



Center for Disabilities Studies

2018-2019
Annual
Report

Greetings, from CDS

As you make your way through this annual report, you'll likely notice that virtually every activity in which CDS engages represents a partnership: with people with disabilities, family members, community organizations, other units here at the University of Delaware, state agencies, policymakers, businesses, funding agencies, other universities and national organizations. CDS is a proven convener, enabling stakeholders with differing perspectives to appreciate their common aspirations and unite in pursuit of solutions.

This can be hard work, especially when there are conflicting opinions about needs and approaches. Yet it is immensely rewarding work, and our "convening" has led to the launch of new initiatives and services, new funding to support the work, the generation of new research findings, the engagement of new partners, changes in law and policy and the blossoming of new friendships.

This year's annual report describes ways in which our Center's activities have influenced the University of Delaware campus community; the climate and instructional practices in Delaware public schools; the quality, accessibility and affordability of services; and awareness of disability-related issues and resources. It highlights what individuals and organizations have contributed in the way of ideas, resources and energy to get new ideas off the ground and generate outcomes that make a real difference in people's lives.

Together, we can do so much more than any of us can accomplish on our own. I invite you to be a part of the difference that [CDS](#) and its partners are making in our world. Please share your thoughts about problems that need solutions and successes that need to be scaled up so they might impact more people in a sustained way. We look forward to hearing from you!

Peace,

Beth



[Beth Mineo](#) served her 11th year as director of CDS in 2019.

Meeting high expectations

Near the end of the documentary [Intelligent Lives](#), which follows three young adults with intellectual disabilities as they transition to adult life, one of the individuals profiled gets promoted from intern to employee. Naomie Monplaisir, who has Down syndrome, becomes a project assistant at Empire Beauty School.

In the car afterward, Naomie smiles as she slides on her sunglasses. “I did it,” she says.

Hundreds of Delawareans have shared in Naomie’s triumph in *Intelligent Lives*, directed by Dan Habib of the [University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability](#). Starting in October 2018, CDS presented admission-free screenings in each county, with the support of the Clayton Theatre in Dagsboro, the Kent County Public Library in Dover, the Route 9 Library and Innovation Center in New Castle, the University of Delaware in Newark, Wilmington Friends School and Westtown Movies in Middletown – where CDS co-sponsored the event with the [Down Syndrome Association of Delaware](#).

Rebecca Lopez, who has Down syndrome, saw the movie in Middletown. “I liked that Naomie was able to make friends and get a job,” she said. Her father, Jason Lopez, said “it gave me hope that there is more for Rebecca to do in society than sitting around in an adult daycare facility.”

The University’s [Access:Ability Scholars](#) enrichment program hosted the first *Intelligent Lives* showing. CDS then presented it throughout Delaware so as many people as possible could experience its positive depiction of intellectual disability and options for inclusive employment and further education.

At some of the *Intelligent Lives* screenings, young adults with intellectual disabilities discussed their transition experiences. Calley Robichaud said she hopes audiences will remember that people with disabilities can set and meet high expectations. She did, achieving a longtime ambition by enrolling in CDS’s Career and Life Studies Certificate program at UD: “This was my goal,” she said, “and I did it.”



A star turn: Naomie Monplaisir before getting hired in the film *Intelligent Lives*.

Enriching the inventory

See better. Hear better. Live safer.

Signs with these words hang inside CDS's three [Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative \(DATI\)](#) resource centers. Showcased beneath them are recently-acquired assistive technology (AT) devices aimed at improving seniors' independence, safety and dignity. Next to sound-amplifying phones and utensils with specialty handles lie recreational tools such as a power planter, which greatly reduces the physical strain of putting plants in the ground, and a fishing rod that attaches to the forearm for those with limited or no grip.

[Located in each of Delaware's counties](#), the resource centers operate as free AT lending libraries. Each has a dedicated space for the new collection of AT for seniors, with several thousand other devices for people with disabilities of all ages nearby. The 130 new AT devices geared toward elderly users arrived thanks to funding from the [Delaware Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities \(DSAAPD\)](#).

"When we saw how DATI can offer free AT trials and their specialists were available to discuss tech options, we wanted to help them to expand their reach," says Melissa Smith, the acting deputy director of DSAAPD.

DATI Assistive Technology Specialist [Gail Hamblin](#) says that almost all of DSAAPD's grant went to "enriching our inventory." The remainder funded the production of a brochure to assist with outreach to senior centers and other community locations.

Hamblin helped Janet Melvin of Harrington, Del., find AT that enables her to be more independent. Melvin, who has vision loss, borrowed a pair of magnifying eyeglasses that make watching TV far less burdensome. She also checked out an Amazon Echo Dot, a voice-activated device that can make phone calls, play music, adjust the thermostat and other actions.

Melvin found the Dot so useful she purchased one herself. "I had to return the eyeglasses," she says, "but maybe when I save up a little more I'll get those too."



In her sights: Janet Melvin enjoys a pair of magnifying eyeglasses at DATI's AT Resource Center in Dover.

The basis of all the other things

What can teachers do to have the greatest impact on students' perceptions about how safe and fair their school seems and how the students and teachers get along?

UD Professor [George Bear](#), an advisor to CDS's [Positive Behavior Support \(DE-PBS\)](#) project, asked this very question in a 2017 article published in [Teaching and Teacher Education](#). Not surprisingly, he found, students rate their school's climate higher if they report they are punished less and praised more. Not as expected was the even stronger impact on school climate linked to students' perceptions that they are being taught to manage their emotions and recognize how others think and feel – examples of what educators call social and emotional competencies (SEC).

Recognizing the growing importance of SEC, the DE-PBS Project expanded the [Delaware School Climate Surveys](#) to investigate further. Supported by the [Delaware Department of Education \(DDOE\)](#), DE-PBS administers the surveys annually to approximately 150 schools. The additions asked students to rate their abilities in self-regulation, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making – four of the five aspects of SEC as defined by the [Collaboration for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#). For the 2019-2020 school year, DE-PBS has added questions about the fifth aspect, self-awareness.

This is key, says [Capital School District](#) School Improvement Specialist and former PBS Coach LaWanda Burgoyne, because it will help educators grasp how well students understand their own emotions and motivations.

Burgoyne spearheaded a push to focus on students' social and emotional development in the Capital School District, as did educators in several other districts. To broaden their reach, the DDOE created the statewide [Social-Emotional Learning Collaborative](#), a diverse group of educators, DDOE staff, community members and policymakers, including Bear and CDS's director of PreK-12 initiatives [Debby Boyer](#). The Collaborative joined CASEL's [Collaborating States Initiative](#), which provides resources and guidance from colleagues across the country.

Being taught SEC and honing “the ability to be self-aware,” says Burgoyne, who is also the Collaborative co-lead, “are really the basis of all the other things we try to [help students learn] and do.”



George Bear with Angela Soltys, a former CDS graduate assistant and a co-author with Bear on a 2017 article in *Teaching and Teacher Education*.

Easing and averting crises

Crisis clinician Kennesha Gill, a member of Delaware's youth [Mobile Response and Stabilization Services \(MRSS\)](#), felt she needed to learn more about autism. "I wanted to ... recognize what was behind some of the behaviors I was seeing," she says.

She and other crisis responders with the organization, says MRSS Program Manager Malia Boone, would appear in home, school and other settings where they'd sometimes find it difficult to discern what was causing disruptive or dangerous behaviors. Effectively defusing the situations proved equally challenging.

That's changing for crisis responders at MRSS and for professionals in Delaware schools, as they take part in new CDS mental health support programs for youth. The [Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism \(DNEA\)](#), housed at CDS, offers training to responders like Gill and Boone while the Center's PreK-12 team collaborates with the [Delaware Department of Education](#) and [Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health](#) on [Project DeLAWARE](#), an initiative to support educators and school mental health professionals as they seek to reduce risks that can lead to crises.

In late 2018, the Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services requested more training in autism and other developmental disabilities for their clinical teams. MRSS, which is offered by [Delaware Guidance Services](#), was at the top of their list. DNEA Training Coach [Kellene Copeland](#) consulted with several of the crisis responders to develop a curriculum tailored to their needs and conducted multiple trainings statewide. "Understanding the roots of a child's behavior is helping the crisis responders meet the child's and families' specific needs," she says.

Meanwhile, Project DeLAWARE, supported by a grant from the federal [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#), launched pilots in [Colonial School District](#), [Capital School District](#) and [Indian River School District](#) to train educators in proactive mental health strategies.

CDS's [Heather Godwin](#), the Project DeLAWARE program manager, says the initiative "demonstrates to students and staff that taking care of your mental health can be a routine and positive thing to do." One way it's accomplishing this is by fostering collaboration between mental health professionals and educators to integrate mental health supports into the daily life of the school.



Kennesha Gill responds to crises in New Castle County.

Better health outcomes

Katie Biddle doesn't like gambling with her dental care. However, that's how she describes her situation as a Delaware Medicaid recipient.

That's because, until recently, [Delaware Medicaid](#) only covered dental services until age 21. As a result, Biddle says she only saw the dentist "when [she] could afford it." She has Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, which can exacerbate her risk of gum disease and other conditions, but the \$100–\$300 cost of cleanings was often prohibitive.

Now, the odds are improving for Biddle and other Delawareans who rely on Medicaid. In June 2019, [Gov. John Carney](#) signed into law [a bill extending Medicaid dental coverage to beneficiaries of all ages](#). Sponsored by [Sen. Bryan Townsend](#), the bill is the result of years of advocacy and research by a coalition of individuals and organizations, including CDS.

[In a 2015 report](#), the Center cited data showing a shocking 40 percent of Delawareans with disabilities were not receiving regular dental care. A year later, CDS contributed to a [Health Resources and Services Administration](#) grant examining the barriers and devising solutions, culminating with disability awareness and accessibility trainings for dental professionals.

"We kept a laser focus on the issue," says CDS Director [Beth Mineo](#), who testified about Townsend's bill before the [Senate Health and Social Services Committee](#). Her testimony highlighted CDS's finding that people with disabilities overwhelmingly cited cost as the highest barrier to dental care.

Under the new law, Medicaid will cover an individual's first \$1,000 of costs for "preventive and restorative" dental care each year, or the first \$2,500 in emergency situations, as defined by the [Department of Health and Social Services](#). Every dental visit has a \$3 copay.

While the spending caps limit access to the full array of needed services, Susan Pugliese, the director of [Christiana Care's General Practice Dentistry Residency Program](#), says this is a "significant step in the right direction." It will likely enable many Medicaid recipients to regularly access preventive care, she says.

"People are going to see better health outcomes," says Townsend. "This was long, long overdue."



Christiana Care's Susan Pugliese says Sen. Bryan Townsend's bill should enable many Medicaid recipients to regularly access preventive dental care.

Addressing every step

Jair Ramos-Perez was diagnosed with autism at age 14, even though his parents recognized developmental delays a decade earlier. “The doctors kept saying ‘ADHD,’ ‘chronic speech delay,’” says Jair’s father Yovanni Ramos. “I heard it so much that I have it engraved in my head. They weren’t open to considering anything else.”

Ramos related his experience to clinical professionals and staff from state agencies and community providers at a workshop in summer 2019. The gathering, intended to probe the possibility of creating state guidelines for autism diagnosis, was sponsored by the [Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism \(DNEA\)](#) and [Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities \(LEND\)](#) program, both headquartered at CDS.

“If we can provide guidelines on diagnosing autism,” says DNEA Program Coordinator [Kara Downey](#), “we can go a long way to ensuring clinicians are using evidence-based tools in their practice and supporting families in understanding the process and resources available in Delaware.”

The workshop marks a transition from the [Building Bridges](#) project undertaken by CDS, [Nemours](#), [Autism Delaware](#), the [Division of Public Health](#) and other stakeholders in 2016. Funded by a three-year grant from the federal [Health Resources and Services Administration](#), Building Bridges stakeholders worked to improve early identification of developmental delays and delivery of early intervention services.

CDS team members connected with pediatricians to integrate a standard autism screening tool, the [M-CHAT-R](#), into their medical records systems for children’s 18-month and 24-month checkups. Autism Delaware expanded its outreach to Spanish-speaking families such as the Ramoses and Ramos-Perezes, including hiring two bilingual family navigators. Nemours aided Delaware’s early intervention program, [Child Development Watch](#), in integrating autism diagnostic evaluations.

“The earlier you can identify a developmental delay, the better the child’s response will be to therapies,” says Lisa Henry, director of community health services at the Division of Public Health. “We’re addressing every step, screening to diagnosis to treatment, making the process better.”



Father and son: Yovanni Ramos (left) and Jair Ramos-Perez share a night out in Georgetown.

Act Early, Read Daily

The numbers couldn't be clearer. Children whose families or caregivers read books to them daily enter kindergarten having heard, on average, between 300,000 and 1.4 million more words than children who are not read to regularly. The more words a child hears, the more prepared that child is to meet language and literacy expectations when he gets to school.

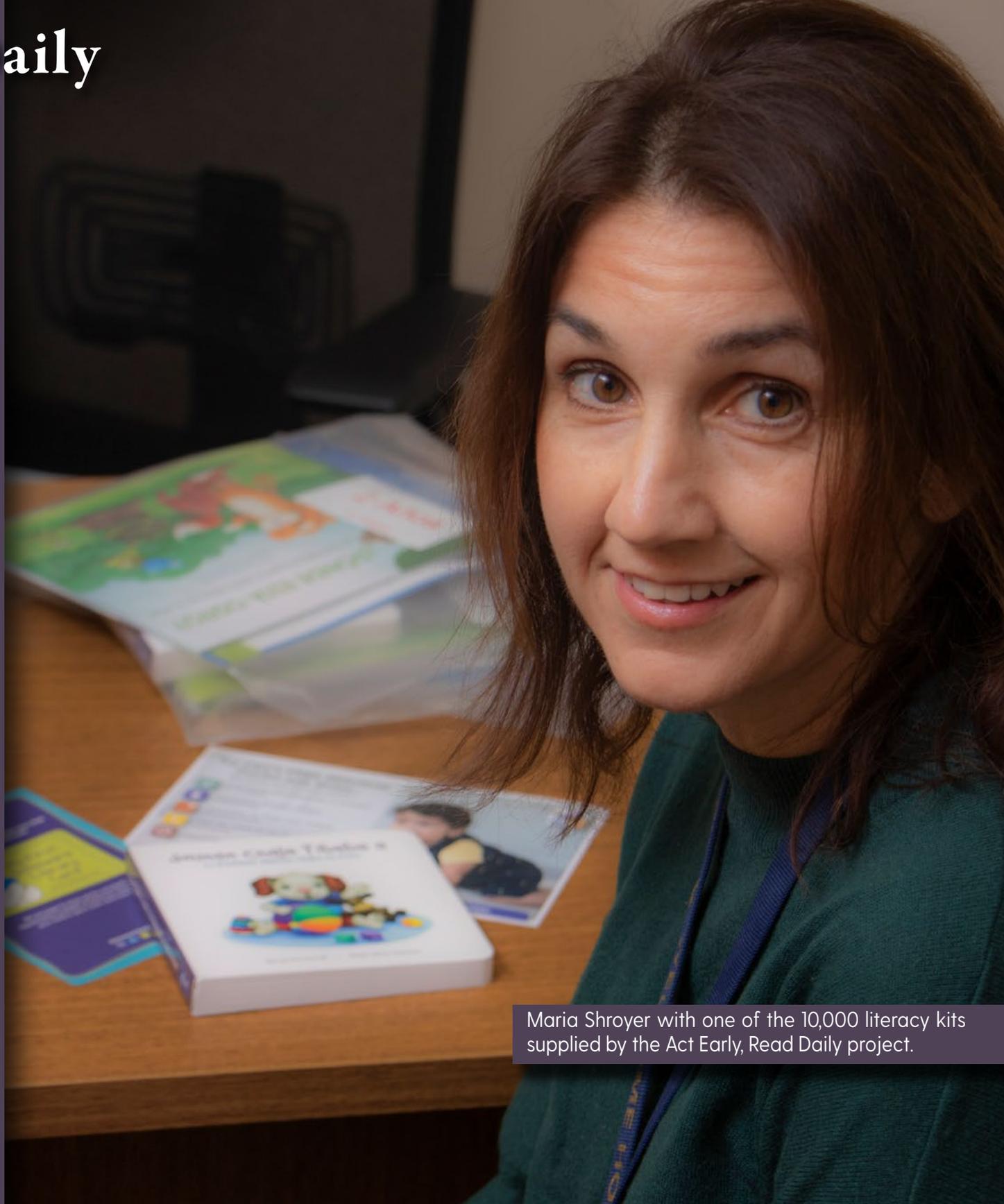
That's why CDS's [Brittany Powers](#) is working to get developmentally appropriate children's books into the hands of the youngest Delawareans – children primarily between one year and four years old – by providing them with titles like [Baby's Busy Day](#), [Where is Bear?](#) and [Amazing Me](#) by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

Powers, who coordinates CDS's early childhood autism projects, is building on connections she made as the state's ambassador for a CDC developmental monitoring initiative called [Learn the Signs. Act Early](#). Powers says she targeted state clinics administering the [Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children \(WIC\)](#) because the clinics serve at-risk families whose children, research indicates, tend to hear the fewest words at home. "We have a relationship with WIC from [Learn the Signs. Act Early](#)," she says. "Now we can collaborate with WIC to ensure participants receive early literacy resources, too."

Maria Shroyer, a WIC consultant dietician and liaison with CDS, says "there's definitely enthusiasm" for the books, which the CDC offers in English and Spanish. Powers says the project also commissioned a Haitian-Creole translation to serve Delaware's growing Haitian community.

The Act Early, Read Daily project has provided WIC clinics with 10,000 literacy kits, all of which include a free book and free library card, part of the [Delaware Division of Libraries' My First Library Card](#) program.

"We all have the same goal – making sure children gain the reading skills they need," says State Librarian Annie Norman. "Partnering with Act Early, Read Daily and WIC to get library cards to more youngsters made all the sense in the world."



Maria Shroyer with one of the 10,000 literacy kits supplied by the Act Early, Read Daily project.

Leveling the playing field

When the University of Delaware's [Spectrum Scholars](#) college-to-career program for students with autism launched in September 2018, [President Dennis Assanis](#) noted that it personifies the university's goal of "inclusive excellence," which is all about "leading every student to success, both in and out of the classroom."

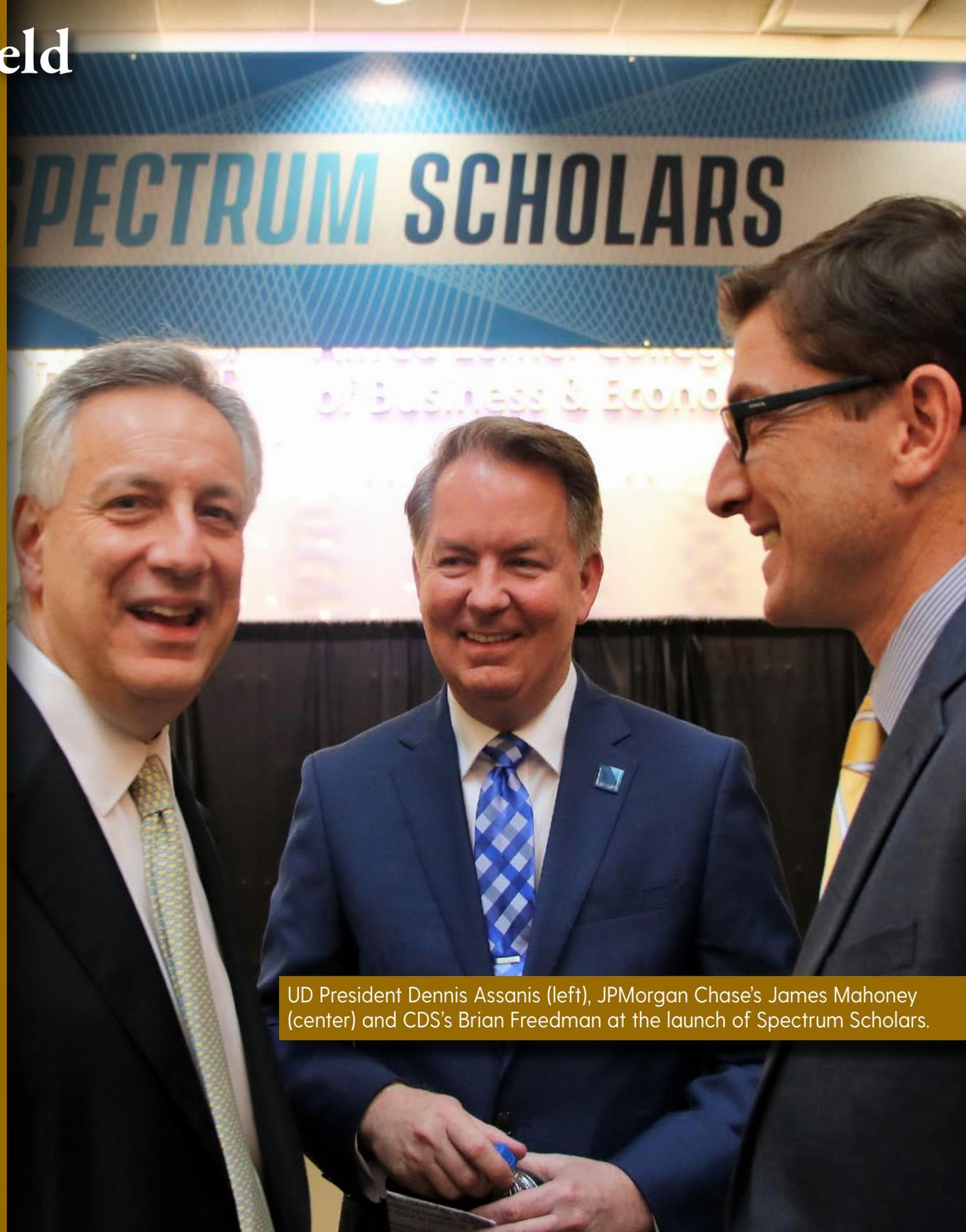
The program, designed by CDS and supported by a \$7.5 million investment over 10 years from [JPMorgan Chase](#), seeks to do exactly that for its autistic students majoring primarily in computer science and electrical engineering by giving them supports and opportunities designed to "level the playing field," says CDS Associate Director [Brian Freedman](#).

"For all their impressive abilities," Freedman said at the program's launch, "students on the autism spectrum often struggle in college and in making the transition to work." Since the launch, Freedman and his Spectrum Scholars team have helped the program's students overcome those challenges by coaching them in executive functioning skills, communication strategies and independent living skills. Faculty liaisons provide them with individualized advice. Before they graduate, the students will receive career development preparation, including mentoring, job site visits and business internships. For some, that preparation will be at JPMorgan Chase.

"We've seen the promise and talent of individuals with autism, and we've seen great business results," said James Mahoney, head of Global Technology & [Inclusion](#) at JPMorgan Chase. The company's [Autism at Work](#) program provides moderate accommodations to JPMC's more than 100 individuals who identify on the spectrum and educates neurotypical coworkers in effective communication strategies. "We do this," Mahoney said, "because it's the right thing to do; ... to help a community which will benefit by well-fitting positions."

The Spectrum Scholars program also encourages the community to support and appreciate students with autism by offering trainings and consultations to other students, faculty, campus staff and employers. Early results are encouraging. At a session held for UD resident assistants, Corey Moore said the training will help him be "more empathetic and understanding."

Such an embrace and support of students with autism, on campus and off, is what the program's planners had in mind. Spectrum Scholars signals to autistic students, notes one of the planners – Sam Rosenthal, herself an autistic UD student – "We believe you are capable of success."



UD President Dennis Assanis (left), JPMorgan Chase's James Mahoney (center) and CDS's Brian Freedman at the launch of Spectrum Scholars.

Enough to turn any election

CDS championed civic engagement on the occasion of its [25-year anniversary](#) by convening experts and advocates a month before the 2018 mid-term election – and challenging them to suggest ways for people with disabilities to overcome barriers that keep a disproportionate number of them from voting.

Rather than look back at CDS's quarter-century of accomplishments, "we wanted our anniversary events to enrich the dialogue about what still needs to happen if America is to realize full inclusion and equitable opportunity for all," said CDS Director Beth Mineo.

Leaders from Washington, D.C.-based advocacy organizations, [Stanford Law School](#) and the [Delaware Department of Justice](#) offered their advice on how more people with disabilities can exercise their right to vote in a [presentation](#) and [forum](#) hosted by CDS at UD's [Roselle Center for the Arts](#).

Improve the physical access to polls and the training of poll workers, said Virginia Atkinson, inclusion advisor for the [International Foundation for Election Systems](#). Helena Berger, president and CEO of the [American Association of People with Disabilities](#), recommended strengthening efforts at informing people with disabilities about issues that impact them. Joining the forum in his last year as Delaware's Attorney General, Matt Denn cautioned that too few candidates feel compelled to voice their positions concerning disability. "It's been pretty rare that I've been asked questions that are specific to [the disability] community," he said. There's a need "to make sure that people are asked the right questions when they run and are held accountable."

Some 3 million people with disabilities – "enough to turn any election" – aren't voting in elections, said Michelle Bishop, voting rights specialist with the [National Disability Rights Network](#). More of them will, said Rabia Belt, a historian and assistant professor at Stanford Law School, when advocates and officials put an end to inaccessible ballots, stringent voter ID requirements and the disenfranchisement of people with "mental disabilities."

"The forum got people thinking, talking ... and acting," said Mineo after the forum. "Some [UD undergraduate students](#) were inspired to become poll-watchers just a few weeks after the call to action."



Energized: UD undergraduate student Max Grozovsky discusses voting issues with Stanford Law School's Rabia Belt.

Exactly what he wants to say

After a classroom activity, [Booker T. Washington Elementary School](#) teacher Wendy Taylor accidentally spilled a set of building blocks across her desk. As she finished picking them up, her student LaSpencer Saunders used his communication device to tell her, “wall.” Taylor checked between her desk and the wall and found a block that had fallen and escaped her notice.

“The thing is that I never taught LaSpencer ‘wall,’” says Taylor, who works with students who have complex communication needs. “He used his device, which groups vocabulary words and concepts by categories, to find the word he needed.”

LaSpencer and his classmates have been speaking their minds much more often since CDS’s [Systematic Processes for Enhancing and Assessing Communication Supports \(SPEACS\)](#) started a literacy initiative in the 2018–2019 school year. SPEACS, a program for training and supporting educators working with children who have complex communication needs, has added an emphasis on literacy to its training aimed at moving students from pre-symbolic to more conventional communication. [Kent County Community School \(KCCS\)](#) and its site at Booker T. Washington embraced that approach.

“Why the emphasis on literacy?” says SPEACS Instructional Coach [Megan Conway](#). “Communication takes many forms: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Each dimension strengthens underlying language abilities.”

While engagement with print is commonplace in classrooms of students without disabilities, this element is often lacking in educational programming for children with complex communication needs. “Communication doesn’t have to be verbal,” says KCCS Instructional Coach Michelle Houston. The SPEACS approach helps fight the mistaken assumption that children who use augmentative and alternative communication supports, either low tech or voice output, will not benefit from literacy instruction, she says.

Taylor says LaSpencer and his classmates show pride in their written work, often asking to revisit their products again and again. LaSpencer has also stopped using his communication device’s prerecorded greeting, opting instead to spell out his name and introduce himself that way. He’s showing how he uses the power of language to say exactly what he wants to say, exactly the way he wants to say it.



LaSpencer Saunders revisits the booklet *Colors* that he and his classmates created.

Improving care coordination

When a federal agency issued a challenge for tech solutions to improve care coordination, [Family Support and Healthcare Alliance Delaware \(Family SHADE\)](#) saw a chance to expand its service to Delaware families and care providers supporting children with special health care needs.

Funded by the [Delaware Division of Public Health](#) and based at CDS, Family SHADE maintains a network of 80-plus Delaware agencies, organizations and private businesses. One of them seemed particularly well-positioned to help. “When we heard about the [\[Health Resources and Services Administration\] HRSA Challenge](#), we immediately thought of one of our member organizations, Danio Diary,” says Family SHADE Project Director [Karen Marsh](#).

[Danio Diary](#), an initiative of the [Green Line Business Group](#), offers a smartphone app, also called Danio Diary, that can store and immediately share health information with a select group of people. “The app was originally targeted to the families and caregivers of seniors,” says Danio Diary President John Hedberg. However, he says that after communicating with Family SHADE, he was excited to tweak the app to provide similar functionality to individuals supporting children with special health care needs.

The [Family SHADE-Danio Diary project](#) was one of seven finalists chosen by HRSA from a field of approximately 60 across the country to advance to the next stage of the challenge.

Olga Goncharova-Zapata, whose late son Victor Zapata had medically complex needs, found the diary helped in multiple ways. She used it as a central place to store information about her son’s hospital visits, medication and symptoms and to make sure medical professionals understood she had expertise in her son’s care.

“It empowers families,” she says. “Providers can see you’re knowledgeable, you’re organized. They treat you as a part of the care team. It’s priceless.”

Since the HRSA Challenge, Family SHADE has been using its connections to reach other potential users and explore ways to sustain the tech development effort.

“We are very excited about the result of our preliminary work,” says Family SHADE Project Coordinator [Bhavana Viswanathan](#). “We plan on expanding it to improve care coordination here in Delaware.”



Olga Goncharova-Zapata (left), Karen Marsh (center) and Bhavana Viswanathan navigate the Danio Diary app.

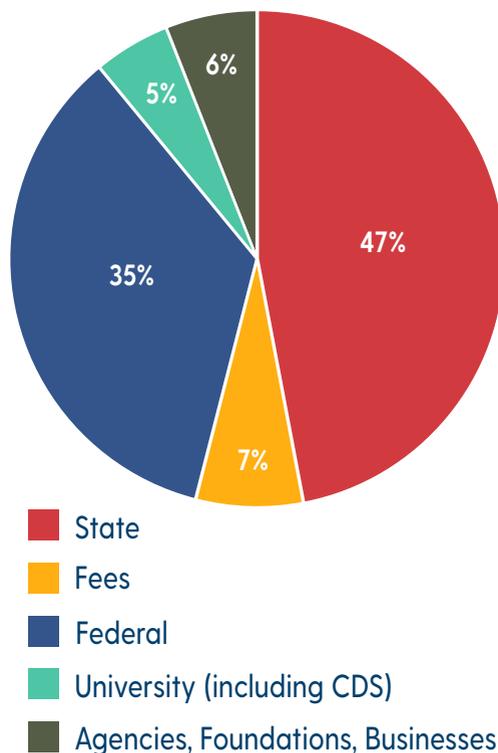
THE YEAR IN REVIEW

FUNDING AND FINANCIALS

The Center for Disabilities Studies had an operating budget of \$6,559,250 from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.

Sources of funding

The vast majority of CDS funding is realized through grants and contracts from federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations, foundations, businesses, fees and the [University of Delaware](#). Included in the federal portion is \$548,111 from the [Administration for Community Living](#), [Administration on Disabilities](#) for our core funding as a [University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities](#). This U.S. government organization is responsible for implementation of the [Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000](#). CDS also benefits from gifts made by individuals and organizations.



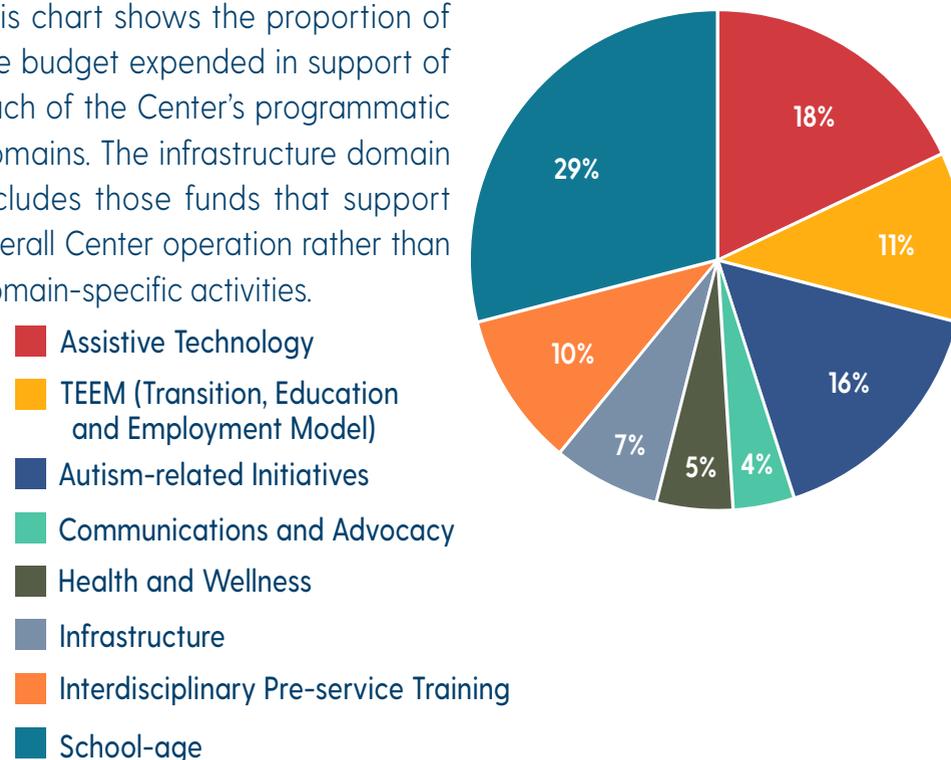
Funding by Source—FY 2019

| Source | Amount |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| State | \$3,074,027 |
| Federal | 2,320,074 |
| Fees | 441,350 |
| Agencies, Foundations, Businesses | 362,992 |
| University | 299,779 |
| CDS | 55,620 |
| Gifts* | 5,408 |
| Grand Total | \$6,559,250 |

* Income from gifts was less than 1% of the total.

Project-specific funding by domain

This chart shows the proportion of the budget expended in support of each of the Center's programmatic domains. The infrastructure domain includes those funds that support overall Center operation rather than domain-specific activities.



Funding by Domain—FY 2019

| Domain | Amount |
|--|--------------------|
| Assistive Technology | \$1,172,510 |
| Autism-related Initiatives | 1,076,859 |
| Communications and Advocacy | 245,421 |
| Health and Wellness | 306,218 |
| Infrastructure | 509,892 |
| Interdisciplinary Pre-service Training | 629,680 |
| School-age | 1,927,241 |
| TEEM | 691,429 |
| Grand Total | \$6,559,250 |

FUNDERS

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Federal Communications Commission

U.S. Department of Education

- Office of Special Education Programs

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

- Administration for Community Living
- Health Resources and Services Administration

STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Delaware Department of Education

Delaware Department of Health and Social Services

- Division of Developmental Disabilities Services
- Division of Public Health
 - Bureau of Oral Health and Dental Services
 - Bureau of Maternal and Child Health

Delaware Department of Labor

- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Delaware Department of Safety and Homeland Security

- Division of Emergency Management

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS, SCHOOLS, FOUNDATIONS AND BUSINESSES

- University of Delaware
- Association of University Centers on Disabilities
- University of South Carolina
- Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation
- JPMorgan Chase & Co.

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We would like to give special THANKS to those listed here for their generous support through gifts received in the year beginning July 1, 2018 and extending through June 30, 2019.

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Maxwell F. Kursh '09 '14M

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THE YEAR IN REVIEW

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Center for Disabilities Studies works to enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families through education, advocacy, service and research. It promotes empowerment and opportunity, accessibility and inclusiveness, so all may fully participate in – and enrich – their communities.

The Center for Disabilities Studies is...

- One of 67 [University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service](#) nationwide, with core funding from the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Disabilities](#).
- The administrative home to the interdisciplinary [Disability Studies](#) minor, the largest minor on campus with enrollment this past year reaching 543 students from 39 majors across all seven colleges at the University of Delaware.



Clockwise from bottom left: [Heather Godwin](#), program manager for [Project DeLAWARE](#); [Sarah Mallory](#), UD assistant professor and interim director of the [Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism \(DNEA\)](#); [Tetsuo “Ted” Sato](#), a graduate of UD’s [Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities \(LEND\)](#) program.

In 2018–2019, CDS staff and faculty cultivated student learning by...

- Teaching or co-teaching 50 courses/course sections and independent studies, reaching a total of 207 graduate and 347 undergraduate students.
- Providing full assistantships/traineeships to 18 graduate students from the [School of Education](#) and the Departments of [Physical Therapy, Communication Sciences and Disorders](#) and [Behavioral Health and Nutrition](#).
- Engaging 39 undergraduate students and four additional graduate students in the work of the Center.

In 2018–2019, CDS staff and faculty fostered the development of new knowledge – and the translation of existing knowledge – by...

- Developing 19 project proposals internally and with external partners.
- Offering 29 conference presentations and publishing eight journal articles and 19 other documents.
- Providing editorial support for 14 journals.
- Being featured in 15 news stories, videos and other information vehicles external to the Center.

In 2018–2019, CDS staff and faculty engaged meaningfully with national, state and local communities by...

- Serving on 43 boards, committees and task forces external to the university (19 percent of these at the national level).
- Collaborating with 21 state agencies, 20 national agencies, 52 other units at CDS, 77 community-based organizations and businesses and 20 other institutions of higher education.

Visit cds.udel.edu for more information about CDS.

Staff and Faculty

[Iqbal Attaelmanan](#)
[Jessica Bass](#)
[George Bear](#)
[Tracy Beird](#)
[Allison Berdoulay](#)
[Blake Bossert](#)
[Debby Boyer](#)
[Amy Brown](#)
[Megan Conway](#)
[Kellene Copeland](#)
[Rosalie Corbett](#)
[Teresita Cuevas](#)
[Zachary Davis](#)
[Kara Downey](#)
[Laura Eisenman](#)
[Brynn Fallah](#)
[Roseann Ferri](#)
[Brian Freedman](#)
[Doretha Freeman](#)
[Kristi Fry](#)
[Wes Garton](#)
[Heather Godwin](#)
[Candy Greenleaf](#)
[Debbie Grise](#)
[Gail Hamblin](#)
[Sarah Hearn](#)
[Pat Heineman](#)
[Rebecca Jewell](#)
[Stephanie Kaznica](#)
[Niki Kendall](#)

[Erin Konrad](#)
[Amy Lane](#)
[Karen Latimer](#)
[Carolyn Lazar](#)
[Rebecca Lloyd](#)
[Pam Lubbers](#)
[Dick Lytton](#)
[Judi MacBride](#)
[Loretta MacLaren](#)
[Sharon MacRae](#)
[Finnigan Madison](#)
[Karl Malgiero](#)
[Sarah Mallory](#)
[Karen Marsh](#)
[Diane Marshall](#)
[Beth Mineo](#)
[Jessica Monahan](#)
[Megan Pell](#)
[Brittany Powers](#)
[Sonja Rathel](#)
[Kittie Rehrig](#)
[Piale Roy](#)
[John Sadowski](#)
[Victor Schaffner](#)
[Carol Scott](#)
[James Sellers](#)
[Melanie Sipko](#)
[Domenica Terinoni](#)
[Bhavana Viswanathan](#)
[Sandy Walls](#)



From top left: CDS team members; [LEND](#) graduates; [CLSC](#) student and CDS intern [Alex Broadbelt](#).
Below: [ACCESS](#)'s [Kristi Fry](#).

Graduate Assistants

[Fiona Lachman](#)
[Jenna Leary](#)
[Timothy Penn](#)
[Kerry Pini](#)
[Majd Subih](#)

[Jackie Pierre](#)
[Aubrey Pilotte](#)
[Samantha Rosenthal](#)
[Samantha Shafer](#)

[Kate Meister](#)
[Roger Mercado](#)
[Brynn Michalcewiz](#)
[Randi Navon](#)
[Danielle Newman](#)
[Laura O'Connor](#)
[Zach Radcliff](#)
[Alicson Saneda](#)
[Vanessa Stansbury](#)

Undergraduate Students

[Sara Bailey](#)
[Phoebe Balascio](#)
[Max Berman](#)
[Emily Brown](#)
[Natalie Brown](#)
[Alexa Georgetown](#)
[Aidan Kedzierski](#)
[Brittany MacKnight](#)
[Emily Marsh](#)
[Shannon McAlister](#)
[Corey Moore](#)
[Miranda Partie](#)

LEND Trainees
[Kelly Bankert](#)
[Kathleen Becker](#)
[Amy Lynne Bednarek](#)
[MaryBeth Clancy](#)
[Emily Curtin](#)
[Matthew Glisson](#)
[Olga Goncharova-Zapata](#)
[Kendra Haynes](#)
[Oshay Johnson](#)
[Megan Kelly](#)
[Jaimie Lafferty](#)
[Jessica Lorenzo-Gaier](#)
[Kristen McMillen-Tate](#)
[Kelsey McMunn](#)

LEND Core Faculty

[Anjana Bhat](#)
[Laura Dewey](#)
[Brian Freedman](#)
[Olga Goncharova-Zapata](#)
[Persephone Jones](#)
[Sarah Mallory](#)
[Anthony Middlebrooks](#)
[Beth Mineo](#)
[Angela Mitchell](#)
[Jillian Trabulsi](#)



Personnel joining or leaving CDS after June 30, 2019 are included in these listings.



Clockwise from bottom left: [Spectrum Scholars](#)' [Wes Garton](#); [PBS](#)'s [Niki Kendall](#); [LEND](#)'s [Anjana Bhat](#); [CLSC](#)'s [Iqbal Attaelmanan](#); [DATI](#)'s [Dick Lytton](#).



Individuals whose service concluded during the past year

Staff and Faculty

[Nicole Anacay](#)
[Debbie Bain](#)
[Jacalyn Baxendale](#)
[Lindsey Ferrero](#)
[Suzanne Milbourne](#)
[Esley Newton](#)
[Michelle Salvatore](#)
[Susan Veenema](#)
[Stephanie Valenzuela](#)
[Chunyan Yang](#)

[Natalie Munoz](#)
[Shelby Schwing](#)
[Amanda Shoenfelt](#)

Undergraduate Students

[Victoria Albanese](#)
[Amanda Bagnell](#)
[Lori Barcello](#)
[Alex Broadbelt](#)
[Helena Bush](#)
[Anthony Drzal](#)
[Chayanna Gallardo](#)
[Lauren Harvey](#)
[Lindsay Kaufman](#)
[Rachel Landis](#)

[Samantha Leonard](#)
[Yutong Li](#)
[Ann Manista](#)
[Samantha Marino](#)
[Rachel Pepe](#)
[Alexis Rea](#)
[Allison Rider](#)
[Amy Sherlock](#)
[Summer Tyler](#)
[Liam Watson](#)
[Erin Williams](#)
[Nicole Wilner](#)
[Lauren Young](#)
[Li Yutong](#)
[Josh Zalewski](#)

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

OUR COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Members of the Community Advisory Council partner with the Center for Disabilities Studies to advance its mission. The council includes individuals with developmental and related disabilities who serve as self-advocates; parents and other family members of individuals with developmental disabilities; representatives from disability-related training, service and advocacy organizations; state agency representatives; and others who advocate on behalf of people with disabilities.



Carmella Giddins-Jones



Lisa Bond



Daniel Madrid



MaryAnn Mieczkowski

CAC Executive Committee

Cory Nourie, chairperson, [Division of Developmental Disabilities Services](#)

Alyssa Cowin, [Delaware Health and Social Services](#), self-advocate

Deborah Dunlap, parent

Linda Heller, self-advocate

Ira Shepherd II, self-advocate

CAC Members

Lisa Bond, [Division of Management Services](#)

Karl Booksh, [University of Delaware](#), self-advocate

Charles Bryant, [Division of Developmental Disabilities Services](#), parent

Anthony Carter, [JEVS Supports for Independence](#)

Karen Doneker, parent

Deborah Dunlap, parent

Susannah Eaton-Ryan, [The Arc of Delaware](#)

Carmella Giddins-Jones, [Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services](#), parent

Stephen Groff, [Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance](#)

Brigitte Hancharick, self-advocate

Terri Hancharick, [Endless Possibilities in the Community](#), parent

Kathy Hughes, family member

Nancy Lemus, parent

Jane Luke, parent

Daniel Madrid, [Office of the State Treasurer](#)

Daniese McMullin-Powell, self-advocate

John McNeal, [State Council for Persons with Disabilities](#), self-advocate

MaryAnn Mieczkowski, [Department of Education](#)

Sandi Miller, [Division for the Visually Impaired](#)

Dava Newnam, [Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities](#)

Wendy Strauss, [Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens](#)

Meedra Surratte, [Parent Information Center of Delaware](#)

Laura Waterland, [Disabilities Law Program](#)

Despina Wilson, [Independent Resources, Inc.](#)

Members whose service concluded during the past year:

Deborah Bradl, Division for the Visually Impaired, parent

Jessica Davenport, self-advocate

Monica Edgar, United Cerebral Palsy of Delaware, Inc., self-advocate

Elisha Jenkins, Division for the Visually Impaired

Pat Maichle, Developmental Disabilities Council, parent

Kim Williams, State Representative



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE CENTER FOR DISABILITIES STUDIES



About the covers

Front: Ava Kaznica works on her tropical sunset-themed landscape at [Artfest's 2019 painting party](#), hosted by CDS and [Art Therapy Express](#). She is accompanied by Jonté Desiré, a UD student volunteer.

Back: More participants, their paintings, volunteers and adaptive brushes at [Artfest 2019](#).



**Center for Disabilities Studies
University of Delaware
College of Education and Human Development**

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