Staff

THE CENTER FOR
DISABILITIES
STUDIES AND
COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIPS

Developing effective partnerships and collaborations is related to the activities of individual staff members of the Center. The time invested in working with organizations across the state provides the relationships and groundwork needed to work on common projects.

Heidi Beck – New Castle County
“STEPS” Transition Team

Mark Bernstein – Associate
Member of Pennsylvania
Association of Resources for
People with Mental Retardation

Martha Buell – Delaware Head
Start Association Board of
Directors, Delaware First Again
Advisory Board, Building
Capacity in Natural
Environments, Early Head Start
Technical Work Group, OSEP
Part D Planning Group

Shaunna Crossen – DAPA
Portfolio Design Group, DAPA
Advisory Committee

Carol Denson – Chronic Renal
Disease Advisory Council

Theda Ellis – Developmental
Disabilities Council, DDC Policy
and Rights Council, State
Rehabilitation Council, Ticket to
Work Advisory Group, National
Council of Community Education
Directors, NTAC Work Group
(supported employment project)

Michael Gamel-McCormick –
Governor’s Advisory Council for
Exceptional Citizens, State
Advisory Council for Persons
with Disabilities, Interagency
Coordinating Council for Birth to
Three, Children and Families
subcommittee of the DDC

Rebecca Hardy – LIFE Conference
Coordinating Committee

Allison Miller – Delaware
Association of Childcare
Providers, NAEYC

Donald Peters – Policy and Law
Committee, PAIR Advisory
Council, State Advisory Council
for Persons with Disabilities

Beverly Stapleford – Department
of Developmental Disabilities
Services, Training Curriculum
Advisory Committee

Donald Unger – Delaware
Children’s Trust Fund,
Wilmington Healthy Start
Executive Board, Home Visiting
Advisory Committee

PUBLICATIONS

PRODUCTS AND PUBLICATIONS

Anderson, K., Manning, M., & Gossen, S. Field Study Survey Report.

Antal, P. WHS Quarterly Reports (4).

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