

## Oklahoma Family Network's "We Saved You a Seat" podcast

This month, The Center for Learning and Leadership | UCEDD is highlighting our community partner, [Oklahoma Family Network](#) (OFN). OFN provides support to families by providing training, and resource connections by linking families to other families who have had similar experiences. Oklahoma Family Network focuses on supporting families of children and youth with special health care needs, behavioral health needs and disabilities by providing emotional support, resource navigation, and ensuring quality healthcare for all children and families through strong and effective family-professional partnerships. One of the ways OFN supports families is through their podcast series "[We Saved You a Seat](#)." To learn more about the [Oklahoma Family Network visit their website](#). Listen to or download any of the "[We Saved You a Seat](#)" podcasts.

## Fauci: US in 'a Different Moment' but Pandemic Not Over

Dr. Anthony Fauci reported that while America has lower COVID-19 cases than it has in months and 2/3 of the population is vaccinated, it is still important to use prevention and safety measures against the virus. Read the full article from the Associated Press: "[Fauci: US in 'a different moment' but pandemic not over](#)." In Oklahoma the vaccination numbers are a little lower than the national numbers. According to the USA FACTS website, as of May 5, 2022, 71% of Oklahomans had received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, 57% were considered fully vaccinated and only 21% had received at least one booster vaccine. Read more from USA FACTS: "[Oklahoma Coronavirus Vaccination Progress](#)". To learn more about local COVID-19 resources that support people with disabilities, visit the [Center for Learning and Leadership| UCEDD website](#).

## 2022 Gerber Baby from Oklahoma!

Congratulations to Isa, daughter of Meredith and John Sligh from Oklahoma. Seven-month-old, Isa was named the 2022 Gerber Photo Search winner on the TODAY Show on May 4, 2022. Watch the full interview and see the amazing photos of Oklahoma's newest celebrity "[TODAY exclusive: Meet Isa, the newest Gerber baby who has a limb difference](#)"

## NSU Celebrates First Graduating Class of RiverHawks Scholar Program

The first cohort of Northeastern State University's (NSU) [RiverHawks Scholar Program](#) for students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities graduated on May 7, 2022 and walked with fellow NSU students. The four-year certificate program aims to prepare students for successful independent living and gainful employment. Read the full article from the Tahlequah Daily Press "[NSU celebrates first graduating class of RiverHawks Scholar Program](#)."

## Oklahoma is 44th in the Nation in Care for Vulnerable Populations

Tulsa-based SOAR Partners commissioned a research project with Oral Roberts University's College of Business Graduate Competitive Business Intelligence Class to compare the services available for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in Oklahoma with other states. This study includes information about the Waitlist for the Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Services In-Home Supports Waiver. On average, people with I/DD are on the Waitlist for 13 years. According to the study, Oklahoma ranked 44th in the nation on providing services to people with I/DD. Read the full article written by Brooklyn Cadwallader: "[Social Impact Perspectives, Vol. 1 – A Thirteen Year Wait: University Research Shows Oklahoma As 44th In The Nation In Care For Vulnerable Populations](#)" posted on the SOAR Partners, LLC website.

## Giving Teens with Disabilities the Tools to Be Successful

[Sarah Soell](#), Executive Director of [Down Syndrome Association of Central Oklahoma](#) discusses raising a teenager with disabilities, "Raising a teenage child with special needs is no easy task but it is no different than raising any other teenager. We get to experience all the same emotions and behaviors and share in some of the best memories." Read the full Metro Family article "[Mom Talk – Raising a teen with special needs isn't all that 'different.'](#)"

## AMCHP is seeking stories of resilience in times of public health emergencies!

The Association of Maternal Child Health Programs (AMCHP)'s Public Health Emergency Preparedness National Workgroup is seeking stories from people across the country about how public health emergencies, including the COVID-19 pandemic, have impacted you personally or professionally, and how you have responded to these challenges. You can find out more on their [Information Guide](#) or fill out the [AMCHP interest form with this link](#). The deadline for sharing or submitting your story is June 3, 2022.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

### Free Training: Staying Protected Online

In the wake of recent data breaches, it's more important than ever to make sure you and your loved ones have the knowledge and tools you need to stay safe online. Join us and a panel of trusted experts from GableGotwals, The University of Tulsa, and Vast Bank to discuss what families and caretakers of individuals with I/DD can do to keep themselves and those they take care of protected. Join the training on Thursday, May 19, 2022 at 1:00 PM. [Registration is required for the On-Line Security Training, register here](#).

### CAPE-YOUTH: Addressing the Needs of Youth with Disabilities and Other Intersecting Identities

On May 24th from 2:30pm-4pm CST, the Center for Advancing Policy on Employment for Youth (CAPE-Youth) will host a webinar, "Addressing the Needs of Youth with Disabilities and Other Intersecting Identities." [Register for the "Addressing the Needs of Youth with Disabilities and Other Intersecting Identities" webinar](#).

### Oklahoma History Center hosts "From Institution to Inclusion: The History of disAbilities in Oklahoma"

The Oklahoma History Center is hosting a disability-focused exhibit through August 31st. Visitors can explore hands-on materials such a textbook printed in braille and other assistive devices that people with disabilities use on a daily basis. Admission is always free at the Oklahoma History Center. The exhibit was funded through a grant by the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma. Read the Oklahoma City Sentinel article about the exhibit: "[Oklahoma History Center hosts 'From Institution to Inclusion: The History of disAbilities in Oklahoma' exhibit](#)."

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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 other 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.