



## Featured Partner: Autism Foundation of Oklahoma

[The Autism Foundation of Oklahoma \(AFO\)](#) mission is to improve the quality of life for Oklahomans with autism and their families. AFO is committed to providing education, advocacy, collaboration, and family support across the lifespan with programs focused on Early Childhood, Public Health and Safety, Justice System Reform, and Workforce Development. AFO current projects include providing training and sensory kits to law enforcement, first responders, and health care workers. AFO also has a community event called [Project: Safe Stop](#), where they partner with local law enforcement agencies to give drivers and passengers with autism the opportunity to experience and practice safe traffic stops in a controlled environment. AFO recently completed the development of four autism training modules for Oklahoma employers, and they are currently providing training to our state's justice system professionals. In the summer of 2022, AFO hosted five sensory-friendly COVID-19 and back-to-school immunization clinics for families statewide and will soon begin health equity training for all 77 county health departments and tribal health service units.

## Wanda Felty receives Advocate of the Year award from Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy

The Center for Learning and Leadership/UCEDD is celebrating our Community Leadership & Advocacy Coordinator, Oklahoma LEND Core Faculty, Parent/Family staff member, [Wanda Felty](#). On July 30<sup>th</sup>, Wanda received the Inaugural Jay Scott Brown Individual Advocate of the Year award from the [Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy](#) at OICA's annual Heroes Ball for her advocacy work. OICA's goal is "to ensure that every child in Oklahoma – from birth to adulthood – is nurtured, healthy, educated, protected from harm, and thriving." Congratulations, Wanda!

## COVID-19 cases expected to rise as students return to school

OU Health officials expect to see a rise in COVID-19 cases as [students return to the classroom](#). While masking in classrooms will continue to be optional for students, health officials encourage mask wearing to help prevent the latest variant from spreading throughout schools. Dr. Bratzler of OU Health also suggests that schools include fresh air opportunities for students and staff to help reduce the risk of transmission such as opening windows or having outdoor activities when possible. Visit The Center for Learning and Leadership/UCEDDs [COVID-19 Information and Resource page](#) for resources that accommodate people with disabilities and their families and caregivers.

## DHS Announces Timeline for Waitlist

In May, the Oklahoma DHS Communications Office shared that [Oklahoma Legislators have dedicated \\$21.3M](#) to provide Waiver Services to those on the 13+ year waiting list. DHS recently released a timeline to process the more than 5,100 Oklahomans with intellectual and developmental disabilities currently on the waitlist. The goal is to process each person waiting with a target goal of March 2024 for those who got on the waitlist on May 1, 2022. The current date being processed is January 31, 2022. More information about the timeline and process can be found in [this recent article](#) published by the City Sentinel. Visit the [Oklahoma Human Services, Developmental Disabilities Services DDS Waiting List site](#) for additional information.

## Are you registered to vote?

In November, Oklahomans registered to vote will have a chance to participate in general elections. In order to participate in the November 8<sup>th</sup> General Elections, you must be registered by October 14<sup>th</sup>. You can start the registration process through the [Oklahoma State Election Board's website](#). The State Election board has provided a [2022 Voting Information Calendar](#) where you can find information on registration deadlines and voting dates for 2022.

## EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Down Syndrome Association of Oklahoma's (DASCO) Annual Festival and 5k

On Saturday, September 24, 2022, the [Down Syndrome Association of Oklahoma \(DSACO\)](#) will host their annual Festival & 5K at the Myriad Botanical Gardens in Oklahoma City, OK. This event is free and open to the public. There will be a 1-mile Fun Run beginning at 8:00 A.M. and a 5k at 8:20 A.M. The Awareness Walk will begin at 9:45 A.M. Family-friendly games and activities will be available. Please visit the [DASCO festival webpage](#) for a full schedule of events and activities or to register for the 5k or 1 mile Fun Run.

### Challenge Air Event

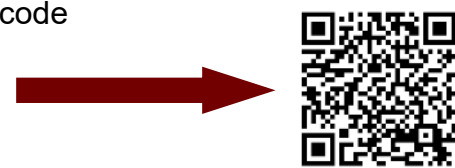
The Challenge Air Fly Day is coming Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> to the Tulsa Riverside Airport. Challenge Air is a national nonprofit that provides opportunities for 7-21 year olds with disabilities to learn about aviation. The annual event includes an educational ground school and a 30-minute flight in a plane. For more information about piloting, volunteering, sponsoring the event, and registering a participant, please visit [their website](#).

## 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.