

**Institute on  
Human Development  
and Disability**  
*A University Affiliated Program*  
**The University of Georgia**

# UPdate

*Making a difference in the lives of people.*



**INSTITUTE ON  
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND DISABILITY**  
*A University Affiliated Program*

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**MISSION:** The IHDD works with others to create opportunities that will improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and their families. The IHDD advances the understanding of the ability of all people through education, research, and public service.

**UPDATE:** Published three times a year by the Institute on Human Development and Disability, The University of Georgia.

Opinions expressed may not reflect those of the University, the IHDD, or USDHHS. Although we endorse the use of person-first language, all quotes are presented in the words actually used by the person being interviewed. We believe it would be inappropriate to edit or rephrase their comments.

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Zolinda Stoneman, Ph.D., Director  
John Weber, Editor

*On the Cover: Betsy Wynne and children at McPhaul Center (see page 8)*

# NEWSMAKERS

*Trends and happenings from the IHDD*

**CAC On the Move** — IHDD's Community Advisory Council has been energized by a series of full-Council and Standing Subcommittee meetings that will help guide us into our next Five Year Plan.

At the Spring meeting, CAC members elected Michelle Schwartz as chairperson of the Council's Executive Committee. Other officers include Linda Hazinski, vice chairperson, and Ernestine Hooker, secretary.

The Alternative Formats and Accommodations Committee has developed an Alternative Formats Policy Statement that will be widely disseminated. It reflects IHDD's production of documents in alternative formats for conferences and general usage by people with various sensory disabilities.

The Resource Development Committee has reviewed recent funding sources for IHDD projects and explored fund raising methods.

The Outreach and Accommodations Committee is identifying groups with which IHDD may collaborate, and reviewing ways for additional community support.

Also featured at the Spring meeting was establishment of Interest Groups, less structured than the three Subcommittees and representing special areas of interest such as Adolescent/School Age Issues, Multiculturalism, Self-Determination, and others.

The CAC's Fall meeting is scheduled for Sept. 13, noon to 3 p.m., at the IHDD office in Athens.

**Waiting List Campaign** — The campaign to appropriate more funds for home- and community-based services for people with disabilities

*Continued on page 10. . .*

*The 6th Annual Babies Can't Wait Parent Conference this year attracted 187 parents, children, service coordinators and educators to Callaway Gardens for two days of fun and sharing coordinated by IHDD. Featured guest was Georgia's First Lady, Marie Barnes, wife of Governor Roy Barnes. Shown with Mrs. Barnes (right) is IHDD's Mary Rugg, conference coordinator.*



## There Were Two Women. . .

by Zolinda Stoneman, Ph.D.

With these words, Gail Bottoms begins her poem, "To Elaine and Lois." Her poem (p. 4) celebrates the victory of two Georgia women, Lois Curtis and Elaine Wilson, and their attorney, Sue Jamieson, in the Supreme Court case of *Olmstead vs L.C. and E. W.* By a 6 - 3 vote, the high court determined that the protections of the Americans with Disabilities Act applies to people living in institutions. "Undue institutionalization qualifies as discrimination..." (Justice Ginsburg, writing for the majority). The stage was set for change.

Over a year has passed since the *Olmstead* case was decided. There are many exciting forces at work in our state. The Unlock the Waiting Lists! Campaign is obtaining increased funding for community based residential services. Policy makers and government officials are speaking favorably about "self determination." Institutions are being closed. Georgians with disabilities are demanding control over their lives. People First is growing in strength and influence. A strong Declaration of Self Determination written by People First sets out a road map for change (see p. 5). There is a feeling of optimism and promise.

In response to the *Olmstead* decision, President Clinton stated, "Our ultimate goal is a nation that integrates people with disabilities

into the social mainstream, promotes equality of opportunity, and maximizes individual choice" (June 22, 1999). It tempers our optimism to know that even as people with disabilities move to the community, they often are not fully included in their communities, lack equality of opportunity, and have little individual choice.

As a state, we may be close to turning the corner on creating community living opportunities. The work is not yet done, but change is in the air. Now we must learn how to ensure that moving from one setting to another actually improves

people's lives. Friends, meaningful days, jobs, purposeful community roles, choice, safety... these important aspects of life are not automatic. One person at a time, we can think about how to make meaningful change happen. As our state system changes, we are challenged to learn how to support meaningful change in the lives of large numbers of people in a short time. We must learn quickly. People have been waiting too long.

*There were two women, Elaine and Lois. Thanks Lois, thanks Elaine.*

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

*"They said I would never make it on my own, but I proved them wrong. I've made a difference in my life. After I visited the group home in Monroe, I knew I was on my way out (of the institution) because I had support. Now I live in my own apartment. I like my own independence - I like my privacy. Someone asked me once if I wanted a roommate and I said 'no way!'"*

- Mary Jean Bradley, Athens People First and IHDD Community Advisory Council Member (Mary Jean lived in an institution in Augusta from age 11 to age 30.)

# IHDD Partners with Georgia's Self-Determination Team

IHDD has been actively involved in partnership with People First of Georgia members to move the Self-Determination agenda forward.

Included is our support for the Self-Determination Team – self-advocates who travel statewide to reach others about self-advocacy

and Self-Determination, and what is needed to change the system so that people with disabilities have control over their lives.

In addition to working with the Self-Determination Team, a few of our other activities related to Self-Determination are listed below:

## May 1997

— IHDD sponsored “Who’s the Boss – A Think Tank of the Future of Self-Determination in Georgia.” We invited national experts on Self-Determination to meet with Georgia self-advocates, families, providers, and policy makers to plan “first steps” for our state in moving toward Self-Determination. Enthusiasm was high. People First members clearly

stated their desire to have control over decisions affecting their lives.

**1998** — People First received a grant to hold a two-day Leadership Institute on Self-Determination to train self-advocates to be leaders in the Self-Determination movement in Georgia. IHDD hosted the workshop and assisted with meeting arrangements. Ruthie Beckwith of People First of Tennessee was the trainer. Participants learned about Self-Determination and how to work to change the system. Each regional representative received a mini-grant to hold Self-Determination activities in their communities.

**1999** — To celebrate and bring public awareness to the many dynamic changes in the lives of men and women who have moved out of institutions, IHDD organized a Community Freedom Celebration. This celebration, held in collaboration with People First and the Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities, honored Lois Curtis, Elaine Wilson, and their attorney Sue Jamieson of Atlanta Legal Aid for their work in arguing the Olmstead case and freeing people from institutions across the nation. Many of the 250 participants shared stories of their past lives in institutions and their current lives in the community.

**February 2000** — IHDD collaborated with nine other states in

## To Elaine and Lois

*There were two women, Elaine and Lois,  
in an institution that wasn't their choice.  
They wanted out so they used their voice.*

*To make a difference was their plan,  
to help their selves and their fellow man.  
They hired the lawyers who said "We can."  
and went to fight, their future to plan.*

*Elaine and Lois went through a big fight,  
to set folks straight and put things right.*

*To tell institutions to go fly a kite.*

*To live in their community is a God given right.  
They convinced the judge they could live on their own,  
make their own choices and have their own home.*

*Thanks Lois, thanks Elaine.*

*Your action has made it even more plain.*

*Stand up for yourself, a self advocate be.*

*There is nothing to lose and everything to gain.*

*So tonight we honor you both for what you have done.*

*You fought with the system and thank God you won!*

*Gail Bottoms*

*Past President, People First of Georgia*

*August 5, 1999*

our region and with People First to plan and implement the Southeast Regional Conference on Self-Determination, which was held in Winston-Salem. Self-advocates and others shared successes and strategies in making Self-Determination a reality. IHDD provided personal support and transportation to make sure that a large number of Georgia's self-advocates could attend.

**June 2000** — IHDD assisted People First members in drafting the Georgia Declaration of Self-Determination at the statewide People First conference. This declaration will be used by the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission and the Medicaid Task Force as they work to shape the future of Self-Determination policy for people with disabilities in Georgia.

## Self-Determination

### Definition

Self-Determination is a systems change movement that allows people with disabilities to determine their own lives through the control of money and resources, with support from people they choose.

### The Four Principles

Freedom – to plan a real life

Authority – to control a targeted

amount of money and resources

Support – from friends, family,

community members and service providers (people we choose) for building a life in our community

Responsibility – to make good

decisions and give back to the community

### Information

For more information about Self-Determination and People First of Georgia, Inc., contact People First, 850 College Station Rd., Athens, GA 30602-4806, (706) 542-6086, Fax (706) 542-4815, TTY (706) 542-6629.

# Declaration of Self-Determination

*Adopted by People First of Georgia, Inc.  
June 9, 2000, St. Simons Island, Georgia*

We, the people with disabilities in Georgia, our families, advocates, friends, staff, and providers, make the following Statement of Self-Determination:

Self-Determination means achieving our own goals and dreams by having power over our lives, money, resources, and the things we own. It means having choices about where we live and work and choosing the people in our lives.

We are human beings with the same human and civil rights as all others. This includes people with serious disabilities and people who don't communicate the same way others do. We all deserve the respect and freedom others have. Self-Determination means having equal rights in our community.

The principles of Self-Determination are:

#### *Freedom –*

- ◆ To plan our own lives.
- ◆ To take risks, benefit from our successes, and learn from our mistakes.
- ◆ To be with people we are close to, to have friends, to date, to be married, and to have our own families.

#### *Authority –*

- ◆ To control our money, services and the supports we receive.
- ◆ To own property, like our own homes, and valuable possessions.
- ◆ To hire and fire the people who provide our services.
- ◆ To be a part of every decision that affects our lives, including those decisions made in our communities, state, and nation.

#### *Support –*

- ◆ To help and encourage us in our daily lives and help us achieve our goals and dreams.
- ◆ To be provided by the people we choose, including our friends and families.
- ◆ To be provided where we need it, when we need it.

#### *Responsibility –*

- ◆ To use our money wisely by making good decisions, paying our bills and taxes, and staying on budget.
- ◆ To be good citizens and employees.
- ◆ To give back to the community by helping others and sharing our gifts and talents.

We charge the state of Georgia and all others to uphold the principles of Self-Determination in all supports and services provided to people with disabilities and their families in the state of Georgia.

*Children of Choice*

## Adoptive/Foster Families Come in All Sizes, Shapes, and Colors

From one to twenty one and more, parents are adding children with disabilities to their families. Tina and Richard Aquino, veteran foster and foster/adoptive parents now have 13 children in their family and are planning to add at least one more this year. The Aquino family is multi-ethnic and multi-racial and their seven adopted and three foster children have a variety of physical, emotional and cognitive challenges and some are sibling groups.

By contrast, about half the families adopting children with disabilities adopt only one child with a disability.

Many adoptive families of children with disabilities are somewhere in between – like the Lee-Nesmith family who have adopted three children with disabilities or special adoption needs and from different ethnic backgrounds.

Tina Aquino and Sherry Lee, both professionals in the field of human development as well as active adoptive parents, have teamed up to offer training to employees of the Department of Human Resources who work to find families for children available for adoption and to current and potential adoptive and foster parents. Funded by the Office of Adoption this training, called Children of Choice, is designed to increase the rate at which children with disabilities or special adoption needs are adopted or find other per-



*The Lee-Nesmith Family*

manent placements. This training is important because 50% of children currently in foster care in Georgia have an identified disability. Most of the children available for adoption through the Office of Adoption have either a disability or special adoption needs.

Training has been held for workers in Macon, Camilla, Dublin, Cleveland and Richmond Hill. Additional training is scheduled in Athens, Toccoa, metro Atlanta, Jonesboro, Newnan) and other areas of the state.

The training helps both workers and parents understand the historical basis for society's negative attitudes towards

people with disabilities. Trainees participate in experiences designed to help them understand their own attitudes and prejudices. They also learn about the positive aspects of parenting children with disabilities and the strengths of families who are interested in adopting children with disabilities.

Evaluations of training events show that both workers and parents appreciate learning from professionals who are also active foster and adoptive parents who have "been there and done that." A majority of participants express more positive attitudes toward children with disabilities after the training.

Adoptive families of children with disabilities often comment that despite the undeniable challenges of parenting a child (or children) with disabilities or special adoption needs, the rewards outweigh the challenges. This comment is supported by research findings. Dr. Laraine Glidden, a well-known researcher in the field, found that parents who adopt children with disabilities are a very diverse group. Income, education or culture did not



*The Aquino Family*

seem to matter. Two well documented studies (Johnson, Pfaltzgraff & Glidden, 1995, and Glidden, 1997) revealed that of the adoptive parents of children with disabilities in the study, 50% adopted a second child and 33% adopted two or more children with disabilities.

Many other studies of adoptive families of children with disabilities indicate findings of joy and satisfaction as well as benefits including: increased marital closeness; increased marital satisfaction; increased parental happiness; a positive impact on siblings; a closer,

stronger family; greater patience, compassion and unselfishness; increased family cohesion; increased involvement in family, school and community; and, personal growth.

Families interested in fostering or adopting a child or children with disabilities can get information on a particular disability via mail or fax by calling Parent to Parent toll free 800-229-2038. Parents who want to talk to experienced parents can also request to be matched with a resource parent who is parenting a child with similar disabilities to a child they are parenting or interested in parenting through foster-care or

adoption by calling the above number. For matching, callers should identify themselves as potential or current foster/adoptive parents interested in a particular child. These resources are also available to adoption workers by calling the above number and identifying themselves as seeking resources for a particular child in the system.

For more information about training available through this project call Kate Smith at (706) 583-0081.

The Office of Adoptions hotline can provide more information or referral to local resources for adoption at (888) 460-2467.

## DISSEMINATION

### Waddie Welcome Videotape Garner National Honors

When IHDD first told the story of how Mr. Waddie Welcome transitioned from a nursing home to community living, we did not foresee the response the story would have in Georgia and throughout the nation. Now, after the videotape *Waddie Welcome: A Man Who Cannot Be Denied* has been in circulation for two years, we can report that the project has won national honors and sales are continuing through the efforts of a national distributor.

Among the honors garnered by the videotape are:

- 1998 Gold CINDY (first place), Non-Broadcast Documentary, International Association of Audio Visual Communicators

- 1998 Chris Award (Honorable Mention), Columbus International Film & Video Festival

- 1999 Certificate of Merit, Human Relations-Social Interest Issues, Intercom Chicago International Film Festival

In addition, the videotape was one of several components contributing to the 1998 Collaboration Award (first place) from TASH, a competition entered by the Georgia Advocacy Office.

The videotape was sponsored by IHDD; Nareel Reedus was the director and Gillian Grable was the executive producer.

Mr. Welcome is a man with severe disabilities who for years shared his life with family and friends. After his caregiver died, he moved to a nursing home. It

was there that a citizen advocate found Mr. Welcome, learned of his desire to once again live in the community, and formed a community circle of support that did, indeed, find an appropriate home for Mr. Welcome.



Copies of the videotape are \$89 plus \$6 shipping and handling from Program Development Associates, 5620 Business Ave., Suite B, Cicero, NY 13039, (315) 452-0643; [www.pdassoc.com](http://www.pdassoc.com)

## "Betsy Wynne, ADA Coordinator. May I help you?"

*The Americans with Disabilities Act is now a decade old. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities and telecommunications.*

*The training of people with and without disabilities to understand ADA regulations and how ADA may benefit all people is an important function of the IHDD. Since 1997, this task has been assigned to Betsy Wynne.*

*Betsy started with IHDD as a volunteer. Her enthusiasm for work, her collaboration with the staff, and her appreciation for the rights of people with disabilities made it evident that Betsy would be a valued member of the staff. After four months as a volunteer, Betsy was named IHDD ADA coordinator.*

*You don't know Betsy? Well, read on...*

Betsy Wynne's office is lined with reference binders on just about any topic the Americans with Disabilities Act has produced in the last decade. These references represent the technical side of ADA, the nitty-gritty that is checked and double-checked whenever a question is asked about how to interpret an ADA regulation. Though Betsy devotes time each day studying formal ADA procedure, she is more frequently on the telephone

demystifying ADA, setting up a training, or arranging an exhibit. Or, she is working on correspondence, e-mail, and internet research on her computer. Betsy uses the latest voice-to-word computer software to speed her typing, software that the ADA encourages as an accommodation in the workplace for people with mobility disabilities.

On this typically busy day, Betsy is arranging to participate in the ADA Torch Relay that will wind its way through Athens to the courthouse and a brief ceremony commemorating ADA's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. She's also gathering handouts and polishing her notes for a presentation later in the month in Atlanta to staffers in the Special Olympics office. And, each day is not complete until she checks her voice-mail and e-mail for ADA questions from community leaders, and queries on the ADA Child Care LINK toll-free telephone number.

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Just down the hall from Betsy's office, on the fringe of the IHDD administrative area, is a classroom for three-year

olds. It's part of the McPhaul Child and Family Development Center, a laboratory school at the University of Georgia's College of Family and Consumer Sciences. McPhaul's headquarters is a mile away on the UGA South Campus, but this satellite class in the River's Crossing building has all the components of McPhaul's main facility.

For Betsy, the McPhaul classroom is a reminder of just how far she has come since 1971 when she first attended McPhaul classes — well before McPhaul's formal inclusion program began in 1985. At that time, she was the only child with a disability (cerebral palsy), and was warmly embraced by teachers and students.

Growing up in rural Oglethorpe County, Betsy lacked the daily interaction with playmates and welcomed the opportunities for sharing



*Becky Olson (right), McPhaul inclusion coordinator and director, explains new Center features to Betsy and her mother.*

with other McPhaul children. Concurrently with the McPhaul program, Betsy had speech therapy at UGA's speech and language laboratory in the College of Education. From there on, Betsy's life was focused on education. After high school, she graduated from Truett McConnell College with additional classes at Athens Tech. She was named one of two Truett McConnell Outstanding Young Alumni for 1998-99.

Betsy recently took time from her work to visit the McPhaul Center, noting the improved accessibility and fielding questions from the children who were fascinated to interact with a former McPhaul student.

Back in her office, Betsy thought about the fun of being a kid again. Then the telephone jarred her back to reality; a service provider was calling with a question on ADA accessibility. Betsy replied, smiled with the satisfaction of knowing she was of assistance to someone in need, and really thought that being ADA Coordinator for IHDD was more fun than being a kid again.

## IHDD Trainings Demystify ADA Regulations

ADA training at the IHDD is funded through a grant from the Georgia ADA Exchange and is linked to 10 Exchange affiliates in Georgia. We reach out to people with disabilities, civic club members and service providers in northeast Georgia on best practices that support the rights of people with disabilities. We also help to alleviate misperceptions toward the ADA by the business community.

In Fiscal Year 1999-2000, the ADA office trained some 512

### STUDENT PROFILE

**Alicia Bevil, Ph.D.**  
Special Education

#### Education:

B.S. Business Administration, U. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
M.Ed. Special Education, U. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
Ph.D. Special Education, University of Georgia

#### Current Position:

Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Special Education at Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio. Working in the Division of Intervention Services; responsibilities include teaching graduate coursework in Early Childhood Special Education, conducting research in the field, and supervising student interns.

#### Value of the IHDD Experience:

"I started as a graduate associate on the Leadership grant in the Fall of 1996. This has been a beneficial experience because I've been given such a wide range of opportunities as part of my assistantship. I've taught many courses in the Department of Special Education at UGA, and I believe those experiences, coupled with the supervision I did, opened doors for me as I looked for a university faculty position.

"The opportunities to design and conduct technical assistance training events and to experiment with distance learning strategies were really important. Typically, GAs don't get much experience outside teaching and supervision, but I was able to do all of these things plus take part in research projects conducted by Dr. Stoneman and Dr. Vail."

Alicia is the author of a book of adoption stories for the IHDD's Children of Choice project.



people. The trainings varied from 10 employees of the Washington County tourism advisory committee to more than 200 people with disabilities and their friends and advisors attending the People First of Georgia statewide conference in St. Simons Island. ADA trainings are also held in classes for UGA students, and may also involve information on disability awareness and person-first language.

Trainings frequently start with an

overview of the five ADA titles and follow with information on ADA topics of particular interest to the audience. An autism support group may want information on education and employment for people with cognitive disabilities; a Sertoma civic club may want to know how commercial businesses may comply with the ADA.

To schedule an ADA training, call (706) 542-3968, or e-mail to [bfw@arches.uga.edu](mailto:bfw@arches.uga.edu).

# NEWSMAKERS

The Unlock the Waiting Lists! Campaign maintains a database of people and families who are on state waiting lists. Anyone who wishes to register with the campaign may call 1-877-WAITLIST.

(Continued from page 2)

made progress this year in the Georgia state legislature. At the close of the legislative session this Spring, campaign efforts showed:



- Services for 100 people with severe physical disabilities/traumatic brain injuries who are on the Independent Care Waiver waiting list.
- Services for 300 people with mental retardation

who are on the waiting list.

- Services for 3,800 people who are older adults or people with disabilities on the community care waiting lists.

Most of the funds will serve as state matching dollars to bring down more federal Medicaid dollars.

Though advocates are thankful for support by Governor Barnes and other key legislators, much remains to be done in the quest for services. According to Beth Tumlin of Marietta, campaign chairperson, Georgia ranks 50<sup>th</sup> in the total per capita number of people served in all mental retardation residential services. In 1998, Georgia's family support spending ranked 47<sup>th</sup> in the country.

**ADA and Child Care** — The ADA Child Care LINK Project, which IHDD coordinates through a grant from the Georgia Child Care Council, is designed to help child care personnel support the inclusion of children with disabilities through understanding responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act. We have held a three-hour GSAMS distance learning conference and an all-day training for some 131 people, published two newsletters (with two more to come), and maintain a toll-free technical assistance line (800-590-5920).

**Adoption Resources** — Publications from the IHDD's Children of Choice project, to be released soon, include: *A Curriculum Guide for Current and Potential Foster and Adoptive Parents*, *A Curriculum Guide for Adoption Workers*, a glossary of disability terms to be included in the *My Turn Now* book and web-site, and *Children of Choice: Successful Adoptive Families of Children with Disabilities*. For information, call (706) 542-6089.

**The Resource Guide** — A guide of resources for people with disabilities and their families is now in circulation throughout Georgia thanks to the Governor's Council and IHDD. The first edition of the guide was published in 1995 to support parents of

IHDD provided transportation and support for some of the self advocates from People First of Georgia who attended the Southeast Regional Conference on Self-Determination in Winston Salem. Here People First members and advisors are shown in Athens prior to start of the trip.



## LET'S HEAR FROM YOU!

IHDD is creating a new Five Year Plan and welcomes input from all people who want to make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities and their families.

Philosophy and goals of the IHDD's four program areas (Interdisciplinary Preservice Education, Outreach and Technical Assistance, Research, and Dissemination) were distributed to Community Advisory Council members at the May meeting and are available from IHDD on request. Are the goals appropriate? Are there other programs on which we should focus? Where can IHDD make a difference long-term?

At the CAC's Fall meeting, Sept. 13, IHDD and CAC will work exclusively on the Five Year Plan. Send us your suggestions now!

children with disabilities. The updated version – more than 230 pages – was expanded to include a comprehensive list of services, provider agencies and support groups for all people with disabilities. It is published in a 3-ring binder and subdivided into two parts: Laws and service delivery systems, and support networks. There are chapters on Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, Rehabilitation Services, and Children's Supports.

The Resource Guide was coordinated and edited by Sherry Lee, IHDD's Individual and Family Support Coordinator, and funded by the Governor's Council. For copies of the guide, call the Governor's Council (404-657-2126) or IHDD.

**Multicultural Collaborative** — IHDD's Multicultural Collaborative is designed to facilitate the improvement of early intervention services for children from families of diverse cultures in Georgia. Training and technical assistance are provided to service coordinators and other professionals in the Babies Can't Wait program on issues related to cultural competence.

The Collaborative provides a forum for professionals in early intervention to share information, identify barriers to services, and problem solve. The group also serves as an advisory council on issues of cultural competence to the state Babies Can't Wait office. Specific areas that have been addressed this year include the development of protocols for the

translation of documents from English into other languages and the implementation of these protocols in translating a set of basic documents including a parent booklet and intake forms into Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese.

**The Person Comes First** — Person-First Language is the appropriate language when writing or talking about people with disabilities. When we speak of people with disabilities with dignity, we then begin to view them with dignity and thus begin to treat them with dignity.

Person-sensitive language is easy to learn. It contains five basic principles that give person-first language priority over group-first language ("People with disabilities" is more sensitive than "the disabled.") It also cautions against coining "nice" phrases such as "physically challenged" or "differently abled" – they don't hide disability and they can produce confusion.

Educators, journalists, service providers and others who care about appropriate language may request a Person-First Language data sheet from IHDD. Or contact us to schedule a comprehensive training that includes principles and examples of person-first language, disability awareness, and effective communication as interpreted by the ADA. The number is (706) 542-3457, [jweber@arches.uga.edu](mailto:jweber@arches.uga.edu).

## COMING EVENTS

Sept. 13, Athens – IHDD Community Advisory Council meeting, noon to 3 p.m.

Sept. 20-22, Savannah – 'Explode into the Future' Transition Conference, DOE, DHR, DRS. (404) 827-8696.

Oct. 21, Athens – Annual Legislative Brunch, CODA. (706) 542-6085

Oct. 26-29, Duluth – Southeast Regional Institute on Deafness, Atlanta Marriott Gwinnett Place. (404) 657-3034; [www.gpc.peachnet.edu/serid2000](http://www.gpc.peachnet.edu/serid2000)

Nov. 10-12, Atlanta – World Congress & Exposition on Disabilities, Georgia International Convention Center. (877) 923-3976, [www.wcdexpo.com](http://www.wcdexpo.com)





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## Georgia PAS Corps: Building Better Communities

Members of the Georgia Personal Assistance Service Corps/AmeriCorps perform a number of public projects each year in a program that supports people with disabilities. One recent project involved building a wheelchair ramp at the home of an Athens resident with a disability. Home Depot donated construction materials for the ramp that was built to ADA specifications with supervision by

Danny Overstreet, a consultant with Ramps for Champs. The Georgia PAS Corps, an IHDD program since 1994, is one of only three national AmeriCorps programs providing personal assistance services to people with disabilities. Members work part time and receive a living allowance and an educational award. For information, call (706) 542-3907.



Above, Nora Camann (right) and Sydney Bacchus cut a support beam for the ramp while (left) Katie Harris assembles a handrail. At right, sharing approval of the finished ramp are (from left) James Brightman, Danny Overstreet, and Ted Gary.



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Above, Nora Camann (right) and Sydney Bacchus cut a support beam for the ramp while (left) Katie Harris assembles a handrail. At right, sharing approval of the finished ramp are (from left) James Brightman, Danny Overstreet, and Ted Gary.

