



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability

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[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

Tools for Life Transition Summit

by Judy Grainger

Inside this Issue

Page 1:

- **MPACT Tools for Life Transition Summit**

Page 2:

- **Service Animal Videos**
- **Director's Report**

Page 3:

- **MFP Success Story**
- **Legislative Poll Results**

Page 4:

Important GCD Program Reminders—

- **Legislative Education Project**
- **GCD Awards Programs**
- **MO-YLF**

On October 27, GCD collaborated with Missouri Parents Act (MPACT) to host the Tools for Life Transition Summit for nearly 400 youth, family members and educators.

MPACT is a statewide parent training and information center that serves parents of children with all disabilities. Its primary goal is to assist parents in their efforts to effectively advocate for their children's educational rights and services. MPACT staff and volunteers are located throughout Missouri and work with public and private agencies, parent groups, professional organizations and advocacy groups to achieve that goal. MPACT's mission is to empower families to advocate for themselves so that children with special educational needs can reach their full potential in education and life - through support, training, and education.

Students, families and educators from across the state convened at the Harry S. Truman Building in Jefferson City to learn about issues pertinent to transitioning from school to adulthood. Sessions included

information on how to deal with bullying, use of assistive technology, services provided through Vocational Rehabilitation and Division of Workforce Development under the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), accessible affordable housing options, students rights for transition as directed under Title II of the ADA and Section 504, services offered by Independent Living Centers, Social Security work incentives, and sessions targeting a smooth transition to the world of work. Youth Leadership Forum (YLF)



YLF Alumna, Caitlin Bartley facilitated a breakout session sharing her personal story of self-determination. Caitlin's presentation delivered a powerful message to students, their families and educators. Caitlin shared her story of perseverance, even when others told her that her goals were "unrealistic." Caitlin's life lessons of advocacy will be shared at this summer's Youth Leadership Forum's closing banquet.



Alumna, Rachel Baskerville, Joe Reneker and Brittany McCurley joined GCD staff and hosted a session providing an overview and panel discussion of the YLF. The group presented to a full room of students looking for information and who asked a great number of questions about YLF. As a result of the presentation, a number of students expressed an interest in applying for the upcoming Youth Leadership Forum.

Photos:

Bottom left: Judy Grainger and MO-YLF alumni at the GCD exhibit booth.

Center: Joe Reneker speaks during the panel discussion.

Top right: Caitlin Bartley speaks at a breakout session.



Service Animal videos

by Laura Mueth

Four new videos are now on the State of Missouri's Disability Portal. They address the most frequently asked service animal topics by individuals who call our office or come in contact with our staff. Their purpose is to provide an easy way for individuals to learn about the laws and issues surrounding service animals.

One video defines service animals and the rights of those individuals who use them.

Another discusses the rights of service animal handlers in places of public accommodation and housing.

A third explains how an individual can obtain a service animal and concerns regarding fraudulent use.



The fourth outlines filing a complaint with the Missouri Commission on Human Rights and includes some information on filing a complaint with the United States Department of Justice if an individual believes they have been discriminated against due to his or her use of a service animal.

There are two sets of videos. One set has the option for captioning. The other has descriptive video for those who are blind or visually impaired. Both sets can be found at <http://disability.mo.gov/serviceanimals.htm>.

GCD Director's Report

by Rob Honan

Now that the Thanksgiving Holiday and election are behind us, I am looking towards the Holiday Season and the forthcoming New Year.

The elections have come and gone. The people have spoken and state agencies will continue to work for the Governor and taxpayers of the state. Disability is very unique in that it covers the broad political spectrum in terms of policy solutions to the many disability issues AND the people affected by the broad approach to public policy are very diverse themselves. This is one reason that I enjoy working in this arena: not only are the people interesting and from all walks of life, but the approaches to policy can be diverse and creative. I may not agree with all policy positions, but all

individuals with disabilities are worth listening to and working with.

What are some of the things to look forward to in 2017?

With the election of Eric Schmitt as Missouri State Treasurer, the ABLE Act (SB 174 from the 2015 legislative session) that was signed into law by Governor Nixon in 2015 will be implemented. It has the potential to assist families who have enormous expenses related to disability. This is very exciting and fitting since Treasurer-elect Schmitt was also the sponsor of SB 174.

Another exciting development is that with the signing of HB 1565 in 2016, asset limits for individuals and couples who use Medicaid will increase

under the new law. This increase goes into effect in July of this year. This is a very big deal and it is because of you, those eligible will have more money going into their pockets.

2017 promises to be an interesting year in the state capitol.

The legislature convenes at noon on Wednesday, January 4, 2017. There is a tremendous opportunity for you make your voices heard. In addition to legislative advocacy, there is also administrative advocacy at the Governor's office. Your voice should also be known to him and his staff because he will ultimately determine the fate of bills passed in the legislature either by his veto pen or by signing passed bills into law.

Money Follows the Person (MFP) Success Story

by Julie Lamons, Department of Social Services



The Money Follows the Person (MFP) program helps people who have disabilities and those who are aging to move from a nursing facility or habilitation center back into a place in the community that meets their needs and wants.

The objectives of MFP—My Life, My Way, My Community are:

- to move people from a facility to the community;
- identify and eliminate barriers that prevent people from being able to move to the community;
- improve the ability of MO HealthNet to provide in-home services;
- and to ensure that there is continuous quality improvement of in-home services provided.

Money Follows the Person helped Latisha move from a nursing home back into her community.

Latisha's story about her successful transition into the community is available online at

<https://youtu.be/pMP9dvWNNtI>

If you have questions about Money Follows the Person, visit <http://on.mo.gov/mfp> or call 573-751-8021 or send an email to:

MHD.MoneyFollowsPerson@ds.s.mo.gov

Legislative Poll Results

by Laura Mueth and Rob Honan

The Governor's Council on Disability recently conducted its annual poll to determine the level of importance disability-related issues have to Missourians impacted by disability through their personal and/or professional lives. The results have already been shared with Council members and will be shared with state legislators, and other interested groups.

Four hundred nine (409) polls were returned. Respondents were given the opportunity to indicate the group or groups to which they belonged:

person with a disability, family member/friend, government agency employee, service provider, educator, employer, other.

The person with a disability category was marked 140 times. Of the other respondents, 138 were a family member/friend,

65 represented a government agency, 97 were service providers, 14 were educators, 21 were employers, and 42 marked other.

Individuals with disabilities were given the option to indicate what type or types of disability they have: blind/vision impairment (22), chronic health condition (52), multiple chemical sensitivity (4), cognitive (28), deaf/hard of hearing (31), developmental (26), intellectual (13), learning (21), mobility (61), psychological (32), and other (48).

As indicated by self-report, 70 (17.11%) live in urban areas, 163 (39.85) live in suburban areas, and 176 (43.03%) live in rural areas. All twenty-two centers for independent living are represented. In addition, there were 74 counties represented in the survey.

The top five priorities of the survey are based on the combined intensity of "strongly agree" and "agree" responses. Here are the top five results:

1. Private insurance covering hearing aids
2. MO HealthNet expanding to cover adult hearing aids
3. Maintaining the motorcycle helmet law
4. Tax credit for small businesses who hire and employ someone with a disability
5. MO HealthNet Aged Blind and Disabled population expansion

The detailed report can be accessed at http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/legislative_priorities_poll.htm.

- Yvonne Wright, Chair,
New Bloomfield
- Joan Bergstrom, Ed. D,
Lee's Summit
- Charles Comstock,
Kirksville
- Betty Davidson, Ph.D.,
St. Louis
- Ronald Hack,
St. Louis
- Mary Ann Harter,
St. Louis
- Todd Mayfield,
Jefferson City
- DeAnna Noriega,
Columbia
- 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
- Judy Grainger,
MO-YLF Coordinator
- Laura Mueth,
Legislative Coordinator

Important GCD Program Reminders

By Claudia Browner

Legislative Education Project

- **Are you interested in learning about the legislative process in Missouri?**
- **Do you want to find out about legislation that affects the rights and responsibilities of people with disabilities?**
- **Do you want to advocate for people with disabilities?**

If you have answered "yes" the [Legislative Education Project](#) is right for you.

The **LEP at the Capitol** provides to opportunity to receive updates on disability-related bills, attend committee hearings, and meet with legislators. It is a one-day program offered in at the capitol in Jefferson City.

The **LEP on the Road** brings the LEP to your office, meeting, center for independent living, or event.

Educational videos and learning modules about the legislative process and accessible voting are available online at <http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/LEP.htm>

For more information or to sign up for the LEP, please contact Laura Mueth at (573) 751-2600.

The 2017 legislative session will convene Wednesday, January 4, 2017 at 12:00 p.m. Bills can be pre-filed beginning December 1, 2016. The inauguration of Governor-elect Eric Greitens will take place on Monday, January 9, 2017. The legislative session will be on break March 20-24 and April 17. The session will end on May 12, 2017 at 6 p.m.

GCD Awards Programs

Please help the Governor's Council on Disability recognize individuals and organizations who exemplify and promote full inclusion of people with disabilities through its annual award programs by submitting a nomination.

The **Inclusion Award** honors a Missouri resident, organization or business that illustrates excellence in leadership for the "best of the best inclusion practices".

The **Youth Leadership Award** honors a youth with a disability that is demonstrating outstanding leadership, advocacy, and dedication to the disability community in Missouri.

New in 2016, the **Website/IT Award** will honor an organization, business, or local government that provides an outstanding and fully accessible website.

Award nominations can be completed online and are due January 31, 2017.

The award winners will be honored at the Power Up conference in April.

2017 Missouri Youth Leadership Forum

Do you know any youth with disabilities (ages 16-21) who have leadership potential? If so, please encourage them to apply for the 2017 Missouri Youth Leadership Forum.

The 15th annual [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](#) will be held July 18-22, 2017 at the University of Missouri, Columbia.

For more information and the online application, please visit <http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/ylf.htm>
Apply early— Applications are due February 28, 2017!