



Annual Report 2024

Governor's Council on Disability



GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL
ON DISABILITY



Michael L. Parson
Governor

Ronald Hack
Council Chair

Claudia Browner
Executive Director

December 13, 2024

Dear Governor Parson, Governor-elect Mike Kehoe, General Assembly, Commissioner Zellers, and Citizens of Missouri,

The Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) is excited to present the Annual Report for 2024.

The GCD operates as a state division under the Office of Administration, serving as an advisory council dedicated to fostering full participation and inclusion of Missourians with disabilities across all areas of community living. This is achieved by educating citizens, state agencies, businesses, organizations, and others about their rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act and related legislation.

The GCD also manages the State of Missouri's Disability Web Portal, which offers a wealth of disability-related resources and information, in addition to providing educational training programs aimed at enhancing disability awareness and inclusion in every aspect of life.

Engaging in employment initiatives, the GCD raises awareness about the significance of employment for individuals with disabilities and highlights their valuable contributions to the workforce.

Furthermore, the GCD collaborates with disability organizations to inform citizens about the legislative process in Missouri. The annual Legislative Priorities Poll gathers insights from the disability community, which informs the General Assembly about critical issues. Throughout the legislative session, the GCD leads the Legislative Education Project and publishes a weekly overview of disability-related legislation in its Legislative Update newsletter.

The GCD offers programs for transition-age youth, equipping students with disabilities with learning and leadership training to ensure a successful transition from high school to post-secondary education or employment.

For any questions or comments regarding the information in the 2024 Annual Report, please reach out to the GCD at 573-751-2600 or via email at gcd@oa.mo.gov.

Sincerely,

Ronald Hack
Council Chair

Claudia Browner
Executive Director

Office of Administration

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History

The Governor's Council on Disability has its origins in the World War II era. In 1947, President Harry S. Truman issued an Executive Order that led to the creation of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. This Committee was designed to help WWII veterans with disabilities reintegrate into the civilian job market. By 1949, Missouri formed its own Governor's Committee to address work-related challenges faced by individuals with disabilities. In 1977, the Governor's Committee was officially designated as a state agency, and in 1994, it underwent a name change and a statute update to expand its mission beyond just employment. This transformation allowed the Governor's Council on Disability to represent over one million Missourians with disabilities across various aspects of life, including state government.

Mission

To provide leadership and support so people with disabilities achieve inclusion and independence.

Vision

The Missouri Governor's Council on Disability will be recognized statewide as the primary organization providing leadership to improve the lives of Missouri citizens with disabilities.

Goals

The Governor's Council on Disability's Strategic and Operational Plan was updated and approved for 2023 - 2027 on November 18, 2022. The Goals are:

- Goal I: Advise all state agencies and non-governmental organizations to advocate for policies and practices that impact Missouri citizens with disabilities.
- Goal II: Encourage system changes and public policies that eliminate barriers and support the wellbeing and independence of individuals with disabilities.
- Goal III: Expand opportunities for independence for people with disabilities in all aspects of their lives.
- Goal IV: Gather input from the public on disability related issues and report the results of this information.
- Goal V: Develop, explore, and implement strategies to increase resources for the operating efficiency of the Council.

For the complete Strategic Plan, please visit our website at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd> and click on Strategic Plan.

Council Membership

- 20 members and a chairperson comprise the Council.
- Council members are appointed by the Governor.
- The appointment of the chairperson requires the advice and consent of the Missouri Senate.
- Members represent each of the eight U.S. Congressional Districts.
- The majority of members are people with disabilities.
- The Governor’s Council on Disability is comprised of the following committees: Executive, Advocacy, and Programs.
- The Council conducts quarterly meetings.
- Currently, there are five Council member positions vacant.



Ronald Hack
Council Chair
Sunset Hills
Appointed: 6/28/22
Confirmed: 3/8/23



Steve Ahrens
Member 1
Jefferson City
Appointed: 6/5/24



Charles Comstock II
6th Congressional District
Kirksville
First Appointed: 7/29/10



Wayne Crawford
Member 3
Marshall
First Appointed: 3/15/21



Betty Davidson
Member 5
St. Louis
First Appointed: 11/16/09



Stacey Elster
Member 7
Wildwood
First Appointed: 03/15/24



Rosemary Hendon
8th Congressional District
West Plains
First Appointed: 1/6/17



Raymond “Chip” Hailey
7th Congressional District
Joplin
First Appointed: 1/6/17



Katie Jones
Member 4
St. Peters
First Appointed: 10/27/17



Kim Lackey
Member 12
St. Louis
First Appointed: 7/9/19



Elijah Mayfield
Member 11
Jefferson City
First Appointed: 3/14/18



Susan Orton
Member 8
Creve Coeur
First Appointed: 7/19/05



Andrew Sartorius
3rd Congressional District
Jefferson City
First Appointed: 7/9/19



Jason Schott
Member 6
Ste. Genevieve
First Appointed: 6/5/24

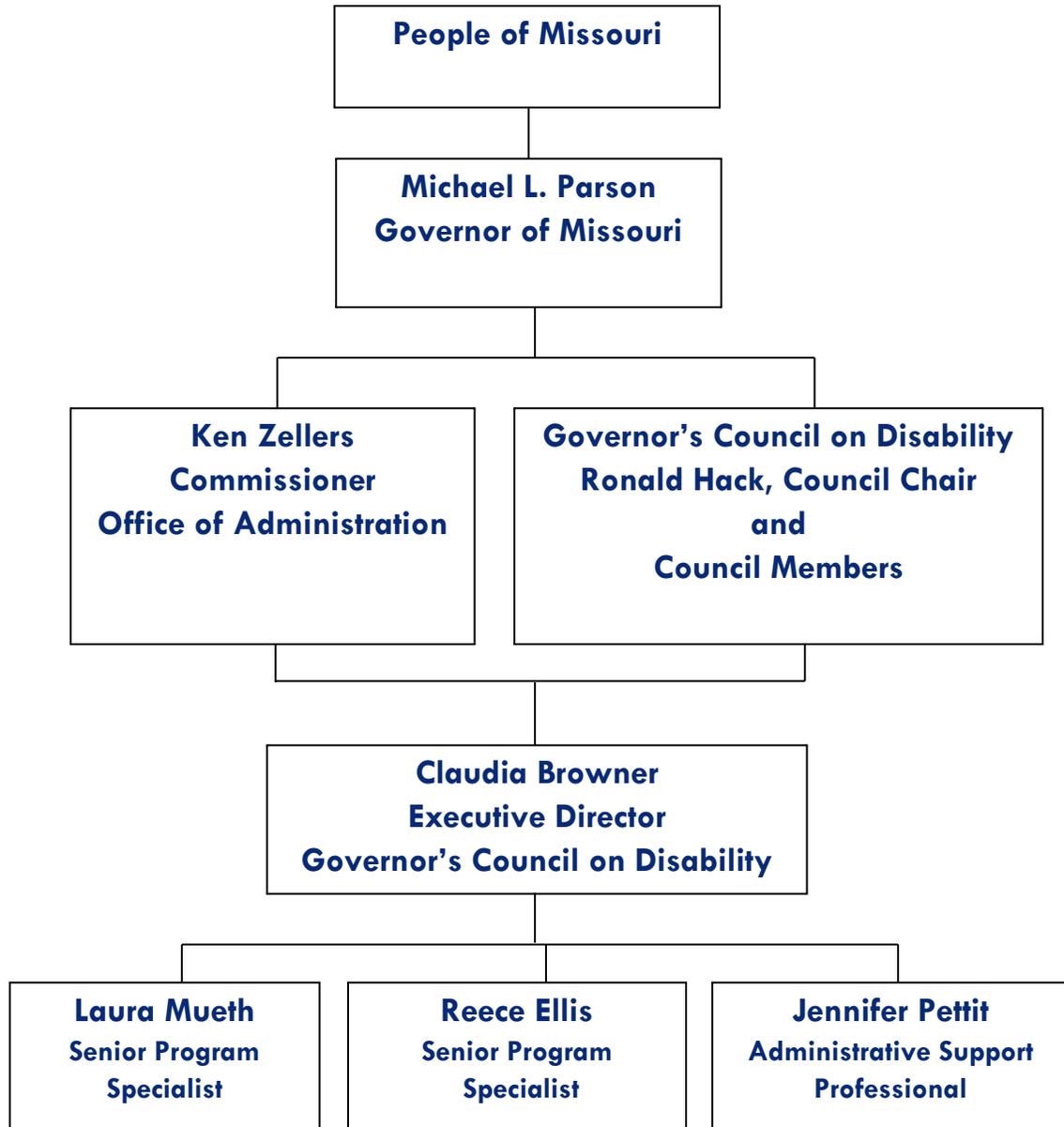


Lesia Shelton
4th Congressional District
Buffalo
First Appointed: 7/9/19



Robert Wallace
Member 2
St. Louis
First Appointed: 5/10/10

Organizational Structure



Council Events 2024

Council Membership

- Council member resignations – Traci Ritter (1/26/25) and Joan Bergstrom (3/1/24)
- New Council member appointments – Stacey Elster (3/15/24), Steve Ahrens (6/5/24), and Jason Schott (6/5/24)

Programs and Initiatives

- GCD participated in the Master Plan on Aging Advisory Council – Housing and Aging in Place Subcommittee
- GCD collaborated with other disability agencies and organizations on planning and facilitating Disability Rights Legislative Day on March 13
- GCD participated in Model Employer initiative committees to improve employment outcomes for Missourians with disabilities
- GCD facilitated quarterly meetings of the state government ADA Coordinator Network
- GCD participated in awareness activities and event planning to celebrate National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), Black History Month, and Veterans Day
- GCD developed and maintained partnerships among the state departments and state department liaisons participate in the quarterly Council meetings and provide input from their departments
- GCD staff provided educational presentations to organizations, agencies, and employers throughout Missouri on a variety of disability-related topics such as employment of people with disabilities, disability awareness, accessibility, service animals and the GCD youth program
- GCD staff served on state agency teams, committees and boards to exchange information and collaborate with disability-related organizations
- GCD staff participated in the National Association of Youth Leadership Forums (AYLF)
- GCD Executive Director participated in the National Association of Governor's Councils
- GCD published six issues of the GCD Newsletter covering disability-related topics
- GCD continued its annual programs:
 - GCD Awards Programs – Inclusion Award and Youth Leadership Award
 - GCD Poster Contest celebrating National Disability Employment Awareness Month
 - GCD Youth Program
 - Missouri Youth Leadership Forum
 - Legislative Programs
 - Legislative Education Project (LEP)
 - Legislative Priorities Poll
 - Legislative Update
 - Disability Rights Legislative Day

Finances

The Governor’s Council on Disability’s programs and services are funded from General Revenue, except for the youth transition program. This funding covers personnel costs and expenses for most Council activities.

The Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025) budget is listed below:

Personnel (4 FTE):	\$222,997.00
Operating Expenses:	<u>\$ 25,283.00</u>
Total:	\$248,280.00

At the time of publication, the Council has spent/encumbered \$12,593 in operating expenses, or 49% of the FY25 budget. Expenses include supplies, postage, telecommunications, Council meeting expenses, travel, professional development, disability accommodations, and expenses for GCD programs.

The Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF) program is **not** funded from General Revenue funds. This program is funded through a combination of sponsorships and donations. Paraquad, Inc., a Center for Independent Living in St. Louis, serves as the 501(c)3 fiscal agent for the program.

The following is a summary of the **2024 MO-YLF** budget and program expenditures.

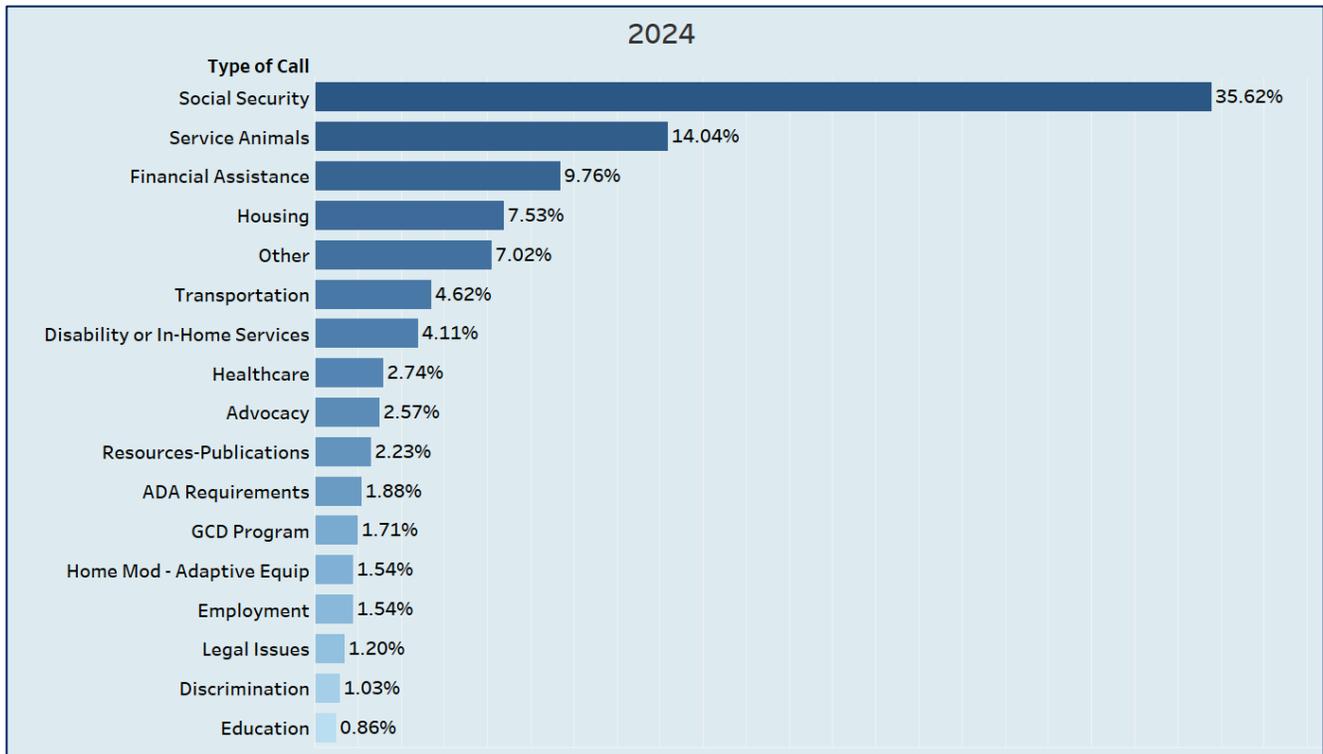
Beginning balance in MO-YLF account on January 1, 2024:	\$117,281.10
Donations/sponsorships/deposits received in 2024:	\$ 78,760.00
MO-YLF Expenditures	<u>\$ (74,255.56)</u>
Balance in MO-YLF account (December 31, 2024)	\$121,775.54

Programs and Initiatives

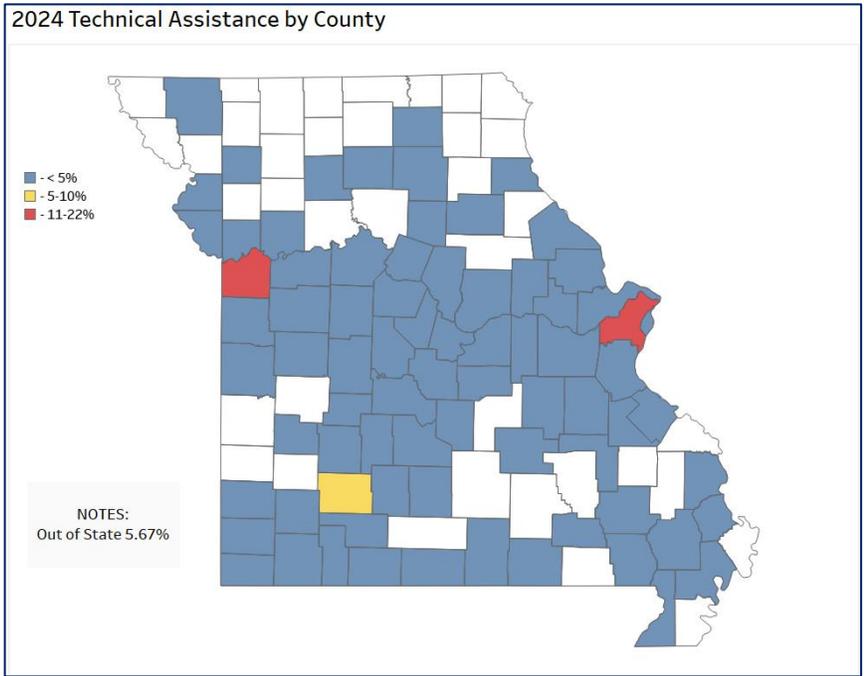
Technical Assistance

The Governor’s Council on Disability (GCD) provides disability-related technical assistance to individuals, businesses, governmental and agency representatives in Missouri, and other states. Most contacts are from individuals in need of resources to live more independently. Referrals are made to state and federal agencies, local community resources, Centers for Independent Living, non-profit organizations, including faith-based groups and Community Action Agencies. In some instances, referrals are made to businesses or for-profit entities. The GCD also works with state agencies, state legislators and the Governor’s Office on constituent affairs to provide solutions to individuals’ concerns and issues.

In 2024, the GCD received a substantial number of calls and e-mail inquiries concerning disability services and information. The highest percentages of technical assistance were on the topics of social security and disability benefits, service and emotional support animals, financial assistance, and housing.



Overall, the GCD assisted 589 different individuals with their phone inquiries and responded to 668 email inquiries and requests.



The counties displayed on the map include:

Group 1 (<5% of inquiries):

Adair, Barry, Bates, Benton, Boone, Buchanan, Butler, Callaway, Camden, Cape Girardeau, Carter, Cass, Cedar, Christian, Clay, Cole, Cooper, Crawford, Dallas, DeKalb, Dent, Dunklin, Franklin, Gasconade, Henry, Hickory, Howard, Howell, Iron, Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson, Laclede, Lafayette, Lawrence, Lincoln, Linn, Livingston, Macon, Maries, Marion, McDonald, Miller, Moniteau, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, New Madrid, Newton, Nodaway, Oregon, Osage, Ozark, Pettis, Pike, Platte, Polk, Pulaski, Randolph, Ray, Saline, Scott, St. Charles, St. Francois, St. Louis City, Ste. Genevieve, Stoddard, Stone, Taney, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Webster, Wright

Group II 5-10% of inquiries):

Greene

Group III (>10% of inquiries):

Jackson (14%), St. Louis County (22%)

Total number of counties listed: 77 of 114 Missouri counties, plus the city of St. Louis.

Publications / Resources

Disability Web Portal and Directory of Resources for Missourians with Disabilities

The Governor's Council on Disability publishes a variety of educational videos, resources, and information on the [Disability Web Portal](#), including the *Resource Directory for Missourians with Disabilities*. The online Directory allows each user to search for disability-related resources by category or location.

Legislative Update

During the legislative session, a weekly [Legislative Update](#) is distributed to keep individuals up to date on legislation that potentially affects individuals with disabilities. Over 1,220 individuals subscribed to the publication.

GCD Newsletter

The GCD publishes six issues of the GCD Newsletter per year about disability-related topics and GCD activities. The newsletter is sent out by e-mail and posted on the website and social media. The newsletters can be found online at <http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/newsletters.htm>

Accessible Parking PSA

The Governor's Council on Disability provides a public service announcement video to educate about the importance of accessible parking spaces for individuals with disabilities, and to remind people to keep access aisles open for those who need them to transfer in and out of the vehicles. The PSA is available at <https://disability.mo.gov/transportation.htm> or <https://youtu.be/4OpEtjbNhgA>

Accessibility Guide: A toolkit for accessible communications in the workplace

The Accessibility Guides and coordinating learning paths for state team members and public use provide information and training resources on making events and communications accessible.

<https://disability.mo.gov/AT.htm>

Capitol Access Guide

The Governor's Council on Disability collaborates with the Missouri Assistive Technology Council to provide an online publication with information about accessibility and accommodations at the Missouri State Capitol.

The guide is available at <https://at.mo.gov/capitol-access-guide/>

Other Publications

The Governor's Council on Disability also disseminated a variety of program information and publications, including *"This is Not a Ticket"* which provides educational information about accessible parking, and brochures and flyers relating to service animals, emotional support animals, and assistance animals.

Awards Programs

The Governor's Council on Disability annually recognizes individuals or organizations who promote and demonstrate leadership in inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of community living. Recognizing best practices in Inclusion and outstanding efforts in Youth Leadership increases awareness about the importance of inclusion in all aspects of community living and awards accomplishments in advocacy efforts for the disability community. The Council selects the winners of the awards, who are nominated by individuals or organizations in their communities.

Inclusion Award

The Inclusion Award recognizes individuals, businesses, agencies, or organizations that have implemented innovative measures to incorporate people with disabilities into their programs, activities, and operations.

32nd Annual Inclusion Award winner for 2023: Alisha Favazza, Hollister RV School District

Photo: Alisha Favazza

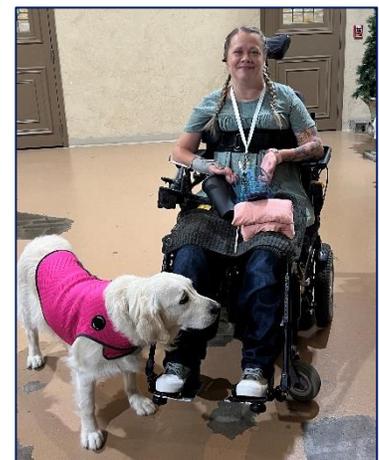


Alisha Favazza, an educator at Hollister High School, promotes inclusivity by developing Community Based Learning Classes and organizing the Hollister Transition Fair. She fosters partnerships with local businesses, engages students in community events, and runs a student-operated coffee shop to empower students with disabilities. Favazza's dedication to inclusivity and student empowerment has garnered respect and admiration from students, colleagues, and the community.

Inclusion Award – Honorable Mention: Kristi Kliewer, Abilities First, Springfield

Photo: Kristi Kliewer

Kristi Kliewer has been instrumental at Abilities First since 2017, promoting inclusion and empowerment for individuals with disabilities. As an Inclusion Educator, she develops programs, advocates for inclusion through various platforms, and hosts events promoting inclusive practices in the community, fostering economic success and disability inclusion. Kliewer's collaborative efforts have made a lasting impact in Southwest Missouri.



For additional information about the annual Inclusion Awards, please visit the website at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/inclusionawards>

Youth Leadership Award

The Youth Leadership Award recognizes emerging leaders in the disability community (ages 16-26) that demonstrate leadership by engaging in activities that have a positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities in their communities.

11th Annual Youth Leadership Award winner for 2023: Lydia Olmsted

Photo: Lydia Olmsted



Lydia Olmsted is a prominent advocate in Columbia, Missouri, championing the rights of individuals with disabilities, especially the DeafBlind. She tackles discrimination, educates communities, and promotes inclusivity. Lydia advocates for equal access from high school to college, building partnerships with various organizations. She mentors individuals with disabilities, provides advocacy classes, and empowers others to become self-advocates. Lydia received the Senator Chuck Graham Memorial Disability and Advocacy Ambassador Award and now contributes to improving digital accessibility through a part-time position at the Great Plains ADA Center.

Youth Leadership Award - Honorable Mention: Margot Epstein

Photo: Margot Epstein



Margot Epstein, a senior at Clayton High School, is known for her academic achievements, athletic abilities, and strong dedication to community service. Margot's dedication to community service includes helping children with disabilities, demonstrating compassion and empathy. Teachers praise her resilience, kindness, and advocacy for inclusion, making her a role model for creating a more inclusive world.

Margot's determination to break barriers extends to her future aspirations in the medical field, where she aims to continue advocating for inclusivity. Margot's journey holds promise for even greater accomplishments ahead, and we eagerly anticipate her future endeavors.

More information about the annual Youth Leadership Award can be found online at <http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/youthleadershipawards>

Nominations for the 2024 Inclusion and Youth Leadership Awards may be submitted online until **January 31, 2025**.

Legislative Programs

Legislative Education Project

The purpose of the Legislative Education Project (LEP) is to educate people about the Missouri legislative process and empower individuals by providing opportunities to become actively involved in public policies that impact people with disabilities.

The LEP is sponsored annually during the legislative session and includes online learning tools as well as educational webinars for individuals and organizations.

The online training modules and videos teach individuals about *How a Bill Becomes a Law*, the *Elected Officials and General Assembly*, and *How to Navigate the House and Senate Websites*. The videos educate about *Accessible Voting*, *Attending a Senate Hearing and Providing Testimony*, and *Building an Effective Relationship with Legislators*.

The online learning modules and videos had 2,978 views, and 86 individuals participated in four LEP webinars during the legislative session to learn about the legislative process, how to get involved in advocacy, and hear about pending legislation that would affect the disability community.

Legislative Priorities Poll

Each year the Governor's Council on Disability distributes a Legislative Priorities Poll to determine the issues that are important to Missourians with disabilities and those who work and live with them. The poll is sent out to agencies and individuals. This year, 497 individuals from 71 counties in Missouri participated in the poll. Based on the results, the legislative priorities the Governor's Council on Disability will be following during the 2025 legislative session are:

1. The State of Missouri updating websites to include more language that is direct and easy to understand for those with reading or writing difficulties
2. The Personal Care Attendant/Aide/Direct Support Professional workforce providing critical services
3. Transportation needs
4. Care workforce needs

Outcomes of the Legislative Priorities Poll are shared with the General Assembly and elected officials. The complete report is available online at https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/legislative_priorities_poll.htm. The GCD will continue to help people with disabilities advocate in the 2025 legislative session. GCD staff will be examining bills relating to disability and analyze their impact on the disability community.

Legislative Update

The Governor's Council on Disability continues to publish the weekly *Legislative Update* newsletter during the legislative session to provide information about disability-related bills and their status in the legislative process.

Disability Rights Legislative Day

The Governor's Council on Disability works in partnership with the Missouri DD Council and other disability agencies and organizations to organize the annual Disability Rights Legislative Day.

The 2024 event took place on March 13 at the state capitol in Jefferson City and online. Over 800 individuals and organizations from Missouri's disability community participated in the event, both in person and virtually.

Attendees who joined in person had the opportunity to connect with representatives from disability-focused organizations to discover more about their resources and services.

Participants received information on how they could engage with various legislative issues and were encouraged to meet with legislators. A rally in the capitol rotunda featured a range of speakers discussing crucial disability-related topics.



For those attending virtually, online learning sessions were available, offering more detailed insights on issues such as transportation, the caregiver crisis, and housing.

More information about Disability Rights Legislative Day is available at <https://drlid.org>

Missouri Youth Leadership Forum

The annual Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF) is a 5-day leadership and career development program for transition age high school students with disabilities.



From July 16–20, 2024, twenty-three delegates from seventeen different counties in Missouri gathered for the 20th annual MO-YLF at the University of Missouri in Columbia. During this time, they explored topics such as self-advocacy, mentorship, disability culture and history, the legislative process, independent living, post-secondary transition, assistive technology, and community service.

This program offers students a chance to learn from mentors, alumni, and volunteers with similar experiences, fostering their growth as leaders within their communities. Delegates get a taste of college life while attending the program and gain insights into career and higher education opportunities through discussions with an employer panel and post-secondary education experts. A legislative day at the capitol allows participants to delve into the legislative process and the importance of self-advocacy, while a community service project emphasizes the significance of volunteering and supporting those in need. Evening social activities provide opportunities for bonding and the formation of lasting friendships.

Group I (less than 5 alumni): (55 counties)

Audrain, Barry, Bates, Benton, Caldwell, Carter, Cass, Cedar, Chariton, Clark, Clinton, Cooper, Crawford, Daviess, DeKalb, Dent, Franklin, Gasconade, Henry, Hickory, Holt, Howard, Iron, Jasper, Lafayette, Lewis, Lincoln, Linn, Macon, Maries, Marion, Miller, Moniteau, Monroe, Nodaway, Pettis, Phelps, Pike, Polk, Pulaski, Ray, Reynolds, Ripley, Saline, Scott, Shelby, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve, Stoddard, Stone, Taney, Vernon, Warren, Webster, Wright

Group II (5 – 10 alumni): (11 counties)

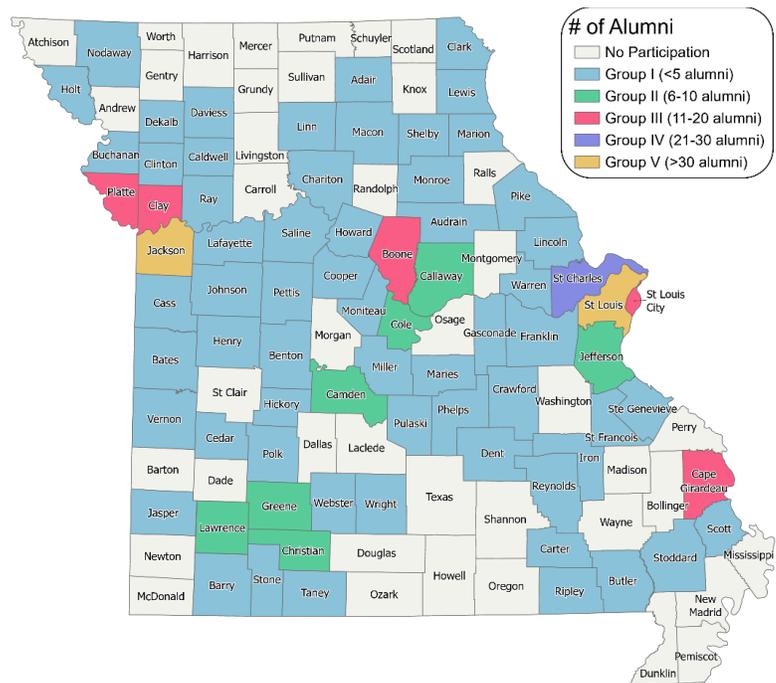
Adair, Buchanan, Butler, Callaway, Camden, Christian, Cole, Greene, Jefferson, Johnson, Lawrence

Group III (11 – 20 alumni): (4 counties plus City of St. Louis)

Boone, Cape Girardeau, Clay, Platte, St. Louis City

Group IV (21 – 30 alumni): (1 county) St. Charles

Group V (more than 30 alumni): Jackson (45 alumni), St. Louis County (80 alumni)



Since inception of the MO-YLF in 2001, 414 alumni have graduated from the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum, representing 73 of the 114 Missouri counties, plus the city of St. Louis.

The Governor's Council on Disability enhanced its outreach for the MO-YLF by providing educational webinars about the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum. These sessions were aimed at potential delegates, parents, educators, and providers, and attracted the participation of 39 individuals.

More information about the MO-YLF is available at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/ylf>

Employment Initiatives

Missouri as a Model Employer Initiative

In 2019, Governor Parson issued Executive Order 19-16 outlining directives for state agencies to implement the Missouri as a Model Employer initiative. Members of the Office of Administration's Division of Personnel, Office of Equal Opportunity, and the Governor's Council on Disability collaborate to assist executive agencies in carrying out the directives of EO19-16. In 2024, these efforts focused on:

- Administering the annual self-disclosure survey for state team members and analyzing the feedback received.
- Surveying state government ADA coordinators and HR directors to assess progress on the directives of the Executive Order, while identifying gaps, recommendations, and actionable items.
- Reviewing and ensuring the accessibility of hiring platforms.
- Delivering training and educational presentations focused on disability awareness, etiquette, and employment practices.
- Organizing inclusive hiring events and outreach initiatives, including:
 - Reverse Hiring Events
 - Statewide Hiring Events (both in-person and virtual)
- Hosting statewide awareness events to promote employment inclusion, such as:
 - National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) Celebration Event
 - NDEAM Poster Contest

Missouri was selected to participate in the National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network (NEON) initiative which enables government agencies to receive capacity-building support, policy development assistance and ongoing mentoring to increase competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities. Missouri's NEON workgroup is a collaborative workgroup of state agencies and national Subject Matter Experts working in tandem with the OA Model Employer workgroup to carry out the directives of Executive Order, Model Employer Legislation, and Employment First Legislation.

More information about the initiative is available at <https://disability.mo.gov/model-employer.htm>

Disability Employment Awareness Month Poster Contest

The Governor's Council on Disability organizes a yearly NDEAM poster contest to honor Disability Employment Awareness Month in Missouri, aiming to highlight the significance of employment inclusion for individuals with disabilities.

The 2024 NDEAM poster contest winner was JP Sauter from St. Joseph, who was recognized for his outstanding artwork at the statewide NDEAM celebration event.



National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)

National Disability Employment Awareness Month is celebrated nationwide throughout the month of October to raise awareness about disability employment issues and celebrate the contributions of America's workers with disabilities. The GCD participated in several NDEAM activities including:

- Collaborating with the Office of Equal Opportunity to co-host the inaugural statewide NDEAM celebration on October 21
- Receiving proclamations from Governor Parson designating the month of October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month and Disability History Month in Missouri
- Providing a virtual exhibit about the history and background of NDEAM, which features resources and information related to the employment of individuals with disabilities (<https://disability.mo.gov/NDEAM.htm>)
- Participating in employment initiatives and NDEAM employment conferences and events
- Raising awareness through newsletter articles, social media, and email communications, educational presentations, and the NDEAM poster contest

Other Employment Initiatives

Additional employment related activities of the GCD included:

- Delivering educational presentations to agencies and organizations focused on disability awareness, workforce diversity, the employment of individuals with disabilities, and workplace accommodations.
- Engaging in workgroups and initiatives aimed at enhancing transition services, as well as employment and higher education opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Taking part in educational webinars, conferences, and events centered on the employment of individuals with disabilities.
- Contributing to the Statewide Diversity & Inclusion Partners workgroup for state agencies.
- Creating the ADA Coordinator Network for Missouri state government agencies and leading quarterly meetings to foster education, training, networking, and the exchange of best practices.

Outreach Activities

The Governor's Council on Disability participated in numerous outreach and educational activities throughout the year to promote disability awareness and inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of life.

Disability Web Portal / Website / Social Media

- The **Missouri Disability Web Portal** (<https://disability.mo.gov>) serves as a one-stop access point for the public to obtain information on disability resources and offers links to other entities and state agencies that provide services to people with disabilities. The portal also provides a link to the GCD website. In 2024, the Disability Web Portal and GCD website had 197,309 page views.
- **Social Media:** The GCD Facebook page is reaching a growing number of individuals with more than 2,200 page followers. GCD's Twitter/X account has 236 followers to date and the GCD's newly created LinkedIn page has 110 followers. The Missouri Youth Leadership Forum Facebook page has 694 page followers.
- **Email subscribers:** Over 2,000 individuals are subscribed to GCD listservs to receive disability-related information and GCD program updates.

Educational Presentations / Outreach / Exhibits

The Governor's Council on Disability provides educational programs on disability rights, etiquette and awareness, employment of people with disabilities, service animals and other disability-related topics to any state agency, group or organization in Missouri requesting such information. Educational programs are specifically tailored to the individuals or groups. During the quarterly public Council meetings, presentations are provided on different disability-related topics.

Throughout the year 2024, the GCD staff:

- Developed and presented **37** educational programs and presentations to **1,524** individuals.
- Provided outreach and shared resources and information with **3,326** individuals at **53** meetings, events, and conferences.

Boards and Commissions

As part of the Governor's Council on Disability's advisory capacity function, staff and Council members serve on a variety of boards and commissions to promote opportunities in all aspects of life, including education, employment, housing, recreation, and transportation. The following is a list of those boards and commissions on which staff and Council members served in calendar year 2024.

- Access and Functional Needs Committee, Statewide
- Advisory Council for the Master Plan on Aging, Statewide
- Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL), Nationwide
- APRIL Youth and Steering Committees, Nationwide
- AYL (Association of Youth Leadership Forums), Nationwide
- Brain Injury Association of Missouri, Statewide
- Cape County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Cape Girardeau County
- Community Transition Teams, Statewide
- Disability Rights Legislative Day Planning Committee, Statewide
- Down Syndrome Association of St. Louis
- East-West Gateway Council of Governments, St. Louis
- Employment First Initiative, Statewide
- Future of Self Advocacy, Statewide
- Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LRPAC) for the Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled (MSSD), Statewide
- Midwest Inclusive Post-Secondary Alliance (MIPSA), Statewide
- Missouri 911 Service Board
- Missouri as a Model Employer Initiative, Statewide
- Missouri Association of County Developmental Disabilities Services (MACDDS), Statewide
- Missouri Brain Injury Advisory Council, Statewide
- Missouri Centers for Independent Living (MOCIL), Statewide
- Missouri Council of the Blind, Statewide
- Missouri Disability and Health Program, Statewide
- Missouri First Responders Disability Awareness Training Advisory Council, Statewide
- Missouri Health Equity Committee, Statewide
- Missouri Inclusive Housing Development Corporation Board, Statewide
- Missouri Interagency Transition Team, Statewide

-
- Missouri Rehabilitation Association State Board, Statewide
 - Missouri State Deafblind Advisory Committee, Statewide
 - Missouri Statewide Independent Living Council, Statewide
 - Missouri Transportation Task Force, Statewide
 - Missouri UD Initiative
 - Missouri Youth Leadership Forum Planning Committee, Statewide
 - Money Follows the Person (Show Me Home) Housing Committee, Statewide
 - MYLIFE Alumni Association, Statewide
 - National Association of Governors' Committees on People with Disabilities, Nationwide
 - National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network (NEON) Planning Team, statewide
 - National Federation of the Blind, Nationwide
 - Productive Living Board for St. Louis County Citizens with DD, St. Louis County
 - Special School District (SSD) Transition Team, St. Louis
 - St. Louis County Commission on Disabilities, St. Louis
 - St. Louis Disability Transportation Resource Network, St. Louis
 - State of Missouri Diversity and Inclusion Partners, Statewide
 - State Rehabilitation Council (Vocational Rehabilitation), Statewide
 - State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind, Statewide
 - Supported Decision Making Stakeholder Group, Statewide
 - Supporting Young People Committee, Statewide
 - Transition Training Institute Team, Statewide
 - UMSL SUCCEED Advisory Board, St. Louis

2025 Meeting and Event Dates

Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) Quarterly Meetings

- February 21, 2025
- May 2, 2025
- August 15, 2025
- November 21, 2025

Council meetings are open to the public and are held at the Compass Administrative Building in Jefferson City, beginning at 10 a.m. or virtually by WebEx and conference call.

Missouri Youth Leadership Forum

- July 15-19, 2025

The 21st annual Missouri Youth Leadership Forum for students with disabilities (ages 16-21) will be held at the University of Missouri campus in Columbia.