



## March is Developmental Disability Awareness Month

March is Developmental Disability Awareness Month. The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities has made this year's theme [Beyond the Conversation](#). The campaign highlights how people with and without disabilities come together to form strong communities.

## March 23<sup>rd</sup>: Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day at the Capitol, 9 AM- 12 PM

Self-advocates, students, professionals, families, and parents and other caregivers are invited to participate in DD Awareness Day at the Capitol on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. This year's theme is Disability Counts. Speakers will be on the South Steps from 9-11 AM. The speakers will include self-advocates, parents, professionals, and legislators. After the speeches, people will be invited to go and meet with their legislators from 11 AM- 12 PM.

## Spotlight: Remembering Judy Heumann

Judy Heumann was considered the "mother of the disability rights movement." Judy passed away on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Judy was a civil rights activist and self-advocate who believed "[Disability only becomes a tragedy when society fails to provide the things we need to lead our lives](#)". Judy was a leader in the disability community, mentoring young advocates throughout her life. [Read more about the life and achievements of Judy Heumann](#). We honor Judy's work which has had a great impact on our families, friends, and our work at the Center for Learning and Leadership/UCEDD.

## Public Health: When to Take an At-Home COVID-19 Test

Between routine winter illnesses and spring allergies "blooming," symptoms like a runny nose, itchy throat, or watery eyes, could be a number of illnesses. Many people aren't sure when to test for COVID-19. The Public Health Communications Collaborative has released a [toolkit to help people](#) decide when it is time to take an at-home COVID-19 test.

## Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development Release Two New Publications

[Georgetown University's Center for Child and Human Development](#) has released two new publications, "[Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Developmental Disabilities: The Essential Role of Leadership for Cultural and Linguistic Competence](#)" and, "[A Cultural Framework for IDD Research](#)". These publications talk about the importance of respecting the culture and language of people with IDD and their families when providing services to them, partnering with them, and doing disability-related research.

## Announcements and Events

### March 21: World Down Syndrome Day

Wear your wildest socks on March 21<sup>st</sup> for World Down Syndrome Day! March 21<sup>st</sup> is World Down Syndrome Day, a worldwide awareness day to celebrate individuals with Down syndrome by advocating for their rights, inclusion, and well-being. The Down Syndrome Association of Central Oklahoma (DSACO) will be having a luncheon on this day. [Visit DSACO for information and to register](#).

### March 23: DDS Waiting List Meeting on Zoom: (1:30-3pm)

The DDS Waiting List Meeting was created by family members for family members. This meeting is a time for those on the waiting list and those who want to learn more to interact with the DDS Director, DHS leadership, and other state agencies and programs that support people with developmental disabilities and their families. Individuals, family members, and community allies share information and resources, ask questions, and raise concerns. [Pre-registration is required](#).

### March 31: 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](#).

### For Your Teens: Apply to OKDRS BEST STEP for summer work! **Deadline for application: March 31st**

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!](#)

### April 1: Beeping Easter Egg Hunt, 11 AM-12 PM

[Heartland Council of the Blind](#) is hosting a beeping Easter egg hunt for children who are blind or low vision, kids with special needs, and their siblings. The event will take place on Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup> at Lions Club located at 4135 NW 10<sup>th</sup> street in Oklahoma City. Families are asked to provide their own Easter basket. To reserve a space or to donate, please call 405-642-1068.

### April 20: 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 lively 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).

## 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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*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.