

**GOVERNOR'S  
COUNCIL ON  
DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES**



real careers

real homes

real learning

real influence

real supports

# 2006

**ANNUAL REPORT**

## **VISION**

**We see a state in which all persons are included in all facets of community life, have choices while exercising control over their lives and are encouraged to achieve their maximum potential.**

## **STRATEGIC VISION**

**The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities for Georgia promotes activities and creates opportunities which enable people with developmental disabilities to exercise their right to live, learn, work and play in the place and manner of their choice.**

## **MISSION**

**The mission of the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities is "to collaborate with Georgia citizens, public and private advocacy organizations and policy-makers to positively influence public policies that enhance the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities and their families. GCDD provides collaboration through information and advocacy activities, program implementation and funding and public policy analysis and research.**

**In Alice in Wonderland**, Alice asks the Cheshire Cat which road she should take to find the rabbit. The cat replies, "It depends on where you are trying to go." The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities has just completed a two-year strategic planning process that will help us decide which roads we should take over the next five years. GCDD members reviewed programs we supported in the past, and received and listened to hundreds of individuals with disabilities, family members and advocates who provided input into the process.

As we completed our strategic plan, we completed many projects from previous years. GCDD is proud of its efforts to create Real Careers, Real Homes, Real Learning Experiences, Real Supports and Real Influence for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. GCDD has helped move Georgia in a positive direction by supporting efforts to change public policy (Unlock the Waiting Lists!), creating advocacy (Partners in Policymaking and Georgia Voices that Count), providing information (*Making a Difference* and *Moving Forward*) and by offering funds to support promising practices and create capacity in the State (DSP Curriculum and Courses, EasyLiving Homes, Discovery Tour and Partnerships for Success).

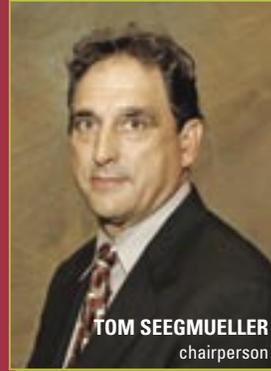
We will continue to support efforts to create inclusive environments for children to develop, learn and succeed. We will support efforts to improve the transition of children from one level to another, especially those who graduate from high school and prepare to meet the challenges of adult life.

GCDD will continue to promote an Employment First policy emphasizing work as the primary option for people with disabilities. We will work with a collaboration of organizations to create an institute where people can find job opportunities, employers can learn how to employ people with disabilities and providers who want to change their work model can find the resources to make the change.

We will continue to monitor implementation of the Children's Freedom Initiative that is working to ensure no child lives in an institution and instead has a loving, stable family. We will work to make sure the requirements of the Olmstead decision are implemented. Those living in the community and those living in institutions will receive the quality supports they deserve to be contributing members of their neighborhoods. This means making sure additional Medicaid waivers are in place and that direct support professionals receive the training and salary that results in quality services.

**GCDD's new plan builds off the strong foundation built through a partnership between Council members, staff, advocacy organizations, policymakers and others.**

GCDD's new plan builds off the strong foundation built through a partnership between Council members, staff, advocacy organizations, policymakers and others. We continue to strive toward improvement and better outcomes for our efforts. We are uniquely positioned through our staff and members to support improving people's lives, providing leadership to the advocacy community, being a resource to policymakers and the media, and operating as an effective, efficient organization. This is the vision GCDD will continue to promote into the future.



**TOM SEEGMULLER**  
chairperson



**ERIC JACOBSON**  
executive director

*Tom Seegmuller*

*Eric E. Jacobson*

# GCDD UNVEILS

## FIVE-YEAR PLAN



After two years of gathering input from advocates across the state, the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities presented its comprehensive, five-year plan in 2006.

During the process, GCDD realized forming coalitions would be key to achieving its goals and is hoping to build relationships with groups who advocate for aging, low income, children, education and others.

In addition to completing its five-year strategic plan, GCDD developed a corresponding public relations strategy to stimulate change, remove attitudinal barriers and impact external audiences and the general public through the media. Objectives: To enhance the lives of people with disabilities and their families by positively influencing public awareness and public perception; reach new audiences; broaden perspectives; and increase public information outreach.

With support from its coalitions, GCDD hopes to help people with disabilities lead real lives by accomplishing goals in five major focus areas: real careers, real homes, real learning, real influence and real supports.

**“Coalitions are necessary for the future. We should work together toward expanding resources or finding ways to make resources fit everyone's needs.”**

GCDD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ERIC JACOBSON

real careers

real homes

real learning



**Standing,  
left to right:**

Susanna Mitchell  
*Program Associate*

Dee Spearman  
*Public Information  
Associate*

Dottie Adams  
*Individual and Family  
Support Director*

Valerie Meadows Suber  
*Public Information Director  
Editor-In-Chief,  
"Making A Difference"*

Patricia D. Nobbie, PhD  
*Deputy Director*

**Sitting,  
left to right:**

Drelda Mackey  
*Administrative  
Associate*

Kate Gainer  
*Advocacy Director*

Eric E. Jacobson  
*Executive Director*

Kim Alexis Person  
*Executive Secretary*

**Not shown:**

Gary Childers  
*Fiscal Officer*

Eric Foss  
*Receptionist*

**REAL CAREERS:** Promote a vision that people with significant developmental disabilities can work by replicating best practices, such as customized employment. Enhance employment opportunities by building relationships with business leaders and employers, and advance policies and practices that value people with developmental disabilities in the workforce.

**REAL HOMES:** Promote policies that recognize housing is linked to income. Ensure resources are in place to help Georgians with disabilities acquire accessible and affordable housing, especially for people transitioning from institutions and nursing homes.

**REAL LEARNING:** Ensure high school students with disabilities have better post-school outcomes through access to effective transition planning, including self-determination training, alternative diploma routes, professional collaboration and positive parental support.

**REAL INFLUENCE:** Increase awareness of GCDD activities and promote initiatives supporting its goal and mission. Support coalitions and advocates in promoting public policies that allow integrated life in the community.

**REAL SUPPORTS:** Continue efforts to increase funding for home and community-based services, as well as the quality of those supports. Prevent children from entering institutions or bring them home safely by offering appropriate support to families.

# YEAR<sup>IN</sup> REVIEW

## 8TH DISABILITY DAY DRAWS RECORD CROWD

1,600 disability advocates gathered at the Georgia Capitol February 23, 2006 to let their legislators know, "We Vote! Unlock the Waiting Lists! We Vote!"

The record-setting group encouraged their legislators to add more waiver slots to the Mental Retardation (MRWP) and the Independent Care Waiver Programs (ICWP), while also asking for support for the Children's Freedom Initiative, HR 633.

Finally, the very first Natalie Tumlin Self-Advocate of the Year award was bestowed on Mark Johnson, director of advocacy for the Shepherd Center.

“  
**WE VOTE!**  
**Unlock the**  
**Waiting Lists!**  
**WE VOTE!**  
”

## LEGISLATIVE SUCCESSES

- Increased number of MRWP slots from 750 – 1,500
- Added 152 ICWP slots to budget
- Included funding for Katie Beckett Waiver for families who no longer meet the eligibility requirements for Medicaid and don't qualify for other government services
- Passed amendments to the election code that:
  - Voters with disabilities no longer have to sign an oath specifying the nature of their disability
  - People with visual impairments do not have to sign a separate oath
  - Personal assistants can deliver an absentee ballot

## ADVOCATES HONORED BY GCDD

**GCDD celebrated the many successes of the disability community July 20, 2006 by recognizing individuals who made significant contributions to those successes:**

### LEGISLATIVE LEADER OF THE YEAR

**Sen. Greg Goggans (R-Douglas)** supported funding for the Independent Care Waiver Program.

**Sen. Regina Thomas (D-Savannah)** sponsored an amendment to the supplemental budget to add \$3.6 million in funding for families who had been denied access to Medicaid through the Katie Beckett Waiver.

**Rep. Ben Harbin (R-Evans)** invested extraordinary time and interest in meeting with Unlock the Waiting Lists!, ICWP and Katie Beckett Waiver advocates.

# DISABILITY DAY 2006



## GCDD DEVELOPS DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

The key to successful community living is solid support. To help Georgians with disabilities have real supports, GCDD funded the development of a certification program for direct support professionals, in conjunction with the Department of Technical and Adult Education.

The result has been better-trained direct support professionals who help people with disabilities live fuller lives.

"The people we serve don't always have choices. We have to be these people's voices...or we need to teach them to speak for themselves," said program graduate Crystal Brown, of Unlimited Services in Monroe, Ga.

## PLANS TO RELEASE CHILDREN UNVEILED

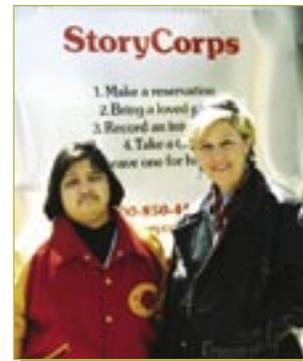
The Children's Freedom Initiative Oversight Committee approved and submitted a plan to Georgia legislators in July that outlined a schedule for releasing 44 children from state-run institutions by June of 2007.

Person-centered planning, lifestyle planning and Supports Intensity Scale documents are being used to identify each child's needs, and each family will have an "ambassador" to help guide them through the process of moving back into the community.

## GCDD ENSURES ALL VOICES ARE HEARD

When the largest oral history project in the country, StoryCorps, came to Atlanta, GCDD was determined to ensure people with disabilities were included in the project.

Five Georgians with disabilities were selected to audio record their stories for the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress project. Kate Gainer, Alan Duvall, Gail Bottoms, Anil Lewis and Mia Nobbie all shared their personal insights while being interviewed by a loved one, like other StoryCorps participants.



"I am glad I was here to record them. They opened up another view of life for me," said StoryCorps' facilitator Jonah Engle.

### MEDIA PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

**Gracie Bonds Staples**, *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, spent an entire day on the road with GCDD, delving into the issues of unemployment for people with disabilities.

**Lisa Crane**, WAGA Fox 5 News, covered families who were denied access to Medicaid when they lost their Katie Beckett Waiver.

### ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

**Al Duvall** delivered personal testimony on HR 633, the Children's Freedom Initiative.

**Linda Wilson** worked on the Unlock the Waiting Lists! campaign and as a parent advocate in the Coweta County School System.

### C. ANTHONY CUNNINGHAM COUNCIL MEMBER OF THE YEAR

**Cheryl Laurendeau** worked tirelessly on the executive committee and program implementation and funding committee.

# 2006



## DISCOVERY DAY APPEALS TO HEARTS, BOTTOM LINE

Georgia's business community discovered how companies – both large and small – are making employing people with disabilities a priority during Discovery Day September 21, 2006 at The Home Depot Headquarters.

Participants heard how supported employment and creating customized job descriptions have helped Georgians with disabilities go to work.

GCDD Chairperson Tom Seegmueller reminded the crowd, "People with disabilities are part of our community, and if given the chance, they can share with you the many gifts and talents they have."

Discovery Day was made possible by more than \$65,000 of in-kind donations from The Home Depot, Southern Company and Intercontinental Hotels Group.

“**People with disabilities are part of our community, and if given the chance, they can share with you the many gifts and talents they have.**”

## EMPLOYMENT FIRST GEORGIA EXPANDS JOBS PROGRAM

The Cobb-Douglas Community Services Board demonstrated how customized employment helps people with developmental disabilities obtain jobs they enjoy and become more integrated into their communities. Employment First Georgia is working to replicate the program across the state. The initiative is a collaborative effort of GCDD, the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy, the Institute on Human Development and Disability, the Georgia Advocacy Office and the Statewide Independent Living Council.

The ambitious program brings together state agencies and others to assure the best employment outcomes possible for Georgians with significant disabilities. The institute's goal is to show communities how to create Customized Strategic Action Plans that identify potential jobs, specific employers and how to pay for needed supports and/or equipment.

“Planning is such a small part.  
Making it happen is what’s important.”

## LIFE IS BETTER ALL TOGETHER

GCDD hosted more than 700 people at the seventh annual Better All Together: Inclusion Works! conference March 1 – 4, 2006, in Athens, Ga.

Attendees learned about a wide variety of topics such as employment options, community living and person-centered planning, from professionals as well as people with disabilities and their families.

National experts Dr. Beth Mount, Michael Smull, Lynda Kahn, Jack Pearpoint and John O’Brien reminded attendees person-centered planning is a great way to determine services and supports, but the plan is not the outcome. “Planning is such a small part. Making it happen is what’s important,” Mount said.



“We are asking the participants  
to organize their communities in  
such a way that disability  
will no longer be a foreign language.”

### left to right standing:

Patricia Williams  
Caitlin Childs  
Patricia Underwood  
Chase Teate  
Susanna Mitchell  
Jamar Raheem S.  
Stephanie Guilloud

### left to right seated:

Barbaraanne Bongiovanni  
Jane Grillo  
Kate Gainer

### front seated:

Emery Wright

### not shown:

Denise Noseworthy

## GCDD NURTURES GRASSROOTS ADVOCATES

In 2006, GCDD created the Organizing Institute to support disability advocates who are already working hard to change the hearts and minds of friends, families and neighbors in their communities across the state.

The institute trains grassroots organizers and helps them complete projects at the local level, while also developing relationships with other social movements.

“We are asking the participants to organize their communities in such a way that disability will no longer be a foreign language,” revealed GCDD Advocacy Director Kate Gainer.

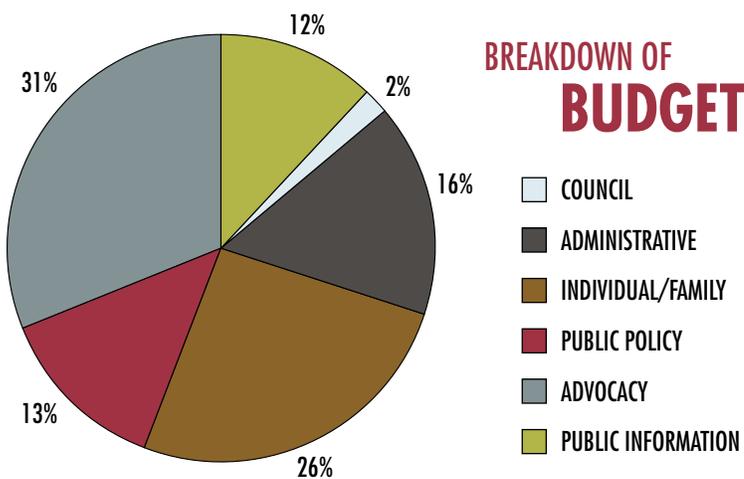
# GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

## DD GRANT

### FFY 2006 BUDGET - EXPENDITURES

Period Covered October 1, 2005 - September 30, 2006

EXPENDITURES	EXPENDED
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	
Council	\$ 70,821
Administrative	\$ 465,034
<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>\$ 535,855</b>
<b>PRIORITY</b>	
Individual/Family	\$ 733,445
Public Policy	\$ 385,162
Advocacy	\$ 906,244
Public Information	\$ 205,989
<b>Total Priority</b>	<b>\$ 2,230,840</b>
<b>Total EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 2,766,695</b>
<b>Total Funds Budget</b>	<b>\$2,766,695</b>



The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD) works with others to improve the quality of life for Georgians with disabilities. Here are projects GCDD funded last year leveraging state, federal and local dollars.

- Partnership Funds:
  - Scholarships for Training Events
- Family Support: Parent Leadership Coalition and Navigator Teams
- Childcare Advisory Committee
- Children's Freedom Initiative
- Making a Difference* Magazine
- Partners in Policymaking
- Grassroots Advocacy Grants
- Workforce Development
- Direct Support Alliance
- Early Childhood Systems Change Grant
- Self-Determination
- Unlock the Waiting Lists! Campaign
- Peer Support
- Aging and Disability Coalition
- Federal Issues Coalition
- Individual and Family Technical Assistance and Outreach
- Partnerships For Success: Creating Inclusive Communities
- Georgia Voices that Count
- Special Education Finance Committee
- Innovative Proposals
- EasyLiving Home<sup>sm</sup>
- Housing Partner Coalition
- Transition Steering Committee
- Jobs for All: Customized Employment Grant from USDOL
- Making A Difference Discovery Day Tour
- Foster Care Taskforce

## VALUES

1. We value people with developmental disabilities with their own gifts and talents, and as independent contributors to a collaborative community.
2. We value available, accessible, flexible and responsive services, which enhance people's participation in the community.
3. We value a diverse Council with informed, motivated and active members who disseminate accurate information.
4. We value a knowledgeable, diverse and well-supported staff, which share open and honest communication with Council members.
5. We value educated and supported families who make significant contributions to caring for and assisting people with developmental disabilities in preparing for their futures.
6. We value public policy founded on sound research, accurate information and best practices in alignment with the principles of the Developmental Disabilities Act.
7. We value public advocacy that is founded on the development of relationships with stakeholders and the legislative community.
8. We value communities, which are designed to be inclusive, allowing for full participation by all people, physically, economically, organizationally and environmentally. We value communities that educate, respect, promote and protect the rights of people, thus offering a wealth of opportunities, and have the capacity to find solutions.

**GOVERNOR'S  
COUNCIL ON  
DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES**

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BACK ROW, L TO R:  
Chris Hunnicutt, Denny Spear,  
Vallorie Butler, Tom Seegmueller,  
Janet Hill, Karen Boyer, Scott Crain,  
David Cowan

FRONT ROW, L TO R:  
Gillian Grable, Millie Powell,  
Tom Connelly, Lynnette Bragg,  
Licheng Tian, Geneice McCoy



2006  
COUNCIL MEMBERS

Tom Seegmueller,  
*Chairperson*  
Vallorie Butler,  
*Vice Chairperson*  
Michelle Aulhouse  
Julia Bowen  
Lynnette Bragg  
Marlene Bryar  
Tom Connelly

Scott Crain  
Marilyn Ellis  
David Cowan  
Jan Cribbs  
Gillian Grable  
Stephen Hall  
Tameeka Hunter  
Cheryl Laurendeau  
Julie Lee

Bruce Lindemann  
Lenora Maynard  
Rhonda Medows  
Ruby Moore  
Nancy O'Hara  
Gwen Skinner  
Denny Spear  
Zolinda Stoneman  
Michael Thurmond

Licheng Tian  
BJ Walker  
Don Watt  
**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS**  
Dawn Alford  
Kathy Crowder  
Vicki Gordon  
Sabrina Jordan  
Debra Noonan-Elber