



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability

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[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

GCD Director's Report

by Amy Bledsoe

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Collaboration has been a buzz word in the worlds of business and education for many years. While I must admit I did not care for group projects as a student, I do enjoy collaboration in my career. Henry Ford said "If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself."

The staff members of the Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) have been working hard to increase outreach and collaboration with departments, agencies, councils and boards throughout the state. We attend many meetings in person, over the phone and even through social media. Each time we open ourselves up for collaboration we gain more contacts and are able to provide our service of referrals and education to more citizens of Missouri.

Collaboration also leads to more efficient problem solving. Problem solving is really what we at GCD do on a daily basis. In our efforts to join with other entities in our state, we have quickly been able to increase the services and education we provide. We have recently revised our database to allow us to more accurately capture what we do in terms of numbers and satisfaction reports. This will certainly help us to serve more of Missouri and we will have data for proof.

In addition to expanding the value of our work, collaboration certainly helps us to save costs, strengthen our programs, and improve efficiency. A very recent example is attending a training session in the Truman building. This led to on-going collaboration meetings with other agencies, which led to us providing educational presentations and the other partners being able to support us with ideas, demonstrations, and specialists to help us to make our own presentations more accessible to individuals with various disabilities. That is a win. Through collaboration with others we are able to learn more and the result is we are able to provide better service for Missouri citizens.

2017 Legislative Priorities Poll

by Laura Mueth

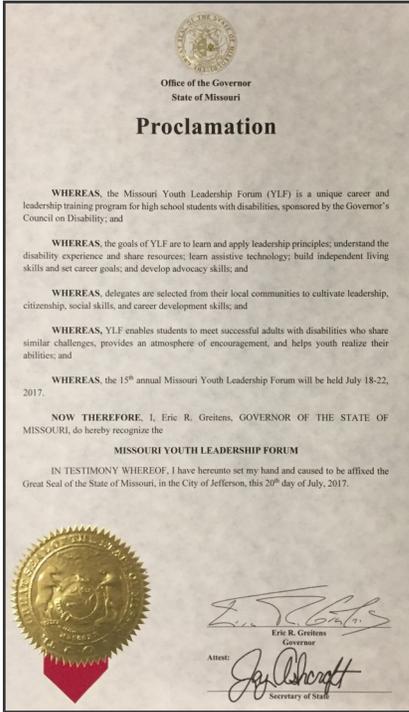
The 2017 Legislative Priorities Poll was released in early August. The GCD staff and council members encourage every Missouri citizen impacted by disability to complete it. The deadline is Sunday, November 26, 2017. Each response received is reviewed by staff and will be used as we shape the Council's legislative priorities and interactions with legislators for the 2018 legislative session.

The poll can be completed online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BRZ2JR8>. It is also available in PDF format which can be filled out electronically or printed and completed by hand. This can be accessed at http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/legislative_priorities_poll.htm or by contacting Laura Mueth at Laura.Mueth@oa.mo.gov. Hard copies can be returned via fax (573-526-4109), email (gcd@oa.mo.gov), and mail (Governor's Council on Disability, 301 West High Street, Room 840 PO Box 1668, Jefferson City, MO 65102-1668). Assistance with completion is available by contacting the GCD office at 800-877-8249.

If you have already completed it, thank you and please keep spreading the word with your contacts.

Missouri Youth Leadership Forum a Success

by Wendy Molitor



The 2017 [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](#) (MO-YLF) was a huge success this year. We had 24 delegates that graduated into lifelong alumni. This year’s group was full of amazing leadership qualities and nearly every one of our 2017 alumni have asked to either come back as support staff volunteers for next year or to link with others in their area to jump into advocacy and leadership roles. Motivation and energy was high the entire week and we simply could not have asked for a better group of young leaders. We had an outstanding group of returning alumni as well as volunteers from the MU Hook Center, MERIL, Vocational Rehabilitation, Paraquad, Camden County DD Resources, The Whole Person, and many individuals from around the state. We also had two mentors that assisted in facilitating the Mentor Luncheon and stayed for the entire week. Governor Greitens issued a proclamation (photo on left) for MO-YLF and a copy will be shared with each of the 2017 alumni. Governor Greitens also gave a free copy of one of his books, *The Warriors Heart*, to each 2017 delegate present at the Missouri State Capitol.

Now that we have graduated this amazing group of 2017 alumni, we have decided to move to the next step. We will be introducing our first **Advocacy Summit**. We currently have a planning committee that includes MO-YLF alumni. This first Advocacy Summit will take place via Facebook Live on Saturday, November 18th, 2017 from 11:00 AM-2:00 PM. Five locations across the state have confirmed that they will host this event. The five host sites are ILRC in Jefferson City, SCIL in Springfield, Paraquad in St Louis, RAIL in Kirksville and Alhaphointe in Kansas City as well as FACEBOOK LIVE from anywhere.

Our first Advocacy Summit is designed to educate, encourage, connect and grow leaders within the advocacy community. We are working to create ongoing leadership development, training, and are moving into a regional system to enhance communication and regional grassroots advocacy. Our hope is to have two summits annually and to keep the different regions in Missouri motivated. We want to grow leaders and strong self-advocates, we also want to empower caregivers to let go and promote self-autonomy and independence within those they care for and support. It is hard and unfortunately, there is no “how to” manual. Our hope is to provide the tools, support and networking needed across the state so that everyone has a local grassroots support system to plug into. We have five presenters for our first summit: Jody Michael and Steven Devero (Warm Fuzzies), Elijah Mayfield, Katheryne Staeger-Wilson, Christina and Joe Bogart, and Paul Meyer. We will have “Check In” activities after each presentation, lunch at each host location and games developed to measure outcomes. Registration information will be available soon.



Governor’s Office staff member Kevin Carr presents a proclamation to GCD Executive Director Amy Bledsoe.

We also have changes to the MYLIFE Alumni Association coming that include a Vice President, President Elect, President, and Immediate Past President in order to enhance the leadership platform in our alumni and to spread the responsibility so it is not all placed on one person. We have many exciting things taking place and encourage everyone to jump in and become a part of the movement.

Accommodation for Success Reverse Job Fair

by James Sahaida, SLATE

Accommodation for Success Reverse Job Fair Turns Tables for Job Seekers with Disabilities

The Third Annual *Accommodation for Success* Disability Employment Event took place on August 10, 2017, at the Forest Park Campus of St. Louis Community College. The event was organized to make it easier for area businesses to build diverse workforce. This year, the event included the first Reverse Job Fair in St. Louis.

Unlike most traditional job fairs, this innovative recruitment event focused on showcasing talents and professional interests of **80+** job candidates with disabilities. Participants met with potential employers in their booth



Recruiters participate in workshops on disability inclusion, workplace culture and recruitment

spaces, demonstrating experience and skills in a variety of industries, while human resource professionals roamed the room, meeting the candidates they were interested in hiring. More than **116** recruiters representing **99** area companies were present. With **236** total registrants, not including job candidates, this year's event was the largest yet.



A job candidate promotes her expertise to potential employers

Accommodation for Success event is a collaborative effort between the St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE), regional job centers, and more than 20 of the region's disability employment organizations. Workshops and resources on disability inclusion, etiquette, recruitment, and workplace culture were offered to registered businesses, prior to the reverse job fair.

Earlier in the day, St. Louis Mayor Lyda Krewson greeted the attendees and delivered a keynote address. She acknowledged regional efforts to improve services for disabled citizens, and encouraged the employers to take a hard look. State Representative Sarah Unsicker also attended the event.

A number of participating businesses were selected by each partnering region and presented with awards for Emerging Partner, Exceptional Supporter of Inclusive Practices, and Outstanding Inclusive Employer; awards were presented by Suzanne Waha of Schenker Inc. and Sandy Keyser, Department of Mental Health, Division of Developmental Disabilities.

"This annual event marked a pivotal moment for thousands of adults living with mental or physical disabilities in our City. A large percentage of people living in poverty are disabled; I believe their true economic independence should begin with giving them access to jobs," said Dr. Alice Prince, SLATE's newly appointed Executive Director.

For more information, please view news coverage, as aired on KSDK/Channel 5, on August 10, 2017:

<http://www.ksdk.com/news/local/reverse-job-fair-connects-st-louisans-with-disabilities-to-employers/463488041>

Article provided by:

James Sahaida, Local WIOA EO Officer, St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment.

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
- Ronald Hack, St. Louis
- Chip Hailey, Joplin
- Mary Ann Harter, St. Louis
- Rosemary Hendon, West Plains
- 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

- Amy Bledsoe, Executive Director
- Claudia Browner, Office Manager
- Wendy Molitor, MO-YLF Coordinator
- Laura Mueth, Legislative Coordinator

Meet Council Member Bob Wallace, Jr.



Council Member
Bob Wallace

As chairman of the Thompson Coburn LLP Firm's Sports Law Group, Bob represents teams, prospective buyers of sports teams, companies interested in sports marketing and civic and government entities facing team relocation or facility issues.

He also assists players, coaches and executives with contract negotiations and separation agreements, and serves as an NFL-approved hearing officer for violations of the league's drug and conduct policies.

Bob has cultivated more than 30 years of experience in both the St. Louis business community and the national sports arena through his past executive and legal work for the Philadelphia Eagles and the St. Louis Football Cardinals.

He spent 16 years with the Rams, serving as the team's executive vice president and general counsel. During his 30-year career in professional football, Bob was one of the highest-ranking African-American club executives in the National Football League. He led the Rams' operations and business departments during two Super Bowl appearances, managed the team's \$200 million budget and served as lead negotiator in the renaming of the Rams' stadium to the Edward Jones Dome.

Bob has taught sports law as an adjunct professor at both Washington University School of Law and Saint Louis University School of Law. He also wrote a weekly magazine column, "Business Philosophy," and has authored several other articles on sports law topics.

Bob has been serving as a Council member for the Governor's Council on Disability since 2010 and serves on the Executive and Advocacy Committees.

Bob also serves as the president of Giant Steps of St. Louis (a school for children 3-21 with autism), a member of the Chancellor's Council at UMSL, and past president and current treasurer for the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis.

Upcoming Events

- Disability 101 Training, September 12-14, 2017 and October 18-19, 2017 at the 16th Circuit Court in Kansas City and Independence
- First Responder Disability Awareness Training, September 22, 2017 in Jefferson City
- Missouri Brain Injury Association—Statewide Conference, October 5-7, 2017 at the Marriott St. Louis West Chesterfield, www.biamo.org
- MultiCultural Fall Festival, October 7, 2017 in Downtown Jefferson City
- MPACT (Missouri Parents Act) Transition Summit, October 17, 2017 at the Truman Building in Jefferson City - www.missouriparentsact.org
- disAbility Awareness Day Conference, October 17, 2017 at Truman State University, Kirksville—Contact: Chuck Comstock (660) 785-2328
- Missouri Advocacy Summit, November 18, 2017—Save the Date! Registration coming soon.