

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES NETWORK PRESENTS

# DD NETWORK NEWS

A Collaborative Publication from MSCDD, DRMS and IDS

SUMMER 2022 ISSUE

## MEGA FUN at the MEGACONFERENCE!

After two years of virtual conferences, it was so good to get back together again at the Mississippi disAbility MegaConference! We enjoyed meeting and learning with hundreds of you. From Mississippians with disabilities and their families to service providers and advocates, our state's disability community had a blast.

Miss out on the fun? Stay tuned for dates and details for 2023!



## YOU'RE INVITED: MEET THE DD NETWORK!

MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES NETWORK

### Community Listening Forums

Share what issues are important to you and learn more about disability organizations in Mississippi.

**FLOWOOD AUGUST 9 4-5:30 P.M.**

G. Chastaine Flynt Memorial Library, 103 Winners Circle

**GULFPORT AUGUST 16 4-5:30 P.M.**

Knight Nonprofit Center, 11975 Seaway Drive

**SOUTHAVEN AUGUST 25 4-5:30 P.M.**

Southaven Public Library, 8554 Northwest Drive

Open to the public.

For more information or accommodations requests, contact [jwalton@drms.ms](mailto:jwalton@drms.ms).

# INSTITUTE FOR DISABILITY STUDIES

This summer, the Institute for Disability Studies (IDS), through its Transition of Teens to Adult Life (ToTAL) Program, hosted its fifth annual Summer Enrichment Academy to provide youth and young adults with the opportunity to prepare for future employment and participate in a paid internship experience. IDS staff were excited to offer this year's Disney-themed Academy as an in-person experience after two years of completely virtual offerings due to COVID-19. The Academy was designed with Walt Disney's "If you can dream it, you can do it" quote in mind. Participants had the option of participating in person at either the Hattiesburg or Gulf Coast Campus of The University of Southern Mississippi. A virtual option was provided for those unable to participate in person. While other students were taking vacations, spending time with family and friends, and just hanging out, a group of 30 youth and young adults chose to participate in this multi-week training and internship experience. The Academy consisted of a general two-week training session followed by individualized six-week work-based learning experiences. Internships were provided in the student's local area and for those under age 16 and outside the local campus communities, virtual educational internships were provided.

IDS offers a variety of year-round adaptive recreation and sports programming, including Quidditch, wheelchair basketball and tennis.

Two staff members, Sylvester Crosby and Robbie Sullivan, will be joining their Deep South Hurricanes teammates to represent Mississippi in the 2022 Wheelchair Softball World Series (WSWS) August 4-6 in Crestwood, Illinois. Teams from 19 states and three countries are expected to participate in this year's double elimination tournament. For more information about the 2022 WSWS, including live bracket updates, please visit <https://wheelchairsoftballws.com/>.

**To learn more about IDS and its programs, please visit [www.usm.edu/ids](http://www.usm.edu/ids), call 601.266.5163 or email [ids@usm.edu](mailto:ids@usm.edu).**



# MISSISSIPPI COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities (MSCDD) promotes projects to empower people with developmental disabilities to achieve their highest potential for self-determination, independence, integration, and inclusion. Working towards this mission, **MSCDD is accepting Innovative Quality of Life Grant applications to meet the needs of people with developmental disabilities and their families.** Applications can demonstrate a new, creative idea, bring in a best practice to the state, or address one or more of the following outcomes from the current state plan: self-advocacy program development, leadership and advocacy skills training, community education and awareness, future planning, or new approaches to services or supports.

Funding per grant is up to \$25,000. Ten (10) or more applications may be approved. Activities must be completed during the time period between October 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. Grant project periods and start dates vary. Application due dates are September 1, 2022 (up to 9-month grant), December 1, 2022 (up to 6-month grant), and March 1, 2023 (up to 3-month grant). Please review the application at [www.msccd.org](http://www.msccd.org) for all the details. If you have questions, contact Christy Ashley at 601-359-5533 or [christy.ashley@dmh.ms.gov](mailto:christy.ashley@dmh.ms.gov).

## DISABILITY RIGHTS MISSISSIPPI

As DRMS plans for the coming year, we want to hear from YOU on which issues you think are most important for us to focus on as we champion the rights of people with disabilities. **Find the link to our survey at [www.drms.ms/fy23goals](http://www.drms.ms/fy23goals).**

**A core part of Disability Rights' mission is to ensure Mississippians with disabilities have full inclusion in education.** We are excited to have hired two new children's rights team members, an attorney and an advocate, to work with families and students with disabilities to ensure their right to a free and appropriate public education is protected. We are also releasing a new Education Support Guide resource booklet to help parents and guardians of students with disabilities learn more about their rights and how to best advocate for their child in the educational setting.

DRMS has recently won a legal challenge to secure our agency's access to vital records and reports needed to protect and advocate for individuals with disabilities who reside in facilities. As the state's only disability advocacy agency with attorneys on staff, we are incredibly proud that we have been able to use our authority and legal advocacy to protect vulnerable Mississippians from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Our litigation regarding health care, mental health care, and ADA violations in Mississippi correctional facilities is ongoing.



**Protect yourself. Help your community. Get the Covid-19 vaccine.**

**Have you seen our commercials? Be sure to find them on our social media channels and share with your networks!**

The DD Network wants to remind you that it's **Worth the Shot!** The COVID-19 vaccine has been proven to be a safe, effective measure against the COVID-19 virus. Receiving the vaccine not only helps keep you safe, but it also can help protect your more vulnerable friends and neighbors.

If you have information you would like to have included in the next issue, please contact Jane Walton at [jwalton@drms.ms](mailto:jwalton@drms.ms).

