



### Recap: CLL Director Dr. Valerie Williams Keynote at Joining Forces 2023

The Center for Learning and Leadership's Director, Dr. Valerie Williams, delivered the keynote speech on the [Seven Partner Values](#) at [Oklahoma Family Network's](#) 2023 Joining Forces Conference. Over 115 attended in person and another 38 attended virtually. The CLL is guided by the Seven Partner Values, which define the elements of successful community partnerships. The Seven Partner Values were created collaboratively with CLL's [Consumer Advisory Committee](#).

### Autism Advocacy Day at the Capitol

April is Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month. The 7th annual Autism Advocacy Day at the Capitol was held on Thursday, April 13th. Families, self-advocates, and 35 resource providers met at the Oklahoma State Capitol to advocate for and with people with autism (autistic people) and their families. For more information on autism, including community resources related to autism, please visit the [Autism Foundation of Oklahoma](#) website and the [Oklahoma Autism Network](#) website.

### Spotlight: Two CLL Staff Recognized and Awarded for Their Advocacy

The Center for Learning and Leadership is proud to announce that two staff members received awards at Autism Advocacy Day at the State Capitol. Wanda Felty, CLL's Assistant Director and Community Leadership & Advocacy Coordinator received the 2023 Parent Advocate of the Year Award, and Gale Hann, CLL's Data Coordinator, received the 2023 Self-Advocate of the Year Award. We are proud to see their contributions honored. Congratulations, Wanda and Gale!

### Public Health is for Everyone: Inclusive Planning Toolkit for Public Health

A [resource database/toolkit](#) has been created that provides free information, products, and best practices to include people with disabilities in public health efforts. Users can search and browse disability and health related resources by their interests and professional needs. The resource database/toolkit was created by the [Association of University Centers on Disability \(AUCD\)](#) in collaboration with the Disability and Health Program, Division of Human Development and Disability, National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

### L.E.A.D: Autism in the Workplace - A Workforce Development Project for Employers

[L.E.A.D. \(Learn Educate Accept Develop\)](#) is a workplace inclusion project from the Autism Foundation of Oklahoma that provides training and business solutions to employers committed to diversity and equity. L.E.A.D offers employers four trainings to learn about the benefits of hiring autistic people/people on the autism spectrum and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and how to attract and interview neurodiverse candidates and foster an inclusive work environment. The L.E.A.D. training courses are available in person or remotely. For more information or to schedule training, please email Kyle Britt, Workforce Development Coordinator at [kbritt@autismfoundationok.org](mailto:kbritt@autismfoundationok.org).

### Announcements and Events

#### April 20<sup>th</sup>: OKASA Wheelchair Basketball Tournament, 5:30-9 PM

Join us for the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Oklahoma Adaptive Sports Association Wheelchair Basketball Tournament. This event pits OU doctors against the OKASA Wheels of Thunder in an epic wheelchair basketball showdown. This family-friendly event provides entertainment, music, and surprise guests. There are also t-shirts for sale, pizza, snacks, and beverages, and a silent auction. All funds raised will go towards OKASA athletes and purchasing sport equipment and travel expenses for the national tournaments. The event will be held at Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School, 801 NW 50th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73118. To learn more about OKASA, visit: [www.okasa.org](http://www.okasa.org).

#### April 24- 28: Think College Awareness Week: College is for Everyone (Free virtual sessions all week)

Join [Think College](#) as they kick off the "Think Higher. Think College," a public awareness campaign to expand access to college for students with intellectual disabilities. This weeklong celebration will take place from April 24th through the 28<sup>th</sup>. It will feature daily virtual learning events for students, families, educators, transition professionals, and higher education personnel. All events are free and open to the public. Visit the [events page to register](#) and learn about each session.

#### April 28 - 29: Caregiver Respite Retreat Logan and Payne County Primary Caregivers

Sooner SUCCESS and the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma are hosting a Caregiver Respite Retreat for the primary family caregivers of a loved one with intellectual/developmental disabilities that reside in Logan and Payne County. Caregivers will receive a free stay at the Hilton Garden Inn in Edmond including meals, free chair massages, other fun activities, and special presentations from ABLE Tech, Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma, and Sooner SUCCESS. \$200 respite vouchers are also available to pay for someone to watch your loved ones while you and your guest can enjoy your stay without any worries! Registration/Check in will be from 3-6 PM on April 28th. The retreat will conclude at 2 PM on Saturday. For more information, contact Lori Wathen at 405-698-6970 or email at [Lori-Wathen@ouhsc.edu](mailto:Lori-Wathen@ouhsc.edu), or Samantha Basave at 405-534-8000, or email at [Samantha-basave@ouhsc.edu](mailto:Samantha-basave@ouhsc.edu).

### We want to hear from you!

Do you have news or an event to share? Please send all information including a link (if applicable) to [learn2lead-ucedd@ouhsc.edu](mailto:learn2lead-ucedd@ouhsc.edu). All submissions should be in no later than the fourth Friday of the month before publication (ex: 4<sup>th</sup> Friday in June for July's newsletter).

Sign-up to receive our free monthly newsletter *focus facts on community living* <http://tiny.cc/focusfacts>

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The University of Oklahoma advances a diverse, equitable, and inclusive university community by embracing each person's unique contributions, background, and perspectives. OU Norman, OU Tulsa, and the Health Sciences Center recognize that fostering an inclusive environment for all, with particular attention to the needs of the historically marginalized populations, is vital to the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of our institutional mission and enhances the OU experience for all students, faculty, and staff.

*focus facts* is published for the University Affiliated Developmental Disabilities Network members. Its purpose is to highlight specific information and data items relevant to developing and sustaining positive community environments. Individual information items are provided for use in this form, or for further circulation. When re-printing information please reference *focus facts* and the month of issue noted below the banner at the top of this page. The name of a contact person for additional information on items referenced in the newsletter is provided for your convenience. If you have data, information or a story to report relevant to community living, please send it to *focus facts* Editor at the Center for Learning and Leadership/UCEDD OU Health Sciences Center, PO Box 2690, Oklahoma City, OK 73126. Please include the information source, by title, a one paragraph (or less) description or story, a contact name who can provide additional information on the subject, and a daytime or evening telephone number for the contact.

If you have questions regarding the format for submissions, please call the Center for Learning and Leadership/UCEDD Headquarters Office at (405) 271-4500. The University Affiliated Developmental Disabilities Network is open to membership by any organization or individual who shares the interests of Network members. The Network is dedicated to identifying opportunities for collaboration and information exchange among its participating members, which leads to improving our statewide, regional or local capacity to provide a better living environment in Oklahoma for people with developmental and other disabilities and their families. The Network is partially supported through a grant from the U.S. Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Department of Health and Human Services, and by the Offices of the Designated Representatives of the Center for Learning and Leadership/UCEDD Collaborating Partners.

If you have a disability (Deaf/hard-of-hearing, Blind/low-vision, mobility, cognitive, etc.), and require accommodations, please reach out to [Learn2Lead@ouhsc.edu](mailto:Learn2Lead@ouhsc.edu). It is helpful if you share what type of accommodations will be needed to ensure that you are able to use the resource materials.