

Council Connection

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Closing Rosewood

*"One Man's
Journey from
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Life of his Own."*

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PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

SUCCESSFUL INITIATIVES CONTINUE

In addition to the outcomes we achieve through the advocacy and leadership of our members and staff, the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council impacts many important issues by funding projects and initiatives that promote community inclusion and improve services and supports for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

The DD Council views this funding as an investment--an investment in change and innovation that brings about lasting improvements in the way people with disabilities are supported in all facets of community life...and increases the opportunities that are made available to them. As illustrated in this newsletter, the initiatives the Council invests in range from child care and education to employment and healthcare.

All projects the Council supports are intended to test new and promising ideas and practices and to tap new opportunities. According to federal law, the Council's investment in projects must be time limited (typically 2-3 years). However, the changes and outcomes they bring about are intended to continue – to be sustained, built upon and replicated.



Sometimes because the Council funds innovative and promising ideas, initiatives are not always successful as projected. In those circumstances we gather lessons learned and move on. However, many times the projects sponsored by the Council are successful and should continue. The challenge for grantees is to acquire funding from other sources to continue successful initiatives: to sustain their positive impact on people's lives and on the services, policies and systems they depend upon.

Please read on page 2 about three Council-sponsored initiatives that have demonstrated their successes and recently acquired funding from other sources to continue--and enhance--their important work with, and on behalf of, people with developmental disabilities and their families.

PROJECTS ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY

Leaders In Disability Policy

The Coordinating Center and Ciekot & Elliott



Council funding for Leaders In Disability Policy (LDP) ended in 2008. LDP was still able to start its fourth year of leadership training in September with thirteen new participants. Ciekot and Elliott, a successful public policy and advocacy firm, along with the Coordinating Center garnered support for LDP through individual sponsorships, pledged funds, scholarship funding and in-kind donations. Leaders In Disability Policy is a six-month program that prepares people with disabilities and others who are passionate about disability policy to advocate for change. Working individually and in small groups, students focus on the policies and civic action that promote full inclusion and participation in society. Graduates of the program are equipped to take on leadership roles in social action and advocacy. For more information on Leaders In Disability Policy or to learn about sponsoring a participant, visit www.bealeader.info

Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education

In this final year of Council funding, the Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education (MCIE) received an amount less than in previous years, but successfully garnered additional funding from other sources to sustain its advocacy services. MCIE received substantial donations from the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, as well as an anonymous supporter. The Council must regrettably end its financial contribution to MCIE's Advocacy Services in September 2009 because of federal limitations on long-term funding imposed on the Council. However, the commitment of the Council and MCIE to increase inclusive education opportunities for children with developmental disabilities is resolute. We look forward to our continued partnership to achieve positive outcomes for Maryland families and their children. For more information on MCIE's Advocacy Services, visit www.mcie.org



Project Include Me of Wicomico County

The Wicomico County Local Management Board



Project Include Me, an inclusive child care initiative, was awarded its final year of funding from the Council for 2009 (see page 5 for details on the project). Having achieved success in Wicomico County supporting child care providers to fully include children with disabilities, the project has set its sights on sustaining and expanding its services to other counties. Project Include Me has developed a plan to continue in Wicomico County after Council funding ends and to expand into Worcester and Somerset Counties. Since the outcomes achieved by PIM are consistent with the Maryland State Department of Education/Child Care Administration's goals, MSDE is interested in supporting and sustaining this important project. Their ability to do so will depend on their budgetary situation during the coming year.

2009 State Plan Amendments

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council values your input. If you would like to provide public comments to the Council's 5-Year-State Plan Amendments, please visit www.md-council.org or call the office at 1-800-305-6441, MD Relay 711.

COUNCIL FUNDED PROJECTS CONTINUING IN 2009

End the Wait Now! Campaign

The Arc of Maryland, \$43,400

The Council awarded a \$43,400 grant to The Arc of Maryland to coordinate and manage campaign activities, while working closely and collaboratively with the Council and other partners.

Ending the wait for essential community services and supports for people with developmental disabilities and their families remains a key priority of the Maryland DD Council. Entering 2009, the Council continues its collaboration with The Arc of Maryland, which has been a leader for many years on waiting list campaigns in Maryland. Other partners include people with disabilities, their families, other advocates and local and statewide organizations who share the Council's and Arc's dedication to convincing Maryland's leadership to reduce and eventually eliminate the Community Services Waiting List. As with most statewide advocacy, the Council is working closely with other Developmental Disability Coalition members--People On the Go of Maryland, Maryland Association of Community Services, and Maryland Disability Law Center, as well as The Arc. The Council has increased its financial support of the End the Wait Now! Campaign, realizing that more needs to be done to activate and support people with disabilities and families on the waiting list and others to engage in crucial educational and advocacy activities. Empowering and supporting citizens with developmental disabilities and their families to tell their stories, demand attention, and seek support for Waiting List funding is at the core of the campaign. For more information on how to get involved, visit www.endthewaitnow.com



Building on last year's work and accomplishments:

- A new part-time statewide campaign coordinator has been hired
- Local volunteer coordinators are in place working with families, including meeting with legislators
- Additional YouTube-type videos are going to be produced
- A Campaign newsletter and a blog have been started
- Meetings with top officials have taken place to advocate "no cuts" to the state budget that would affect the waiting list and to urge additional funding
- A professional photographer, whose family is on the Waiting List, has volunteered to take portraits of people waiting for services as another compelling way to put human faces on the statistics



In-House initiative

The Family NETWorks list-serve and web presence will continue to provide comprehensive resource information to families, professionals and advocates across the state in 2009. For a wealth of resources, current events and information on how to add your name to the list-serve, visit the website at www.family-networks.org



Creed Family

(Waiting List portrait by Jennifer Bishop)

COUNCIL FUNDED PROJECTS CONTINUING IN 2009

H.O.M.E.S Project

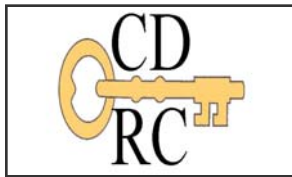
Maryland Disability Law Center, \$16,415

In year two, MDLC will focus its efforts on training self-advocates, professionals, providers, resource coordinators, and families regarding access to covered Medicaid services and legal rights. In addition, MDLC will recruit and train a new group of pro bono lawyers who will be available to accept individual case referrals even beyond the project's lifespan. To download copies of MDLC's brochures on accessing Medicaid services for people with developmental disabilities visit their website at www.mdclaw.org and click on publications.



Cross Disability Rights Coalition

People On the Go and ADAPT of Maryland, \$66,831



The Cross Disabilities Rights Coalition is an advocacy group led by people with disabilities. In 2009, CDRC will continue to educate people with disabilities about community living options, engage in legislative advocacy on behalf of people with developmental disabilities and their families and be a leader for deinstitutionalization in Maryland. For more information about CDRC or to become a member contact Ken Capone at kenny@thecdrc.org or visit www.thecdrc.org

Project Discovery

Arc of Howard County/ F.A.P.E Family Advocacy & Parent Education Program of Howard County, \$45,565

Project Discovery facilitates the transition process for middle and high school students with disabilities in Howard County by using individualized career planning. This comprehensive approach to transition promotes customized employment, self-employment and/or participation in career training or higher education, and helps to ensure successful transition to adult life. Once fully implemented and refined, this innovative approach should serve as a model for other schools. For more information about Project Discovery, contact Patricia Daley, Coordinator of Special Education, Howard County Public School System, at 410-313-5350.



Families as Faculty

The Parents' Place of Maryland, utilizing carryover funds from 2008

The Families as Faculty project will continue with its unique approach to training by pairing up families of children with disabilities and special health care needs with medical students, pediatric residents and masters-level health professionals. The students gain hands-on experience regarding the needs and struggles facing families in the community. In 2009, the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health has committed to having their graduate students involved in the project as well. For additional information contact Josie Thomas at josie@ppmd.org

COUNCIL FUNDED PROJECTS CONTINUING IN 2009

Project Include Me

The Wicomico County Local Management Board, \$58,268

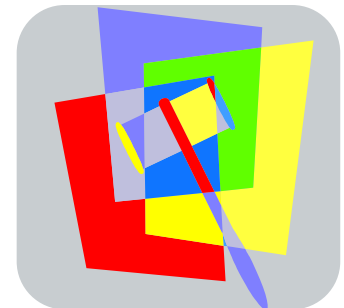
Project Include Me (PIM) is an innovative project to enhance inclusive child care for children with developmental delays and/or disabilities in Wicomico County. It also serves as a model for other counties. PIM provides training, equipment and modifications, and other resources to typical community based childcare providers to help support them in caring for children with developmental disabilities along side children who don't have disabilities. For more information about Project Include Me, contact Beth Cooney, Family Support Service Coordinator, and Wicomico Partnership for Families & Children, at 410-546-5400 ext. 19, bcooney@wicomicocounty.org



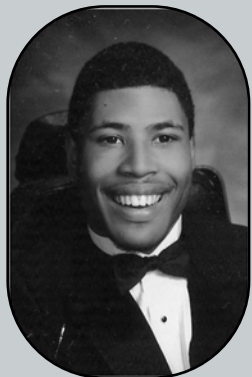
Legislative Internship

People On the Go of Maryland, \$4,000

For the fourth consecutive year the Council is sponsoring a People On the Go of Maryland legislative internship. The internship is a fantastic way for an emerging leader with a developmental disability to learn about the state legislative process, develop useful public policy skills and impact important issues affecting the lives of people with disabilities in Maryland. This year's intern is Brent Debnam from Prince George's County who will receive support and mentoring from The Arc of Maryland and People On the Go.



A Message from Brent



"Hi, My name is Brent Debnam and I am a 18 year old college student from Laurel Maryland. I am a very outgoing and determined person who is always willing to help people in need. I was born with a disability called cerebral palsy which constricts certain muscles in my body from moving. I am a legislative intern for the disability advocacy group called People On The Go. As a legislative intern for People On the Go my role is to prepare and deliver written testimonies for bill hearings and research bills. I will be working out of Senator Delores Kelley's office during the 2009 Legislative Session. I will be going to People On the Go meetings and informing our members about bills that have passed through the House and the Senate as well as important events happening throughout the month."

"I am very proud to be a member of People On the Go because it gives me the chance to advocate for people with disabilities."

NEW COUNCIL FUNDED PROJECTS IN 2009

Rosewood documentary

Video Press, \$30,000

The Council has provided seed funding for the production of a documentary about the closure of the Rosewood Center. The \$30,000 committed by the Council to this project garnered an additional \$45,000 funding from the Developmental Disabilities Administration and the Maryland Department of Disabilities. Video Press, a unit of the University Of Maryland School Of Medicine, was selected through a competitive process to chronicle the closure and tell the story through the eyes of some of the people leaving and their families. The documentary is intended to educate and inform multiple audiences, including families, people with disabilities, policy makers, and the general public about the process involved with closure, planning and transition and the new lives of individuals impacted by the closure. The producer of the documentary, Susan Hadary, won an Academy Award in 2000 for the film “King Gimp.”



Community Works

Maggie's Light Foundation and Towson University, \$17,100

In a recent award made to Maggie's Light Foundation, the Council will expand respite care for families of children and young adults with developmental disabilities. This demonstration project, called Community Works, will refine and broaden an innovative approach to respite care and expand the availability of caregivers. College and graduate students from Towson University who are studying in related fields such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech pathology, and nursing will be partnered with families in need. The project will work with The Arc of Baltimore Family Support Services program to identify families and Community Works will help facilitate the connection.



The goal is for parents to obtain the support they need from the community and for the child or young adult to be supported by students who are motivated, creative and close in age. In turn, the students gain field related employment and develop a greater sensitivity to the issues and challenges inherent in supporting and caring for a child or young adult with a developmental disability.

Equal Access to Resources

\$25,000

The Council's 5-year State Plan includes a goal to develop and implement strategies that result in individuals with developmental disabilities and their families from culturally diverse populations having increased access to needed information and community resources. As a first step in addressing this goal, research will be conducted in 2009 to identify issues, needs, barriers, opportunities and promising practices relative to people with developmental disabilities and their families from major ethnic/cultural groups in Maryland. The Council will contract with an independent researcher or research organization that has related expertise to conduct a focused community assessment, report findings and make recommendations. The findings and recommendations will guide the Council's next steps.



OTHER COUNCIL INITIATIVES FOR 2009

Educating Children in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Under the leadership of our Children & Family Issues Committee, the Council has decided to embark upon additional education initiatives to support LRE systems change. Maryland continues to rank at the bottom nationally in terms of educating children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, as required by law. This remains a top priority.

The Council began by convening LRE roundtables to solicit input and learn the perspective of key advocates and leaders on this issue. Our next step is to outreach to an array of diverse parent groups, advocacy groups and professionals throughout the state to identify shared goals and strategies, successful initiatives and activities worthy of support and replication, and innovative and promising ideas. The Council will make decisions over the next six months about how to best utilize our funding to further support systems change, advocacy and capacity building in the schools. For more information about these LRE activities, contact Rachel London at RLondon@md-council.org

Friends & Family TIES of Maryland

Shared Support Maryland, Inc.

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration enlisted the DD Council to provide expertise and guidance in the selection and monitoring of an organization to implement a Family to Family Mentoring Project. Shared Support Maryland, Inc. was selected through a competitive process and is funded under the State's Money Follows the Person Demonstration Project. This four year project, named "Friends and Family TIES of Maryland" (Together in Enhancing Support), will focus on developing an effective mentoring program for the family members and supporters of people with developmental disabilities transitioning from State Residential Centers to living in the community. Activities include providing support, education and outreach to families throughout the State with an emphasis at the Rosewood Center in the first year. For more information, contact Beth Munro at beth@sharedsupportmd.org



NEWS YOU CAN USE

National Center for Parents with Disabilities

The new National Center for Parents with Disabilities and their Families has been announced by "Through the Looking Glass," a non-profit organization. Visit their website at <http://lookingglass.org/ncpd/index.php>

Including All Kids

The website, www.includingAllKids.org, and its companion publication, **Paths to Inclusion**, are designed as guides to help youth program leaders & volunteers expand opportunities for all young people to be engaged by making their organizations & programs more accessible.

JAN, the Job Accomodation Network

JAN's website, www.jan.wvu.edu offers the most comprehensive information to practical technical assistance designed to make the workplace more accessible for all.

Transition to College

The Postsecondary Education Research Center Project coordinated by TransCen, Inc. has developed a new website. For resources on college options for students with intellectual disabilities visit www.transitiontocollege.net

WELCOME NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS



Sharon Dockery:

Sharon is a parent of two young children. She and her family live in Montgomery County. Her eight year old daughter has a diagnosis of autism. Ms. Dockery is employed as a resource teacher with Fairfax County Public schools. She graduated from Leaders In Disability Policy a leadership program developed through a Council grant. Her areas of interest are in inclusive educational practices, staff development, and training and transition of services from one level of education to the next.



Eric Cole:

Eric is the parent of a three year old son with a developmental disability. Eric and his family live in Montgomery County. Eric is actively involved with The Arc, the Dandy-Walker Alliance, the Genetic Alliance, and a number of other advocacy organizations. He has testified before the US Congress and has developed relationships with his local representatives to garner support for programs that serve children with developmental disabilities; Infants and Toddlers, DDA, and the REM program to name a few. Eric's area of interest are with technology he has a great depth of professional experience in working with IT and in supporting technological advances to promote full access for people with developmental disabilities.

Paula Suter:

Paula is a self advocate who recently transitioned from a nursing rehab facility back to her own apartment in Baltimore County. Paula has helped raise funds and awareness for the National United Cerebral Palsy Association. She attended college and majored in English. She retired from the IRS and currently works as an interviewer for the Ask Me! Project. She has volunteered at the MD Center for Independent Living and is very interested in adult issues related to housing, employment, and transportation for people with disabilities. She has testified in Annapolis about the paratransit system and enjoys public speaking and advocacy.

Aaron Kaufman:

Aaron, a self advocate, who has been instrumental in introducing legislation in Annapolis that would require insurance carriers in Maryland to guarantee habilitative services for individuals beyond the age of 20. Aaron is well known by his representatives. He also works to ensure that voting places in his county (Montgomery County) are accessible, and has testified in Annapolis on housing issues for people with developmental disabilities. He interned in the Public Affairs Office of Easter Seals and has federal legislative experience as well. Aaron has a variety of interests but his passion is public policy.

CLOSING ROSEWOOD:

One Man's Journey from Institutional Life to a Life of his Own

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

January 9, 2008 was a snowy day that many people with disabilities and their families will never forget. Governor Martin O'Malley announced the Executive Order to close the Rosewood Center, which sparked a journey for people with disabilities to begin their transition into the community.

Steven is one such person who is ready for the change. He has lived at Rosewood for four years and will soon be moving to his own apartment. Along with his parents, Steven's family members and friends share his enthusiasm about the move. They are delighted that Steven will be closer to home so they can visit with him more often.

Steven's mother, Sylvia, doesn't mind the lengthy process of transitioning out of Rosewood, *"I want those involved to make good decisions in Steven's best interests, even if that takes time."* There have been back-up strategies put in place for Steven to help support him in the many different situations he will face in his new independent life.



Steven asked Tina if he would still have to earn his "home leave." It was truly hard for her to hold back the emotions when she told him, "There is no more earning visits home, you just need to call your parents and set a time to see them." Steven smiled and said, "That's cool!"

When Steven was asked, "What is the best part about moving out of Rosewood?"

"He said, "It makes me feel happy!"

Tina Fink from the provider agency, Shared Support Maryland, Inc., has been instrumental in collaborating with Steven during this process. She has advocated for him to be completely involved in every step of transitioning into the community. Tina Fink shared that the best way to support Steven is by talking with him about what he wants his life to look like outside of Rosewood. During their first visit together, Steven asked Tina if he would still have to earn his "home leave." It was truly hard for her to hold back the emotions when she told him, "There is no more earning visits home, you just need to call your parents and set a time to see them." Steven smiled and said, "That's cool!"

Steven is looking forward to going out to eat more, bowling and going to the movies, and to the park. He would also like to be employed at a hotel in the laundry department and plans to enroll in sign language classes at Hagerstown Community College.

Although he sometimes relies on advice from others – it has been wonderful for Steven's family and supporters to watch him make his own decisions. He has worked hard and he is ready to start his life, closer to his family, and on his own.





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The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council is a public policy organization that advocates for the inclusion of individuals with developmental disabilities in all facets of community life.

This publication is available in alternative formats upon request.