



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability



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[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

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GCD LAUNCHES ANNUAL NDEAM POSTER CONTEST

by Claudia Browner

The Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) promotes and raises awareness about the importance of inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of community living including employment. Each year, the GCD hosts a poster contest to receive artwork from Missouri artists with and without disabilities to create an awareness poster for National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), which is celebrated annually in October.

The US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy has recently announced the 2024 NDEAM theme as "Access to Good Jobs for All", highlighting the equally important issues of expanding the number of employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities as well as the quality of those employment opportunities.

As we prepare to celebrate and honor NDEAM statewide throughout the month of October, we invite Missouri residents to participate in the poster contest by submitting their artwork for a chance to be featured on the GCD's 2024 NDEAM Poster, which will be distributed statewide, and featured on social media, and on the GCD and NDEAM websites.

Learn more about the GCD NDEAM Poster Contest and download the entry form at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/PosterContest>

Governor's Council on Disability
POSTER CONTEST

SUBMIT ENTRIES BY
SEPTEMBER 15, 2024

CALLING ALL MISSOURI ARTISTS

Submit your artwork for a chance to be featured on the Governor's Council on Disability's 2024 National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) Poster

Themes for your artwork should be:
INCLUSION - EMPLOYMENT - COMMUNITY

LEARN HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE AT
disability.mo.gov/gcd/PosterContest QUESTIONS? CALL
573-751-2600

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JULY 26 MARKS THE 34TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADA

Each year on July 26, the United States celebrates the anniversary of the signing of an important piece of civil rights legislation—the Americans with Disabilities Act known as the ADA. This landmark legislation protects the rights of individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, with the goal of full participation, equal opportunity, independent living and economic self-sufficiency. The GCD proudly supports the ADA and celebrates this important law that works to ensure all people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

For ideas on how you can celebrate the ADA, visit <https://adaanniversary.org/ideas-celebrate-ada/>

Photo credit: ADA National Network (adata.org)

ADA34 ★★ ★★ ★★
★ 1990 - 2024 ★★ ★★ ★★
Americans with Disabilities Act
Celebrate the ADA! July 26, 2024

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION IS COMPLETE

by Laura Mueth

This year's legislative session is over and was very different. The biggest difference was the appropriation process. The process started earlier than usual and concluded later than usual. There was little to no public testimony taken by the committees responsible for crafting the budget bills. Instead of going to individual conference committees, the chairs of the House and Senate committees responsible for the bills worked out the differences between the House and Senate versions of the bills. Another difference was two record setting filibusters in the Senate. One by some Republicans which lasted approximately forty-one hours with the other by Democrats which lasted almost fifty hours.

A total of twenty-six non-appropriation bills were Truly Agreed To and Finally Passed (TAFP) by the time the General Assembly adjourned on May 17. Only seven are impacting individuals with disabilities in some way. They are Senate Bills (SB) 727, 748, 756, 912, and 1111 as well as House Bills (HB) 1495 and 2287.

Two bills already signed by Governor Parson are [SB 727](#) and [HB 2287](#). Each one includes provisions related to various aspects of education.

The Federal Reimbursement Allowance expiration date or FRA bill ([SB 748](#)) was extended. The FRA now has five years until it will need to be renewed.

Veteran suicide prevention was passed in two bills. The first was [HB 1495](#). This was the veteran suicide prevention bill. The second was [SB 912](#) which also included a portion that allows individuals who have verification of a permanent disability from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to not have to continue to show proof of disability when renewing their disabled plates or placard.

In [SB 1111](#) is the requirement for individuals wanting to establish, maintain, or operate a prescribed pediatric extended care facility in the state to have a license from the Department of Health and Senior Services. [SB 756](#) clarifies SB 190 (senior citizen property tax credit) which was TAFP in 2023.

Of the two Senate Joint Resolutions (SJR) that passed, only one impacts people with disabilities. [SJR 78](#) has a portion which allows voters to decide whether all elections will be done by either paper ballot or as stated in law by mechanical means.

The Governor has until mid-July to act on the non-appropriation bills.

The main appropriation bills are still awaiting action by the Governor. The new fiscal year begins July 1 so he must act on those bills before then. The budget passed by the House and Senate contains cuts to programs for people with disabilities. You can view all the bills at [Appropriation Bills](#).

If something important to you made it through the process this year, you might consider thanking the legislators who aided the issue through. If an issue important to you did not make it this year, begin talking to legislators and candidates about the issue this summer and fall. Many will be attending events and meeting with citizens for re-election and election in November. This provides an opportunity for you to share your concerns and issues with those legislators and candidates.



20 YEARS OF MO-YLF

by Reece Ellis



Twenty-six delegates and several staff are preparing themselves for an engaging week at the annual Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF) which will be celebrating its 20th program year! MO-YLF will be hosted at the University of Missouri in Columbia, July 16—20.

As we celebrate two decades of empowering young leaders with disabilities, MO-YLF remains committed to nurturing the next generation of advocates, change-makers, and trailblazers. When we reflect on the success of this program, we are reminded of the continued support of our sponsors, volunteers, and alumni, whose contributions make this transformative experience possible year after year. Thank you.

We are excited to welcome delegates from all parts of our state and the diversity of experiences and ideas that they will share with us and each other over the course of the week. A point of pride for staff this year is how overwhelmed we have been by the support of our alumni. This year our keynote speaker, Colleen Young ('14) a medal winning paralympic swimmer, is an alumna of YLF. Additionally, several of the career professionals participating in our mentor day will be alumni. Finally, all of the Facilitators and Team Leaders who will guide delegates through the week are alumni. We appreciate their dedication and commitment to giving back to the program to help nurture leadership skills in the next cohort of delegates.

Throughout the week, delegates will engage in various learning experiences and activities tailored to re-enforce vital skills and values. From sessions focused on independent living to a day in the Missouri General Assembly to learn about advocacy to a conversation about disability history and culture in the United States, MO-YLF aims to equip delegates with the tools they need to navigate the transition from high school. We look forward to what promises to be yet another year of meaningful growth and connection for our delegates!

The Missouri Youth Leadership Forum is completely funded by sponsorships and in-kind donations. The generous support we receive from individuals and organizations allows us to operate this program every year, at full capacity, at no cost to students. This allows young people from economic backgrounds of all kinds to participate in what is often described as a “life changing opportunity”.

One way is to be sponsor through a monetary donation. We have many different levels of sponsorships, and every dollar goes a long way towards the longevity of this program. A second way to contribute to MO-YLF, is through in-kind donations. Each of our delegates and staff get a welcome backpack with different types of promotional items. We will have roughly 60 backpacks to fill this year and still need items for them, but need your help to make this possible. Other items that we are needing, include: giveaway/door prizes (gift cards or larger items).

Find out more about the sponsorship opportunities at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/yfl/sponsors.htm>

| THANK YOU TO OUR 2024 MO-YLF SPONSORS! | | |
|---|--|---|
| Gold Level | Silver Level | Bronze Level |
| Veterans United Foundation FINCK Supported Living Services | MOCIL Missouri Centers for Independent Living IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH INDEPENDENCE Missouri Statewide Independent Living Council UMKC Institute for Human Development | home state health |
| Supporter Level | In-Kind Donations | |
| MACDDS MISSOURI ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES MCDHH MISSOURI COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING | College of Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources University of Missouri BUCK'S ICE CREAM | Pre-Employment Transition Services University of Missouri Extension University of Missouri |

A heartfelt thank you goes out to our 2024 sponsors who have already committed to supporting the MO-YLF!

The Missouri Youth Leadership Forum is hosted by the Governor’s Council on Disability in collaboration with MU Pre-Employment Transition Services, MOCIL, Paraquod and Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation.



MEET COUNCIL MEMBER STACEY ELSTER

by Claudia Browner



On March 15, 2024, Governor Parson appointed the newest Council member for the Governor's Council on Disability, Stacey Elster. Stacey mostly grew up in St. Charles and currently resides in St. Louis County. She graduated from Webster University with a Masters of Art in Teaching. She holds Special Education certificates for teaching in the areas of Severe Developmental Disabilities and Mild to Moderate Disabilities. Stacey has over 16 years of experience within the field of providing services to individuals with disabilities. She spent seven of those years as a Special Education Teacher in the Special School District. Stacey has been an adjunct professor in the School of Education at Webster University for over 13 years. She prepares pre-service teachers to provide inclusive and evidence-based instructional experiences for students with disabilities.

Stacey joined Lafayette Industries in 2016 and is currently Chief Program Officer. She has launched several initiatives in this role, including designing a self-regulation program and sensory room, expanding services to include employment training programs and life-enhancement programs, and overseeing the positive behavior supports programming within the facility-based employment setting. In 2020, Lafayette was awarded funding from the Productive Living Board to launch STEPUP, which is a unique long-term competitive employment training program focusing on social cognitive skills while gaining experience within a partner business. The program was awarded the prestigious "Cutting Edge" Award by the Missouri Association of County Developmental Disabilities Services in October of 2021 and the *St. Louis Business Journal's* Corporate Philanthropy Award honoree in 2022. Stacey was recognized by Special School District as a Special Ambassador in 2019 for her exceptional efforts on behalf of students graduating from Special School District. Program development and enhancement remain at the core of Stacey's career. Stacey's career supported her ability to seek early intervention services for her son. She hopes to ensure all Missourians have knowledge of all available resources for their individual needs.

NEWS AND UPDATES FOR THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY

by Claudia Browner

Accessible National Parks

Summer is the perfect time for traveling and sightseeing. Discover accessible adventures with the National Park Service. The National Park Service is dedicated to accessibility, offering resources for visitors and employees with disabilities. Each park's website features an accessibility section for trip planning. Plus, the [Access Pass](#) provides lifetime access to 2,000+ federal recreation sites. Visit <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/accessibility/index.htm> for more information.

New Rule on Accessibility of Web Content and Mobile Apps

The Federal Register has published the US Department of Justice's final rule on accessibility requirements for web content and mobile applications provided by state and local governments, ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities.

A [Fact Sheet provided by ADA.gov](#) summarizes the requirements of the new rule. The full rule can be found on the [Federal Register website](#).

HHS issues New Rule to Strengthen Nondiscrimination Protections and Advance Civil Rights in Health Care

The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) have issued a final rule under Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) advancing protections against discrimination in health care. Find out more on the [Federal Register website](#).

HHS finalizes Rule to Strengthen Protections against Disability Discrimination

The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through its Office for Civil Rights (OCR) finalized a rule that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability and bolsters protections for people with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehab Act, which prohibits discrimination in programs and activities that receive federal funding. Find out more details at <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2024/05/01/hhs-finalizes-rule-strengthening-protections-against-disability-discrimination.html>

Justice Department launches updated Voting Rights and Elections Website

Visit the one-stop resource providing [voting and elections information website](#) for more information.

111TH BIRTHDAY OF VIRGINIA "GINI" LAURIE

by Reece Ellis

Virginia "Gini" Laurie is often hailed as one of the "Grandmothers of the Independent Living Movement" and her legacy includes advocating for what would eventually become the first Centers for Independent Living.

Virginia Grace Wilson Laurie was born in St. Louis Missouri on June 10, 1913. Her life became defined by serious hardships her family endured due to a nationwide polio epidemic the year before she was born. In her words from a dedication in 1988:

"In 1912, the year before I was born, four siblings were struck by polio: a 12-year-old sister was mildly disabled, a 6-year-old brother very severely disabled, and two sisters, aged 3 and 9, died within days at St. John's. In their memory, my mother painted a mural on the ceiling of the St. John's chapel depicting them as angels. Sixteen years later, I watched my significantly disabled brother die of pneumonia and underventilation at St. John's. His funeral mass was in St. John's Chapel, underneath the mural of our sisters."



She was named for the two sisters that predeceased her, Virginia, and Grace. Gini Laurie's early life experiences laid the groundwork for her lifelong commitment to advocating for individuals with disabilities in general, and polio survivors in particular. She would go on to serve as a volunteer at the Toomey Pavilion in Cleveland working in polio rehabilitation during the 1940s and 50s. During this time she worked with countless patients and gained superior understanding of the importance of connections to one's community in rehabilitation. She established what would become *the Rehabilitation Gazette* to connect polio survivors across America who could share stories, tips, advice, and support.

According to the CDC, there were more than 21,000 paralytic cases of polio reported in 1952, but by 1965 just 10 years after the introduction of the Salk vaccine, there were only 61 cases in the entire United States. This decline in cases was a cause to celebrate as far as public health is concerned, however public interest in the well-being of polio survivors declined as the threat receded. Attendant care up until that point had been largely financed by private gifts made to the March of Dimes, which all but stopped funding services due to a lack of donations just 4 years after the introduction of the Salk vaccine. In 1959 there were no Great Society programs like Medicaid or Medicare and Social Security Disability Insurance at the time only applied to individuals over 50 years old and under 18 years old, so this meant that many thousands of Americans were left with very significant need. Laurie organized letter writing campaigns by disabled Americans that helped reignite disability rights as a policy issue in federal politics in the 1960s. Later, Congress would pass the Social Security Amendments of 1960 and the Vocational Rehabilitation Amendments of 1965 which expanded benefits and support for all individuals with disabilities to pursue independent living.

Later in life Laurie would become the only nondisabled member of the board of directors for the American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities. Laurie spent the rest of her life active in disability rights advocacy, giving lectures internationally as well as mentoring the next generation of leaders, both with and without disabilities. As we celebrate what would have been her 111th birthday, let us not only honor her activism and achievement but recommit ourselves to the ongoing struggle for inclusivity, accessibility, and equal opportunity for all Americans.

June 15



Adult Abuse and Neglect Hotline
 Make a difference. Make the call.
 1-800-392-0210
 Health.Mo.Gov/abuse



JUNE 15 IS WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

Each year, an estimated 5 million older adults are abused, neglected, or exploited. Older Americans lose an estimated \$2.6 billion or more annually due to elder financial abuse and exploitation. It can happen to anyone including family members and neighbors. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day aims to raise awareness and promote a better understanding of abuse and neglect, and recognizes the significance of elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue.

To report adult abuse or neglect in Missouri, call 1-800-392-0210 or make a report online at health.mo.gov/abuse

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability— Council Members

- Ronald Hack, Council Chair, St. Louis
- Charles Comstock, Kirksville
- Stacey Elster, Wildwood
- Wayne Crawford, Marshall
- Betty Davidson, Ph.D., St. Louis
- Chip Hailey, Joplin
- Rosemary Hendon, West Plains
- Katie Jones, St. Charles
- Kim Lackey, St. Louis
- Elijah Mayfield, Jefferson City
- Susan Orton, Creve Coeur
- Andrew Sartorius, Jefferson City
- Lesia Shelton, Buffalo
- Robert Wallace, St. Louis

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability— Staff Members

- Claudia Browner, Executive Director
- Reece Ellis, Senior Program Specialist
- Laura Mueth, Senior Program Specialist
- Jennifer Pettit, Lead Administrative Support Assistant

UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out these upcoming disability-related conferences and events! Click on the links to learn more or register.

- **June 9—12, 2024**
[National ADA Symposium, Minneapolis, MN](#)
- **June 12—14, 2024**
[Missouri Rehabilitation Association \(MRA\) Conference, Osage Beach](#)
- **June 17—20, 2024**
[National APSE Conference, Charlotte, NC](#)
- **June 26—28, 2024**
[Transition Training Institute, Columbia](#)
- **July 16—20, 2024**
[Missouri Youth Leadership Forum, Columbia](#)
- **July 17—19, 2024**
[APSE-MO Employment Summit, Columbia](#)
- **July 24—26, 2024**
[Special Education Director Academy \(SEDA\), Columbia](#)
- **August 25—27, 2024**
[Real Voices - Real Choices Conference, Margaritaville Lake Resort](#)
- **September 3—5, 2024**
[2024 Missouri Transit Conference & Expo](#)
- **September 9—11, 2024**
[Ma4 Show Me Summit on Aging & Health 2024, Springfield](#)
- **September 26—27, 2024**
[Center for Disability Inclusion 2024 Inclusion Summit, Kansas City/virtual](#)
- **October 9—11, 2024**
[MACDDS Annual Conference, Columbia](#)

If you know of other events you would like us to share with the disability community, please contact our office.