



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability

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[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

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RECOGNIZING NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

by Claudia Browner

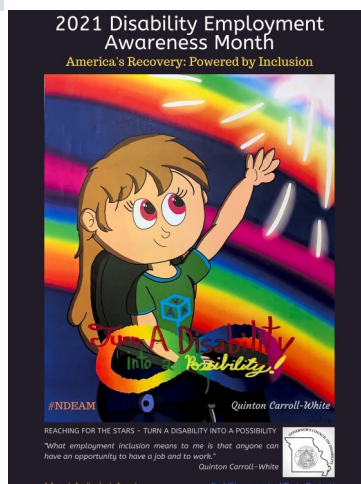
Each year in October, the Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) celebrates National Disability Employment Awareness Month—NDEAM, along with the disability community and disability organizations and agencies nationwide. Initiated by the US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment, NDEAM recognizes the contributions of America's workers with disabilities, brings awareness to employment issues, and reminds employers of the importance and value of an inclusive workforce.

The NDEAM theme for this year is "America's Recovery: Powered by Inclusion". To download the poster and find out more about NDEAM, visit <https://dol.gov/odep/topcis/ndeam>



The GCD recognizes and celebrates NDEAM by participating in NDEAM events throughout the month, providing presentations about employment inclusion, and hosting a [Virtual NDEAM Exhibit](#) on the Disability Web Portal. The exhibit provides information about the background and history of NDEAM, disability history, GCD's participation in NDEAM activities, ideas to celebrate, employment resources for Missourians with disabilities, and other resources.

Governor Michael L. Parson issued two proclamations, designating October as [National Disability Employment Awareness Month](#) and [Disability History Month](#) in Missouri. Both proclamations are posted in the NDEAM exhibit.



The GCD raises awareness about the importance of employment inclusion through its annual [Disability Employment Awareness Month poster contest](#).

The winner of this year's poster contest is Quinton Carroll-White, a young man from St. Louis who enjoys digital art and states, "What employment inclusion means to me is that anyone can have an opportunity to have a job and to work."

To find out more about the contest, or download a copy of the poster, please visit <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/PosterContest/>

2021 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES POLL NOW OPEN

by Laura Mueth



Each year the Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) distributes a Legislative Priorities Poll to find out about issues important to Missourians with disabilities and those who work and live with them.

The 2021 Legislative Priorities Poll was released in August. We, GCD staff and council members, encourage every Missouri citizen impacted by disability to complete it. The deadline is 5:00 p.m. Friday, November 5, 2021. Each response received will be reviewed by staff and used to shape the Council's legislative priorities for the 2022 legislative session. The results will also be shared with state legislators and elected officials.

This poll can be completed online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NSGLGGB>. It is also available in PDF format which can be filled out electronically or printed and completed by hand. The PDF format 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), or mail (Governor's Council on Disability, 301 West High Street, Room 620 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, be a part of the effort by spreading the word and encouraging others to take time to give opinions.

ANNOUNCING 2022 YOUTH LEADERSHIP EVENTS

by Rachel Rackers



The [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum \(MO-YLF\)](#) and the Virtual Leadership Summit are statewide leadership training programs for high school students with disabilities, ages 16 – 21, hosted by the GCD and its partner agencies.

Our planning committee is already gearing up for 2022 MO-YLF, which will be held July 12th-16th at the University of Missouri Columbia campus.

Applications for staff, volunteers and delegates will be available by mid-October. The deadline for delegate applications is April 15th and staff applications are due May 1st. The MO-YLF planning committee encourages you to spread the word about MO-YLF and to come experience this life-changing week!

For more information about the MO-YLF and the online application, please visit <http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/yf.htm>

Dates set for 2nd Annual Virtual Leadership Summit—The Governor's Council on Disability will be hosting its 2nd Annual FREE **Virtual Leadership Summit** on February 26, 2022! Applications will be available at the beginning of October until January 14th.

Participants will meet virtually with leaders in the disability community and hear from employers, mentors, alumni, and keynote speakers about the importance of goal setting, self-advocacy, and leadership. The event is open to transition age high school students. Must be a Missouri resident to qualify. Apply and get more information at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/yf.htm>

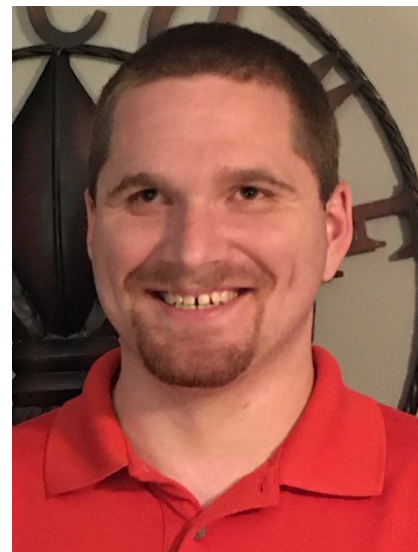
Please help us share this exciting opportunity with students, parents, teachers and colleagues!



MO-YLF ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT ON KYLE BORAH

by Rachel Rackers

This month's Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF) alumni spotlight is on Kyle Borah. In July of 2011, Kyle attended the MO-YLF. He graduated from Oakville High School in 2012. After high school, he attended Evangel University in Springfield, Missouri, to pursue a degree in Government with an emphasis in Prelaw. Although he enjoyed all of his classes, Kyle soon realized that he couldn't see himself doing law for the rest of his life. During his time at Evangel, he had friends who were into tech and programming, which started to change his view of technology. This sparked his interest in wanting to know how a computer worked and operated. After trying out programming in his spare time, Kyle was hooked and self-taught a type of programming called Python. He also discovered an interest in cybersecurity.



In the fall of 2015, Kyle enrolled at St. Louis Community College to finish his Associates Degree. He knew to become a software developer he would at least need a Computer Science degree. In January 2017, Kyle started at Webster University to pursue his computer science degree with an emphasis in cybersecurity and a minor in mathematics.

Webster University was one of Kyle's top two picks because he knew they previously had other blind students who attended. The Academic Resource Center (ARC) on Webster's campus contributed greatly to Kyle's success and ability to sustain his course load. They were able to help him with any accommodation that he needed, big or small. An example of this is when Kyle was taking Calculus, they couldn't just scan in all of the equations, formulas, and homework problems. Instead, they had to manually enter each one into a format that could be read with his reading device. In May of 2019, he graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science with an emphasis in cybersecurity and also a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics.

Kyle was hired April 2021 at the State of Missouri as an Associate Applications Developer on the Information Technology Services Division—Dept. of Higher Education and Workforce Development (ITSD-DHEWD) team. He stated, "The employment statistics for people who are blind are alarming! Not many blind people have a job and have a job they love and that is fulfilling to them. I thankfully do".

In his free time, he enjoys watching and cheering for St. Louis Cardinals baseball and Blues hockey. He also enjoys playing hockey and Beep baseball. In 2016, his brother Sean started the blind hockey team called St. Louis Blues Blind Hockey Club and Kyle has been a part of it since. Kyle joined the Gateway Archers in spring of 2021, which is a Beep baseball team in St. Louis. Earlier this year, their team participated in the 2021 National Beep Baseball Association (NBBA) World Series in Wichita, KS. Their team finished 9th out of 19 teams and Kyle received the Defensive Rookie of the Year Award. In addition to playing hockey and Beep baseball, he also plays piano, guitar and sings in the worship band at the church he attends.

COVID—19 INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

COVID-19 Vaccine Information—<https://covidvaccine.mo.gov>

COVID-19 Vaccine Incentive—<https://covidvaccine.mo.gov/win/>

Disability Web Portal—COVID-19 Resources page—<https://disability.mo.gov/covid-19.htm>

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- Charles Comstock, Kirksville
- 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
- Traci Ritter, Cape Girardeau
- Andrew Sartorius, Jefferson City
- Lesia Shelton, Buffalo
- James Trout, St. Louis
- Robert Wallace, St. Louis

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability Staff Members

- Claudia Browner, Executive Director
- Laura Mueth, Senior Program Specialist
- Rachel Rackers, Senior Program Specialist
- Jessica Zimmer, Lead Administrative Support Assistant

LEARN ABOUT MISSOURI CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING—MOCIL

by Patrick (Pat) Chambers, President, Missouri Centers for Independent Living (MOCIL)



A state and/or federally recognized Center for Independent Living (CIL) provides programs and services to individuals with disabilities to assist them to continue to

live independently, and/or to achieve an independent living environment in their own home, and in the community of their choice. Missouri is fortunate to have a total of 22 Centers for Independent Living to support individuals with disabilities living within our state. Our 22 CIL's provide services in all 114 counties and the one independent city in the state. Many states have counties or geographic areas that are not served by a CIL. Each of Missouri's CIL's is an independent non-profit organization.

Missouri's first CIL was Paraquad, established in 1970, making it one of the first ten CIL's in the nation. In 1997, then-Governor Mel Carnahan, a strong advocate for disability services, was successful in getting funding approved for ten CIL's. The final CIL added to the list was Heartland Independent Living Center. It started as a branch office for an existing Center in 2002 before obtaining state funding as a stand-alone Center in 2006.

Every CIL nationwide must provide the five core services of Independent Living. Those services are Advocacy, Peer Support, Independent Living Skills Training, Information and Referral, and Transition. Transition is actually a three-part service that provides for transition from nursing homes/institutions back into the community, advocacy for individuals at risk of being forced into that type of living situation, and also transition of youth into post-secondary education, or employment. In addition to the core services, each CIL, with direction from their respective board of directors, creates and implements additional support services that are needed by people with disabilities living within their service area. While it may vary from CIL to CIL, the overwhelming majority of programs and services are offered at no cost to the participant.

Since 1984, Missouri has had various associations of CIL's. These associations provide support and resources to their members which can then be used to support the participants the CIL serves. Our current association is MOCIL, Missouri Centers for Independent Living. Originally formed in 1998, and reorganized in 2017, MOCIL's membership now includes 21 of the 22 CIL's in the state. It is the largest number of members that the association has ever enjoyed. Having the vast majority of CIL's gives the association a very strong, unified voice when advocating with the legislators and state agencies. MOCIL meets on a monthly basis and conducts an annual business meeting and banquet in the fall of each year.



MOCIL recently launched its new website! If you would like more information about MOCIL or to find the CIL that serves your area in Missouri, please visit the **MOCIL website** at <https://mocil.org/>