



GCD: Governor's Council on Disability



Volume 8, Number 3, June 2022

[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

Inside this Issue

Page 1:

- **GCD seeks entries for Disability Awareness Month poster contest**
- **ADA celebrates its 32nd anniversary**

Page 2:

- **Congress considers requiring Disability Specific Training for Law Enforcement**
- **Service or Emotional Support Animal—What's the difference?**

Page 3:

- **Opportunities to support and participate in MO-YLF**

Page 4:

- **Digital Access in Education**
- **Upcoming Events**

GCD SEEKS ENTRIES FOR DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH POSTER CONTEST

by Claudia Browner

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is observed annually in October to celebrate the contributions of America's workers with disabilities and educate employers and others about the importance of disability-inclusive employment policies and practices.

It is not too early to start planning ahead for NDEAM 2022. From putting up a poster to implementing a disability education program, there are many ways to get involved and support this event.



In preparation for NDEAM, the Governor's Council on Disability is now accepting entries for the annual Disability Employment Awareness Month Poster Contest.

Artists are asked to illustrate what employment inclusion means to individuals with disabilities and spark conversation about the importance of access to employment and inclusion at work. The poster contest is open to all Missouri residents. Please submit your entries by August 15.

More information can be found at <https://disability.mo.gov/PosterContest>

ADA CELEBRATES ITS 32ND ANNIVERSARY

by Claudia Browner

On July 26, 1990, the landmark civil rights legislation known as the Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA, was signed into law, prohibiting discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, transportation, state and local government services, public accommodations, and telecommunications. The ADA has expanded opportunities and inclusion for people with disabilities by reducing barriers, changing perceptions, and increasing full participation in all aspects of community living.

Each year, the disability community celebrates the anniversary of this important historic milestone by reaffirming the principles of inclusion and equity, and recommitting to work towards full compliance with the ADA. The theme for this year's celebration is **Celebrate—Learn—Share**.

For ideas on how you can participate in celebrating, learning, and sharing about the 32nd ADA Anniversary, please visit the ADA National Network's anniversary website at <https://adaanniversary.org/>



Logo credit: ADA National Network (adata.org)

CONGRESS CONSIDERS REQUIRING DISABILITY SPECIFIC TRAINING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

by Laura Mueth

The United States House of Representatives recently passed a bill ([HR 2992](#)) which would require that relevant tools be developed to train law enforcement on interactions with individuals who have traumatic brain injury, acquired brain injury, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Missouri is fortunate to already be implementing training which includes this information as well as extensive information on how law enforcement can interact with and best serve all people with disabilities. Missouri is in the sixth and final year of a [Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council](#) grant which has allowed [Niagara University's First Responder Disability Awareness Training Program](#) (FRDAT) to bring their curriculum to Missouri, customize it with Missouri specific information, and train our law enforcement officers.

I have been honored to be a part of the team ensuring the endeavor is successful through serving on the Missouri FRDAT Advisory Council and co-training officers. As we near the conclusion of the grant funding phase, the Advisory Council and the FRDAT staff have been working together to implement structures to continue the training of law enforcement officers in the future, as well as to provide further information and resources to the law enforcement agencies who participate in the training. This remains a work in progress because Missouri is the only state other than New York to complete the grant.

SERVICE OR EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMAL—WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

by Claudia Browner

The Governor's Council on Disability receives many calls and questions from individuals relating to the rights and obligations concerning service and emotional support animals, and oftentimes, they are not sure about the difference.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service animal as a dog that has been trained to work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, while Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) are not considered service animals under the ADA. Emotional Support Animals have not been trained to perform specific tasks. ESAs may provide comfort, companionship or emotional support to relieve symptoms of a person's disability and can include other animals besides dogs.

The ADA requires state and local government agencies, businesses and non-profit organizations that provide goods or services to the public to make "reasonable modifications" in their policies, practices, or procedures when necessary to accommodate people with disabilities. The service animal rules fall under this general principle. Accordingly, entities that have a "no pets" policy generally must modify the policy to allow service animals into their facilities. Emotional Support Animals do not qualify as service animals under the ADA and therefore do not have to be allowed in public places.

While the ADA does not specifically address service animals in employment, employees with disabilities may request to bring their service dog or emotional support animal to work as a reasonable accommodation.

Rights and regulations are different in regards to housing. The Federal Fair Housing Act defines assistance animals as animals that work, assist, perform tasks, or provide emotional support for the benefit of a person with a disability. This means, that in addition to service dogs, a landlord or homeowners association must consider emotional support animals as a reasonable accommodation in housing.

For comprehensive information, educational videos, legislation, and publications regarding service animals and emotional support animals, please visit the Service Animals page on the Disability Portal at <https://disability.mo.gov/serviceanimals.htm>. You may also contact our office with questions or to request a presentation on this topic.



OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATE IN MO-YLF 2022

by Rachel Rackers

Twenty-two delegates and numerous staff are getting geared up for the 18th annual [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](#) (MO-YLF) for high school students with disabilities to be held at the University of Missouri in Columbia, July 12-16.



Throughout the week, the delegates will be exposed to a variety of helpful information to help them in their transition from high school. One unique event during the week is the mentor luncheon, where successful individuals with disabilities from a variety of different career paths are invited to talk to the delegates and share their experiences. It is an opportunity for delegates to learn first-hand that they can lead productive and full lives. If you are a person with a disability and would like to participate in our mentor event, we would love to have you join us!

You may not know this, but the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum is completely funded from sponsorships and in-kind donations. The support from individuals and organizations, is what allows us to offer this life changing program at no cost to the youth or their families. There are several ways that you can support MO-YLF and the youth with disabilities from all over Missouri that attend our 5-day program.

One way is to be sponsor through a monetary donation. We have many different levels of [sponsorships](#), starting at just \$50! A second way to donate and contribute to MO-YLF, is through in-kind donations. Each of our delegates and staff get a welcome backpack with different types of goodies and 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/files/2022-MO-YLF-Sponsorship-Opportunities.pdf>

A third way to donate and contribute to MO-YLF, is to donate an item off our [wish list](#). Due to the pandemic, we haven't been able to host MO-YLF since 2019. As we plan for this year's event, a lot of our nurse and first aid items have expired and need to be replaced. We have created a list of these items to give more opportunities for individuals and organizations to help support our program and offset some of our expenses. The MO-YLF Wish List can be found at <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/files/2022-MO-YLF-Wish-List.pdf>

Every single donation helps us provide this excellent experience for our delegates, whether it be monetary, in-kind, or an item off our wish list.

Lastly, if you are an organization that provides a service or supports high school students with disabilities, we want to invite you to join us for our MO-YLF Resource event on July 16th from 10:00 am to noon at the University of Missouri Campus in Columbia. This is an opportunity to share helpful information and resources with our delegates and their parents/guardians. Our goal is to send them home with a large variety of information that will be helpful and also to the parent/guardian in supporting their youth.

If you would like to support the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum or have questions about donating or participating, please contact Rachel Rackers at rachel.rackers@oa.mo.gov.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- ☑ **Participate as a mentor**
- ☑ **Participate in the resource event**
- ☑ **Donate items**
- ☑ **Provide a sponsorship**

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
- Vacant, Lead Administrative Support Assistant

DIGITAL ACCESS IN EDUCATION

by Claudia Browner

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights has recently announced a new series of videos covering topics on digital access in education, including how people with disabilities use technology, applicable federal regulations, and identifying and remediating access barriers.

The videos provide valuable information on a wide range of topics to all those in the education field and others who are interested in learning about equal access to education.



You can learn what makes technology accessible for people with disabilities and how you can make your site or platform accessible to all. The video series is broken down into 19 different topics and each video is just a few minutes long.

You can find the videos on the ADA Network's website at

<https://adata.org/ocr-videos>

or on YouTube at

https://youtu.be/Z_eoocwBYb4

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **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](#)
- **MACDDS Annual Conference—October 5-7, 2022, Columbia** <https://macdds.org/2022-macdds-annual-conference/>

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