SOUTH CAROLINA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL

POSITIVE ABILITIES

June 2015

MISSION

The mission of the South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council is to provide leadership in planning, funding, and implementing initiatives that lead to improved quality of life for people with developmental disabilities and their families through advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change.

SELF-ADVOCATES

MAKING POSSITIVE CHANGES, TAKING CONTROL AND … MAKING THE DIFFERENCE!

Kimberly Maple: Loudly and Proudly; Gave a resounding speech during Advocacy Day for Access and Independence that set the crowd on fire!

Kimberly Maple has become a strong self-advocate and a leader. Her endearing personality and sincerity allows the enthusiasm and passion she has for people with disabilites to radiate through her. Kimberly continues to work towards her diploma. She initially began the program working to complete a certificate. Her grades and her determination were motivators that showed her instructors she was capable of doing more. They recommended she work towards her diploma and Kimberly has taken the challenge and continues to work hard achieving high marks.

Along with working towards completing her diploma, she serves on the DD Council, she is a part of IMPACT and involved with the Disability and Special Needs Board in Sumter. Kimberly is a part of the State Director's Advisory Group and also works with the Human Rights Committee focusing on learning the rights of people with disablities; so she can assist others with advocating for themselves. Kimberly was initially shy and somewhat timid. As she began working with programs like DDSN and IMPACT she quickly discovered her own strengths and now flourishes as an impactful speaker.

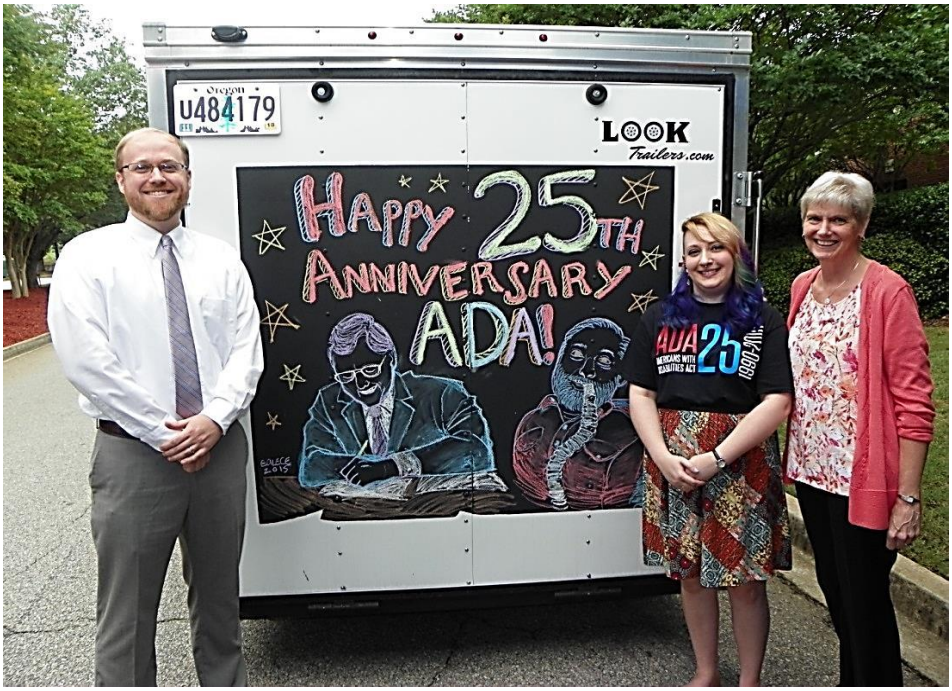
Kimberly Maple Continued…

Kimberly states she loves doing what she does because it givers her the opportunity to meet different people and advocate on their behalf. Kimberly stated she never thought she would be able to "speak–up", but the direction her life has taken has pushed her out front and with all of the support she has she found her voice and a stregnth she never knew she had. She stated she wanted others to find their voice and do what makes them happy. Kimberly stated she has strong spiritual beliefs and she feels public speaking is a calling, a huge responsibility and something she enjoys doing. Kimberly has aspiration of attending nursing school and a desire to work with the elderly. She stated she has a passion for serving such a vunerable population. Also in Kimberly's future are buying her first car and becoming a homeowner. Kimberly stated she discovered her voice and will use it to continue making a difference, helping to create more opportunities for people with disabilities and positively impacting the community around her.

Kimberly listens intently to a presentation from one of our sub-grantees during a Council meeting

Kimberly Maple speaks to the crowd and shares her story

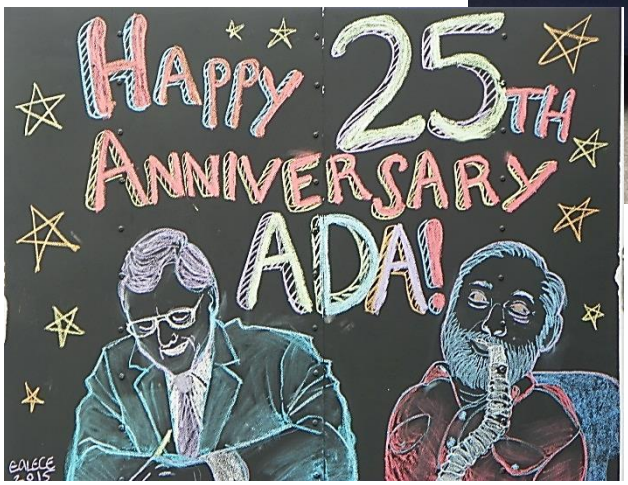
ADA CELEBRATING 25 YEARS!



Robbie Kopp, Effie Francis and Valarie Bishop

Able South Carolina hosted The Road To Freedom Bus Tour which recognizes the on-going efforts of people with disabilities advocating for their rights. Young Adult Leader, Effie Francis, from Able South Carolina was the artist who was selected to draw the picture representing South Carolina. Disability organizations from around the state joined in the festivities. Historical pictures were taken and the crowd cheered and celebrated their achievements over the past 25 years. Able South Carolina staff wore the 25th Anniversary Addition T-Shirts and provided signs, water, and lunch for the event. Family Connection, Florence County Disability and Special Needs Board along with the Mayor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities were a few of the organizations joining with Able South Carolina to help highlight these achievements. The DD Council was proud to show support and continues to recognize efforts which give life to our mission!

Valarie Bishop, Esther Williams, Reyhan Miller, Jackie from Florence County DSNB and Cheryl English of the DD Council



Effie Francis' amazing artistry depicting 25 years of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)

Members of Family Connection along with Able SC Director, Kimberly Tissot

The enthusiastic crowd listens as the bus driver shares the history behind the tour and takes the opportunity to pose for historical photographs during the event

ABLE SOUTH CAROLINA . . .

. . . MAPPING OUT THEIR FUTURE AND TAKING THE REINS!

Some Able South Carolina staff members pose for a picture during their annual "Mapping Your Future" Conference in Greenville, SC.

The annual conference was held in Greenville, SC where participants experienced the excitement of learning how self-advocacy benefits them. Conference goers were treated to a number of workshops and spirited sessions focusing on specifics for their future. Parents and Care givers learned the importance of letting go or relaxing the "reins" and self-advocates were given the tools to be able to have more control and a more definitive say

One of the conference speakers shares ideas with parents.

Mapping Your Future Continued…

in planning for themselves. Parents and self-advocates expressed excitement over future possibilities and left feeling empowered having a more focused direction.

Participants are all smiles as they gain confidence and uncover their strengths!

KEYNOTE FEATURE
"I'm Determined"

Equip Leader, Derrick Means, shares with conference participants

I'm Determined to set and steer the course rather than remaining the silent passenger. The ***I'm Determined*** project is a state directed project funded by the Virginia Department of Education which focuses on providing direct instruction, models, and opportunities to practice skills associated with self-determined behavior beginning at the elementary level and continuing through the student's educational career The self-determined student knows how to set and achieve goals and has a great understanding of personal strengths and how to get support for areas of need. The hallmark of the self-determination project is the "Aha Moment": the point when student, educator and/or parent see how the development of these skills leads to improved academic and personal outcomes. This project facilitates youth, especially those with disabilities to undertake a measure of control in their lives, helping to set and steer the course rather than remaining the silent passenger. Teachers report seeing the "Aha Moment" in their students to be one of the greatest rewards of their career.

Advocacy Day!

Participants "Hold Up The Banner" during the Advocacy Day Rally at the State House.

Neither rain, nor cold weather could stop the charge or make self-advocates change their course! Able SC spear-headed the event and the DD Council staff was on hand to show support.

Advocacy Day for Access & Independence was held at the statehouse on April 16, 2015. 250 people attended despite it being a cold, rainy day. 25 separate organizations supported this event. The event included a briefing on key issue areas – Transportation, Employment, Housing and Healthcare. People came from across to state to attend. Speakers included Representatives Beth Bernstein, Mike Pitts and Chandra Dillard, Columbia Mayor Stephen Benjamin, Council Member Kimberly Maple, and many others. The Governor's Proclamation and a personal statement from the Governor were read by Council Executive Director Valarie Bishop. The message was clear: let's unlock the barriers to access and independence for South Carolinians with disabilities! Thanks to everyone who volunteered their time to plan, participate and speak at this important event.

National Youth Leadership Network

Building power among young leaders with disabilities!

In 2013 the National Youth Leadership Network (NYLN) submitted an application to establish and guide a youth-led project in South Carolina at the Council's request. This was initiated after two attempts failed to produce a response to a request for proposals (RFP). The grant was approved and a three-year plan of action was set in place to ensure South Carolina produced a solid organization for empowering youth. Betsy Valnes and the NYLN staff jumped right in to spearhead the initiative. NYLN sub-contracted with Able South Carolina and provided oversight and resources to assist organizations, youth and allies. Through these efforts Equip was created/established with the support of the SC Developmental Disabilities Council.

The growth and development of the young people within EQUIP far exceeded expectations. In only a years' time, a strong foundation of young leaders and a sturdy alliance of well-seasoned professionals around the state was set. The outlined goals and objectives were achieved, the number of people targeted exceeded expectations and an outline was created for sustainability in record time.

NYLN is a national organization that prides itself on fostering strong leaders and embraces the recognition when youth leaders are ready to lead independently. The time to support a change was recognized by all and a transition plan developed in August 2014. The transition was set to take place at the end October, 2014 and the process was seamless. NYLN placed great confidence in ABLE and Equip and felt they were positioned to provide outstanding leadership for youth and to continue to build a positive Youth Leadership Network in South Carolina. Thank you NYLN for helping us get things started!

Betsy Valnes meeting with stakeholders and working with youth to ensure the continued success of NYLN.

Betsy and Alesia talking with youth leadership forum participants

DISABILITY ADVOCACY DAY

Dr. Beverly Buscemi, SCDDSN State Director, is one of the guest speakers at the event.

Connie Coleman, is the moderator for the event.

The South Carolina Partnership of Disability Organizations is made up of disability advocacy organizations representing autism, brain injury, spinal cord injury, intellectual and related disabilities.

Because our constituents share many of the same service needs, these organizations joined together to provide leadership in advocating on critical issues affecting the lives of people with disabilities and their families. Collectively, these volunteer organizations advocate for more than 500,000 people with severe lifelong disabilities and their families in South Carolina.

The Mission of the South Carolina Partnership of Disability Organizations is to engage in concerted advocacy for public policy that:

- Assures self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with severe lifelong disabilities in all aspects of society
- Enhances the civil rights and quality of life of all people with disabilities
- Reflects the values of the Americans with Disabilities Act

Impact members are becoming more aware of their strengths and capabilities, and are beginning to take on leadership roles in advocating for their rights. Impact members will begin to have a more active role in future Disability Advocacy Day event planning. Truly living up to their motto: “Nothing About Us, Without Us”!

CALANDER OF EVENTS….

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31 May	June	2	3	4	5	6
	NATIONAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEEK – HURRICAN SEASON BEGINS					
7	8	9 DD Council Meeting	10	11 IMPACT Self-Advocacy Meeting	12	13
					Impact Leadership Training	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Impact Leadership Training Continued						
21	22	23	24	25	26 SCEMD Training	27
28	29	30	July	2	3	4
5	6	7 EQUIP Summer Series	8	9	10	11
				National Youth Leadership Forum 07/09-11/2014		
12	13	14 EQUIP Summer Series	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 NACDD Conference EQUIP Summer Series	22 NACDD Conference	23 NACDD Conference	24	25
26	27	28 EQUIP Summer Series	29	30	31	August
2	3	4 EQUIP Summer Series	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 DD Council Meeting	12	13 EQUIP Summer Series	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3003 Chamblee Tucker Road
Atlanta, GA 30341

Region IV-NR-2015-005
Media Contact: (770) 220-5226

FEMA

News Release

HURRICANE SEASON BEGINS JUNE 1—ARE YOU READY?
New FEMA Weather Alert App Keeps You Informed, Prepared

ATLANTA – As the 2015 hurricane season begins, FEMA has launched a new feature to its mobile app to help you be prepared and stay informed about severe weather. The free feature allows you to receive weather alerts from five locations you select anywhere in the country, even if the phone is not located in the area. This tool makes it easy to follow severe weather that may be threatening your family and friends in other areas.

"Whether this years' hurricane season is mild or wild, it's important to be prepared," said Regional Administrator Gracia Szczech. "Despite forecasters' predictions for a below-normal number of storms, fewer storms do not necessarily mean a less destructive season. FEMA is reinforcing preparedness basics and resources to help people be ready whether they live along the coast or farther inland." Visit FEMA's www.ready.gov/hurricanes for step-by-step information and resources for what to do before, during and after a hurricane.

Cellphones and mobile devices are a major part of our lives and an essential part of how emergency responders and survivors get information during disasters. According to a recent survey by Pew Research, 40 percent of Americans have used their smartphone to look up government services or information. Additionally, a majority of smartphone owners use their devices to keep up to date with breaking news, and to be informed about what is happening in their community.

The new weather alert feature adds to existing features in the app to help Americans through emergencies. In addition to this upgrade, the app also provides a customizable checklist of emergency supplies, maps of open shelters and Disaster Recovery Centers, and tips on how to survive natural and manmade disasters. The FEMA app also offers a "Disaster Reporter" feature, where users can upload and share photos of disaster damage. The app defaults to Spanish language content for smartphones that have Spanish set as their default language.

The latest version of the FEMA app is available for free in the App Store for Apple devices and Google Play for Android devices. Users who already have the app downloaded on their smartphones should download the latest update for the new alerts feature to take effect. To learn more about the FEMA app, visit: The FEMA App: Helping Your Family Weather the Storm.

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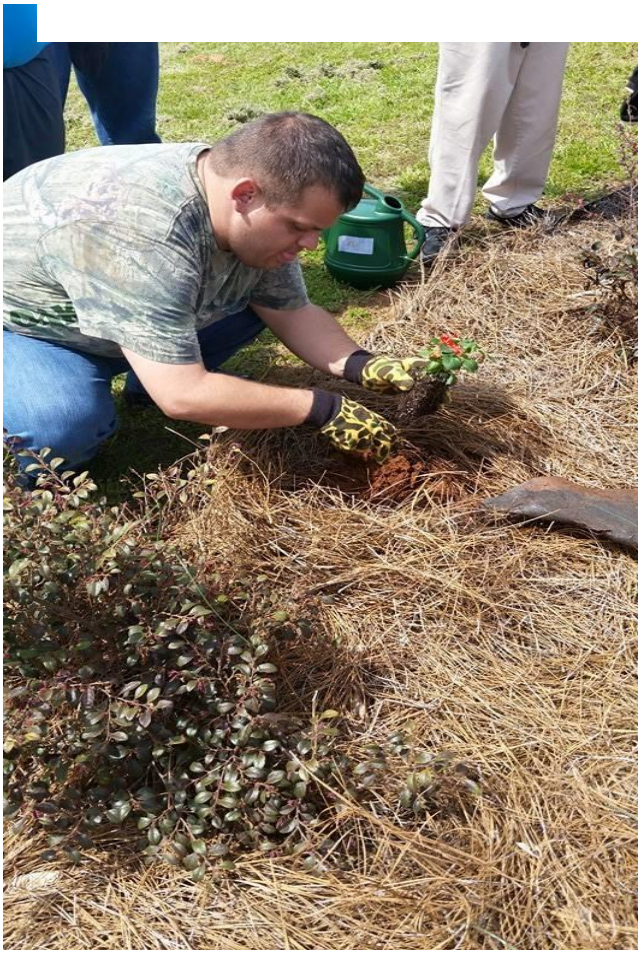
FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

MIXED GREENS – GROW WITH US

Mixed Greens is a blend of community projects to provide people with intellectual and developmental disabilities an opportunity to gain the lifelong skill of gardening while participating in innovative and inclusive community garden and service projects. This program offers many opportunities for social, recreational activity, and networking through connections with community members, local businesses, staff and volunteers. It is our aim to provide more than lessons on gardening and social gatherings. This project proposes participants focus on goal attainment, develop physical and mental skills, hone social interaction, build self-esteem, and strengthen their sense of community and personal accomplishment.

Below are a few projects we hope to implement as the program expands. If you are interested in volunteering or being a part of any of these, please contact us!



Plant Yourself!

The Mixed Green group simply provides a few green chairs for individuals visiting markets or events to rest or catch up. Words are written in front of the chairs to ignite conversations and there's a craft table with a gardening theme incorporated for the young people.

Adopt-a-Pot: Adopt-a-Pot is a program intended to beautify community landscapes, in cooperation with city and local governments. The town/government entity or a grantor provides large pots filled with soil. The pots are then "adopted" by local businesses, organizations, and individuals, planted with flowers and cared for during the growing season. Mixed Greens would seek grantors and collaborate with local groups to plant/maintain the plants.

Little Green Wagon:

The Little Green Wagon invites children and young people who visit Columbia's local farmers markets to plant a seed, watch it grow from one Saturday to the next, and take their plant home when it is ready to transplant. Plants that do not find a home with the children who planted them will be given away. The Mixed Greens group would take care of the plants during the week and bring the mobile garden back to the market on a routine basis so that the young persons can stop in, socialize and check on their plant.

Community Gardens: It is not just one garden, but many, coming together for a variety of worthy causes. The goal is to not only have gardens in a community setting where people with intellectual and developmental disabilities can participate, but a shared garden tended by members from various groups — adding to the sense of community. These community places/gardens will work to blend groups and build new friendships between the gardeners, who give each other support and tips to improve their skills.

Participants enjoy a day at the market as well as making vegetable dishes with produce they have grown and purchased at their local farmers markets.

Community Strong!

Melinda D. Moore, M.Ed.
Chief Executive Officer
Arc of the Midlands
(803) 693-5746

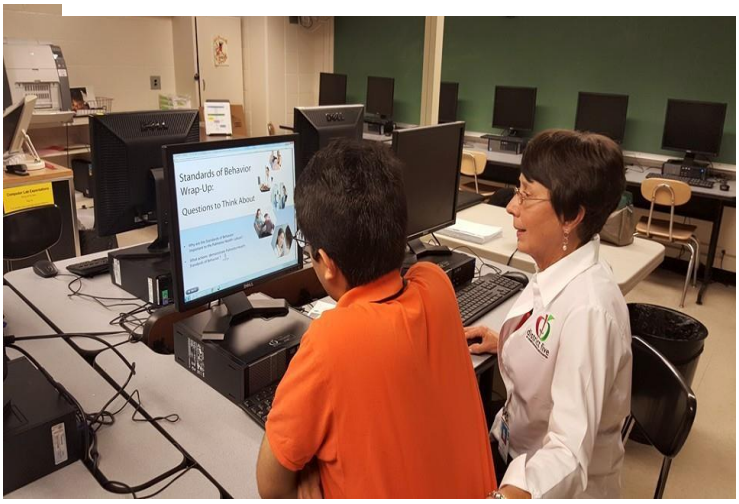
www.arcmidlands.org

PROJECT SEARCH – HIGH SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION

Project SEARCH is a business-led school-to-work transition model with demonstrated success in developing internships for students with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities. This model leads to integrated employment that pays the prevailing wage for a given job for students in their last year of high school. The program is targeted for students whose main goal is competitive employment.

Funded by the SC Developmental Disabilities Council, The Arc of the Midlands has partnered with Palmetto Baptist Parkridge Hospital, District 5 of Lexington and Richland counties, and SC Vocational Rehabilitation, to bring Project SEARCH to Columbia for school year 2015-16. Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration and hands-on training through worksite rotations. The overall goal is competitive employment. For more information, contact Melinda@arcmidlands.org.

Special "Thanks" to Spartanburg Regional Hospital for sharing Project Search and allowing us to see all the great things you are doing.



Participants in the Project Search Program

ARTS ACCESS SOUTH CAROLINA

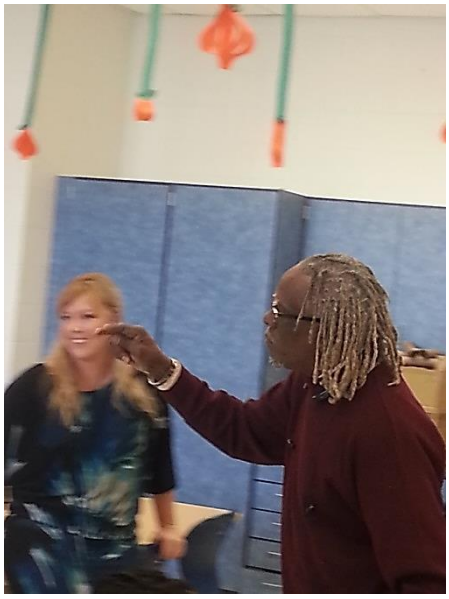
Project R.E.A.L.

Formally vsa The State Organization on Arts and Disability SOUTH CAROLINA
Celebrating 28 Years of Service

Project R.E.A.L. (Recruiting Entrepreneurs for Advocacy and Leadership), recruits future entrepreneurs to increase job opportunities in the arts for high school students and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Through the use of visual, literary, culinary, and performing arts, students are trained and encouraged to use their creativity and growth in order to better equip and prepare them in becoming future leaders and advocates in the arts community. R.E.A.L. provides a variety of arts related apprenticeship/training programs aimed at matching high school students and young adults with master artists to advance them to a potential professional career in the arts.

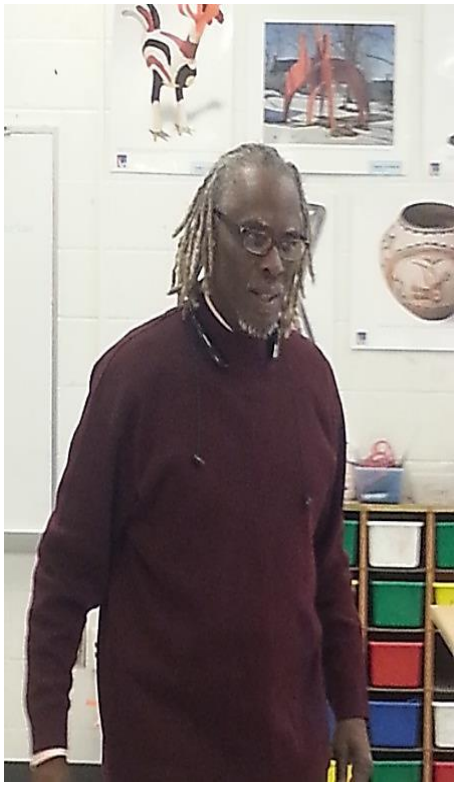
Executive Director, Julia Brown with Senator Tim Scott at a Veterans Day Celebration in North Charleston, SC. Recruiting Disabled Veterans for Project R.E.A.L.

Take Me Back to Harlem...



The Semple Take presented by ARTS Access SC was held on May 6th and 7th at the Steret Hall Auditorium at the Navy Yard 1530 7th Street, North Charleston, SC 29405

Arts Access South Carolina presented this original, two act play written by W. LaVone Griffin and inspired by Langston Hughes' popular fictional character Jesse B. Semple. The story focuses on Griffin's version of Jesse B. Semple and the character's views on racism in America during World War II. Produced as a component of Arts Access SC's new program, Expressions: For Vets by Vets, the play was designed to offer disabled veterans an opportunity for self-discovery through an artistic platform.



W. LaVone Griffin

© ARTS ACCESS SOUTH CAROLINA 2014

WE ARE THE MASK Students are introduced to specific requirements as far ahead of time as possible to give them time to think of their idea and begin finding objects that might help with their project.

Students begin making a mask that depicts how they want the world to see them. If they could instantly show someone who they are what would that look like? For instance students are asked to think of themselves as an author, artist, dancer, guitar player, scientist or something else entirely different. Asking the question what are they already or what do they want to become? What is their true inner self?

Since the masks are to be seen from a distance it is best to think of a single large high contrast image or of an assemblage of a few objects. Try placing the image at the far end of the room if it is not recognizable at that distance how will people in the audience know what they are trying to show them?

Students began saving found objects that could be incorporated into a mask that fit their idea of the above instructions. Items that are most suitable would view well at a distance, be light in weight, accept paint (if needed) and be something that they did not need back. The items may be glued riveted, carved, painted or otherwise permanently altered. No valuable items.

Materials that may be helpful: Glue, paint, Styrofoam (egg cartons, packaging –these must be cleaned), brown paper bags, newspapers, pipe cleaners, buttons, thread, yarn, elastic, eyelets, cloth, fake fur, aluminum pie plates juice boxes, oatmeal containers, paper cups, soda pop bottles, anything light that looks like or can be altered to look like what they wanted to portray in their mask. Cereal boxes or card stock scraps are useful for making an armature for protrusions.

Lots of scrap paper was used. Newspaper is the most commonly used paper for Paper Mache and yields a strong final product as it has the correct combination of strength and absorbency. However excellent effects can be created with for instance paper towels which can create a dragon scale effect and unused tissue paper or Kleenex can make a great molding paste for forming details. Students were excited and did an excellent job creating masks they felt best portrayed their image.

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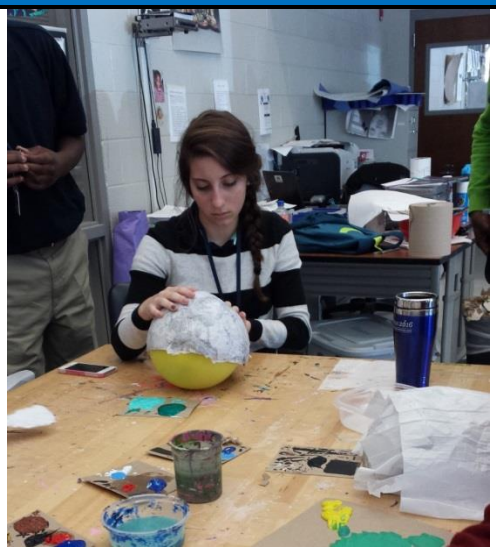


warrior

UCAN: Community

A grant funded by the South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council

Project Coordinator: Kristen Caldwell, MS, CTRS

Project Goals:

1. To increase the number and diversity of adaptive recreational opportunities offered in the Greenville community.

2. To enable those with a disability to build social capital through recreational opportunities and thus expand their life circles.

UCAN: Community is a grant funded by the South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council, in addition to the generous contributions of Tony Harper and Marion Peace Harris Moore. Using a two-pronged approach, this project strives to increase social connectedness and community participation of individuals with a disability. Friendships, social networks, and community supports (social capital) are essential in creating a sense of self-worth, importance, and belonging. After acquiring a disability, it may be difficult or intimidating for an individual to re-engage in their community, thus leading to social isolation and depression. The goal of UCAN: Community is to enable individuals with a disability to build social capital through recreational and leisure activities and thus expand their life circles.

The first strategy is to increase the number of adaptive recreational activities offered through Roger C Peace Rehabilitation Hospital's Upstate Community Abilities Network (UCAN). UCAN currently

provides adaptive instruction in cycling, water skiing, and golf. These adaptive sport events provide access to specialized instruction and equipment in a warm, encouraging environment. The grant targets growth in these existing sport programs, as well as the addition of sports like sled hockey, indoor cycling, and alpine skiing.

The second strategy is to identify community-based "gatekeepers" as advocates for integrating individuals with disability into existing recreational, leisure, and social opportunities. While specialized adaptive events are effective as an introduction to adaptive sport, individuals with disability would benefit from establishing inclusive, sustainable relationships in recreation and leisure activities to become more fully integrated into their community and access these activities on a regular basis.

Grant participants will meet with Kristen Caldwell, Project Coordinator and Recreational Therapist, to complete a Recreation and Leisure Inventory to identify interests, as well as a Social Capital Inventory to identify social connectedness. Based on these results, we will create an Individualized Community Participation Plan to target a few key interests and outline steps toward getting involved in those areas.

This grant is appropriate for individuals with:

- ❖ any acquired injury or illness (SCI, TBI, Stroke, MS). Congenital, physical disabilities will be considered as resources allow.
- ❖ any age (priority given to under 21).
- ❖ anyone who needs assistance with community participation, for example:
  - ➢ Individual has little to no participation in recreation, leisure, and community activities
  - ➢ Individual feels socially isolated because of their injury/illness
  - ➢ Individual feels lonely, depressed, bored

If you or someone you know if interested in participating in this grant project, please contact Kristen Caldwell at kcaldwell5@ghs.org or 864-455-2627. All services are free and voluntary, although the selected activity may have associated fees.

MOVE TO WELLNESS Continues to make progress and have a positive impact with their nationally recognized/awarding winning program. Staff in this program hosted a conference in March 2015 to share their successful program. The Conference was held in Columbia with 62 people in attendance. Packets and flash-drives of resource materials were handed out to all participants. An array of speakers included Valarie Bishop (SCDDC), Kelly Eifert (SCDHHS) and York Adult Day Care staff. Topics included activities and wellness in the center environment. Move to Wellness integrates health promotion into plans for participants. Along with assessments each person receives education about: Food & Diet, Exercise, Hydration, Sleep, Stress, Flu, Dental Hygiene and Heart Health. Participants reported feeling better, having an increase in mobility and more enjoyment of socialization. Other noted progress includes increased water intake and reduction in urinary tract infections. Improvement in blood pressure has led to medication changes.

Members of the program along with other organizations participate in a training program and workshop focusing on maintaining positive progress.

2015 Partners in Policymaking Graduating Class 18

PIP is an established statewide, grassroots network of highly skilled and motivated parents of children with developmental disabilities, self-advocates, and family members who have the leadership skills and training to change their own lives, to effect system change at the local, state and national levels, and to become Partners with Policymakers who make policies and laws in regards to disabilities. PIP is a trademark program consisting of training and curriculum developed by the Minnesota Developmental Disabilities Council. PIP focused on training adults with disabilities

PIP Continued…

and the parents of individuals with disabilities to become strong advocates for themselves, family members, and others with disabilities. The goals of empowerment, self-advocacy and leadership are the driving force behind the initiative.

Valarie Bishop, Jennifer Adams and Tonya Inabinet share a smile during the ceremony.

This year concluded with 18 parents and self-advocates graduating. Classes were held in the state capital; Columbia. There were 13 counties represented and collaboration and partnerships were established with local and state legislators, agency directors and advocacy organizations including Employment and Workforce, Assistive Technology, Department of Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, School Improvement Council, Council on Adoptable Children, Family Connection, Autism Society, Independent Living Council, Foster Parent Association, Parents Leading the Way, Exceptional Family Member Program.

Class training included, increasing self-awareness, how to be an effective advocate, E-learning sessions, participating in legislative sessions, and presentations from various speakers. PRO-Parents increased the use of electronic resources by granting program access. A list serve for active e-mail accounts for graduates of Partners in Policymaking provided constant contact free to participants. In addition Partners in Policymaking also have Facebook and Twitter accounts which serve to enhance socialization skills.

In addition to website access, the program distributes booklets and newsletters which reach approximately 25,000 statewide. PIP participates in conferences and members take part in various board and council meetings with other state agencies and self-advocate organizations.

IMPACT

The DDC grant allows I.M.P.A.C.T. S.C. (IMPACT) to increase their participation in national and statewide conferences. It also increases their ability to train self-advocates and increases awareness across the state about the wants and needs of people with disabilities.

Events include the following:

- **Presenting at the South Carolina Chapter of The American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (SCAIDD) conference on October 9, 2014.**
- **Attending the SABE conference in Oklahoma City, OK on October 9-12, 2014.**
- **Presenting to the R.E.A.C.H. program students at the College of Charleston on February 24, 2015.**
- **Exhibiting at the SC Human Service Providers Conference on February 25-27, 2015.**
- **Exhibiting at the SC Assistive Technology Expo on March 26, 2015.**

Due to IMPACT's collaboration with Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE), a National Self-Advocate Organization, South Carolina was one of 8 states to receive the Our Community Standing Strong grant in October, 2013. They are in their second year of funding from that grant. Impact Members are part of the Advisory Committee for this grant and they participate in meetings, webinars and conference calls.

As you can see, I.M.P.A.C.T. S.C. has had a busy year!

Next up is a Train The Trainers Leadership Series workshop that will take place June 12-15, 2015. Trainers are coming from the Massachusetts DD Council to do the training. Stay tuned for a report on this initiative in our next edition!

Impact SC members played a very active role in carrying out SC Disability Advocacy Day at the statehouse (see page 8 for article and pictures about the event).
Impact SC has agreed to take over the event for next year!

Membership has grown this past year as well. New members include a group from the Marion-Dillion DSN Board.

Assistive Technology; Breaking Records and Going International!

The Assistive Technology Expo was a huge success with record breaking attendance this year. With 837 people registered the Expos continues to highlight new developments and improved technology available. Expo goers shared their increasing needs for support in this area as well as their excitement for the Expo opening doors to those needs. With attendance of this magnitude providers begin to understand the overwhelming need for support in assisting individuals as well as families.

The SC Assistive Technology Program is always ready to give a device demonstration to anyone in SC. What a treat to have Lalitha Nagarajan, AVAZ app representative visiting us from India! Lalitha met with SCATP staff, Palmetto Language and Speech Center staff, The Therapy Place staff, parents and their children who use the AVAZ app as part of their communication systems.

A Word From the Chair

Amy Davenport, Chairperson

I continued to be amazed and honored to serve as the Chairperson for the SC Developmental Disabilities Council. I have been afforded the opportunity to see firsthand the hard work which takes place throughout the state with our sub-grantees. As we continue to push self-advocates into the spot-light I am elated by proven abilities. Our grantees provide the opportunities and self-advocates shine. They merely prove they are people with Abilities and the sky is the limit!

A key component to each grant is the self-advocacy aspect. DD Council is elated to have more self-advocacy involvement in the development and implementation of the grants. With this essential piece in place, self-advocates are able to better address their own needs, rally for better services, make stronger public appeals and have their voices heard.

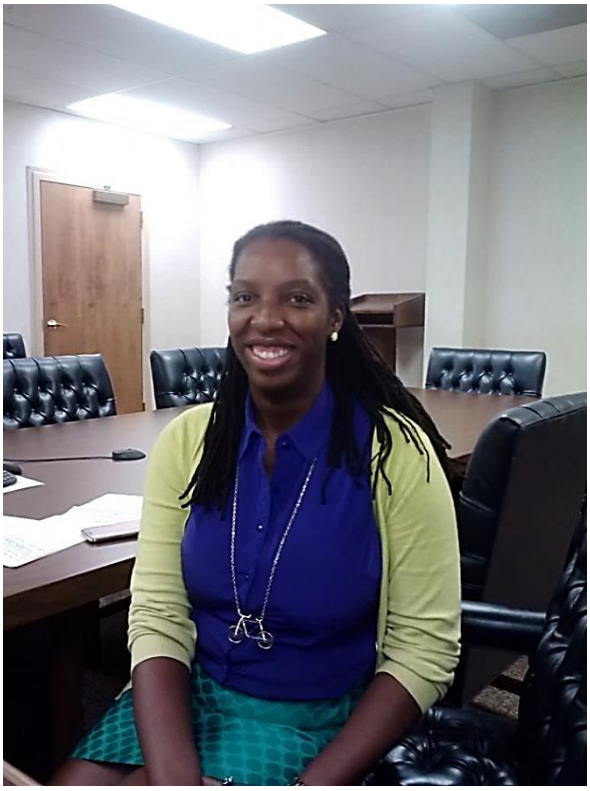
The increase in grant activities through the DD Council has provided continued support to programs which successfully encourage individuals, families and partners. As a parent who understands the daily challenges that face people with disabilities it is heart-warming to see first-hand, the work being done around the state and the level of commitment from every sub-grantee, organization and agency.

The Council added two new faces; Jeffrey Ham from SC Department of Mental Health and Kathy Martin, from Protection and Advocacy. I want to say a very special "***Thank You***" to all of our Council members who serve so faithfully.

Members of the South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council take a moment to pose for the camera

Standing L to R: Roger Kuperman, Mary Eaddy-Baker, Marion Taylor, Charles Daniel Willis, Frank Bennett, Jacob Chorey, Jevettra Devlin, Jeffrey Ham, Jennifer Van Cleave, George Maky, Amy Davenport, Melina Lee, Dr.David Rotholz. **Seated L to R:** Milton "Drew" Gatlin, Jr., Coy L. "Les" Durham, III, Mary Ann DeBerry, Mildred Mayes, Freda King, Brad Raymond. **Not Pictured:** Kimberly Addis, Sharon Durham, Owens Goff, Kimberly Maple, Kathy Martin, Dr. Charles McLafferty.

DD Council Members On The Move!



Jevettra Devlin provides her knowledge in public health to the Council and Health Committee. She works at the University of South Carolina Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics. Jevettra is also an active participant on the Functional Needs Committee which focuses on ensuring persons with disabilities are included in emergency preparedness management planning.

Jevettra Devlin

Kathy Martin from Protection and Advocacy shares with the Functional Needs Committee her experiences while attending the FEMA training courses. Kathy is now a FEMA Certified trainer and will be able to train others in emergency preparedness. Congratulations to Kathy!

Jevettra Devlin and Kathy Martin take a moment after the Functional Needs Committee Meeting.

The SC DD Council welcomes Jeffrey Ham from the Department of Mental Health

Executive Director

Message from the Director

Council activities continue to make a difference in people's lives and in our communities. We have so many wonderful grantees whose programs are highlighted in this issue. Thank you to all of you for taking the time to share your stories and the stories of those who are benefitting from your efforts.

The Council staff is taking a more active role in participating in events such as Disability Advocacy Day, Advocacy Day for Access and Independence and the 25th ADA Bus Tour. How exciting to be a part of these inspiring events.

I want to say "thank you" to our wonderful partners who are strong advocates across South Carolina. We are excited about the programs that are breaking down barriers to employment and full community inclusion for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and look forward to our continued work together.

Valarie Bishop

South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council

Ms. Kimberly Addis
Ms. Dianne S. Bennett
Mr. Frank Bentley
Mr. Jacob Chorey
Mr. Amy Davenport
Mr. Mary Ann DeBerry
Ms. Sharon Durham
Mr. Coy L. "Les" Durham, III
Mrs. Mary Eaddy-Baker
Mr. Milton "Drew" Gatlin, Jr.
Mr. Owens Goff
Mr. Jeffrey Ham
Mrs. Freda King
Mr. Roger Kuperman
Ms. Melina Lee
Mr. George Maky
Ms. Kimberly Maple
Ms. Kathy Martin
Ms. Mildred Mayes
Dr. Charles McLafferty
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