GCDD.ORG ▪ FALL 2014

MAKING a DIFFERENCE

REAL HOMES. REAL CAREERS. REAL LEARNING. REAL INFLUENCE. REAL SUPPORTS.

ADA 25

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

1990-2015

DISABILITY RIGHTS ARE CIVIL RIGHTS

EMPLOYMENT FIRST

Helping Citizens with Disabilities p.14

NEWS FOR YOU:

- **EMPLOYMENT FIRST:** Ask For More
- **EXPERT UPDATE:** Rethinking the DD Definition
- **YOUR VOICE:** Are You Ready for Election Day?

GCDD

GEORGIA COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

On the Cover:

Bricio Marban, 23, trained at the Rehabilitation Industries of Northeast Georgia on industrial machinery such as the pallet jack and forklifts.

The ADA Legacy Project celebrates its 25th anniversary on July 26, 2015.

The Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities, a federally funded state agency, works to bring about social and policy changes that promote opportunities for persons with developmental disabilities and their families to live, learn, work, play and worship in Georgia communities.

GCDD
GEORGIA COUNCIL ON
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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Cassidy Bradford from Project SEARCH is a full-time employee at Shaw Industries in Dalton, GA.

Election Day is November 4, 2014.

FALL 2014

MAKING a DIFFERENCE

A quarterly magazine of the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 2

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There is a rich history behind the power of voting and why people with disabilities are important to the political conversation.

Employment First Begins a Worthwhile Path to Success .... page 14

An Employment First culture seeks to identify the gifts, talents and goals of all working age citizens with disabilities.

Moving Forward: The ADA Legacy Project Aims to Preserve, Celebrate and Educate Future Generations .... page 22

The ADA has made great strides since its passage in 1990, and the project looks to establish more youth advocates.

DEPARTMENTS

Celebrating the ADA

ERIC E. JACOBSON

On August 25, 2014 *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* published an opinion piece by William Lind. In the article, Mr. Lind opined that the "ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) has proven the single most expensive, least useful mandate ever leveled on public transit."

Mr. Lind, who is director of The American Conservative Center for Public Transportation, goes on to say that, "Many of the special facilities ADA demands of transit systems are seldom if ever used. If something intended to serve the disabled is frequently used, including by people who are not disabled but nonetheless find it helpful, I'm all for it. But millions have been spent entirely uselessly."

Mr. Lind obviously does not know people who rely on public transportation to get to work, the doctors or to an Atlanta Braves game. He does not understand that the goal of the ADA is to realize the dream of many people with disabilities to have access to the same places and opportunities as others.

This issue of *Making a Difference* begins a yearlong examination and celebration of the ADA as we move closer to its 25th anniversary. Georgians will join others in celebrating this important civil rights law passed to end discrimination in the workplace, the movie theater and on public transportation. Mr. Lind reinforces that some people still believe it's about "picking yourself up by the bootstraps" and that prejudice and discrimination do not really exist. The National Center for Human and Civil Rights (NCCHR) that opened this summer in Atlanta is a way for us to remember the stories of those who have fought to end discrimination.

Another issue that the ADA was created to address is employment. Since its passage, we have not experienced the promises in employment that were expected. The majority of individuals with disabilities remain unemployed or attend "sheltered" programs where they are paid almost nothing. We explore what is needed to increase the number of people with disabilities in Georgia who are employed and the policy changes required to fulfill the promise of the ADA. This includes the adoption of an Employment First policy that will result in employment being the first option for many people instead of an afterthought.

Finally, we hear from the candidates for Governor and the United States Senate as we prepare for the November elections. Learn what they have to say about people with disabilities and the policies that are needed. It is important that you ask them if they agree with William Lind before you cast your vote. We cannot allow this kind of mentality to prevail in this country.

Check out our website and join our advocacy network so that you can stay informed. We hope you enjoy reading this magazine and we want to hear from you. Let us know your thoughts and connections to the civil rights movement by writing to Valerie.suber@gcdd.ga.gov.

Eric E. Jacobson

Eric E. Jacobson
Executive Director, GCDD

Tell us your thoughts about the magazine or what topics you would like to see addressed by emailing us at valerie.suber@gcdd.ga.gov, subject line:

Letters To The Editor.

GCDD **VIEWPOINT**

How to Reach Us

Letters to the Editor

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

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AROUND **GCDD**

Former Public Policy Director D'Arcy Robb (center) listens to people with disabilities and advocates at the Thomasville stop on the GCDD Listening Tour.

GCDD Needs YOU in Our Advocacy Network!

"Nothing about us without us!" This familiar slogan is used throughout the disability community and reminds us of the importance that we must speak up on issues that can impact our lives. The mission of the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities is to bring about social and policy changes that promote opportunities for Georgians with disabilities and their families. But we cannot accomplish that mission without **you** – those who share our vision and are willing to advocate for it to become a reality.

Recently, GCDD went on a listening tour around various locations in Georgia so that we could hear the concerns of people with disabilities and those who love them to help us shape our legislative agenda for the upcoming legislative session. At the time this issue went to print, we had visited Thomasville, Savannah, Columbus and Gainesville, Decatur and a listening tour in Dalton is scheduled for mid-October. Not only did our listening tour help us understand what issues need to be on our radar, but it helped us to connect with more individuals who care about disability issues.

In advocacy, the more voices that speak up, the greater the chance we have to influence change. GCDD maintains an advocacy network database of individuals who sign up to receive our Advocacy & Policy Alerts and are willing to mobilize by contacting their legislators about key issues. In addition to legislative updates and calls-to-action, our advocacy network database includes subscribers to GCDD's Community News and Alerts, as well as *Making a Difference* magazine. We have been working to increase the number of individuals in our advocacy network database and ensure the accuracy of our records. In recent weeks, we have been emailing individuals to take a moment to review and update their contact information and subscription preferences. You may even receive a phone call from someone at GCDD to remind you to update your database profile and offer to assist you through this process if needed.

If you have not received an email invitation to update your records, please visit *www.gcdd.org*. Click on "Join our Advocacy Network" and follow the instructions. You will have the opportunity to select the following subscription preferences: Advocacy & Policy Alerts; Unlock the Waiting Lists! Campaign Alerts; Community News and Alerts and *Making a Difference* magazine. If you are specifically interested in legislative advocacy and want to receive notifications that require action by our advocates, be sure that you select the preferences to receive "Advocacy & Policy Alerts" and "Unlock the Waiting Lists! Alerts."

But, you don't have to wait to receive an action alert from GCDD to begin your advocacy. Take the time now to make appointments with your state legislators to share your concerns and personal story. Log on to the GCDD Advocacy Network to find out who your legislators are. For an excellent resource on how to talk with your legislator, be sure to check out an archived webinar on the GCDD public policy page at *www.gcdd.org/public-policy.html.* Our legislative agenda will be posted there too. And don't forget to go vote on Election Day, Tuesday, November 4th. Remember your voice counts and together we can make a difference!

For more advocacy resources, please visit *www.unlockthewaitinglists.com.*

> "IN ADVOCACY, THE **MORE VOICES THAT SPEAK UP,** THE GREATER THE CHANCE WE HAVE TO **INFLUENCE CHANGE.**

2015 Georgia Winter Institute: A Celebration of Community

SAVE THE DATE:
JANUARY 25-28, 2015
COLUMBUS, GA

IN THE **NEWS**

Save the date for the 2015 Georgia Winter Institute (GWI) on January 25-28, 2015 at the Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, GA. The event will bring people together from Georgia and beyond to discover how to infuse values-based, person-centered philosophies into our community building efforts.

"The main focus of the 2015 event is person-centered planning and community building," said Stacey Ramirez, director of Individual and Family Supports at the Center for Leadership in Disability (CLD) at Georgia State University.

GWI will explore topics including, but not limited to Employment/Financial Independence, Community Building, Futures Planning, Inclusive Faith Communities and Health and Wellness.

The attendees will also hear keynote speeches from "The Roving Listener" De'Amon Harges, who will focus on going into the community and making the "invisible visible;" William Gaventa, former director of Community and Congregational Supports at the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities at Rutgers University who will speak about employment and inclusive faith-based communities; and Tom Kohler, co-author of *Waddie Welcome and The Beloved Community*, who will speak about community building.

"We want people to come together, embrace new ideas and implement them back into the communities they serve," said Ryan Johnson, community support specialist at CLD.

The mission of the Georgia Winter Institute is to connect people with and without disabilities to work together to nurture and use gifts to strengthen community bonds.

For more information on the 2015 Georgia Winter Institute, visit *georgiawinterinstitute.weebly.com*.

Members of the Georgia Microboards Association at the 2014 Winter Institute.

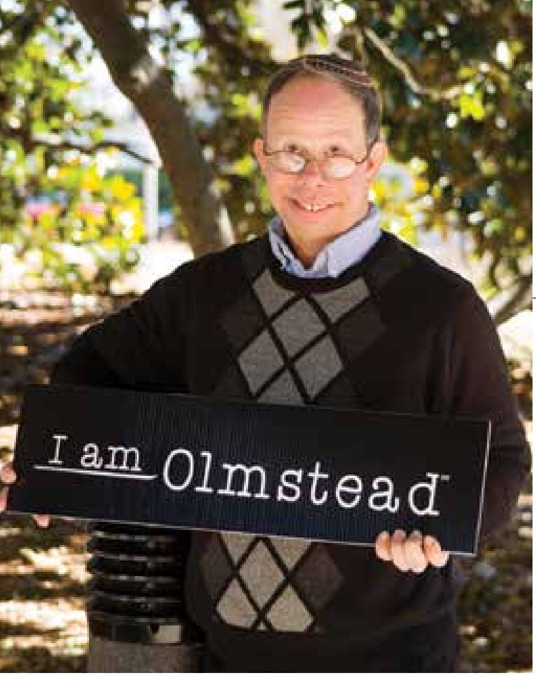
DBHDD Adds Two New Leaders

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) announced two new leaders in the Division of Developmental Disabilities. Dan Howell will serve as the director of the division and Frank Kirkland will be the assistant director. DBHDD provides opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities or behavioral health challenges close to their homes, so they can live a life of independence and recovery and create a sustainable, self-sufficient and resilient life in their community.

National Center for Civil and Human Rights. Photo credit: Albert Vecerka & Rockwell Group

Correction

Making a Difference's Summer 2014 issue covered the opening of the new National Center for Civil and Human Rights Center in Downtown Atlanta. At the closing of the article, the link to the Center was provided as www.ncchr.org. The correct link to National Center for Civil and Human Rights Center's website is **www.civilandhumanrights.org**



The Future of *Olmstead*

By Talley Wells

What's next for *Olmstead?* That is a question I am often asked when I speak about the United States Supreme Court decision, which affirmed the right of people with disabilities to live in the community rather than in institutions.

TALLEY WELLS is the director of the Disability Integration Project at Atlanta Legal Aid Society. Wells advocates for housing and supports in the community on behalf of clients with disabilities who are confined in Georgia institutions, nursing homes or at risk of institutionalization of the Supreme Court's *Olmstead* Decision and ensuring compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"What's next" is both an exciting and a daunting question. We have a long way to go to fulfill the promise of *Olmstead*, but it will be an extraordinary day when we fulfill the promise.

The *Olmstead* settlement between the United States Department of Justice and Georgia is scheduled to end in 2015. Now is the time to plan for what comes next.

Many in state government probably believe that the State will have met its obligations under *Olmstead* with the Justice Department Settlement. In fact, at one time, state officials called it the "Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Settlement." This gave the impression that this one settlement would meet all of the obligations of the State under the ADA. This was not, and is not, the case.

Despite the settlement, 7,000 Georgians are still on the waiting list for a developmental disability Medicaid waiver. This means we have thousands of people with intellectual disabilities who are receiving little, if any, of the supports they need to successfully live in the community. This puts families under terrible strain. This becomes more pronounced when a person with a developmental disability ages out of the school system. Even though a school is supposed to develop a transition plan for the student, most transition plans state that "Mom" will get the student enrolled in a "program" after school. That is not a plan!

The lack of Medicaid waivers for developmental disabilities is causing a crisis. Thousands of people with intellectual disabilities live with aging caregivers. As the baby boom generation grows older, many become unable to fully care for their loved one with a disability. Dangerous situations occur. A parent mixes up her medications with her child's. A parent has to go to the hospital leaving alone someone who needs supervision. Again and again, desperate families call us when a caregiver is no longer able to care for a loved one.

> As a State, we want to enable every citizen with a disability to live full lives in the community rather than in institutions and nursing facilities.

> "These caregivers are heroes. They are also tired. **THEY ARE AFRAID.** What will happen to their loved one when they die?

These caregivers are heroes. They are also tired. They are afraid. What will happen to their loved one when they die? As important, the person with a disability is not getting what he or she needs to live a meaningful independent life.

In addition, thousands of Georgians live in nursing facilities, who have the right to live in

THE SUPREME COURT MADE CLEAR THAT STATES NEED AN EFFECTIVE WORKING PLAN TO COMPLY WITH OLMSTEAD. IT IS TIME TO DUST OFF THE 2010 OLMSTEAD PLAN AND PUT IT INTO ACTION.

the community. Nursing homes were not a part of the Justice Department litigation and so they were not impacted by the settlement.

Georgia has a program called Money Follows the Person (MFP), which assists people to transition from nursing homes back into the community. Unfortunately, MFP has a waiting list and can take over a year for a transition. Additionally, each of the physical disability waiver programs has waiting lists, including one waiver that has a waiting list of over a year. This forces people with physical disabilities to go into nursing homes, which is the opposite of the state's *Olmstead* obligation.

In mental health, the State has made significant strides. Still, the new services only assist adults in crisis. The new services do not help prevent a crisis from occurring and force people with mental illness to needlessly go into an institution, become homeless or enter the criminal justice system. Also, there is a desperate need for a more robust system of mental health services for children.

With all of these gloomy facts, is the situation really so dire after a five-year settlement in which Georgia has invested heavily in *Olmstead*? YES! Georgia has taken big steps forward, but with thousands of people with disabilities still not getting the supports they need, progress must continue.

Georgia disability advocates and state leaders spent years developing a strong meaningful plan to comply with *Olmstead*. The result was the best *Olmstead* plan in the country. The plan was adopted by the *Olmstead* Planning Committee in 2010 at the same time Georgia agreed to the Justice Department Settlement. Because of the settlement, the *Olmstead* plan was put on the shelf.

The Supreme Court made clear that states need an effective working plan to comply with *Olmstead*. It is time to dust off the 2010 *Olmstead* plan and put it into action.

In 2015, Georgia will be at the center of national celebrations to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the ADA. Many Georgia advocates have participated in developing a website and organization called The ADA Legacy Project as a way to celebrate and educate Americans about the ADA. In May, a national convention on the ADA will be held in Atlanta.

The anniversary year is a perfect time for Georgia to take another step toward fulfilling the promise of *Olmstead*. It should do this not because courts say it has to (which they do) but because it is the right thing to do. As a State, we want to enable every citizen with a disability to live full lives in the community rather than in institutions and nursing facilities.

In fact, at one time, state officials called it "the ADA Settlement." This gave the impression that this one settlement would meet all of the obligations of the State under the ADA.

THIS WAS NOT, AND IS NOT, THE CASE.

Election Day: Your Voice, Your Vote Matters

By Devika Rao

There is a rich history behind the power of voting and why people with disabilities are important to the political conversation. Landmark legislation such as the 1990 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the 1999 *Olmstead* Decision were prominent achievements in the disability rights movement.

Voting is one way all citizens, with or without disabilities, can have their voices heard. The right to vote, when exercised, is a powerful tool that makes great progress in how our counties, cities, states and nation operate.

As a voter, being well-equipped with voting histories, background information and a candidate's stance on issues that are important to you is not just about casting a ballot. It's a form of political involvement and advocacy.

Your Voice

The lives of people with disabilities have dramatically improved since the passage of laws like ADA, IDEA and more. Moreso, the right to vote has been protected through the progress and implementation of new accessibility standards, assistive technologies and continued advocacy for disability rights.

According to the US Census Bureau, 10 to 20% of eligible voters with disabilities are left out of the voting process, whether due to accessibility issues or finding informational sources. By being a part of the community as a whole, your voice is an important one.

To bridge this gap, there are limitless resources available for voters with and without disabilities. At the US Election Assistance Commission (EAC) website, *www.eac.gov*, voters can find out basic, yet important information on early voting, absentee ballots, local polling places and voter registration.

In addition, Georgia's Office of the Secretary of State (SOS), *www.sos.ga.gov* or 404.656.2871, provides resources for contacting county boards of registrars and election offices.

The website also provides a personalized My Voter Page that allows visitors to see information such as voter registration status, poll locations and sample ballots.

Your Vote

As a voter, gathering accurate information about how candidates stand on issues that are important to you can be overwhelming.

Adelaide Kimball, senior advisor at Project Vote Smart, highlights the importance of being ready to vote. "Through Vote Smart, people can find out information such as backgrounds, previous experience, voting records and even ratings by special interest groups on a certain candidate," she said. "Our national database manages information on over 40,000 political candidates and includes voting history for state and federal officials."

Project Vote Smart, *www.votesmart.org,* is an independent, national organization that is focused on helping people become informed voters.

Be a Prepared Voter!

- Make sure you are registered to vote by calling your county voter registration office or the Office of the Secretary of State at 404.656.2871 or visit the website at *www.sos.ga.gov.*
- Bring a photo identification card to vote. Go to the Georgia Department of Driver Services to obtain a driver's license or government-issued photo ID before you head to the voting booth (For information, visit the website at *www.dds/ga/gov.*)
- Sample ballots, registration information, early voting and poll locations are available through the Office of the Secretary of State: *www.mvp.sos.ga.gov*

In addition to the Project Vote Smart website, there is a toll-free number (1-800-VOTESMART) for those who may not be able to access the Internet for information. With the help of hundreds of volunteers, "we will be on the phone with you and guide you through the information you need to find out about the candidates in your elections," Kimball explained. "In the end, it is about giving voters the power of information to make a well-informed decision in the voting booth."

Other resources for candidate information include the SOS' website, *www.sos.ga.gov*, each candidate's respective campaign websites or local and national newspapers. Candidate voting records are also available at *www.congress.gov* or *www.legis.ga.gov* that lists how candidates who are currently in office have voted on certain issues.

Voting Accessibility

Next year, the country will celebrate the passage of the ADA that established paths for equal opportunities for people with disabilities. Accessibility to polling places and the right to vote are protected under the ADA. Along with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), these critical pieces of federal legislation leveled the playing field for people with disabilities through ongoing advocacy.

Passed in 2002, HAVA requires every polling place to have at least one accessible voting machine and to "provide the same opportunity for access and participation … as other voters."

The legislation also established the EAC, a bipartisan group to provide guidance in meeting HAVA requirements. In 2011, EAC launched the Accessible Voting Technology Initiative (AVTI) to make voting technology and processes more accessible for people with disabilities.

To further this goal, the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation (ITIF) began work on technology advancements to make ballots more accessible for people with disabilities through an AVTI grant.

"We worked on touch screen technology for ballots that would help voters who are blind or visually impaired," said David Castro, senior analyst at ITIF who spearheaded this project.

This new touch screen voting technology is now found in all of Georgia's polling places, which are equipped with other assistive voting devices such as audio and magnified ballots.

Furthermore, in 2010, Title II of the ADA was passed declaring that states and local governments could not deny persons with disabilities "equal participation in, or the benefits of their services, programs and activities," which includes voting.

To comply with these new provisions, proper access must be provided for people with disabilities to voting booths to assure their right to vote. In addition, fully accessible polling places are to be equipped with poll workers trained to take care of the needs of all voters.

Voting is also easier for those with and without disabilities through simple new measures such as Absentee or Early/Advance Voting. "These measures are creating disproportionately higher turnout among voters than those states that do not have these options available," said Castro.

Jared Thomas, spokesperson for the Office of the SOS agreed. "We do everything we can to work with local counties to make sure that polling places are accessible for everyone," he said. "We encourage people to call their local county election office regarding resources available on Election Day. If something is missing, it's important to speak up!"

As the disability rights movement continues its progress, it becomes important to carry the torch that has paved the way for so much advancement for people with disabilities. As we head to the voting booth on November 4, it becomes an opportunity to not just vote, but to advocate for people with and without disabilities.

***Making a Difference* asked the Republican and Democrat gubernatorial and Senate candidates their insight on issues important to our readers. Read what they have to say on the next page and remember to cast your vote on November 4, 2014.**

Be an Informed Voter!

- **My Voter Page:** *www.mvp.sos.ga.gov*
- **Project Vote Smart:** *www.votesmart.org* or 1-800-VOTESMART
- **Voting History:** *www.congress.gov*, *www.legis.ga.gov*

Race for
US SENATE

Michelle Nunn (D)

David Perdue (R)

FROM THE CANDIDATES

MICHELLE NUNN (D)

We must strive as a State and nation to empower all citizens and that starts with igniting economic opportunities and job growth, managing healthcare effectively, and providing accessible educational opportunities.

All Georgians need access to affordable healthcare that meets their needs and that's why it's important that we expand Medicaid. Georgia's Medicaid waiver program provides individuals with disabilities necessary support so they can live independently.

We need to protect and broaden the accessibility of educational programs for those across the spectrum of developmental disability. Policy makers must continue to maintain and build upon the provisions of IDEA so that all individuals with disabilities can have the right to an equality of opportunity to be independent and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

My hero and family friend Rafa San Miguel lost his hearing as an infant. He is a scientist at The Coca-Cola Company and the father of three boys. He is a Boy Scout leader, church leader, inventor, and in his spare time he teaches low-income kids about science with eye-popping experiments. He and his wife Betsy have inspired me to understand the opportunities associated with fully tapping into the talents of people with disabilities.

I think we have a tremendous opportunity as a nation to ensure that we give all people who live with disabilities the chance to live out their unique and great talents and thereby enhance our communities, grow our economy and strengthen our nation.

DAVID PERDUE (R)

I believe it is extremely important to ensure that all Georgians, especially those who are most vulnerable in our communities, have the resources and support they need to get good jobs to provide for themselves and their families. My wife Bonnie was a school teacher who helped children with disabilities and special needs. I also come from a family of educators and understand how important it is to work together to help more parents and children with special needs live happy, healthy and productive lives.

As a United States Senator, I am determined to use my 40 years of business experience to help grow our economy and create more economic opportunity for everyone. Additionally, a strong vibrant economy is necessary to adequately fund our budget priorities.

Candidate Questions

1. What ways would your administration enhance the resources available to people with disabilities in terms of employment, Medicaid expansion or waivers?
2. The unemployment rate is high for people with disabilities. How do you hope to address employment for people with disabilities?
3. One out of five or 20% of all Americans have some type of disability as an occurrence of birth, injury or longevity and most people are likely to have a loved one, neighbor or co-worker with a disability. Have you had personal ties to someone with a disability or the disability community? How does that affect your stand on policies?

Race for Georgia's
GOVERNOR

FROM THE CANDIDATES

STATE SENATOR JASON CARTER (D)

The future I see for Georgia is one where nobody gets left out. That means that we have to do everything in our power to make sure that all people have access to opportunities to succeed.

Georgia can, and must do better serving its citizens with disabilities. In the last several years, the state government has drastically cut job training, counseling and rehabilitation programs that could be helping people with disabilities get jobs and gain independence. Today, Georgians with disabilities face a higher unemployment rate and greater poverty. As governor, I will make sure that we take advantage of every resource available to serve Georgians with disabilities.

GOVERNOR NATHAN DEAL (R) INCUMBENT

Governor Deal strongly supports ongoing work by the Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), Dept. of Community Health (DCH) and the General Assembly to make inclusive community-based living a reality for all Georgians with disabilities. Being able to live in one's own home, get a good job and be active contributors to our economy is, after all, central to the pursuit of the American Dream. That's why Governor Deal's budgets have included funding to increase access to Medicaid waiver services and supports that give Georgians with disabilities the tools they need to succeed and thrive.

Governor Deal emphasized during Disability Day at the Capitol this year – on the 15th anniversary of the *Olmstead* decision – we're not done yet. He looks forward to continued input from the disability community, providers, employers and families as we navigate complex issues in pursuit of a common goal: afford every Georgian, regardless of disability, the opportunity to live independently and pursue a career of their choosing.

Job creation is his number one priority as Governor, and supporting employment opportunities for Georgians with disabilities is a big part of that effort. Under Governor Deal's leadership, Georgia has taken important steps to expand post-secondary inclusive education to equip students with the skills needed to succeed in a job. Recently, Kennesaw State University's Academy for Inclusive Learning was bolstered with additional state funding and a new post-secondary inclusive education program at South Georgia's East Georgia State College will open its doors to new students very soon.

Governor Deal has also tasked DBHDD's work group dedicated to addressing barriers to employment for Georgians with disabilities to recommend how best the State can move forward with an Employment First Initiative.

Use the MVP Log In to check your

- Voter registration status
- Mail-in application and ballot status
- Poll location
- Early voting locations
- Elected Officials
- Registration information on file with the county office
- Sample ballot for the upcoming election
- Provisional Ballot status

Not Registered to Vote?

MVP Login

Your Name and County

First Initial:*

Last Name:*

County:*

Date of Birth:* (mm/dd/yyyy)

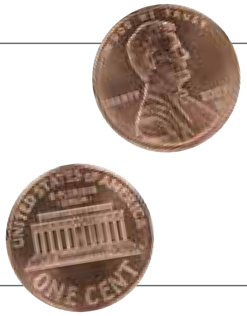
Check out My Voter Page at *www.sos.ga.gov* for personalized voter information.

Senator Jason Carter (D)

Governor Nathan Deal (R)

A Call to Action to Ask for More!

By Crystal Rasa



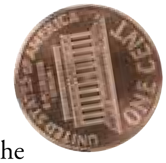
When Employment First becomes the culture in Georgia, will it provide enough help for people with disabilities to have the good life? The life that everyone strives for, regardless of disability, without want for basic necessities? Employment First Georgia advocates suggest a call to action for more. The joy of having a job or developing a career is diminished without financial stability. A successful Employment First culture in Georgia will embrace employment in an integrated setting, at a living wage as the expectation, not the exception.

What does it mean to earn a living wage, not just minimum wage? It means that when you are working, you have enough money to live comfortably and to save some as well. It means that you can save for vacations, better technology or furniture. It means that you can use a credit card and have the satisfaction of paying the balance (or learn the lesson of what happens when you do not).

But, sometimes, we make assumptions that these things will not be part of the life of a person with a disability.

When people earn a living wage, they make enough to meet their expenses. In the disability service system, there is a belief that people should not be bothered with their living expenses or what their cost of daily living is. However, it is vital for everyone to know what it takes to shop, to cook, to obtain medical care and to enjoy entertainment to achieve financial stability. We must raise the expectation of what someone's monthly expenses are. Monthly expenses include utilities, room and board and the things that the majority of society chooses to have a good life within our means.

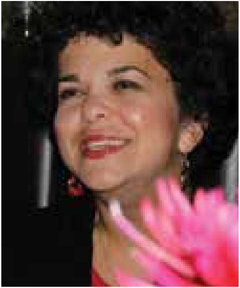
When we visit people with disabilities throughout Georgia who are not working, we are astounded by how few people are given access to their own savings accounts. According to the Corporation for Enterprise Development, 69% of individuals with disabilities reported they have no checking account and 54% reported no savings account.



People who receive public benefits have money left over monthly, even if it is a small amount. But, without the knowledge of how much is saved and what it can buy, people are in no better condition to increase their standard of living.

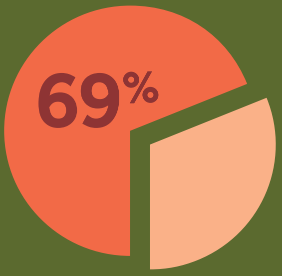
Compound the mystery of savings with the minimum or subminimum wage a person with a disability can expect to earn. People with disabilities earning a minimum wage for a few hours each week rarely enjoy the fruits of their labor. Seven dollars and 25 cents an hour for a few hours rarely gets a person beyond trips to the discount stores and meals at fast food restaurants. Moreover, the incentive for working harder, increasing

> A successful Employment First culture in Georgia will embrace employment in an integrated setting, at a living wage as the
>
> **EXPECTATION, NOT THE EXCEPTION.**



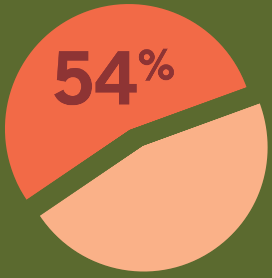
CRYSTAL RASA, JD, is the program accountability director and employment director at the Georgia Advocacy Office.

FINANCIAL FACTS



% OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WITH NO CHECKING ACCOUNT*

% OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WITH NO SAVINGS ACCOUNT*



According to the Corporation for Enterprise Development

job skills and achieving promotions is diminished when the financial incentive remains the same.

So, when Employment First is the culture in Georgia and people with disabilities are offered effective employment supports without the expectation that they should make a living wage, people with disabilities will not rise out of the poverty that they have been segregated into for generations. “Because tax dollars support the services of public rehabilitation [and other employment support services impacted by an Employment First policy], it is reasonable to demand that the employment secured lays the foundation for financial stability,” as written in *Why Financial Stability Matters* in *Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling* by Abby Lindman Cooper.

> “There is a myth that people with disabilities do not have the same wants and needs as everyone else.”

In an Employment First culture, a person with a disability is offered the opportunity to work before being offered other services. They are given the chance to work and earn money. However, there is an assumption that after the employment support provider helps someone find a job, the goal has been reached. We tell ourselves that everyone starts out making minimum wage and that public benefits will pay for what minimum wage does not.

There is a myth that people with disabilities do not have the same wants and needs as everyone else, such as owning nice material goods or experiencing a rich social life. We must break this assumption. Instead, we must model raised expectations so that a person with a disability who strives to earn a living wage can choose to buy concert tickets, go to a sporting event and frequent a nice restaurant.

In a successful Employment First culture, a person with a disability will be presented with employment in an integrated setting within the community as the first and priority service option. Equally important, they will be presented with what to expect in wages, hours, benefits, taxes and the impact on a credit score, the opportunity for saving, work incentives and plans to become more financially independent.

The most important thing is supporting individuals with disabilities to make the critical connection that financial resources are a means to an end, and to know that they can and should take ownership of their own financial lives. We have an obligation to support families and people with disabilities who expect financial stability. By the time a person is old enough to go to work, regardless of disability, the expectation will have been set from a young age that he or she will make a living wage, not just “get a job.”

We will support families to seek and obtain support and information. For example, families can contact the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Projects to learn how any wage will affect public benefits. Each county in the State is served by the Shepherd Center or Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency. Families can go to *www.benefitsnavigator.org/gpage2.html* to learn which agency serves them, and call to talk about the special rules that help job seekers work and still receive monthly payments and Medicaid or Medicare.

An ideal Employment First culture can create incentives for providers of employment support services when they help a person work for a living wage instead of minimum wage. An ideal Employment First culture can also create incentives for providers of employment support services when people with disabilities earn promotions, raises and employment-related benefits. Employment supports do not end when someone earns his or her first paycheck. Employment supports continue to assist people with disabilities to earn a living wage and live the good life!

“In a successful Employment First culture, a person with a disability will be presented with **EMPLOYMENT** in an **INTEGRATED SETTING** within **THE COMMUNITY** as the first and priority service option.

For supports and information, go to:
www.benefitsnavigator.org/gpage2.html

Employment First Begins a Worthwhile Path to Success

By D’Arcy Robb

> “The reality is that virtually EVERYONE with a DISABILITY IS ABLE TO WORK with support in the right situation.

People work for many reasons. For some, it provides a sense of self or meaning in one’s life; for others it is the social context of meeting and associating with others in a common effort or goal; and for still others, it is the means by which to gain status, either personal or economic, which allows for choice and discretion in determining one’s “life quality.” These are the words with which we open our website, *www.employmentfirstgeorgia.org*, and they are core beliefs behind the idea of Employment First.

Employment First is the idea that employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome for working age citizens with disabilities. Under an Employment First policy, publicly funded services for citizens with disabilities emphasize integrated employment in the community at or above minimum wage as the primary option. The reality is that virtually everyone with a disability is able to work with support in the right situation.

Employment First is not “Employment Only” – it doesn’t take away choice or mandate that people must go to work. Rather, a true Employment First culture seeks to identify the gifts, talents and goals of all working age citizens with disabilities, and to support each individual in a career path that fits those gifts, talents and goals.

That may not be an easy path, but it is a worthwhile one. Just ask Angelica Summey, who is proud to be an employee at Shaw Industries in Dalton, GA. Today, you can find Summey in her cubicle, speaking with customers about orders and shipping. But a few years ago, her career path was far from clear. As a high schooler, she learned valuable skills through GCDD’s Project SEARCH internship program at Hamilton Medical Center, but none of the hospital rotations Summey experienced were the right fit for her. So, she tried a job in retail, but quickly discovered that wasn’t her path either: “There were too many distractions,” she said.

> In Georgia, . . . taxpayers reaped $1.61 in benefits for every $1 put into supporting individuals with disabilities to work in their communities.

A second internship rotation connected Summey with Shaw Industries. And when Summey got the chance to work in the inventory department, she and her support team realized that the focused environment was a match for her goal-oriented style. Outside of work, Summey’s employment at Shaw has helped her fulfill another type of goal – purchasing her own car – and she’s planning to move into her own apartment with a friend. When asked how her job makes her feel, Summey simply says, “I can stand on my own two feet.”

D’ARCY ROBB is the former Public Policy Director for Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Tim Jones works with a pallet jack at Rehabilitation Industries of Northeast Georgia, a nonprofit that provides vocational services to individuals with disabilities or others with similar vocational needs to reach independence and self-sufficiency.

Avery Koenemann's supervisor at Hamilton Medical Center calls him, "one of the best."

Angelica Summey proudly shows off her cubicle at Shaw Industries in Dalton, GA.

WITH THE WAITING LIST FOR THE NOW AND COMP WAIVERS HOVERING AROUND 7,000 INDIVIDUALS, MANY GEORGIANS WHO WANT TO WORK AREN'T GETTING THE SUPPORT THEY NEED TO DO SO.

Across town, Avery Koenemann takes a philosophical approach. As a full-time employee on the food services staff of Hamilton Medical Center, Koenemann appreciates that he is part of a team supporting patients and families during some of the most difficult times of their lives. He explains, "I know I'm helping someone to heal. It's those small things that make a big impact. One person going the extra mile shows that they care about that person. Patients really don't want to be here, so I try to go that extra mile."

Dollars and Sense

According to the well-respected survey of individuals with disabilities, the National Core Indicators, the majority of Georgians with developmental disabilities want to work in their communities like Summey and Koenemann, but only 14% of them do. One of the major challenges lies in Georgia's current funding system. Under the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), providers can be reimbursed up to $10,500 for supporting a person at a job in the community, but they can get more – up to $17,500 annually – for supporting a person in a sheltered workshop. Sheltered workshops typically employ people with disabilities to do repetitive work at or below minimum wage.

Financially speaking, that incentive is perfectly backwards. In fact, Georgia taxpayers should get a positive return on dollars invested when individuals with disabilities work in the community, not sheltered workshops. Researcher Robert Cimera, PhD, conducts policy research in the hopes of increasing the number of people with disabilities working in the community while lowering the cost of their services to taxpayers. Cimera looked at the cost effectiveness of employment services provided by vocational rehabilitation agencies across all 50 states to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In Georgia, he found that taxpayers reaped $1.61 in benefits for every $1 put into supporting individuals with disabilities to work in their communities.

And not only is our funding incentive backwards. With the waiting list for the New Options Waiver and Comprehensive Supports Waiver programs hovering around 7,000 individuals, many Georgians who want to work aren't getting the support they need to do so. In a recent Unlock the Waiting Lists! survey that reached hundreds of Georgians in the disability community, jobs, jobs and more jobs came up over and over again. Not surprisingly, the greatest identified needs for people with disabilities were more and better quality services and supports and more employment opportunities.

As one parent put it, "Once a student has graduated from high school there are no guarantees on what services will be available. They need services and support just as a student with no disabilities is given. Please unlock the waiting list. A parent like myself will be forced to quit my job in order to provide my child with support. I need my job."

This is a concern that we at GCDD hear time and time again as we connect with people across the State – people need supports, and they want jobs. This is an especially critical need for students who are finishing high school. They want to work, but with no employment supports readily available and transportation a major

Burt Petley is one of many people who works at Rehabilitation Industries of Northeast Georgia where he handles on project deadlines for packaging or assembly for companies.

"A true Employment First system seeks to identify the gifts, talents, and goals of all working age citizens with disabilities, and to **SUPPORT EACH INDIVIDUAL** in a career path that fits those gifts, talents and goals.

Paula Clark combines a joyful spirit with on-the-job efficiency. The system she and her job coach created for sorting laundry has been adopted by several co-workers.

challenge, today's promising young students become tomorrow's couch kids.

So if people want real jobs and it makes good financial sense to support them in those jobs, what are we waiting for? The time is ripe to make Employment First the reality in Georgia.

Envisioning an Employment First Georgia

What will a Georgia in which employment is truly first look and feel like? It starts with two things – a presumption of competence and an agreement of principle. We know that all individuals with disabilities have valuable gifts to contribute. Under Employment First, we presume both as a disability community and as a greater society that virtually everyone can work in the right situation with the right supports.

For Employment First to truly work, we cannot start making exceptions and drawing lines. We can't say, "Janie can work, but Peter can't." If someone is marked "unemployable" and everyone around them starts treating them as such – and worse yet, if they start believing it themselves – there's no room for growth in an environment like that. But the reality is we don't know how to fully measure human potential. And if we prioritize Employment First and commit to its principles, potential has the nourishment to take root and bloom.

In an Employment First Georgia, all children, regardless of their level of disability, will be encouraged to dream, to explore and prepare for their careers. Parents and teachers will have quality tools with which to support their sons, daughters and students – tools like student-led Individualized Education Programs (IEP) and self-determination curriculum. Internships will happen early and often, and preparation for life after high school will be well underway by ninth grade. It's not enough to finish high school. High school is supposed to lead to something – a job, access to higher education and ultimately a career. The level of expectation will be raised and supported across the board.

> All children, regardless of their level of disability, will be encouraged to dream, to explore and prepare for their careers.

The career and work options supported by our system will be readily available, varied and flexible. Most of the Georgians currently accessing employment supports receive supported employment because it is the service most widely available. But supported employment, which involves supporting an individual in an existing job, is only one path to integrated employment. There is customized employment, which is the creation of a job for a specific individual based on their talents and an unmet need in the business community. Customized employment is generally preceded by job discovery taking a more holistic, in-depth look at a person than a traditional vocational evaluation. There is also self-employment, in which a person utilizes a talent or skill to support their own enterprise. Employment situations evolve and grow throughout a person's lifetime, and a good Employment First system recognizes this truth and is designed accordingly. There has to be room for creativity, flexibility and individuality.

Want to be involved in Employment First advocacy?

Get Involved!

Join Our Advocacy Team

Become part of our advocacy team! Go to *www.gcdd.org* and click on "Public Policy" in the navigation bar. Then click on the green "Get Involved" button. Be sure to choose "advocacy" as one of your interests!

> Employment First is about the value of people and the value of work, the value of work in peoples' lives, and all the good things that can happen when a person is learning and growing in a career path that's right for them.

For an adult receiving segregated employment or day services – or not receiving day services at all – Employment First is about education and choice. Adults in these situations will get the opportunity to learn about integrated employment, and those who are interested will get the support they need to explore employment.

For Employment First to thrive, we have to get smarter and more creative about transportation. Especially in areas without well-developed public transportation systems, people need a way to get to work. Going back to creativity and flexibility –we could build a transportation budget as needed into each individual's employment services. We could create employment by providing would-be drivers with accessible vehicles, and then giving them the freedom to design their own routes around the needs of the community with extra incentives for transporting others to and from work. There are worlds of advantage to be gained from shared transportation, and with some innovation surely we can harness that spirit to get Georgians with disabilities where they need to go.

For all of this to happen, we need to make a serious ongoing commitment to provider training and capacity building. Something we hear from folks in various regions across the State is that they would like to work but can't find a provider to support them. And something we hear from many providers is that they're interested in offering employment services but aren't sure how. As we shift Georgia to a State in which employment is truly the first option, providers need quality, ongoing hands-on training.

From a policy standpoint, making this vision a reality entails several key changes. Employment policies and procedures need to work together across all the key agencies – the DBHDD, the Department of Education, Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, and the state Medicaid agency, Department of Community Health. Funding needs to incentivize integrated employment and reward positive employment outcomes. Agencies need to engage in data sharing, braided funding, joint strategic planning and a shared commitment to Employment First. Which brings us back where we started – the need to presume competence and agree on principle that Employment First is where we want to and must go.

Ultimately, Employment First is about the value of people and the value of work, the value of work in peoples' lives, and all the good things that can happen when a person is learning and growing in a career path that's right for them. Those of us who are blessed to have that kind of job know the unique feeling of satisfaction that comes from a hard day's work or the completion of a successful project – and the deep fulfillment that comes from the chance to serve and connect with others through our work. Paula Clark, longtime employee at the Rehabilitation Center of South Georgia, sums it up: "It's about the people. I just love it."

Longtime Tift County Road Department employee Michael Wright personifies dependability with a smile.

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month and the theme of 2014 is "Expect. Employ. Empower." The national campaign raises awareness about disability employment issues and celebrates the contributions of America's workers with disabilities.

I can **ADVOCATE FOR MYSELF** and I have learned the value of working on a team.

PERSPECTIVES

A Sense of Pride

By Bricio Marban

When I think about my employment, it gives me a great sense of pride about myself and who I am. I started working at Pilgrim's Pride in May of this year where I started as a shipping loader. My supervisors tell me that I am a hard worker and that I am dependable. They can always count on me to work overtime to keep our department caught up.

Getting this job has given me financial security and a sense of confidence. But it is also because my supervisors helped me understand what it takes to be a good worker. Learning how to report, when to take leave, filling out forms at the office or understanding when procedures change at the office are all a part of being a part of a company. And, my supervisors explained these changes to me.

I am a person with a mild intellectual disability, and Project SEARCH was able to give me work experience for my resume. I was hired halfway through my internship to work at Northeast Georgia Medical Center as a recycle tech because of my great work ethic. While in that internship, I received forklift training through Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation and Rehabilitation Industries of Northeast Georgia, so I was eventually able to get a job with more hours at Pilgrim's Pride.

Now, I work 40 hours plus overtime at Pilgrim's Pride as a shipping loader, operating a pallet jack. I pick up pallets with boxes of chicken and carry them with the pallet jack to the trucks for shipping. I also help in translation from Spanish to English for anyone on my team who needs it.

I have had so many positive experiences since I left high school. I gained confidence in myself and I am not shy. I can advocate for myself and I have learned the value of working on a team. These positive work experiences make me look forward to work every day, and knowing that I can provide for my family has created a great sense of pride in me.

> We have to provide for our families too. We are hard workers and most important, we love to work. We are dependable because we *want* to work.

People with disabilities have to make money too. We have to provide for our families too. We are hard workers and most important, we love to work. We are dependable because we *want* to work.

BRICIO MARBAN is 23 years old and resides in Gainesville, GA. He works as a shipping loader at Pilgrim's Pride, a poultry plant in Gainesville, GA.

Project SEARCH is a unique, one-year, school-to-work program for young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities that takes place entirely at the workplace. The goal for each student is competitive employment.

Website: **projectsearch.us**

Businesses Must Break Barriers

By Edgar Victoria

But, it has been **HARD TO FIND A JOB** because you have to go on the computer to look for jobs . . .

PERSPECTIVES

At Project SEARCH, I learned how to make beds, make packets, move all the stuff from the old hospital rooms to the new hospital rooms, check hospital machines and other various tasks in the departments at Cartersville Medical Center's The Hope Center. The center serves cancer patients with radiation therapy and other patient services.

I learned a lot of new skills, met new people and I had fun by working in different departments and having different job duties.

But, it has been hard to find a job because you have to go on the computer to look for jobs to see where the job is located so you can know if the job is far or close to your house.

The applications are easy to fill out depending on what kind of questions they give you. They might put some hard questions that I do not get and some questions that I do get depending on what kind of job I apply for. I had help to complete applications from my teacher and my job coach.

I had difficulty with the portion of the application that had ethical questions, reading comprehension quizzes and math problems. If I didn't score high enough on these, my application was never seen by human resources. Some ways businesses can make it easier for people to apply is they should put applications on computers, in the newspaper or put a sign outside at the front building.

But, applications aren't the only thing that can be difficult in getting a job. Sometimes, if your whole family has just one car to drive from work and back, that can make it difficult to get and keep a job.

I was hired in May to work at Bojangles from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., four days per week. My main duty was to make the biscuits from scratch. When a new manager arrived, she said that there was no 10 – 3 shift and that I would have to work the regular shifts like everyone else.

This was a problem because of transportation. My father works the night shift and I could not work the closing shift at the restaurant because I would have needed to be picked up after my father had already left for work. The restaurant was not willing to make any accommodations to the schedule. But, at the same time, I was told that I was doing a great job, arrived on time and got the job finished. She said I was a good worker, but I worked there for about six weeks.

I am good at building and fixing things, cooking, art, computers, sports, building with Legos, wood, metal parts and other kind of materials.

If people teach the people who have disabilities more skills and give them more work experience than a person that does not have disabilities, we can work in a job by ourselves.

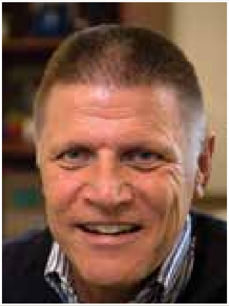
> I was told that I was doing a great job, arrived on time and got the job finished. She said I was a good worker, but I worked there for about six weeks.

EDGAR VICTORIA is 20 years old and lives in Cartersville, GA.

> In order to comprehend present-day public attitudes, policy, education or technology, **WE MUST UNDERSTAND THE PAST** – how things began and evolved.

July 26, 2015: 25 Years of Emancipation

By Mark Johnson



MARK JOHNSON is the director of advocacy for the Shepherd Center, the top spinal cord & brain injury rehabilitation hospital in the nation. Johnson also serves as the council chair for The ADA Legacy Project.

Making a Difference will feature five guest columns by Johnson on the legacy of the ADA and how national and state groups are commemorating the anniversary. This is the first installment.

THE ADA LEGACY PROJECT
PRESERVE · CELEBRATE · EDUCATE

www.adalegacy.com

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the beginning of a new era in civil and human rights. By signing the law on July 2, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson completed what his predecessor, President John F. Kennedy, had started. The act made discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin illegal and paved the way for school desegregation, access to voting, public entities and services.

Although the law was born out of bigotry, inequality, conflict and violence, its legacy 50 years later is a positive one. In a March 2014 CBS poll, eight in 10 Americans think the Civil Rights Act has had a positive effect on the country.

In order to comprehend present-day public attitudes, policy, education or technology, we must understand the past – how things began and evolved. History is about our journey as a society and culture. When you put all the pieces together, it increases our understanding and appreciation of progress and the work that remains. When we study atrocities committed in the past, we identify the causes. This can help us prevent future mistakes. It can also help us shape the future. People like Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Ed Roberts and Justin Dart have contributed important lessons related to civil and human rights. All their great work will be wasted if we do not understand their teachings and appreciate the work done by them and their supporters. It's important that we study the past and use it to mentor the next generation.

In passing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Congress made it clear that Americans with disabilities, similar to Americans who had faced discrimination based on race, color, gender or age, had been subjected to discrimination and prejudice, and should not be denied the opportunity to pursue the American dream. Unfortunately, prior to the ADA, individuals who were discriminated against on the basis of a disability had few legal tools to combat discrimination and barriers to inclusion. The ADA established absolutely that individuals with disabilities, as a group, had been disenfranchised socially, vocationally, economically and educationally.

The Shepherd Center hosted an ADA25 Summit in 2012. What emerged was a concept and The ADA Legacy Project. The mission of the project is to honor the contributions of people with disabilities and their allies by:

- Preserving the history of the disability rights movement
- Celebrating its milestones, like the ADA
- Educating the public and future generations of advocates.

Presently, The ADA Legacy Project and Disability Rights Center (DRC) have organized a 35+ city cross-country ADA Legacy Tour to highlight the Project's mission and ADA25. The Tour kick-off was on July 25 in Houston, the

PRESENTLY, THE ADA LEGACY PROJECT AND DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER (DRC) HAVE ORGANIZED A 35+ CITY CROSS-COUNTRY ADA LEGACY TOUR TO HIGHLIGHT THE PROJECT'S MISSION AND ADA25.

home of former President George H. W. Bush, who signed the Americans with Disabilities Act into law in 1990. The purpose of the legacy tour is to: raise awareness and excitement about the 25th anniversary of the ADA in 2015; share the history that led to passage of the ADA (preservation), its impact today (celebration), and the issues that remain to be addressed (education); and facilitate connections with individuals and organizations at the local level.

There will be two stops in Atlanta coinciding with the National ADA Symposium (May 10-13, 2015) and Society for Disability Studies (SDS) Conference, (June 10-13, 2015). Representatives of the Georgia Disability History Alliance and other local groups are working with the organizers of both these conferences.

Partnerships are central to the success of The ADA Legacy Project and ADA25. Since 2012, project leaders have developed 30-plus strategic partners in addition to DRC, the National Center for Civil and Human Rights (NCCHR) and the Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies at University of Georgia. For example, the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities started producing the following for their project "Moments in Disability History."

> *The selection of "moments in disability history" cover a wide range of audio and video clips, historical documents, images and slides from over a span of decades. These chosen "moments" draw upon seminal work from the past that laid the foundation for the ADA and other disability policy. They are the "moments" every self-advocate, parent and professional advocate should know and be literate about in order to create future policy. For purposes of focus and specialization, the "moments" selected do not include activities, events, programs and projects that are about the delivery of programs and direct services.*
>
> *The selection of "moments in disability history" provide a common ground and foundation for the study of disability history. They have left an indelible mark on public policy and reflect many defining moments of the last 50 years. These are events that have contributed to the forming of American society as we know it today. The events or aftermath of the events, changed history and their impact still resonates with us today.*

Lastly, The ADA Legacy Project is committed to educating the next generation. As John D. Kemp, president & CEO of The Viscardi Center and an ADA Legacy Project council member wrote in a recent blog post for NCCHR:

> *"I see ADA25 as another starting point.*
>
> *A starting point for educating employers about the talented workers with disabilities they are leaving on the sidelines. A starting point for changing mindsets so others welcome our differences and recognize our similarities. A starting point to rally our next generation of disability rights leaders and advocates.*
>
> *Let's use this next year to bring attention to and acknowledge influential individuals with disabilities who are today's mentors and role models so that young people with disabilities see the extraordinary leaders that they themselves can relate to – leaders with disabilities they can aspire to become."*

The ADA Legacy Tour bus will make two stops in Atlanta – one during the National ADA Symposium (May 10-13, 2015) and the second at the Society for Disability Studies (SDS) Conference, (June 10-13, 2015).

> "Let's use this next year to bring attention to and acknowledge influential individuals with disabilities who are today's mentors and role models so that **YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES SEE THE EXTRAORDINARY LEADERS THAT THEY THEMSELVES CAN RELATE TO –** leaders with disabilities they can aspire to become.

Disability rights supporters marched on the US Capitol calling for the passage of ADA. Photo credit: Tom Olin

Moving Forward: The ADA Legacy Project Aims to Preserve, Celebrate and Educate Future Generations

By Alison Heinz Stephens

On July 26, 2015, Americans across the nation will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The landmark legislation, signed into law in 1990 by President George H. W. Bush, was created to acknowledge the rights of people with disabilities to fully participate in all aspects of society.

From employment and education to housing and participation in state and local government programs, the law tore down many barriers for people with disabilities. The ADA is an "equal opportunity" law for people with disabilities.

"It is a very broad civil rights statute for people with disabilities," said Mike Galifianakis, statewide ADA coordinator for the Georgia State Financing & Investment Commission. "The ADA, overall, has four goals: equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency."

To keep moving forward, we must preserve the spirit of the ADA by not only celebrating what has been done in the past 25 years, but also making sure future advocates will tirelessly promote the landmark legislation and the commitment of every state to provide equal opportunities for all its citizens.

The ADA Legacy Project aims to serve as a clearinghouse to connect the vast network of organizers working across the country to promote disability awareness and showcase the rich history of the disability rights movement.

"The project is about recognizing all of the people who fought to make ADA a reality," said Kristen Vincent, project coordinator of The ADA Legacy Project. "It is about preserving their stories and keeping them alive through the course of history."

The ADA Legacy Project shall *preserve* disability history; *celebrate* the accomplishments of people with disabilities; and *educate* the public on disability history and issues, including passage of the ADA.

The ADA Till Today

It is safe to say that the progress made since 1990 is undeniable.

"Since the enactment, I would say the ADA has transformed the architectural landscape," Galifianakis said. "From guidelines on how to design new facilities having accessible ramps to accessible sidewalks and streets, there has been tremendous improvement." As the ADA coordinator, he is responsible to see the law's requirements are implemented at the state level.

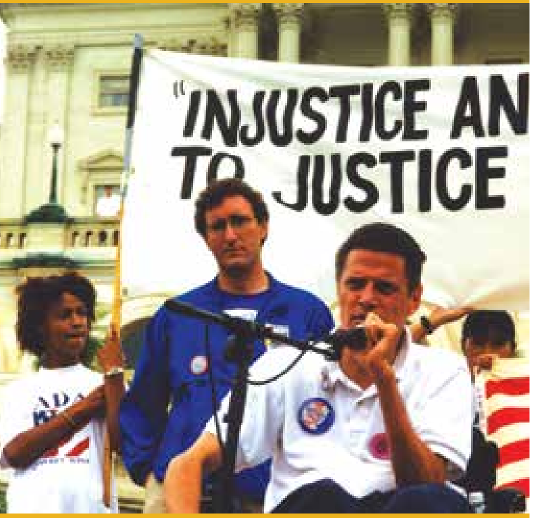
When it comes to continued advocacy, the movement is working to instill a strong future for those with disabilities, especially in the realms of technology and employment.

"Everyone does business and communicates more electronically now," said Galifianakis. He speaks of the Internet, email, mobile phones and other information technology advancements that have made digital correspondence the norm for everyone. But, they have also presented a form of exclusion for people with disabilities.

Although progress has been made in making technology accessible through the Section 508 amendment of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 for the federal government, it needs to follow suit for local and state governments and the private job sector as well.

"Technology can be a great equalizer as long as it's accessible," he said, noting that 25 years ago, the ADA didn't adequately address technological accessibility because technology was not prevalent the way it is today.

> "Apart from preserving and appreciating the ADA's history, the movement is also
> **FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE.**



Mark Johnson spoke to supporters, advocates and people with disabilities at a Washington, DC rally in 1990 for the passage of the ADA. Photo credit: Tom Olin

Another shortfall has been unemployment. It holds higher than average numbers among people with disabilities, and advocates, agencies and the disability community are undertaking the task to make employment the norm. Employment First, a concept to facilitate the full inclusion of people with significant disabilities in the workplace and community is being launched. (*Read about Employment First on page 14.*)

The Future of the ADA

Apart from preserving and appreciating the ADA's history, the movement is also focusing on the future. The goal is to increase awareness and engage younger generations to continue advocating for accessible technology and employment, among many other issues.

"Major anniversaries like this one are times for celebration, reflection and thinking critically about what comes next," said Maria Town, policy advisor for the US Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy. "Youth leaders are critical to the disability rights movement."

It was college student Ed Roberts who led a group of students with disabilities at the University of California at Berkeley in championing their right to live in dorms. Roberts and other students with disabilities were forced to live in the Student Health Services infirmary because no accessible housing was available. The Rolling Quads, as they called themselves, helped to begin the Physically Disabled Students Program. This was the first student-led disability advocacy group originating on a college campus.

"The need for advocacy is just as intense now as it was 30 to 40 years ago and, much like Roberts and the Rolling Quads, student advocates today work for changes in their own lives," Town added.

The youth focus on intersectionality, recognizing that all individuals carry multiple identities such as disabilities, race or color, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socio-economic status, etc. For instance, an woman who has disabilities can be an elderly person of color who may belong to the LGBTQ community. Part of the progress of the future is the growing acceptance of this idea of intersectionality by today's youth.

Youth are also advocating for accessible technology, especially in the realms of social media, electronic medical records and more. "For example, on Facebook, it would be great to have image descriptions on online posts," Town said. "Electronic medical records linked to wearable technologies like a FitBit are ways the future generation can manage their lives and utilize self-directed care."

And like the current movements, the ADA Generation (the generation born after the passage of the law) is focused on employment to receive greater services and supports so they can become their fullest selves and be active in a competitive job market.

More young advocates, whether with disabilities or not, are beginning to realize the importance of the ADA. Teaching disability rights in schools is an effective way to promote awareness and encourage students to advocate on behalf of themselves and their peers.

In 2006, a group of 20 students in West Virginia led the first successful effort which established Disability History Week. More than 20 states joined West Virginia in recognizing Disability History Week, celebrated during the third week in October, which is also National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

However, the ADA Generation is still vulnerable to inequality, leaving young advocates with much work to do.

"While you might think increased inclusion decreases the need for advocacy, I actually think it has the reverse effect," said Town. "The more young people with disabilities are included, the more opportunity they have to see the ways in which they are still treated unequally from their peers without disabilities."

Town hopes efforts to promote accessible fashion, technology, employment and other forms of design will lead to greater equality.

"More than anything," said Town, "I want to see people with disabilities, regardless of age, living life on their own terms with dignity and respect."

Faces of the ADA Generation: Youth were present at GCDD's Disability Day rally at The Capitol.

ADA Legacy Project National Events*

StoryCorps:
Disability Visibility Project
Until July 2015
Atlanta, GA
disabilityvisibilityproject.org

ADA Legacy Tour Stop
January 28 - 31, 2015
Orlando, FL

2015 National ADA Symposium
May 10 - 13, 2015
Atlanta, GA

28th Annual Meeting of
Society of Disability Studies
June 10 - 13, 2015
Atlanta, GA

ADA Legacy Tour Stop
July 20 – 26, 2015
Washington, DC

ADA 25th Anniversary Celebration
July 26, 2015
Washington, DC

For information on all of these events and more, visit www.adalegacy.com

*subject to change

Rethinking the Developmental Disability Definition

By Bob Kafka

I want to begin this article with a confession: I broke my neck in 1973 at the age of 27. This is the same age that Janice Joplin, Jimi Hendrix and Jim Morrison committed suicide. Their suicides have nothing to do with the rest of the article except for the fact that I wanted to get your attention and the number 27.

Another confession: because of that number 27, I am a D (disability), not a DD (developmental disability). I actually didn't realize that when I was lying in bed in the Bronx Veterans Affairs Hospital. Nor did it come up when I became active in advocacy in Houston, TX with the Texas Paralyzed Veterans and the Coalition for Barrier Free Living. It actually never came up when I became active in the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities nor when I was on the board of the American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities.

When I was hired as coordinator of Handicapped Student Services at the University of Houston, they never mentioned it during my job interview. When I got involved with ADAPT (originally Americans Disabled for Accessible Public Transit) in 1984, neither ADAPT's founder Wade Blank, its national organizer Mike Auberger, nor renowned community organizer Shel Trapp ever asked the "D" or "DD" question.

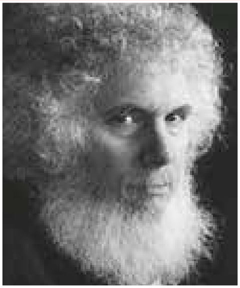
When I first got arrested for civil disobedience in Washington, DC blocking an inaccessible bus, the arresting police officer never asked the question.

I first became aware of the distinction between D and DD was when I served on the board of the National Association of Protection and Advocacy Systems (NAPAS), which is now the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN). I learned about the definition of "developmental disability." It was first introduced in 1970 for certain disabilities acquired before age 18, and then further expanded in 1975 in the Developmentally Disabled Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act) which raised the age of onset to 22 and switched from a list of specific conditions to a more functional approach. I learned the acronyms of DD; P&A (protection and advocacy); PAIMI (protection and advocacy for individuals with mental illness); and PAIR (protection and advocacy for individual rights).

> There is no debate on the fact that all people with disabilities don't need the same package of services.

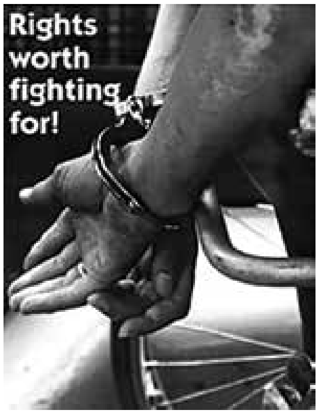
I found out that not only did the DD Act create the P&A groups, but also State Councils on Developmental Disabilities and University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service. It is quite an impressive structure.

> **COMMUNITY INTEGRATION,** the philosophical foundation of the ADA, is something everyone in the disability community can agree on.



BOB KAFKA is a disability rights activist and co-founder of ADAPT of Texas. Through his work with ADAPT, Kafka helped shepherd the WE WILL RIDE victory for lifts on buses and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. ADAPT fights to release people from nursing homes and other institutions and works for more accessible communities including transportation, housing, public accommodations and governmental buildings and programs.

D = DISABILITY · DD = DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY



It struck me sitting at these NAPAS board meetings that although it was a well thought out structure, why did it focus only on people with the label of DD?

It seemed to contradict the cross-disability philosophy that fueled the independent living movement and the disability rights movement as a whole. It also seemed to contradict a slogan self-advocates used: LABEL JARS, NOT PEOPLE!

I had participated in the protests to implement the rules of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which put into law the definition of "person with a disability" that includes people with the label of DD. Why the separation? This definition was the basis for the current definition in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

I then realized that this separation was bureaucratically designed in 1979 when the Department of Health, Education and Welfare split into two agencies: Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Department of Education (DOE). The Administration on Developmental Disabilities was created at HHS and Independent Living (IL) went to the Rehabilitation Services Administration at DOE. These were decisions made by the advocates at the time.

The ADA will be celebrating its 25th anniversary next year. Community integration, the philosophical foundation of the ADA, is something everyone in the disability community can agree on. Though our rhetoric is of cross-disability, the reality is we are an extremely fragmented community, that has built our service delivery models for long-term services and supports (LTSS), based not on our functional needs, but on an arbitrary age of onset and governmental disability definitions.

There is no debate on the fact that all people with disabilities don't need the same package of services.

Our community is not a fondue all melted together; we are more like a tossed salad made up distinct vegetables (no offense intended).

However if you need an attendant to get out of bed, it doesn't matter if you were born with your disability, acquired it before age 22 or broke your neck at 50.

If you need assistance with financial management or other decision-making tasks, does it really matter that you had a brain injury at 30, a stroke at 60 or were born with those needs?

If you have an "Intellectual Disability," why is it the government only recognizes it if you had it before age 22? How do mental health needs get integrated into the LTSS system?

We have built systems that have their own cultures. We speak different languages defining the same things. We have different program names, different packages of services, similar services with different names, different rates for workers doing the same tasks, different providers, different bureaucratic agencies, etc.

It is not an easy discussion. There are many interest groups that have a stake in keeping the status quo. It is also a political minefield that we hate to traverse. I personally think we avoid this open discussion at our own peril.

Medicaid, the largest funder of LTSS, will be going through reforms over the next five to 10 years that none of us can predict. Medicaid managed care is growing. Whether we support or oppose it, we can't escape the reality that even some of the most progressive governors in the country are implementing Medicaid managed care. Congress seems unable to address difficult issues so it appears change, if it is to occur, must bubble up from the state level.

A start might be an Administration on People with Significant Disabilities within the Administration on Community Living. Another thought is to change the age of onset in the DD Act to under 60.

As we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the ADA let's not miss the opportunity to debate how our services and supports system can better align with the community integration philosophy of the ADA.

> "It seemed to contradict the cross-disability philosophy that fueled the independent living movement and the disability rights movement as a whole. It also seemed to contradict a slogan self-advocates used:
>
> **LABEL JARS, NOT PEOPLE!**

In 1984, Mike Augerger, a fellow ADAPT activist of Bob Kafka, was arrested for civil disobedience in Washington, DC for blocking an inaccessible bus.

ADA TODAY! ADA TOMORROW! ADA FOREVER!

MIA'S **SPACE**

A World that Works for Everyone

By Pat Nobbie, PhD, Mia's mom

Mia rides paratransit to work three days a week. The fare is $3.20 each way, in cash, exact change. She can buy a book of 10 tickets for $32. She must give the driver the money and get the tickets at the same time, so this involves some arrangements. Mia lets me know when she has two tickets left. I tell Fabersha, who supports her two days a week, to go to the bank with Mia and get the money for the tickets.

They put one $20, one $10 and two $1 bills in an envelope. I email the transit system and let them know what day Mia will be bringing her money for tickets and they send the tickets out with the driver. The exchange is made, and she has another week and a half of transit. Mia is very organized, so once we got this system down, it worked like clockwork.

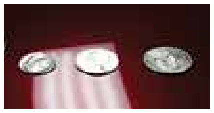
So imagine my reaction when transit called her to say the fare was going up 30¢ a ride, effective immediately. She couldn't pay it all at once, she had to pay it ride by ride. This gave me serious pause. I thought, "Do they have any idea how hard it's going to be for me to explain to Mia to find an extra quarter and nickel for each ticket in her book?"

Here's what happened. I called her and tried to explain it to her. She was frustrated and so was I. But a couple minutes later, I received this text message:

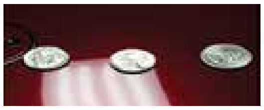
First this picture: Shake is right. (Shake is change) Love Mia

I call her back and say, "You have dimes, you need two quarters and two nickels."

A minute later, I get this:



Ok, not quite, so I call her back, and say again, "No, you need TWO nickels and TWO quarters."



Next this picture: At this point, my hall mates are engaged in this conversation. It took two attorneys and a PhD to figure out maybe we should send HER the picture of what she needs. I lay it out and send Mia this. "This is what you need. Two quarters and two nickels."

At which point Mia calls back all frustrated and says "Mom, I can't do it!" So I ask her, "What do you have on you?" She says, and I can picture her slapping her right and left pockets, "I have a quarter and two nickels here, and a quarter and two dimes here," and I tell her, "Just get on the bus and show the driver what you have. It's enough."

This is not a criticism of the individuals who run the paratransit system. They are always responsive, working out schedules for getting people with disabilities to work and appointments with a limited budget, staff and only a few vehicles. But this transaction sparked a lot of conversation in the office. Few people appreciate the granularity of life's daily tasks for someone with a cognitive disability. For those of us working on policy, these incidents keep us real. The transit system would be so much easier with smart cards that could be loaded online, and regular slots for people with regular schedules like Mia. But tax-averse politicians prevent an increase in the budget. Instead of supporting work, we are making it harder.

I was reminded of the opening lines of Beth Mount's TED Talk. "Imagine a world that works for everyone. It's time."

“Few people appreciate the granularity of life's daily tasks for someone with a cognitive disability. For those of us working on policy,

THESE INCIDENTS KEEP US REAL.

REAL
COMMUNITIES
INITIATIVE

The Ripple Effect: Basmat Ahmed and Clarkston Community Leaders Share the Wealth

After various events, Basmat Ahmed returned to the place that she called her first home in the United States. She was 18 years old when Ahmed and her family came to Georgia, and began their life in the US at Jubilee Partners in Comer, GA in 2006.

Started in 1980, Jubilee is an on-site ministry that has helped over 3,000 refugees from over 30 countries become acclimated to the US by providing comfortable homes, intensive English classes and other important cultural information to families and individuals who resettle in the US.

"When we left Jubilee, I knew I'd be back one day to help the place I called my first home," said Ahmed, who is originally from Sudan.

In 2011, she started her work as a community builder with the Clarkston International Community Garden, a project of Global Growers Network, in partnership with GCDD's Real Communities Initiative. Ahmed brought to her work a background in community organizing and the experience of having a brother with a developmental disability. This experience, along with her work with Real Communities, brought the 26-year-old awareness for inclusion and finding ways to make everyone, people with and without disabilities, a part of the community.

Then, she and other grassroots leaders became focused on the bigger picture in the city, focusing on building connections across cultures and sharing opportunities by using community assets to support each other through exciting projects. Clarkston is on the south end of DeKalb County and is one of the most diverse areas in the State. It is home to 60 different ethnicities and 26 different languages.

"Clarkston is very rich, and we should share the wealth," said Ahmed. "There are a lot of community leaders but how do we bring everyone together? How do we continue forming inclusive communities?"

Diverse community leaders in the area and from organizations such as Women Watch Afrika, the Clarkston Interfaith Group, Clarkston Development Foundation, the City of Clarkston, the Avalon Ambassador, and GCDD – as well as individuals who live in Clarkston – came together and formed the Clarkston Relationship Builders Group (CRBG), and its mission is to create a relaxed and safe environment where people understand and value each other, giving voice, visibility and support to people with different abilities through relationship building.

Members of the Clarkston community, families and GCDD went to Jubilee to tour the facilities. The group noticed that the 35-year-old facility wasn't accessible for people with disabilities.

"The facility didn't have wheelchair ramps or accessible restrooms, and our group could contribute resources to make Jubilee more accessible for its residents," Ahmed said. By partnering with local companies and organizations, they hope to have a working project established soon with Jubilee.

"With my experience through Real Communities, I didn't go back alone," said Ahmed. I went back with a group of people whose mission is to make a difference and build strong community relationships."

To volunteer with the Clarkston Relationship Builders Group, contact Basmat Ahmed at basmat12@yahoo.com

BASMAT AHMED is a community builder and helped found the Clarkston Relationship Builders Group (CRBG). *Photo by Mary Silver, Epoch Times, Reprinted with Permission.*

> "When we left Jubilee, I knew I'd be back one day to help the place I called **MY FIRST HOME.**

Leading an Independent Life Because of the ADA

By Sukhwa Glick

Sukhwa Glick, 26, Atlanta, GA resident, part-time employee and aspiring photographer.

Do any of those labels indicate that I am a person with a disability? No? Well, I am. And I am glad that they do not imply that because my disability isn't who I am, but a part of me.

On August 11, 1988 in South Korea, I was born with a disability known as Arthrogryposis Multiplex Congenita (a physical disability that affects all four of my extremities.) Six months later, I was adopted and living in the United States in a small town in Connecticut and I graduated from high school in Florida.

And today, I am in Atlanta working and leading the most independent life that was only imaginable years ago.

My current level of independence, and that which I have experienced in the past, would not be possible without the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protecting my rights as a person with a disability. I live alone in my own apartment, coordinate my own personal care attendant's schedule and have an active social life.

Graduating high school with the standard diploma alongside my peers, who I had grown up with since the beginning of our educational careers, would not have been as equal of an opportunity without the ADA and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Nor would graduating with a college degree [of my choosing] have felt like such an equal playing field amongst my peers without disabilities. However, my rights to the least restrictive educational environment are not the only ones included in the ADA.

Being able to acquire and sustain reliable transportation, employment and housing – being self-sufficient and gainfully employed – are goals that almost everyone sets for himself or herself.

But it is "easier" to attain for some rather than others. Fortunately, I have been given the access and knowledge to the resources that I need, to personally overcome those obstacles. In conjunction with the ADA, I have been graced with the presence of a great network of support – family and friends.

Knowing what the ADA protects and how to self-advocate is the key to this "ease." The ADA is a great foundation for eliminating discrimination against people with disabilities in prime aspects of life.

I speak from experience. But there are very few things that are "perfect" in this world. For the most part, there is room for improvement.

The change that I would like to see and contribute to the disability community is to open more doors for equal opportunities.

If every part of living in the community was more universally accessible, employment statistics would improve, inclusion would be second nature, and the quality of life for all would no longer be a concern to be resolved.

With the advances in technology and education systems, if we included the disability movement and history into curriculums, this task will not seem so difficult.

Until then, for me, promoting the independent living philosophy and sharing the knowledge that I have to empower the emerging advocates, will continue to be my goal.

> "My current level of independence, and that which I have experienced in the past, would not be possible without the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) **PROTECTING MY RIGHTS** as a person with a disability.

STRAIGHT **TALK**

SUKHWA GLICK is the youth outreach and development specialist with disABILITY LINK and The Center for Independent Living that serves 12 counties in Metro Atlanta. She is also a part of the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living's (APRIL) Youth Steering Committee.

MILLENNIALS, SHARE YOUR STORY!

Millennials with disabilities (30 or younger), what has been the ADA's greatest impact on your quality of life? Submit your story to GCDD @ *gcdd.org/ADAcallforsubmissions*, and you could be featured in an upcoming edition of this magazine. #millenials #adalegacy

2014-15 CALENDAR

October

October 21

American Association on Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities
Putting Technology in the Hands of People with IDD (webinar)
aaidd.org

October 23-24

Georgia Family Connection Conference
Augusta, GA
www.gafcp.org

October 27

Institute on Human Development and Disability Supported Employment Webinar Series
www.fcs.uga.edu/events

November

November 4-6

Understanding Vocational Rehabilitation CAP/VR Meeting National Disability Rights Network
Washington, DC
www.ndrn.org

November 6-7

Enabled by Design-athon
United Cerebral Palsy Lifelab
Washington, DC
ucp.org/event/ucp-life-labs-designathon

November 7

18th annual Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Exposition
Phoenix, AZ
vrate.org/default.php

November 9-12

AUCD Unleashed: The Power of Engagement Conference
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Washington, DC
www.aucd.org/conference/

November 12-14

NADD 31st Annual Conference & Exhibit Show
San Antonio, TX
www.thenadd.org

2014 Director's Forum & Annual Conference
National Association of State Directors of DD Services
Alexandria, VA
www.nasddds.org

November 13-16

National Autism Conference
St. Petersburg, FL
www.nac.nationalautismassociation.org

November 21-23

Abilities Expo
San Francisco, CA
www.abilitiesexpo.com

December

December 3-4

Georgia Association for Positive Behavior Annual Conference
Atlanta, GA
http://disability.publichealth.gsu.edu/

December 3-5

2014 TASH Conference
Washington, DC
www.tash.org

January

January 15-16

GCDD Quarterly Meeting
Atlanta, GA
404.657.2126

January 25-28

2015 Georgia Winter Institute
Columbus, GA
Georgiawinterinstitute.weebly.com

January 28-31

ATIA 2015 Conference Assistive Technology Industry Association
Orlando, FL
www.atia.org

Planning an upcoming event?

Send your information to Jhai James, Public Information Associate and Social Media Coordinator at jhai.james@gcdd.ga.gov; Subject line: "Community Calendar" by December 15 to be included in the calendar. Visit the GCDD website at hgcdd.org/calendar-of-events to view our expanded online community calendar with additional local and national events.

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHT:

Save the Date: March 5, 2015 for Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities' 17th annual Disability Day Rally at the Georgia State Capitol.

RESOURCES

For additional information about the articles and issues in this edition of *Making a Difference* magazine, consult the following resources.

Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD)
www.gcdd.org
404.657.2126 or
888.275.4233 (ASK.GCDD)

State Government

Georgia Senate & House of Representatives
www.legis.state.ga.us

Georgia Governor's Office
www.gov.state.ga.us
404.656.1776

Department of Community Affairs
www.dca.ga.gov

Georgia Housing Search
www.georgiahousingsearch.org
877.428.8844

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

General Information
www.georgia.gov

Georgia Lieutenant Governor's Office
www.ltgov.georgia.gov
404.656.5030

In The News

Georgia Winter Institute
georgiawinterinstitute.weebly.com

National Center for Civil and Human Rights
www.civilandhumanrights.org

Around GCDD

Advocacy
www.gcdd.org

Election Day: Your Voice, Your Vote Matters

US Election Assistance Commission
www.eac.gov

Georgia's Office of the Secretary of State
www.sos.ga.gov, 404-656-2871

Georgia Department of Driver Services
www.dds.ga.gov

Project Vote Smart
www.votesmart.org
1-800-VOTESMART

My Voter Page
www.mvp.sos.ga.gov

US Congress
www.congress.gov

Georgia Legislature
www.legis.ga.gov

From the Candidates (in alphabetical order)

Jason Carter for Governor
www.carterforgovernor.com

Nathan Deal for Governor
www.dealforgovernor.com

Michelle Nunn for US Senate
www.michellenunn.com

David Perdue for US Senate
www.perduesenate.com

A Call to Action to Do More

Employment First
www.dol.gov/odep/topics/
EmploymentFirst.htm

Corporation for Enterprise Development
www.realeconomicimpact.org

Why Financial Stability Matters in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling
www.tacesoutheast.org/training/
docs/financial_stability_matters.pdf

Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Projects
www.socialsecurity.gov

Benefits Navigator
www.benefitsnavigator.org

Employment First Begins a Worthwhile Path to Success

Employment First Georgia
www.employmentfirstgeorgia.org

Project SEARCH (Georgia)
http://gvra.georgia.gov/
vocationalrehab/project-search

New Options Waiver & Comprehensive Supports Waivers
www.dbhdd.georgia.gov

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency
www.gvra.georgia.gov

Department of Community Health
www.dch.georgia.gov

July 26, 2015: 25 Years of Emancipation

ADA Legacy Project
www.adalegacy.com

Moving Forward: The ADA Legacy Project

ADA Legacy Project
www.adalegacy.com

ADA Legacy Project Toolkit
www.adaanniversary.org

Rethinking the Developmental Disability Definition

ADAPT
www.adapt.org

ADAPT of Texas
www.adaptoftexas.org

Real Communities

Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities
www.gcdd.org

Basmat Ahmed
basmat12@yahoo.com

Jubilee Partners
www.jubileepartners.org

Straight Talk

disABILITY LINK
www.disabilitylink.org

The Center for Independent Living
www.silcga.org/cils

Thanks to OUR SPONSORS for their Support!

……

If you are interested in being a sponsor for *Making a Difference* magazine, please call Devika Rao at 678.384.7836.

MILLENNIALS, SHARE YOUR STORY!

The ADA Generation is comprised of individuals that grew up after the landmark legislation was passed in 1990.

……

Millennials with disabilities (30 or younger), what has been the law's greatest impact on your quality of life such as your expectations for access to opportunity, education, technology and employment? In 250 words or less, tell us your thoughts and you could be included in an upcoming edition of *Making a Difference* magazine.

……

Submit your ADA Generation Story to GCDD's *Making a Difference* Editor-In-Chief, Valerie Meadows Suber at *gcdd.org/ADAcallforsubmissions*.

#millenials *#adalegacy*

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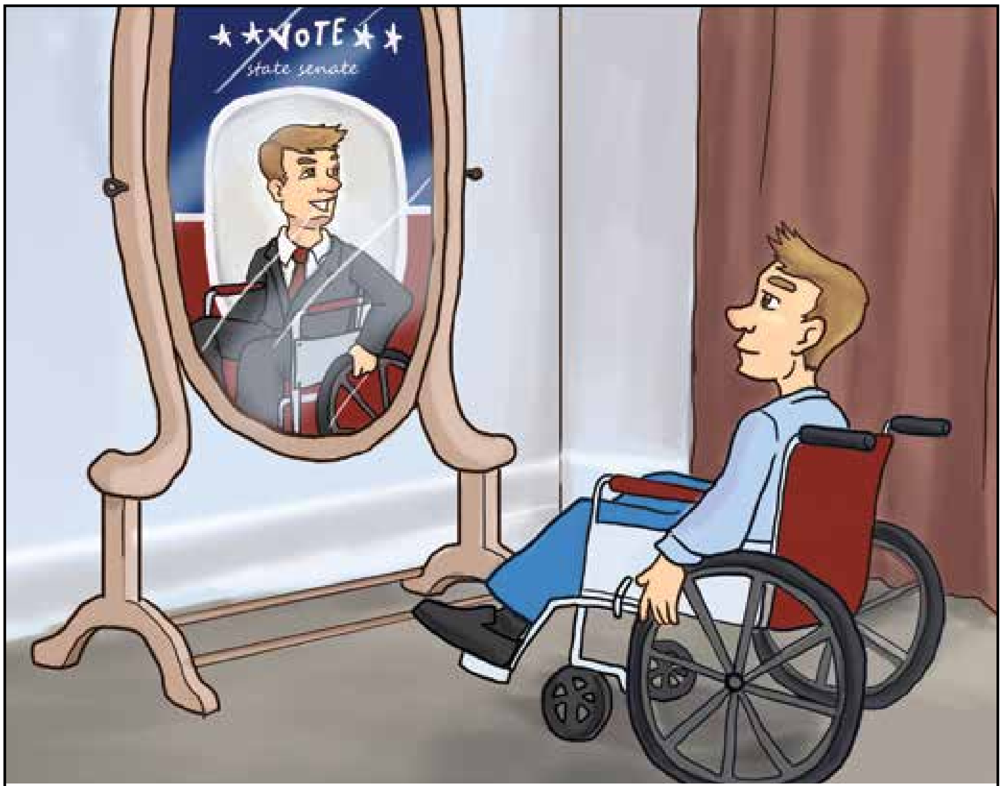
Follow us on Twitter @

twitter.com/georgiacouncil

We want to hear from you!

GCDD
GEORGIA COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



Don't stop at voting!
Become a candidate yourself!

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2 Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 26-246
Atlanta, GA 30303-3142
404.657.2126, www.gcdd.org

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MAKING a DIFFERENCE
A quarterly magazine of the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities
VOLUME 15, ISSUE 2
FALL 2014

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Your Vote,
Your Voice Matters

VOTE TUESDAY
NOV. 4, 2014

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Begins a Worthwhile
Path to Success