



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability

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[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

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2016 Disability Rights Legislative Day

by Rob Honan



The 15th annual Missouri Disability Rights Legislative Day, with a theme of “**Freedom to Choose my Own Path,**” took place on March 10th at the Capitol Rotunda.

Over 425 people from all over Missouri attended the rally to hear exciting, enthusiastic and informative speakers and to learn about legislative issues. The day culminated with many of the audience participants visiting their legislators to tell their stories and advocate for legislative bills that are important to them.



There were a wide variety of speakers, from advocates, to state attorneys, to elected officials. All of the speakers had important information to give to the audience and the range of topics reflected this.

Cathy Enfield, Stephanie Briscoe, Brian Weisel, Chris Worth, Stella Vanvacter, and Senator Eric Schmitt.

*(Photo above:
Audience at Disability Rights
Legislative Day)*

From information on guardianship reform to the Money Follows the Person Program to Medicaid Asset Limit and to Medicaid Buy-in, there was something for everyone.

Andrew Lackey and Becky Dickey were the co-chairs of the event and they were able to recruit the following outstanding speakers:

Lt. Governor Peter Kinder, Chuck Graham, Reg Turnbull, Representative Kevin Engler,



Photo on right: Rob Honan introduces speakers at the Disability Rights Legislative Day.

Spotlight on Bullying

by Laura Mueth



Bullying is a topic of importance in the 2016 legislative session. Four bills seek to address bullying in educational settings. They are House Bills 1384 and 1583 and Senate Bills 728 and 748. The bill that is farthest through the process is House Bill 1583 sponsored by Representative Allen.

Bullying, particularly of students with disabilities, is an issue that the GCD staff hears about often from adults and young people in school today. Last year, this was a topic during the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum. I recently saw a television commercial from Shriners Hospitals for

Children featuring individuals with physical disabilities including RJ Mitte, an actor who has Cerebral Palsy and was bullied growing up. The commercial discusses the need to prevent bullying and asks the public to take the pledge. You can view the commercial at:

<https://vimeo.com/107625290>

You can find out more about the Cut the Bull campaign at <http://cutthebull.org/>. It provides an opportunity for individuals to share stories of bullying and become educated. Although this campaign only addresses bullying of people with physical disabilities, the GCD recognizes it can happen to anyone with any type of disability.

Unfortunately, suicidal thoughts and suicide can sometimes be the result for an individual who has been bullied. Two bills have been introduced this session with the aim of educating teachers and students. They are House Bill 1656 and Senate Bill 627.

A concurrent resolution has been introduced geared toward the general public. These pieces of legislation may not have been introduced because of bullying, but could assist in the recognition of issues resulting from bullying.

2016 Autism Society Day on the Hill

By Spencer Hunley, Missouri Youth Leadership Forum 2004 Alum



The 2016 Autism Society Day on the Hill was a good experience, and allowed me to meet with various legislator offices and other affiliates and discuss ideas and methods that may have not been shared nor considered before. Even though Congress was in recess during the week of February 17-19, it was still a fruitful experience that taught me a lot about working with legislators to further our policy goals.

The first training session went over basic information, very useful if you were new to this event and/or visiting with legislators/legislative offices and their staff. It was thorough and provided a lot of tools to use, as well as explanations as to why the Hill functions the way it does - and how to use that to your advantage. We went over a few priorities and bills - one I chose to focus on intently was HR 927 - also known as the Keeping All Students Safe Act.

In summary, it directs the Department of Education to establish minimum standards

that prohibit seclusion/restraint unless such measures are required to eliminate imminent danger of physical injury to student or others and certain precautions are taken; requires LEAs (Local Education Authorities) to ensure sufficient number of school personnel who receive state-approved crisis intervention training & first aid certification; and finally, prohibits physical restraint or seclusion from being written into a student's education plan, individual safety plan, behavioral plan, or individual education program as a planned intervention.

In my opinion, I think seclusion and restraint should be completely banned in school settings; however, after some thorough research and study, I was shocked to find that seclusion and restraint is already being used in public schools in many parts of our country; some districts have even built seclusion rooms inside classrooms for this practice. The sad fact is that a full ban wouldn't end seclusion

and restraint, but compel it into a hidden and secretive part of our schools, which opens the potential for abuse. This bill, while not banning it altogether, forces schools to also disclose to parents the same day any seclusion or restraint is used upon a student - which will significantly lessen the likelihood of abusive and life-threatening conditions and actions being committed, while ensuring that parents of all students (non-verbal and otherwise) are properly informed if/when their child is secluded or restrained. It's a step in the right direction towards ending this outdated, obsolete and cruel practice.

Maria Town, a self-advocate who is the Associate Director of Public Engagement for the Office of Public Engagement and Intergovernmental Affairs at The White House, spoke with us and provided a view from someone who has a disability who works within the D.C. system.



Spencer Hunley and Legislative Correspondent Bryan Wells

The next day, we boarded the bus for the Capitol. I met with Abby Pezzi, Senior Policy Advisor with Congresswoman Lynn Jenkins; Legislative Correspondent Krysten Thomas, with Senator Claire McCaskill; Legislative Correspondent Bryan Wells, with Senator Pat Roberts; and Joe Eannello, Legislative Director for Congressman Kevin Yoder.

I took away a few things that can be useful in future meetings with legislators, whether locally at home or in D.C.:

- Write hand-written thank you notes to each person you met with. It goes a long way and is much more likely to be remembered than another e-mail in their inbox.
- Visit their district office. If their staff routinely commutes between their D.C. and local office, this is a great way to reinforce who you are and what you're advocating.
- Don't demand, give. Give information, resources, something useful or informative. Pins, DVDs, CDs, USB storage devices, pamphlets, even simple flyers are all great ways of giving something that will get you remembered. Don't demand to know how the legislator will be voting or demand a promise of a vote.
- Remember that legislation you're advocating for or against may not be passed or voted down - that's a normal part of the lobbying and advocacy process.

State Agency Report—Missouri State Highway Patrol

By Capt. David A. Flannigan, Missouri State Highway Patrol

Editor's note: *There are a number of state liaisons from the various departments that participate in our quarterly meetings, and shortly after the February 8th meeting I sent out an email requesting success stories from various state departments. The following article was provided by Captain David Flannigan of the Missouri State Highway Patrol.*

We have a three-story building that houses over 100 employees during the day and a couple dozen employees during the second and third shifts. An employee who is a wheelchair user works during

the first shift on the first floor, which has one uni-sex accessible restroom in the public area and one accessible restroom each for males and females in the employee area. The problem that occasionally arose was that when our employee with mobility issues needed to use the restroom and it was occupied, the individual was forced to either wait or take the elevator to the third floor (the second floor is a secure area) and there were times when neither of these options were viable.

To address this problem, our maintenance staff took a look

at the structure (including plumbing and electrical connections) and devised an excellent plan to transform a portion of a large first floor utility closet to a uni-sex accessible restroom. This new restroom is located across the hall from the existing employee restrooms. We were thrilled to be able to come up with a resolution that assisted our employees.

During this process, I used information from the GCD office and the Office of Administration FMDC to achieve our goal.

Apply Now for MO-YLF



The Governor's Council on Disability is still accepting applications for the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF) from delegates and volunteer staff.

MO-YLF is a unique 5 day training program for high schools students with disabilities, ages 16-21, designed to cultivate leadership, citizenship, social, and career development skills. The Missouri Youth Leadership Forum is hosted by the Governor's Council on Disability and Paraquad. This program is not funded by state revenues.

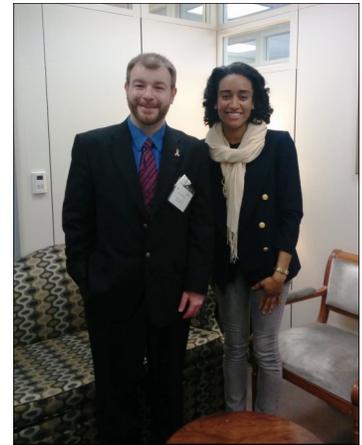
All funding is handled through Paraquad, a nonprofit, 501(c)3. Donations are tax-deductible.

If you know of a student with disabilities who has leadership

potential, please share the information about this exciting program with them. GCD is looking for applicants from all areas of the state.

The applications for delegates and staff are [available online](http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/yf.htm) at <http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/yf.htm>

For questions, please contact the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum at (800) 877-8249 or (573) 751-2600.



Spencer Hunley and Legislative Correspondent Krysten Thomas



MO-YLF delegates and staff on MU campus

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability Members

- Yvonne Wright, Chair, New Bloomfield
- Joan Bergstrom, Ed. D, Lee's Summit
- Charles Comstock, Kirksville
- Betty Davidson, Ph.D., St. Louis
- Jeff Grisamore, Lee's Summit
- Ronald Hack, St. Louis
- Mary Ann Harter, St. Louis
- Todd Mayfield, Jefferson City
- DeAnna Noriega, Fulton
- Susan Orton, Creve Coeur
- Derek Smith, Osage Beach
- James Trout, St. Louis
- Robert Wallace, St. Louis

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability Staff Members

- Robert Honan, Executive Director
- Claudia Browner, Office Manager
- Dawn Evans, MO-YLF Coordinator
- Laura Mueth, Legislative Coordinator

Mobility Management Planning in Missouri

By Rob Honan

There are some exciting things going on with transportation in Missouri for rural Missourians with disabilities, seniors, and low income individuals. For the last three years, citizens in 19 counties have had access to better transportation coordination than in the past, and I spoke with one of the persons who is making this happen on a regional level. I interviewed Holly Kreienkamp, who is the Mobility Manager of the Meramec Regional Planning Council (MRPC):

How did this project start?

In 2012, the Missouri Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities (now: [Missouri DD Council](#) (MODDC)) offered up \$20,000 cash and \$6,667 in-kind seed funds for a pilot project to develop and implement a strategy to promote Human Service Transportation. The project turned out to be Mobility Management Programs (MMP), and the MMPs are housed in three Regional Planning Councils: MRPC, Boonslick Regional Planning Commission (Warrenton), and Mid-MO Regional Planning Commission (Columbia). The scope of the project is 19 counties.

What is "Coordinated Transportation" and what is the role of the MMPs :

"Coordinated transportation" is primarily a transportation referral service that utilizes many different transportation providers. As part of the referral process, individuals seeking transportation can access: [MORIDES.org](#) or the three MMPs to learn more about their transportation options. The MMPs are employees of the three regional planning commissions who provide information to the public, plan and run quarterly meetings and work with MODOT and the DD Council to operate the program.

Since the program has started are you seeing increased numbers of people using transportation?

Because the MMPs do not actually provide transportation, the actual numbers are not known, but we are seeing an increase in the number of calls about how to access transportation.

What is the average cost of a ride?

Again, the costs vary by provider. Transportation users can go to [MORIDES.org](#) to find out how to contact providers for fare charges. In addition to the transportation providers in the 19 counties of the three existing MMPs, users can access all transportation options for the entire state of Missouri, including some in Illinois.

What are some of the innovative things that you have done?

In July of this year, we are going to offer a Mobility Management Voucher Program. The program will assist individuals that have exhausted all other options and cannot afford transportation. The program will provide up to two vouchers per person. The maximum value of each voucher will be \$10. The voucher program was developed to assist people with their transportation needs with an overall effort of improving transportation services within the Meramec Region. In addition, for a 45-day period, MRPC is partnering with Schwan's Cares in a fundraising campaign to provide much needed dollars to help cover transit costs when there is no other way to provide a ride. Schwan's Home Delivery Service will give 20% of product sales & 40% of eGift card sales back to MRPC to support the MMP program.