



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability



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[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

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AWARDING LEADERS IN INCLUSION AND YOUTH LEADERSHIP

by Claudia Browner

The Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) is excited to announce this year's winners of the Inclusion and Youth Leadership Awards. Awarding leaders in inclusion and youth leadership recognizes and honors their accomplishments and brings awareness to the importance of inclusion and advocacy.

The Inclusion Award and one Honorable Mention are presented annually to recognize private and public employers, individuals, and organizations that have successfully included people with disabilities in education, employment, housing, leisure activities, universal design and website accessibility.

The 2021 Inclusion Award winner is Summit Future Foundation, Kansas City and the Honorable Mention goes to Chill-Pak, Springfield.



For more information on the 30th annual Inclusion Award winners, visit <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/inclwin.htm>

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GCD LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITES AND LOGO

by Claudia Browner



The Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) has recently launched the new [Disability Web Portal](#), [GCD Website](#), and logo. We hope you will find these websites to be user-friendly and easy to navigate for all users.

On the home page of the Disability Web Portal, you will find an introductory video explaining the content and services provided. The portal also features a Resource Directory for Missourians with disabilities. To add your organization or agency to the Resource Directory or to update your listing, visit https://disability.mo.gov/resource_search.

You can check out the new websites here:

Disability Web Portal – <https://disability.mo.gov>

Governor's Council on Disability – <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd>

Please feel free to contact the GCD with comments or questions at gcd@oa.mo.gov or 573-751-2600.

TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO USE WHEELCHAIRS

by Laura Mueth

Through the years, the GCD has heard from Missouri citizens that travel is often difficult for individuals who use wheelchairs. Two of those reasons are a lack of airplane accessibility and a lack of funds. As people are beginning to make summer vacation plans, there have been two travel related developments for those who utilize wheelchairs.

On March 24, the United States Department of Transportation held a public meeting regarding air travel by persons who use wheelchairs. The meeting was an opportunity for the Department to hear from individuals who use wheelchairs regarding their experiences while flying and from the airline industry. The airline industry spoke about the challenges they face dealing with wheelchairs as well as the steps being taken to improve situations. Individuals shared poor experiences with handling of wheelchairs, staff training, aisle chairs, and airplane lavatories (restrooms).

To assist in addressing issues with the lavatories the Department has a [proposed rule](#) related to accessible lavatories on single aisle aircrafts open for public comment until April 25. Instructions for comment submission are included within the proposed rule. Visit the website at <https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/aviation-consumer-protection/accessible-lavatories-single-aisle-aircraft-part-2> for more information.

[The Curb Free Foundation](#) launched in February to provide grants to individuals who use wheelchairs and do not have the funds to take their dream domestic or international trip. Application details can be found on the website at <https://thecurbfreefoundation.com> or on Facebook at <https://facebook.com/thecurbfreefoundation>.

Hopefully, these developments provide opportunities for Missourians who utilize wheelchairs to have enjoyable travel experiences in the coming years and also serve as a way for others to visit our state.



COVID—19 INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

NEW Long COVID-19 Information—<https://covidvaccine.mo.gov/longhaul/>

COVID-19 Free Testing Information—<https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/community-test.php>

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

COVID-19 Information Hotline—Call 877-435-8411

Need Transportation to get the vaccine? Get a Ride Resources—<https://covidvaccine.mo.gov/ride/>

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

Information about free In-Home Test Kits—<https://www.covidtests.gov/> or call 1-800-232-0233

YOUTH PARTICIPATE IN 2ND VIRTUAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

by Rachel Rackers

The Governor's Council on Disability has hosted its second annual [Virtual Leadership Summit](#). On Saturday, February 26th, sixteen high school students who represented nine different Missouri counties, met virtually to learn about career development, leadership, goal setting, self-determination, self-advocacy, independent living, and more.

To kick off the event, participants heard from keynote speaker, Wesley Hamilton about the importance of setting goals and staying positive despite barriers you face in life. They also learned a lot of valuable information from five of our Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF) alumni and Vocational Rehabilitation about employment and college. The alumni shared their personal experiences in both and provided great tips and tools for self-advocacy and leadership. They also spoke about the importance of mentors, asking for accommodations, utilizing the disability services on campus, and how the MO-YLF impacted their lives. Participants then learned about self-determination, self-advocacy and independent living during a session facilitated by Jill McClintock.

A special thank you goes to Paraquad, MU Pre-Employment Transition Services, and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for their involvement in the planning and staffing of the event. Also, thank you to the many panelists and MO-YLF alumni that participated in the second Virtual Leadership Summit.

MISSOURI YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM TO BE HELD IN JULY

by Rachel Rackers



The Governor's Council on Disability is excited to host the 2022 [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](#) (MO-YLF) this year from July 12th-16th, after a two-year break due to the pandemic.

Applications for delegates and volunteer staff are still being accepted and available on our website at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/ylf.htm>.

The deadline for applications is **April 15, 2022**.

If you know of a high school 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. MO-YLF is free of cost to the students who are selected. This is all made possible because of funding from state agencies, sponsorships and donations.

If you or your organization would like to help us make this great program possible, please contact GCD for more information by email at gcd@oa.mo.gov or by calling our office at (800) 877-8249 or (573) 751-2600.

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AWARDING LEADERS IN INCLUSION AND YOUTH LEADERSHIP



The annual Youth Leadership Award and one Honorable Mention are presented to recognize an outstanding Missouri youth (age 16-26) with a disability that has demonstrated exemplary leadership by making a difference in their community. The 2021 Youth Leadership Award winner is Seyoon Choi and the Honorable Mention goes to TyReeke Garnett, both of St. Louis.

For more information about the 9th annual Youth Leadership Award winners, please visit our website at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/youthleadershipaward.htm>

Congratulations to all of the winners! The awards were presented to the winners at the Power Up Assistive Technology Conference & Expo in Blue Springs.

The GCD will be accepting nominations for the 2022 Inclusion and Youth Leadership Awards in the fall.

Missouri Governor's Council on Disability— Council Members

- Ronald Hack, Interim Chair, St. Louis
- Joan Bergstrom, Ed. D., Lee's Summit
- 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

US DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ISSUES GUIDANCE ON WEB ACCESSIBILITY AND THE ADA

by Claudia Browner

On March 18, the US Department of Justice issued a [news release](#) announcing new [Web Accessibility Guidance Under the Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA). This new guidance describes which steps state and local governments and businesses open to the public can take to make sure that their websites are accessible to people with disabilities, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Having websites that are inaccessible to individuals with disabilities is no different than a building or program that has access barriers, and prevents these individuals from having equal access to information or services the government entities or businesses provide.



Identified as a priority by the Department of Justice, this new guidance covers the following topics:

- Why Web Accessibility Matters
- Examples of Website Accessibility Barriers
- When the ADA Requires Web Content to be Accessible
- How to Make Web Content Accessible to People with Disabilities
- Web Accessibility for People with Disabilities is a Priority for the Department of Justice
- Resources

To read the news release, go to

<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-issues-web-accessibility-guidance-under-americans-disabilities-act>

To access the new guidance on website accessibility, visit

<https://beta.ada.gov/web-guidance/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **MOCIL Advocacy Day—April 12, Missouri State Capitol**
<https://fb.me/e/1OLHP3GN6>
- **Independent Living (IL) Summit—May 22-24, Branson**
<https://mocil.org>
- **Missouri Rehabilitation Association (MRA) Conference—June 5-7, Osage Beach** <https://www.mo-rehab.org/conference.html>
- **DESE—Transition Training Institute—TTI—June 27-29, Columbia**
<https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/2022-transition-training-institute-save-date>
- **Youth Programs for transition age high school students with disabilities**
 - June/July—[Center for Independent Living \(CIL\) summer experience](#)
 - June/July—[Starkloff Disability Institute \(SDI\) Dream Big Camp, St. Louis](#)
 - June/July—[VR Summer Work Experience Programs](#)
 - July 12-16—[Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](#)

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