Learning begins at the time of birth, and it is important to make sure your child gets off to a good start. If you’re concerned about the development of your own infant, toddler or other little ones, South Dakota provides an early intervention program for infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities and their families, which can be a wonderful resource. Early Intervention (EI) is a family-focused, in-home service for children from birth to 36 months of age that provides a system of services and supports for families to help understand their child’s development and specific training to assist the family in addressing these areas of delay. Early Intervention is a voluntary partnership between the child’s parents, caregivers, childcare providers, professionals and others with focus on providing the adults in a child’s life with skills and resources to help the child develop. This family-centered process is customized to the family’s routines and everyday life so that intervention can happen all day, every day – not just when the professional is present.

Who is eligible for early intervention?

Eligibility is determined by evaluating the child with their parents’ consent. This developmental evaluation is completed by the local school district at no cost. For some children, it is known from the moment the child is born that early intervention will be important in helping that child and family. Often this is for babies who have a specific condition or experience significant prematurity. Others may experience a setback, develop more slowly or in ways that are different from other infants and toddlers.
What to expect if eligible for early intervention.

When a child is found eligible for early intervention, a semi-structured interview is conducted asking about the child and family during every day routines. This is a wonderful opportunity for the family to learn about early intervention and the critical role they will play in their child's development and also to learn about the family's priorities, goals and needs not only for their child but for their family. Families, along with an Early Intervention team, design an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) based on the family's priorities and routines previously identified. The early interventionist professional(s) selected to work with the child and family is based on the IFSP family priorities. These professionals serve as a coach showing family members and caregivers strategies for working with your child and helping your child learn. The most common early interventionists are service coordinators, special instruction, occupational therapist, physical therapist and speech and language pathologist.

Some areas that focus on helping eligible babies and toddlers learn the skills that typically develop during the first three years include:
- physical (reaching, rolling, crawling and walking)
- cognitive (thinking, learning, solving problems)
- communication (talking, listening, understanding)
- social/emotional (playing, feeling secure and happy)
- self-help (eating, dressing)

What is the key to success of Early Intervention? Active, engaged families.

Families, most particularly, parents, are vital participants in Early Intervention. You are your child’s most important teacher and caregiver. You know your child better than anyone else. Share your child’s likes and dislikes with your Early Intervention team. Practice the strategies with your provider’s support and ask questions to ensure you are using the strategies correctly. Provide opportunities for your child to play and practice new skills during routines such as meal times, diaper changes and dressing. During home visits, take an active role and ask your early intervention professional questions about the activities.

Where to get more information:

If you are concerned about your child’s development, you don’t have to wait for a referral. You can reach out to the South Dakota Early Intervention program with your questions to help determine if your child is eligible. Information related to this can be found at: http://doe.sd.gov/Birthto3/.

This article also appeared in print and online in Hood Magazine.
Throughout the month of May, the USD Center for Disabilities took part in the Professional Fellows Program for Inclusive Disability Employment (PFP-IDE). This program is a four- to five-week program aimed at citizens from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania who work in the private sector or leaders in the governmental system that want to learn about what the best practices are for employing people with disabilities in the U.S. This is the second year that the Center has hosted a person through the program.

This year, we welcomed Bernadette Muyomi from Kenya and she says the friendliness and hospitality she experienced during her stay was exceptional.

“I really liked the friendliness of the people and the hospitality that I’ve received during my time here,” said Muyomi.

In Kenya, Muyomi is the executive director and founder of the African Grassroots Development Organization. Her role consists of providing strategic leadership in her organization and partnering with like-minded organizations to lead various advocacy initiatives. She first heard about the program through an African Leadership Network called Young African Leadership Initiative. She then completed the application process through Humanity International, which included writing essays that demonstrate how her work relates to inclusive employment towards people with disabilities.

Muyomi’s project focused on developing information and resources to share with key stakeholders in Kenya in an effort to promote policy on inclusive employment for people with disabilities. During her time in South Dakota and following her return to Kenya, Muyomi received assistance and support from her mentor, Dr. Wendy Parent-Johnson. Muyomi noticed a huge difference in the availability of services for people with disabilities in South Dakota versus Kenya.

“Coming into South Dakota, I saw that there were a lot of supports available for people with disabilities to fulfill their everyday needs. In Kenya, it is the opposite, as many disabilities are discovered later in life which leads to people missing out on the fundamental opportunities to succeed, such as education and access to health care,” says Muyomi.

During her stay, Muyomi visited with agencies, organizations, professionals, families and people with disabilities around the state who graciously spent time with her to share what they do and many helpful resources. While learning about the agencies and organizations, she also learned about how policy is shaped when it comes to people with disabilities.

“I felt the information I gained was useful. It can lead to creating policies and awareness of integrating services that are much needed in the disability community,” said Muyomi.

She was also able to take part in activities with Center staff and check out tourist attractions in South Dakota such as the Corn Palace in Mitchell, downtown Rapid City, Mount Rushmore, the Badlands, Sturgis Motorcycle Museum and Crazy Horse National Memorial. She also enjoyed some cultural experiences by participating in day-to-day live activities and events with her hosts.

“The big eye opener for me was seeing that fishing is a major sport in South Dakota and I ate goat cheese for the first time. I also got to learn about the different international communities that are represented in Sioux Falls,” says Muyomi.

When she goes back home to Kenya, her focus will be on advocating for more implementations and specializations for agencies that work with people with disabilities.

“What I hope to tell people who are interested or looking into the program is that every day is an opportunity to learn something new. Take in everything you have learned but also have fun while you are at it,” said Muyomi.

The Professional Fellows Program for Inclusive Disability Employment (PFP-IDE) is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Professional Fellows Division and administered by the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) in partnership with the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston (ICI). If you would like to learn more information about the program, visit https://pfp-idefellowship.org/.

The Center for Disabilities’ Symposium is designed to bring together people who are active in the field of disabilities in a welcoming environment that encourages education, the sharing of ideas, rejuvenation and inspiration. The symposium is an event which encourages creativity to thrive among service providers, educators, employers, persons with disabilities, families and government agencies. Its purpose is to generate contacts, networking, be visionary and develop original ideas that empower individuals with disabilities to achieve economic self-sufficiency, independent living and inclusion and integration into all aspects of society.

DON’T DELAY. REGISTER TODAY!

For more information see link: www.usd.edu/medicine/center-for-disabilities/symposium

Symposium 2018 AGENDA

**Sunday, October 21, 2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>noon to 1 p.m.</td>
<td>Symposium Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 to 2:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Sessions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Burnout and Compassion Fatigue Part 1</td>
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<td>• Discovering the Leader in You Part 1</td>
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<td>2:15 to 2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30 to 3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Flutter Productions Presents</td>
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<td>3:30 to 3:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
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**Monday, October 22, 2018**

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 to 8 a.m.</td>
<td>Symposium Registration &amp; Continental Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 to 10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Welcome Keynote Address</td>
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Dan Habib – Filmmaker, Public Speaker, Photojournalist and Creator of award-winning documentary films.

Presenting:

Intelligent Lives Documentary – stars three pioneering young American adults with intellectual disabilities – Micah, Naieer, and Naomie – who challenge perceptions of intelligence as they navigate high school, college, and the workforce.

Dream Out Loud Documentary – Life on the Pine Ridge Reservation

Tuesday, October 23, 2018

7 to 7:30 a.m.  Symposium Registration
7:30 to 7:45 a.m.  Welcome to Employer’s Breakfast and NDEAM Celebration
7:45 to 8:45 a.m.  Keynote Address:Honorable Katherine McCary  Consultant, go-business disability inclusion expert, policy advisory, public speaker, SHRM certified diversity trainer and an ADA leadership network trainer.
8:45 to 9:15 a.m.  Recognition of Employers Employee & Employer Awards
9:15 to 10:15 a.m.  Keynote Address Bonus:Honorable Katherine McCary
10:15 to 10:30 a.m.  Break
10:30 to 11:45 a.m.  Sessions
• Behaviors: A Layered Approach (PBIS)
• Perspectives on Education and Culture in Indian Country
• Strengthening Families
• What to do when it Doesn’t Feel right
• Video Modeling: 10 Steps to Task Success
11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.  Lunch
1:15 to 2:30 p.m.  Sessions: Interactive 30 minutes in each breakout room
• Do I Have to Sign a Roommate Agreement: Discover Shared Living
• Speaking Business: Using Terms Employers Understand
• Why not College?
• Oyate’ Circle: What is it all about?
• Person Centered: It’s about You
2:30 to 2:45 p.m.  Break
2:45 to 4:15 p.m.  Keynote Address:Jason Freeman  Author, professional speaker, and bravery coach
4:15 to 4:30 p.m.  Closing Ceremony
Join us in viewing the award-winning film *Intelligent Lives* by Dan Habib!

*Intelligent Lives* stars three pioneering young American adults with intellectual disabilities – Micah, Naieer and Naomie – who challenge perceptions of intelligence as they navigate high school, college and the workforce. Academy Award-winning actor and narrator Chris Cooper contextualizes the lives of these central characters through the emotional personal story of his son, Jesse, as the film unpacks the shameful and ongoing track record of intelligence testing in the U.S.

*Intelligent Lives* challenges what it means to be intelligent and points to a future in which people of all abilities can fully participate in higher education, meaningful employment and intimate relationships.

https://intelligentlives.org/about-film

Also premiering Dan Habib’s short film, “Dream Out Loud”.

Pine Ridge, South Dakota, High School has launched an entrepreneurial initiative for students with disabilities living on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Pine Ridge is one of the poorest communities in the nation, with an unemployment rate of 90% and a median income of $4,000/year. Pine Ridge High School has been recognized nationally for helping students with disabilities, including film subjects Alan Wagner and Mariah Romero, learn business startup skills by managing and staffing an in-school coffee shop.
Flutter Productions PRESENTS

ABLE
THE DISABILITY CHRONICLES

DIRECTED BY HEATHER PICKERING - CHOREOGRAPHED BY SARA OLIVIER - COMPOSED BY ANDREW GRACE

Support is provided with funds from the State of South Dakota, through the department of Tourism and the National Endowment for the Arts. This production has been made possible in part by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Exploring the human endeavor.

Flutter Productions is a part of the Black Hills Works family, a community of people with disabilities where everyone participates to achieve a life of purpose and potential.

Don’t miss out on the Community Dance on Monday night.

Sunday, October 21, 2018 from 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Flutter Productions Presents
Throughout the past year, behavior specialists with the University of South Dakota’s Center for Disabilities have collaborated with the South Dakota Department of Education to promote capacity building in local elementary, middle and high schools within the state. This ongoing work has been aimed to provide increased guidance and implementation of comprehensive behavioral support services for South Dakota’s education professionals.

Over the spring semester, behavioral program staff have offered both a self-paced graduate level course and a team-based course focused on the areas of assisting educators in the development of effective interventions for individuals with complex and challenging behaviors. Beginning in March, a number of educators, psychologists, school counselors, paraprofessionals, general education instructors, special education teachers and directors and administrators encompassing eight urban and rural school districts statewide took part in coursework to earn graduate credit. In all, 38 team and self-paced participants received instruction through a blend of online modules, web-based instruction and on-site visits from trained facilitators with the goal of developing highly trained professionals at the regional and local levels.

In addition to course offerings, the Center also provided several professional development opportunities in the form of Skills Institutes designed to assist educators interested in learning more about the specific areas of effective teaching and preventative measures for when working with students with complex and challenging behaviors. On June 1, training on the topic of Effective Use of Reinforcement and Preference Assessments were offered both in Rapid City and Sioux Falls locations, with the June 8 training focusing on the topic of students as self-monitors. A total of 73 educators participated in trainings at both East and West River sites. During each full-day workshop, attending educators received didactic instruction followed by modeling, role play and feedback with the intent to build competency through skill application and classroom implementation. Upon completion of training, all participants received either continuing education certificates of attendance or will earn graduate credit for attendance and follow-up course studies.

Feel free to reach out to the Center for Disabilities behavior specialist staff; Kris Bollig, Kristine.Bollig@usd.edu and Tova Eggerstedt, Tova.Eggerstedt@usd.edu for more information on upcoming behavior related program offerings and trainings.

Department of Education Project
by Tova Eggerstedt, M.S., Behavioral Specialist

Employment Supports Projects
by Jon Wallner, M.S., Training Associate

Kessler Employment Technical Assistance Project

The University of South Dakota Center for Disabilities is currently working with employment staff across the state to serve as participants in a pilot project aimed at exploring a technical assistance model through cell phone texting in the provision of supported employment/job coaching services. The number one request from our Vocational Rehabilitation Employment Specialist Training attendees is the need for help after the training - in the moment that it is needed. The rural nature of the state means that employment staff are isolated and lack others to brainstorm and problem solve with. The University of South Dakota Center for Disabilities personnel will assist in employment staff development and training through the use of cell phone texting to address
any issues that emerge and provide an outlet to share ideas and resources, brainstorm and solve problems that occur in the field.

Pilot projects in Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota are being implemented and evaluated as part of a multi-faceted approach in this study to address common disability employment issues through the use of existing virtual technologies. Pilot projects are part of a larger two-year study funded by the Kessler Foundation to demonstrate the use of existing technologies to enhance the availability, delivery and effectiveness of supported employment services by:

- Providing support in both rural and urban areas
- Developing and training employment support staff
- Supporting people with significant disabilities and behavioral concerns to maintain employment
- Supporting employers with tools and resources that lead to greater job retention of employees with disabilities
- Enhancing employment support staff satisfaction and retention

The University of Iowa Center for Disabilities and Development will utilize personalized assisted technology aids (virtual job supports) through the form of iPad and telehealth technologies. Supported workers, employers and job coaches will be trained on the use of the iPad and telehealth technologies to communicate, check-in and/or troubleshoot issues on the job in real time, providing job coaching and crisis intervention services to employers and supported employees in both rural and urban areas.

The University of Nebraska Medical Center Munroe-Meyer Institute will provide technical assistance to job coaches and employment teams via the virtual technology platform of Vidvo by a Licensed Psychologist, who is also a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). This approach serves as a potential solution for connecting direct support professionals (DSPs) with licensed BCBAs who can consult on effective strategies for managing challenging behaviors in the workplace.

The University of South Dakota Center for Disabilities Development will utilize personalized assisted technology aids (virtual job supports) through cell phone texting with vocational staff serving rural, urban and Native American communities across the state of South Dakota. Technical assistance will be provided for job coaches who are often geographically isolated and lack opportunities for accesses of resources and enhancing their skills to help supported workers during placement, training and fading, and follow-along after case closure. Seven job coaches throughout the state have been recruited in the pilot program and will inquire about any issues throughout the job placement and employment process. In collaboration with job coach participants, University of South Dakota Center for Disabilities personnel will share ideas and resources, brainstorm and solve problems that may occur through the format of cell phone texting. Additionally, a monthly phone call and group forum text chat amongst the participants to brainstorm ideas and troubleshoot issues will be initiated.

The texting model will be developed in year one and offered to other job coaches throughout the state in year two. For more information feel free to contact Jon Wallner, Jon.Wallner@usd.edu and/or Wendy Parent-Johnson, Wendy.ParentJohnson@usd.edu.

Alaska Customized Employment Project

The University of South Dakota Center for Disabilities is collaborating with The Center for Human Development at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA CHD) to study customized employment for job seekers with psychiatric disabilities, receiving funding from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR).

The premise of this two-year research project is that job satisfaction and job retention will increase using customized employment. This project is intended to help individuals with psychiatric disabilities find jobs that are a good fit for them and their support needs.

UAA CHD has contracted with six employment specialists throughout the state of South Dakota to deliver customized employment to job seekers with psychiatric disabilities and report on different outcomes. Employment specialists participating in the research study will receive a 12-hour training on how to implement customized employment and then use that to assist a job seeker with a psychiatric disability to find a job.

By participating in this study as employment specialists, these individuals will be reimbursed for their time and receive training in customized employment that is approved by the Alaska Department of Vocational Rehabilitation in order to bill for customized employment services. The University of South Dakota Center for Disabilities is responsible for recruiting South Dakota employment specialist participants to complete the customized employment training, coordinate and assist as needed, to provide UAA CHD with the information and forms they require, as well as facilitate the referral process in connecting job seekers with psychiatric disabilities to the employment specialists.
Leslie Stusiak-Drew joined the Center for Disabilities in April 2018 as the National Core Indicators (NCI) coordinator. Prior to coming to the Center for Disabilities, she worked as the director of operational support for the Council on Quality and Leadership, an international training and accreditation organization. She has more than 10 years of experience working in the developmental disability field, having held various positions including direct support professional, residential manager and case manager/service coordinator. Stusiak-Drew has a Bachelor of Science degree in social work from Presentation College in Aberdeen, South Dakota, and a Master of Nonprofit Management from Regis University in Denver, Colorado.

She was born and raised in Watertown, South Dakota, and has lived in Sioux Falls for 11 years. When Leslie isn’t working, she enjoys spending time with her husband Jon, her two sons Emerson (7) and Ira (3), her Saint Bernard Rosie, and her two cats Rory and Sammy. Stusiak-Drew also coaches high school speech part-time at Brandon Valley High School and will be starting her fifth year with them this coming school year. Lastly, Stusiak-Drew has been a musician her entire life and even though she switched her major as a sophomore from vocal music performance to social work, she still loves singing opera and being involved in theater when time allows.

Jonathon A. MeDrano, Ph.D., began working as a training associate for the Center for Disabilities in April 2018 and has an appointment of assistant professor in the Department of Pediatrics. He received his Ph.D. in Indigenous health and well being from the University of Chicago, Department of Comparative Human Development. In this research, he explored historical and cultural dimensions of Indigenous health. As an Indigenous scholar, his research contains an emic perspective and a lived understanding of specific beliefs and practices of both reservation and urban-based Native American communities.

MeDrano’s research has been influenced by prior professional and academic experiences, including roles in local, state and federal governmental programs in which he worked with Native American communities, tribal governments and offices. In these roles, he has engaged in supervisory/school management, instruction and advocacy for diverse populations. MeDrano was also the Native American Support Program (NASP) acting director and academic advisor/counselor at the University of Illinois-Chicago (UIC). In this professional role, he facilitated students’ transition to, progression in and completion of college life by making himself available as a mentor, and providing cultural, academic and professional guidance to students in need.

MeDrano’s current scholarship pertains to health disparities affecting marginalized populations, including children with disabilities. He is extending this line of research to include Indigenous families of children with disabilities, and the role of cultural knowledges and practices/rituals in child health and well-being.