



## **Black History Month**

February celebrates Black History Month. Many Black / African Americans with disabilities have made lasting contributions and advanced rights for all people with disabilities, while promoting visibility and equity for all. [Black/ African American advocates with disabilities](#) have historically worked to promote inclusion, diversity, and equality. On February 15<sup>th</sup>, join MassFamilies as they host a virtual panel of Black advocates to discuss *Embracing Intersectionality – A Conversation about Race and Disability*. [Register to receive a link to the virtual panel.](#)

## **Spotlight: DRTC**

The [DRTC](#), formerly Dale Rogers Training Center, supports people with disabilities through competitive community employment, paid vocational training, in-house programs, and work opportunities. Recently, OETA produced a news story about the first class of people with disabilities to graduate from DRTC's [EmployAbility Academy](#).

## **OU Health Community Collaboration for Edmond's Special Olympics Team**

On January 21st, OUHSC's [Unity Clinic](#) participated in a community event providing free physicals to [Special Olympics](#) athletes. The event was coordinated by [Edmond Public Schools](#) and OU Health Community Partnerships. [Dr. Joanne Skaggs](#) coordinated the participation of the Unity Clinic, which included students and faculty from Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Nursing, and other fields. [Dr. Catherine Mims](#) and her pediatric residents provided the medical exams. OU Health provided refreshments and lunch.

## **Filing taxes? VITA can help for free!**

The [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance \(VITA\)](#) offers tax filing assistance to those with a qualifying income, senior citizens, persons whose primary language is not English, and people with disabilities. This service is FREE. To find VITA location near you, please use the [IRS VITA locator tool](#).

## **EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Training Series Offered in the Evenings Throughout February**

The Center for Learning and Leadership/UCEDD and the Oklahoma Disability Law Center will be offering their community and family training series in the evenings at 5:30 PM three times during the month of February. **Registration is required for each training.** Follow the links for more details and to register:

February 15<sup>th</sup> : [Using Life Course to Plan for Long-term Supports](#)

February 21<sup>st</sup>: [Basics of Self-Directed Services](#)

February 28<sup>th</sup>: [Long-term Planning – Financial and Employment Options](#)

### **Keepin' It Real with Dr. Bobby Kern February 18<sup>th</sup>**

Join Dr. Kern at Oklahoma Christian University on February 18<sup>th</sup> from 9am-12pm in a FREE couple's workshop for partners who have a child with a disability. Three topics will be covered over the course of the workshop to explore pathways to happy couplehood. Childcare will be available at the DSACO Office. For more information, [visit DSACO's information and registration page](#).

### **Wellspring Event for Parents March 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>**

[Wellspring](#) is offering a FREE overnight event for parents who have a child with autism on March 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. Wellspring "offers a free hotel stay and engaging sessions. It's a combination of time to connect, tools and resources to strengthen your family, and time to get away and refuel!" To find out if you are eligible, please fill out their [Wellspring weekend information form](#) that is available in English and in Spanish.

### **Joining Forces Family-Professional Partnership Conference March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023**

The Joining Forces conference will be held in Oklahoma City on March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023. CLL's Director, [Valerie N. Williams](#), will be the keynote at the 2023 conference. To register, visit the [Oklahoma Family Network website](#) or scan this QR code with your phone to take you directly to registration.



### **For Your Teens: Apply to OKDRS BEST STEP for summer work!**

If you are 16 years old and have a disability, consider applying for [DRS' BEST STEP program](#). BEST (Building Employment Skills Today) STEP (Summer Transition Employment Program) provides a week-long employment training followed by an opportunity for up to 4.5 days a week of work for up to 25 hours each week. [Learn more about the BEST STEP program and apply now!](#)

### **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>

Or use your cell phone camera and point it to this QR code



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.