



Center for Disabilities Studies  
**Annual Report**

July 1, 2001 ♦ June 30, 2002



*University of Delaware  
College of Human Services, Education, & Public Policy*



*Dear Friends,*



The Center for Disabilities Studies Annual Report is always a time to reflect. As I read through the activities of the past year, I am struck by how the Center, in collaboration with its community partners, addresses the issues that face persons with disabilities, their families, and their communities. Whether it is in the

area of program evaluation, model program development, advocacy, training, technical assistance, policy development, or dissemination, the Center strives to work in collaboration with individuals, families, and programs to ensure that persons with disabilities control their lives and their destinies.

*“This work is the foundation for relationships to come that, hopefully, will contribute to a society where dignity, justice, and respect are afforded all persons of all abilities.”*

Working to ensure that persons with disabilities control their own destiny is a challenging task. Part of our role as a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities is to provide persons with disabilities, their families, and programs with up-to-date, accurate, reliable information upon which decisions can be made. But sound research and evaluation and effective training and advocacy cannot be developed in a vacuum. We, therefore, are thankful that we have the relationships with individuals, families, and programs that permit us to be partners in developing the information that can then be used to secure better services and supports for persons with disabilities.

The past few years have seen political, economic, and social turmoil throughout the world, and the importance of strong collaborative relationships has been made clearer. Yet, without the individuals who work at the Center on a day-to-day basis, those collaborative relationships would not be possible. The dedication, perseverance, intelligence, and passion of the over 100 professionals, graduate and undergraduate students, interns, and volunteers who worked at the Center during the past year permitted us to serve thousands of individuals with disabilities, their families, and communities.

As you read through the 2002 Annual Report and review our past accomplishments, I ask that you also look forward. View the projects described here as groundwork on which to build further opportunities for all persons with disabilities. This work is the foundation for relationships to come that, hopefully, will contribute to a society where dignity, justice, and respect are afforded all persons of all abilities.

With sincere thanks for your continued support of the Center for Disabilities Studies,

Michael Gamel-McCormick, Ph.D.  
Director



# Building Strengths

The Center for Disabilities Studies is a part of the network of University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities that addresses the needs of people with disabilities, their families, and communities. July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002 was a year of *building strengths* for the Center for Disabilities Studies— a year of new programs and initiatives, program enhancements, and the addition of new staff — all of which depend on the strength of our University and community partnerships. Through our federal, state, and foundation funding, as well as the generosity of individual gifts, collaboration with community centers, schools, state departments and divisions, nonprofit organizations, and numerous other programs and people throughout Delaware, we are able to continue working toward our mission to enhance the lives of individuals and families in Delaware.

These strengths are best illustrated by these highlights from the past year:

- **Wilmington Healthy Start** ended in 2001 after four years of serving over 1,000 women and children each year ([page 4](#)).
- **Project CREATE** ended at the close of fiscal year 2002, but developed community-based training that is still utilized ([page 4](#)).
- The **F.A.C.T. evaluation** continued through a University partnership with CDS, the Center for Community Research and Service, and the Delaware Education Research and Development Center ([page 4](#)).
- Evaluation activities for **IRMC** and **Parents As Teachers** continued this year ([page 4](#)).
- The **Home Visiting Advisory Committee** began a new demonstration project in 2002, the Sussex First Time Families Consortium ([page 5](#)).
- The **Family Support** Initiative was awarded in 2002 to provide outreach and training to individuals with disabilities and families collaboratively with community, provider, and advocacy organizations ([page 5](#)).
- In **Delaware Alternate Portfolio Assessment's** second year of statewide implementation, 398 student portfolios were reviewed ([page 6](#)).
- **New Directions Early Head Start** received expansion funding in 2001 and continues their commitment to supporting and empowering pregnant women, infants and toddlers, and their families ([page 5](#)).
- **Positive Behavior Support** expanded training and technical assistance to twelve school districts in Delaware ([page 6](#)).
- Two University of Delaware courses were developed this year to provide students in the **Transition Partnership Project** and undergraduate students opportunities to work together on a range of issues ([page 7](#)).
- **Community Education** expanded class offerings throughout Delaware and introduced a new, video-based Adult Foster Care Distance Learning Certificate Course ([page 8](#)).
- During 2002, **University Education** continued expanding efforts by developing new curricula and reaching out to more students ([page 9](#)).
- **Dissemination activities** continued meeting a need for up-to-date information with the newsletter, *delAware*, and introduced *delAware: A Research Brief* to highlight the research activities of the Center ([page 10](#)).

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

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## Our Funding Sources

The Center for Disabilities Studies had an operating budget of \$3,760,416 from July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002. Of this total, \$1,907,424 was obtained through grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Administration for Children and Families, Head Start Bureau and Administration on Developmental Disabilities.

The Center also received over one million dollars in funding from the University of Delaware for support of a wide range of projects and activities.

Federal Government	51%
University of Delaware	27%
Delaware Department of Education	14%
State of Delaware	4%
Delaware Department of Transportation	1%
MBNA Helen F. Graham Foundation	1%
Delaware Disabilities Planning Council	>1%
Individual gifts	>1%

## Our People

### CORE Staff

Michael Gamel-McCormick, *Director*  
Theda M. Ellis\*, *Associate Director*  
Carol Denson, *Pre-Service Coordinator*  
Rebecca Hardy\*, *Assistant to the Director*  
Rebecca Fernandez\*, *Records Specialist*  
Debbie Koch, *Administrative Assistant*  
Mary Thomas, *Records Specialist*

### Project Staff

#### Delaware Alternative Portfolio Assessment

Alison Chandler  
Shaunna Crossen  
Donald Peters  
Patricia Tressell  
Janine Weber\*

#### Community Education

Carol Bernard\*  
Mark Bernstein  
Judy Greene  
Beverly Stapleford

#### FACT

Jim Salt

#### Interagency Resource Management Committee

Debbie Amsden

#### Positive Behavior Support

Debby Boyer  
Sarah Hearn

#### Transition Partnership Project

Jackie Gallagher  
Diane Merrill

#### Family Support/ Wilmington Healthy Start

Peter Antal\*  
Teresita Cuevas  
Vanessa Harper  
Patricia Tressell  
Donald Unger

### New Directions Early Head Start

Jennifer Adams  
Ada Baker\*  
Heidi Beck  
Martha Buell  
Michelle Cornwall\*  
Renee El-Williams  
Carolyn Graves  
Norma Grice  
Robin Harbaugh  
Amy Harter  
Allison Miller  
Cynthia Monger\*  
Lidia Vela\*

### Graduate Students

Kellie Anderson  
Adrienne Bey  
Keith Casey  
Valerie Dorn  
Jennifer Dugan  
Monica Fahey  
Anna Gatta  
Molly Malone  
Ilka Pfister  
Jennifer Phillips  
Ryan Pommerening  
Jennifer Torgersen  
Tara Woolfolk

### Undergraduate Students

Kristen Akers  
Alicia Armstrong  
Bethany Ash  
Seena Dattani  
Kristen Figaro  
Kelly Gilbert  
Jennifer Hause  
Melissa Hause  
Wei Jiang  
Michelle Kalikas  
Amy Louridas  
Cory Nourie  
Megan Raley  
Amanda Romano  
Janine Scherr  
Caitlyn Young

### Center for Disabilities Studies CORE Advisory Council

*The CORE Advisory Council offers policy input and direction to the Center. Members represent people with disabilities, families, and professional or advocacy organizations.*

#### Marie-Anne Aghazadian

*Parent Information Center of Delaware*

#### Steven Amick

*Delaware State Senate*

#### Martha Brooks

*Delaware Department of Education*

#### Carla Dennis

*Community Education Graduate  
Delaware Special Olympics*

#### Russ Dynes

*Lead Prevention Program  
Delaware Department of Public Health*

#### Andrea Guest

*Division of Vocational Rehabilitation*

#### Brian Hartman

*Delaware Disabilities Law Program*

#### Linda Heller

*Division of Services for Aging and  
Adults with Physical Disabilities*

#### Peggy Hirsh

*Family Member*

#### Ray Hunt

*Independent Resources, Inc.*

#### Brenda Kramer

*Family Member*

#### Rita Landgraf

*State Council for Persons with Disabilities*

#### Paul Poplawski

*Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health*

#### Sandy Reyes

*Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council*

#### Marianne Smith

*Division of Developmental Disabilities Services*

#### Catherine Soles

*Department of Services for Children,  
Youth, and Families*

#### Bill Viehman

*Community Representative*

\* These staff members are no longer with us. For an updated list of CDS staff, please visit our website: [www.udel.edu/cds/](http://www.udel.edu/cds/).

## Early Childhood

### Wilmington Healthy Start

The Wilmington Healthy Start (WHS) project ended in 2001 after four years of focusing on building family outreach, creating support systems, and reducing risk for pregnant and postpartum participants. Partnering with Christiana Care Health Systems and the Wilmington community, WHS served over 1,000 women and children each year. WHS increased prenatal and perinatal services and supports to parents within the poorest and most ethnically diverse areas of the city.

For more information, please contact Donald Unger at 302-831-6852 or [unger@udel.edu](mailto:unger@udel.edu).

### Project CREATE

During this three-year pilot program, Project CREATE (Caregiver Recruitment, Education, and Training Enhancement) offered family and center-based childcare providers tuition-free college courses and technical assistance focused on developmentally appropriate childcare practices for infants and toddlers. During fiscal year 2002, Project CREATE offered community-based training to help childcare providers work effectively with parents through greater understanding. Although the funding ended for this pilot program, the Office of Child Care Licensing continues to use the information gained from Project CREATE to plan additional training and technical assistance opportunities.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Adams at 302-831-3492 or [jenadams@udel.edu](mailto:jenadams@udel.edu).

### Interagency Resource Management Committee

One of the original activities of the Center was to help early intervention and early childhood programs evaluate and improve their services. The Interagency Resource Management Committee (IRMC), composed of the Secretaries of Education, Health and Social Services, and Services for Children, Youth and their Families, the state's budget director, and the Controller General, fosters an interagency approach to delivering early care and educational services in Delaware. The IRMC makes both policy and budgetary decisions for three major early intervention programs. For six years, the evaluation services for these programs have been coordinated through the Center for Disabilities Studies. This year, IRMC and the Center collaborated on multiple projects, including an evaluation for Child Development Watch, a longitudinal study of early intervention programs, and an evaluation of the quality of Delaware's early child care and education programs.

For more information, please contact Debbie Amsden at 302-831-3633 or [irmc@udel.edu](mailto:irmc@udel.edu).

### Parents As Teachers

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

PAT concentrates on children's early years (prenatal to 3 years of age). The services help to provide parents with an understanding of what to expect during each stage of their child's development and links these families to community resources. The Center helps PAT to implement a program monitoring and evaluation system that allows administrators and staff to assess the project's capacity to address the needs of participants, to identify program strengths, and to identify areas in need of improvement.

For more information, please contact Donald Unger at 302-831-6852 or [unger@udel.edu](mailto:unger@udel.edu).

### F.A.C.T.

The F.A.C.T. (Families and Communities Together) project is a five-year, federally-funded systems change effort. The goal of the project is to provide children with serious emotional and behavioral disturbances mental health services which are more individualized, flexible, positive, and family-centered than typically offered by the traditional mental health service delivery approach. Housed within the Division of Child Mental Health Services, the project encourages collaboration between several state agencies and community partners to bring about change in the larger child and family service system. Both the project and the evaluation are expected to continue through September 2005.

For more information, please contact Jim Salt at (302) 831-6735 or [jdsalt@udel.edu](mailto:jdsalt@udel.edu).



## Family Support

The purpose of family support projects across the nation is to ensure that families with members with disabilities receive the services they need so that their family members can live at home or in the community, regardless of age or disability. The Administration on Developmental Disabilities awarded this project to the Center for Disabilities Studies in fiscal year 2002.

*Project Goals are:*

*Self Determination Pilot Program:* This project is working with the Delaware Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) to develop a pilot program to better serve families of individuals eligible for DDDS benefits.

*Outreach:* The project helps and encourages Delaware families to understand, identify, and find the services and supports needed for family members with disabilities. Primary efforts are to reach unserved and low-income communities in New Castle and Sussex Counties.

*Training:* The project offers training to community and state agency staff to assist them in recognizing disabilities within the families they serve and to adapt their services and supports to meet the needs of family members with disabilities.

*Family Participation:* Through the education piece listed above and three project task forces made up of family members and agency representatives, the Center is making every effort to work with families to design and deliver project activities.

*Outreach and Training to Latino Families:* The family support project is making many efforts to reach Latino families. In addition to outreach, our two Latino staff members provide direct support to family members including translation services and assistance with receiving services for their children with disabilities.

For more information, please contact Donald Unger at 302-831-6852 or [unger@udel.edu](mailto:unger@udel.edu).

## Home Visiting Advisory Committee

The Home Visiting Advisory Committee project (HVAC) recommends needed resources and changes necessary for the implementation of an effective and valid training and evaluation system for home visiting programs.

HVAC also identifies and prioritizes recommended practices for the home visiting programs offered by state agencies and nonprofit organizations in Delaware. With the financial support of the Delaware Children's Trust Fund, the HVAC began a demonstration project, the Sussex First Time Families Consortium, in Sussex County, Delaware. Also, a demonstration training program was initiated for home visitors and supervisors of home visitors.

For more information, please contact Donald Unger at 302-831-6852 or [unger@udel.edu](mailto:unger@udel.edu).

## New Directions Early Head Start Policy Council

*The Policy Council is an elected group of parents and community members who share responsibility for overseeing the delivery of high quality services to families with infants and toddlers and pregnant women enrolled in programs supported by New Directions Early Head Start.*

Patricia Beza, *Community*

Dorenda Boger, *Community*

Sharon Brown, *Parent*

Chimere Charlton, *Parent*

Michael Gamel-McCormick, *Center for Disabilities Studies*

Maria Garcia, *Parent*

Conquista Holmes, *Parent*

Monique Husser, *Parent*

Nicole Johnson, *Community*

Alexis Marchiana, *Parent*

Sarah Neale, *Community*

Shailyn Rodriguez, *Parent*

Dawn Rowe, *Parent*

Cynthia Slater, *Parent*

Kathleen Splane, *Community*

Marvin Townsend, *Parent*

## New Directions Early Head Start

New Directions Early Head Start (NDEHS) is an interagency program committed to empowering and supporting pregnant women, infants and toddlers, and their families. The program was funded in October 1997, during the third national wave of federal support to develop Early Head Start programs across the nation, and received expansion funding in September 2001.

The NDEHS consortium of agencies represents an innovative collaborative model bringing together the University with a diverse group of nonprofit community agencies to provide direct services to 135 children and families in New Castle and Kent Counties. The consortium also works to have an impact on many more families and service providers by way of its capacity-building approach in the areas of childcare, disability support, training, and coordination of services.

For more information, please contact Heidi Beck at 302-831-0478 or [hlbeck@udel.edu](mailto:hlbeck@udel.edu).

### Delaware Alternate Portfolio Assessment Project

During 2001-2002, the second year of state-wide implementation for Delaware Alternate Portfolio Assessment (DAPA), 398 student portfolios, each documenting three domains of student achievement, were submitted and reviewed. Portfolio developers were required to submit entries for the Communication Domain, the Applied Academics Domain, and for either the Personal Management Domain, the Career/Vocational Domain or the Social Domain. Each portfolio was scored independently by two of the 24 qualified scorers. A comparison with the scores on the same three domains during 2000 - 2001 indicated score improvement in all three domains available for comparison. The improved scores are a reflection of several factors including:

- the extensive portfolio development training provided to teachers by CDS and Department of Education staff,
- improved portfolio development guidelines and training materials,
- a greater recognition of the importance of the DAPA by school administrators, teachers, and support service personnel, and
- improved opportunities provided to students with moderate to severe cognitive disabilities throughout the state.

Other important accomplishments during the year included setting proficiency levels for the DAPA Communication Domain. This process involved parents, teachers, administrators, community members and disability community advocates who set cut-off scores for five proficiency levels ranging from “distinguished” to “well below the standard.” The alignment of the DAPA Domain scores with the Delaware Education Proficiency Levels will permit the aggregation and reporting of the DAPA scores with those of the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) scores for federal reporting and state accountability purposes.

Finally, consistent with the federal No Child Left Behind legislation, a plan for the future expansion of the DAPA was developed. As part of this plan, and in anticipation that all DAPA eligible students between the ages of 5 and 17 will be submitting portfolios each year, a variety of efficient “high tech” alternatives for scoring are being explored.

For more information, please contact Shaunna Crossen at 302-831-1052 or [shaunna@udel.edu](mailto:shaunna@udel.edu) or Brian Touchette at 302-739-4667 or [btouchette@state.de.us](mailto:btouchette@state.de.us).

### Positive Behavior Support

The Positive Behavior Support (PBS) project was created with the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) to provide school districts and teachers with skills to address and prevent challenging behaviors for all students. The intent is to create school-wide systems that teach positive student behavior and design effective individual interventions for students with more challenging behaviors.

Members of Delaware’s constantly growing PBS State Team include parents, state agency representatives, and local school district personnel, as well as DOE staff who serve in an invaluable advisory capacity. The Core Team faculty from the University of Delaware’s School of Education and DOE staff developed the original curriculum modules and continue to provide ongoing guidance for the direction of the project. PBS is fortunate to have these faculty members as major contributors to its growth.

During the first two years, the Center field-tested seven curriculum modules with training teams from 12 of the 19 school districts in Delaware. Participation was expanded to include personnel from five state agencies during the last year. In addition to training, providing technical assistance to the 12 trained school districts was a major focus. The Center and project staff are excited to provide technical assistance, school-wide PBS implementation throughout Delaware, and assistance with school data collection.

For more information, please contact Debby Boyer at 302-831-3503 or [dboyer@udel.edu](mailto:dboyer@udel.edu).





# Spotlight on...the Transition Partnership Project

TPP is a university-local school district collaboration that provides a model program for students, aged 18-21, with moderate to severe disabilities as they transition from school to their adult life in the community. Red Clay Consolidated School District provides staff and all student educational services. The Center provides technical assistance and access to the University of Delaware facilities that offer the least restrictive environment for enrolled students. The project staff work with adult service agencies, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, and other state agencies to improve transitions between school and community services. Further collaborations have occurred through the Advisory Committee whose members represent businesses, the University, parents, students, community programs, and state agencies involved in the transition process.

The students start their day in a leased apartment near campus for TPP program activities. They then travel to various university and community destinations during the day with paraeducators, who have been grouped into teams that work with specific students. Based on individual needs and preferences, multiple goals in vocational, social, domestic, communication, personal management, and functional academic domains are addressed. Last year's graduates went on to supported employment assignments (Russell Dining Hall and MBNA) and day programs (Chesapeake Care Resources Day Program, Chimes Day Program, and Elwyn).

TPP, the University, and campus employers, such as Aramark, have been exploring opportunities for increasing campus employment options for young people with disabilities. Additionally, Dr. Carol Denson offered two undergraduate courses that involved UD students with TPP students; one course investigated the transportation needs of TPP students and another supported TPP students in becoming more involved in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings.

For more information, please contact Jackie Gallagher & Dianne Merrill at 302-831-3062 or 11970@udel.edu.

## Transition Partnership Project Advisory Committee

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

Becky Arnold, Family Member

Timothy Brooks, Dean of Students, UD

Arlene Denniso, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Carol Denson, Consumer Studies, UD

Theda Ellis, Center for Disabilities Studies

Michael Gamel-McCormick, Center for Disabilities Studies

Sharohn Howard, Student

Joanne Johnston, Family Member

Rita Landgraf, State Council for Persons with Disabilities

Lynne Meyer-Berlin, Red Clay Consolidated School District

David Michalik, Division of Social Services

Trish Mitchiner, Family Member

Lachelle Pierce, Easter Seals

Tom Pledgie, Delaware Department of Education

Marcia Raniere, Dupont Company

Michael Shriver, MBNA

Cheri Tyree, Family Member

Roberta Walker, Red Clay Consolidated School District





## Community Education

### New Visions I and II

New Visions I and II seminars are offered monthly throughout the state, laying the philosophical foundation for supporting self-determination and informed choice making. Each one-day seminar offers an introduction to developmental disabilities and person-centered planning. The Seminars are accepted by the Delaware Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDDS) as meeting four of the basic requirements for new DDDS staff orientation.

### Innovative Concepts and Practices

Innovative Concepts and Practices (ICP) is a multi-module course on relevant issues in the field of disabilities. The curriculum includes a comprehensive look at the lives of people with disabilities that addresses person-centered planning, work, home, recreation and leisure, family, communication needs, and positive behavior supports. This past year, 35 participants were enrolled with 25 individuals completing the certificate program. For the first time, classes were held at the Wilmington College campus in Dover, in addition to our second class in Newark.

### Supported Employment Training

The Supported Employment Training (SET) certificate program successfully completed its third year with a total of 59 participants attending two offerings. The program is geared toward professionals and paraprofessionals who work in the school system and the adult service provider community with funding from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Education. In this series, topics included history and trends in supported employment, job assessment, job development, marketing, natural supports, and positive behavioral supports.

### First Line Supervisor Training

This dynamic and interactive program is designed for both first-time and experienced supervisors and managers in residential, vocational, day, and community settings. The six-week series is an overview of critical issues and topics on how to supervise and lead others who work with people with disabilities. Participants learn by doing and are able to relate the curriculum and exercises directly to their day-to-day work as supervisors. The curriculum includes topics focused on leadership, team building, communication, time management, coaching, conflict management, human resources, and others.

### Support Coordination

Support Coordination (SC) is a nine-module course (15 seminars) that combines components of ICP with self-determination and service coordination. SC ensures that service coordinators understand best practices and their role in providing support to individuals with disabilities.

### Adult Foster Care, Distance Learning Certificate Program

Two video-based seminars on self-determination help caregivers enrich the lives of the people they support by promoting independence and helping dreams come true. This program is designed for people who share their homes and lives with adults with developmental disabilities. The Foster Care Certificate Program is funded through a collaboration of the Helen Graham Foundation, DDDS, and INTERgeneration Links.

### Quality Management & Supervision in Human Services

Quality Management and Supervision in Human Services (QMS) is a 15-module course (18 seminars) designed to build management and leadership skills for mid-level supervisors and managers working in agencies that serve people with disabilities.

### Community Education Advisory Council

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

Holly Bounds, *Kent Sussex Industries*

Sue Brown, *Martin Luther Homes*

Gary Cassedy, *Easter Seals*

Harry Curriden, *Dungarvin Delaware*

Karen Gallagher, *Advocate*

Becky Hudson, *Kent Crest Services*

Todd Jarger, *Community Systems, Inc.*

Anne Laird, *Chimes Delaware*

Harriet Ann Litwin, *Division of Vocational Rehabilitation*

Pat Maichle, *Developmental Disabilities Council*

Eileen Marvel, *Delaware Elwyn*

Jane Miller, *Division of Developmental Disabilities*

Alisha Raiford-Hall, *Division of Developmental Disabilities*

Sonja Simowitz, *Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative*

Cindy Sterling, *Opportunity Center, Inc.*

For more information on Community Education, contact Beverly Stapleford at 302-831-4688 or [bstape@udel.edu](mailto:bstape@udel.edu).

*Training students to be knowledgeable about disabilities and to understand their impact on individuals, families, and the community is an important part of the Center's mission. In partnership with academic departments in the University, the Center offers a number of courses about disabilities. An interdisciplinary team of faculty associated with the Center, community agencies, and family members partner to teach these courses. The College of Human Services, Education, and Public Policy, several University departments, and the Center collaborate to provide students with educational and professional opportunities.*

### Summer Institute: Quality Services for Individuals with Severe Disabilities

The Quality Services for Individuals with Severe Disabilities Certificate Program is a graduate level college credit program designed to deliver state-of-the-art knowledge and skills to individuals who work with children and adults with disabilities in the community, education, work, and leisure settings.

The Summer Institute includes eight, three-credit courses offered over a four-year period. Courses focus on critical topics for the support of creating life-enhancing alternatives for individuals with severe disabilities. They are incorporated, on a rotating basis, into the University of Delaware curriculum. During fiscal year 2002, 17 students were enrolled in the Summer Institute courses.

For more information, please contact, Peggy Lashbrook, at 302-454-2305 or [lashbrom@csdmail.k12.de.us](mailto:lashbrom@csdmail.k12.de.us).

### Interdisciplinary Minor in Disabilities Studies

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

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

As of September 1, 2001, 41 undergraduate students from 10 different majors completed the minor in disabilities. Approximately 60 additional students are currently enrolled in the minor. Students from 17 different majors have enrolled in this university-wide interdisciplinary minor.

#### Disabilities Studies Minor Courses:

Leadership in disability policy (CNST 367)  
Analysis of consumer disability issues (CNST 267)  
Families and developmental disabilities (IFST 270)  
Family support, self-determination, & disabilities (IFST 467)  
Senior seminar in disabilities studies (HEPP 465)

For more information, please contact Carol R. Denson, at 302-831-8537 or [crdenson@udel.edu](mailto:crdenson@udel.edu).

### Student Opportunities in the Center

The Center recognized that learning about disabilities occurs both through formal and informal mechanisms. Work, assistantships, and volunteer opportunities at the Center offer undergraduate and graduate students opportunities to learn about disability issues. Students are recruited across departments and colleges to support our transdisciplinary approach to services and training.

#### Undergraduate Student Opportunities

Undergraduate students provide support to many Center projects and often fulfill important roles in key Center programs such as maintaining the Library Resource Center or assisting in the development of training activities for Community Education projects.

The Center actively recruits first and second year students for employment throughout their academic life and adds to their responsibilities over time. Students who come to the Center for a job often leave to enter employment or pursue graduate studies in the disabilities field.

#### Graduate Student Opportunities

The Center, with university and state legislative support through public service assistantships, offered 13 graduate assistantships to master and doctoral level students during fiscal year 2002. Assistantships cover tuition and pay a stipend in return for 20 hours of work per week.

Graduate assistants participate in developing research, writing articles or reports, teaching, offering technical assistance, coordinating surveys and evaluations, and other Center projects. As with undergraduate students, the Center recruits graduate students to work on projects over the length of their graduate career.

For more information, please contact, Michael Gamel-McCormick, at 302-831-6974 or [mgm@udel.edu](mailto:mgm@udel.edu).

The single greatest need that individuals with disabilities and their families cite is the need for information. Individuals and families want information about disabilities, laws and regulations, services and where they are located, how to use services, what research shows to be best practices, and how to have a voice at the policy and legislative level. A major role for the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs) is to provide people with disabilities, families, professionals, policy makers, and the general public with up-to-date and easy-to-use information about research findings, trends in services, and their own activities. The Center has developed a number of communication strategies to disseminate information that is easy to read, use, and obtain. Building on its strengths in this area, the CDS expanded dissemination efforts during fiscal year 2002 and now makes all its publications available on its web site [www.udel.edu/cds](http://www.udel.edu/cds).

### Community Providers

Center staff also developed curricula and training sessions at the request of individual provider agencies, including Goodwill Industries of Delaware, MBNA, Children and Families First, Delaware Public Purchasers Regional Conference, and the Annual Delmarva Institute for Developmental Disabilities. For information on developing individualized training for your organization, please call 302-831-6974.

### Community Presentations

#### Carol Denson & Jackie Gallagher

*Student development using problem-based learning*, PBL 2002 International Conference, Baltimore MD, June 18, 2002.

#### Carol Denson

*Public input in the ADA paratransit eligibility process*, Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting, Washington DC, January 2002.

#### Donald Peters, Brian Touchette, Janine Weber, Shauna Crossen, & K. J. Anderson

*Putting the Pieces Together: Statewide Implementation of a Portfolio-Based Alternate Assessment System*, Annual Meeting of The Association for the Severely Handicapped (TASH), Anaheim CA, December 2001.

### The LIFE Conference

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

### delAware: Our Newsletter

The Center's newsletter, *delAware*, highlighted two key issues, family support and child abuse, in its major topical editions during this period. These editions laid the groundwork for further work in each of these areas and also identified the need that Delawareans with disabilities and their families have for support. The MBNA Helen F. Graham Foundation provided funding for these issues, as well as an update of activities of the CDS and the Developmental Disabilities Council. *delAware* is distributed to more than 2600 individuals, families, legislators, policy makers, and professionals.

### delAware: A Research Brief

Highlighting original research developed at the CDS, *delAWARE: A Research Brief* is the latest effort in dissemination. The intent is to bring critical information on current Delaware programs and research findings to individuals, families, and practitioners who may not have access to journal articles or other research. Research briefs were developed on the impact of home visiting programs on parent education and support for families of young children.

### CDS Web page

The CDS continued to revise and update its web page to make it more user-friendly for individuals and families, students, faculty, and community staff. This new, accessible web page offers information about our university and community educational programs, current research and demonstration projects, publications, student opportunities, and contact information. Community Education and Family Support students may register for classes through the internet. CDS publications are available on the web as well.

[www.udel.edu/cds](http://www.udel.edu/cds)

For more information on our dissemination activities, please contact Tracy L. Mann at 302- 831-3150 or [tlm@udel.edu](mailto:tlm@udel.edu).



**Heidi Beck:** New Castle County “STEP” Transition Team, Early Childhood Summit Starting Young: Partnering to Promote Emotional Wellness in Young Children planning committee, the Wilmington Early Childhood Education Committee, Starting Young: Partnering to Promote Emotional Wellness in Young Children strategic planning committee

**Mark Bernstein:** Associate Member of Pennsylvania Association of Resources for People with Mental Retardation, American Society for Training and Development (ASTD)

**Martha Buell:** Delaware Head Start Association Board of Directors, Delaware First Again Advisory Board, Building Capacity in Natural Environments, Early Head Start Technical Work Group, OSEP Part D Planning Group, the Mid-Atlantic Early Childhood Education Network

**Shaunna Crossen:** DAPA Advisory Committee

**Carol Denson:** Chronic Renal Disease Advisory Board, Paratransit Committee, Transportation Research Board, National Research Council, Community Leaders Transit Advisory Committee, State of Delaware Red Clay School District Meadowood Program, Transition Partnership Project

**Laura T. Eisenman:** Delaware Transition Council

**Theda Ellis:** Developmental Disabilities Council, Policy and Rights Committee; Ticket to Work Advisory Group; National Council of Community Education Directors; NTAC Work Group

**Michael Gamel-McCormick:** Accreditation Commission, National Academy of Early Childhood Education; Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council; Governors Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens; Interagency Coordinating Council

**Rebecca Hardy:** LIFE Conference Coordinating Committee

**Alison Miller:** Delaware Association of Childcare Providers

**Donald Peters:** Policy and Law Committee, State Council for Persons with Disabilities; the PAIR Committee, Delaware Disabilities Law Program

**Beverly Stapleford:** Training Curriculum Advisory Committee, National Adult Family Care Association, Partners in Justice Committee

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

**Partnering Agencies:**

- Child Development Watch  
Child, Inc.*
- Children and Families First  
Christiana Care Health Systems*
- Delaware Association of Child Care Professionals, Inc.*
- Delaware Department of Education*
- Delaware Department of Health and Social Services*
- Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth, &  
Their Families*
- Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council*
- Delaware Division of Child Mental Health Services*
- Delaware Division of Developmental Disabilities Services*
- Delaware Division of Family Services*
- Delaware Division of Public Health*
- Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation*
- Delaware Early Childhood Center*
- Delaware Early Head Start*
- Delaware Education Research and Development Center*
- Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing*
- Delaware Office of Prevention and Early Intervention*
- Delaware Program for the Deaf/Blind*
- Delaware State Legislature*
- Easter Seal Society of Del-Mar*
- Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center*
- The Interagency Resource Management Committee*
- Perinatal Association*
- Prevent Child Abuse Delaware*
- Red Clay Consolidated School District*
- Southbridge Children’s Center*
- Wilmington Head Start*
- & numerous local school districts, agencies,  
and organizations.*

**University Partners:**

- Center for Community Research and Service*
- College of Human Services, Education, & Public Policy*
- Department of Consumer Studies*
- Department of Individual and Family Studies*
- Department of Psychology*
- Department of Sociology*
- Education Research and Development Center*
- School of Education*

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Center for Disabilities Studies  
University of Delaware

166 Graham Hall  
Newark, DE 19716  
302.831.6974 voice  
302.831.4689 TDD  
302.831.4690 fax  
www.udel.edu/cds

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Center for Disabilities Studies  
University of Delaware

166 Graham Hall  
Newark, DE 19716  
302.831.6974 voice  
302.831.4689 TDD  
302.831.4690 fax  
[www.udel.edu/cds](http://www.udel.edu/cds)

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