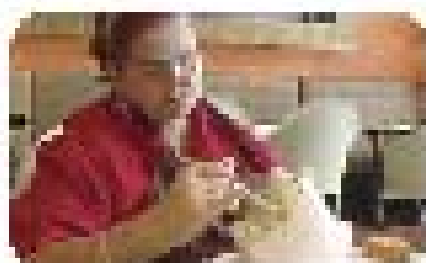


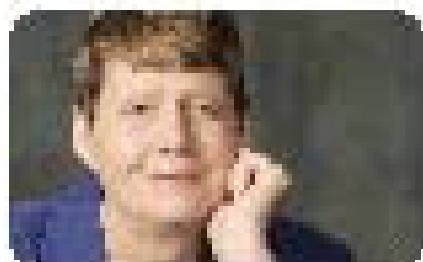
update

making a difference in the lives of people

equal justice for people with disabilities



remembering slain women
and Leonard Cohen page 6



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Children and adults with disabilities are two to five times more likely to experience some form of violence or sexual assault. Despite this increased risk, these victims are less likely to be reported, investigated, or prosecuted. In response to requests from well-to-do advocates with disabilities and to fund a national forum, the IHDD founded the Safe and Able Lives Coalition in 2018. Members of the Coalition included representatives from People First, disability first, a former State ADA Coordinator's Office, the Partnership Against Domestic Violence, and the Georgia Network for End Sexual Assault.

Activities led by the coalition included training for judges and law enforcement, training for domestic violence program staff, and outreach to men and women with disabilities. The IHDD collaborated with the Partnership Against Domestic Violence in Atlanta as a charitable violence project coordinated by PADV and funded by the US Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women.

Most recently, the IHDD was awarded the current US Department of Justice grant to develop training for judges on the law on equal justice for people with disabilities who have experienced violence or sexual assault. "We are delighted to be partnering with the Institute for Continuing Judicial Education (ICJE) in rural USA," says Dr. Jerry Sanders, who is directing the project.

The ICJE provides 90% of the training for judges in Georgia, and they incorporated the training into their ongoing education courses for judges in all classes of court. Support from the State DA Coordinator's Office has been also proven invaluable in assisting the judges to understand the unique needs of the Americans with Disabilities Act and how to make the necessary accommodations for citizens with disabilities to fully participate in the courtroom.

—continued on page 11



Children and adults with disabilities are two to five times more likely to experience some form of violence or sexual assault.

the children's freedom initiative a sense of urgency



greetings from the director

In the past few months, we have lost several leaders in Georgia's self-advocacy movement. Two of those leaders, Elaine Wilson and Leonard Roscoe, are memorialized in this newsletter. Both Elaine and Leonard were institutionalized as children. Elaine entered institutional life as a teenager; Leonard was only a preschooler when he was institutionalized. Elaine had to fight the system all the way to the Supreme Court to gain her freedom. She spent her last five years in the community, living in her own apartment and developing her own business. Leonard had just passed the tenth anniversary of living free in the community, a milestone which we celebrated at the winter meeting of the IHDD Community Advisory Council (CAC). Both Elaine and Leonard lost many valuable years living behind locked doors while other children and youth were involved in sports, community activities, and "hanging out" with friends. Although both Elaine and Leonard eventually gained their freedom, the years they lost could never be returned to them. Once time is lost, it is forever gone.

Mary Kissel, our new CAC Co-Chair, often speaks about the work of supporting people with disabilities as being propelled by a "sense of urgency." The all-too-short lives of Elaine and Leonard highlight that urgency. Over 140 of Georgia's children and youth with disabilities are currently living in nursing homes and institutions. Additional children live in group homes and other segregated, restricted settings. All of these children belong in permanent families. Researchers have told us since the 1960's that institutional life is bad for children. These children develop motor, language, and cognitive skills more slowly than comparable children living with their families. The institutional environment fails to teach important social skills.

Children need at least one adult who remains constant in their lives – someone who loves them, nourishes them, teaches them, and is always there for them as they grow and develop. Staff may genuinely care about the children they serve, but they are not a family. Why are Georgia's children being placed in institutions and nursing homes? The answer is simple. We, as citizens, have not had the political will to insist that services be provided to children where they live. It has been easier to force children to leave their families and live in facilities in order to receive necessary services. In the process, we often have torn families apart and caused great pain.

So what can we do? A new partnership has formed in Georgia called the Children's Freedom Initiative. IHDD is one of the founding members, along with the Georgia Advocacy Office, the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and People First. The goal of the Children's Freedom Initiative is to create change in Georgia, so that children living in institutions and segregated facilities return to their families (or if that is not possible, become members of permanent families), and no additional children are placed in these facilities. Over the next year, you will hear much more about his initiative. Please consider adding your efforts and expertise to this important work.

Each child's life is precious. There is no time to waste. —Dr. Zolinda Stoneman

update

Published twice a year by the Institute on Human Development and Disability, The University of Georgia. Opinions expressed may not reflect those of the University, the IHDD, or USDHHS. Although we endorse the use of person-first language, all quotes are presented in the words actually used by the person being interviewed. We believe it would be inappropriate to edit or rephrase their comments.

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Zolinda Stoneman, Ph.D., Director

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Writing: Becky Brightwell, Cindy Costa, Vici Decker, Jenny Manders, Melissa Link, Jayne Plymale, Jeani Wooten

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2 update summer 2005

employment news

The Disability Law and Policy Network and the State ADA Coordinator's Office (Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission) sponsored information and planning forums to identify issues, increase dialogue and foster awareness about issues of access and participation to employment for persons with disabilities. IHDD staff, Tracy Coffin, Jessica Long, and Rich Toscano served on the Georgia Employment Access Initiative steering committee, organizing these forums across the state.

The first forum was held in August and a subsequent forum on November of 2004, in Atlanta, GA. The November action-planning forum called for a strategy to expand the dialogue statewide and engage a larger network of stakeholders to give a strong unified voice to the issues and potential remedies. Over the first quarter of 2005, IHDD Jobs for All staff, in collaboration with the aforementioned groups as well as representatives from the Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund, the Georgia Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Governor's Council on Developmental Disability have held a well attended forum in Macon. Rich Toscano from IHDD presented on Customized Employment at this forum. Plans to hold informational forums in seven other Georgia locations are being scheduled to be held over the upcoming year.

IHDD staff is working to disseminate information on Customized Employment and expand capacity within the state by offering Employment Access information as well as technical assistance to families, schools, VR, and others in the region who request help. In addition, an Employment Access Initiative committee is being formed in eight regions across Georgia. These committees would be available to provide technical assistance on customized employment within their region in the future.

MISSION: The IHDD works with others to create opportunities that will improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and their families. The IHDD advances the understanding of the ability of all people through education, research, and public service.

parent leadership support project

As a follow up to the most recent Dialogue event, "Families and Schools Together for Children with Disabilities", IHDD will host and co-sponsor the Parent Leadership Support Project (PLSP) developed by the Georgia Advocacy Office. This will be the first time this intensive leadership training program has been available in the Athens area. The goals of this training are as follows:

- Prepare parents of children with disabilities and other concerned citizens to serve as advocates and mentors for parents of children with disabilities in order to help secure educational opportunities for their children.
- Prepare graduates of the program to support parents to understand Georgia's educational system and their rights and responsibilities in regard to their child's education.
- Prepare graduates to assist parents to appropriately prepare for their child's Individual Educational Planning (IEP) meetings and attend the IEP meetings as an advocate for the parent and child.

This exciting opportunity is open to citizens not employed by the education or disability service systems who have the passion and time to advocate for children with disabilities. It is a wonderful way to make a difference for children, families, and communities! Please apply to be a part of this outstanding program!

The ten PLSP trainings will begin Saturday, August 20th and will continue until the final training on November 5th. The trainings will take place on Thursday mornings except for the first and last, which will be on Saturdays. Applications will be available in July. For more information, contact Katie Ford at kford@uga.edu.



officer's spotlight

With the election of three wonderful new officers in January, the Community Advisory Council (CAC) is ready to continue its efforts to support existing IHDD programs and to advocate for exciting new projects.

Everyone at IHDD is exceedingly grateful to have the leadership of these new officers and we look forward to the participation of all of the CAC members at the next council meeting on September 6th at IHDD. See you there!



Mary Kissel

Mary Kissel is a full-time disability rights activist. Mary is the founder and president of the Georgia Options Inc., an organization that supports people with disabilities to live in their own homes and have typical life experiences. She spends most of her time working to raise funds to support the work of Georgia Options. Mary is also the volunteer CEO of her son's business, Splashes by Eric, and the co-chair of IHDD's Community Advisory Council.

Mary values the role IHDD played in helping establish Georgia Options, and also for the Institute's continued work to further public knowledge, advocacy, and policy about disability issues. "Many barriers to full inclusion – full civil and human rights – remain in our society. It's up to us to inform ourselves and work together as hard as we can to eliminate barriers." Mary hopes that the

knowledge available on disability rights to current students at UGA will continue to influence them as they become professionals and contributing citizens so they will be open to including all people in society.

When Mary is not volunteering or working with Georgia Options, she enjoys reading and experiencing the arts. She also likes spending time with her new granddaughter, Amelia, and hopes to be an important person in Amelia's life.

"IHDD's presence in our community is important, and my family has personally benefited from IHDD's many activities on behalf of people with disabilities. IHDD representatives were at the table when Georgia Options was formed in the early 90s. My son's life is greatly enhanced through his participation in Georgia Options; now, he's a participant in the Jobs For All grant, which has enabled him to start his own business. When I was asked to co-chair the CAC, I felt I needed to do my part to sustain and support an organization which has not only benefited my son and family, but which is also important in the larger landscape of teaching, policy development, and advocacy for people with disabilities. We need many voices and many people's efforts to keep moving forward in our community, our state and our nation. IHDD provides important leadership toward a greater good for citizens with disabilities."

–Mary Kissel, CAC Co-Chair

Bob Herrin

Bob Herrin is a Program Consultant with the Babies Can't Wait, a program that serves children up to age three who have a diagnosed physical or mental condition which is known to result in developmental delay. He is responsible for monitoring programs and responding to the concerns of parents. Bob is also the incoming co-chair of IHDD's advisory council, where he represents Babies Can't Wait.

Bob has worked with IHDD for several years and believes in the focus and mission of the Institute. "IHDD continues to provide valuable research that strengthens the knowledge base of professionals in the fields of developmental disabilities. In addition, it provides wonderful services and advocacy to individuals who have traditionally not had access to community work and living that you and I take for granted." Bob hopes that IHDD will continue to expand their work throughout the state.

As a native of Georgia, Bob spent most of his childhood in the Atlanta area and now resides in Jackson county. In his spare time, he enjoys camping on the beach with family and friends and working with computers. He also volunteers his time as a HAM radio operator with the Athens Radio Club and the Georgia Amateur Emergency Radio Services.



"I'm excited about working with the CAC as it works with IHDD to continue its valuable work in the field of developmental disabilities. IHDD puts people first, and has led the way in interagency collaboration and individual planning. I look forward to working with my co-chairs and the entire committee as we move forward."

—Bob Herrin, CAC Co-Chair



Doug Hatch

Doug Hatch grew up in Atlanta, but now calls Athens home and works as an adjunct faculty member at Athens Technical College in the math department. He is also vice-chair of the Community Advisory Council with IHDD and has been involved with the organization for many years.

According to Doug, IHDD has the potential to reach across the state with information, resources, and programming that can directly benefit people with disabilities at the local level. Hatch and others on the advisory

counsel are working to see IHDD reach that potential. He would also like to see advancements for disability rights in Georgia, such as streamlining insurance issues for people with disabilities.

Hatch is also involved with several other organizations including ADAPT (American Disabled for Attendant Programs Today) and the Athens-Clarke County Commission for People with Disabilities. Doug also enjoys sports for people with disabilities, including road racing wheel chairs. When talking about people with disabilities, Doug Hatch says, "It's all really a matter of degree [of disability]. We are after all people first."

"The CAC has the potential to become a strong voice for local citizens with disabilities across the state to guide not only program development but also policy and system change. It has been said that great potential is a heavy burden, but it also a great opportunity."

—Doug Hatch, CAC Vice-Chair

in memoriam



Elaine Wilson
Disability Rights
Advocate & Speaker
1951-2004

Years
institutionalized
1966-1997

“

You can be free only if I am free.

”

— Clarence Darrow

Leonard Roscoe
Disability Rights
Activist & DJ
1969-2005

Years
institutionalized
1969-1995



Elaine Wilson fought for her own freedom all the way to the U. S. Supreme Court and made it possible for many more people to be free. She spent the rest of her life trying to make sure that others could live in the community and make their own choices.

Elaine was a champion in the disability rights movement and was one of the two plaintiffs in the Supreme Court case, *Olmstead v. L.C. and E.W.* During her lifetime, Elaine displayed great courage, grace, and humor in spite of the injustice and the abuse that she endured at the hands of those who “meant well.” Elaine very much wanted to spend the rest of her life encouraging more people with disabilities to fight for their rights and especially for their freedom from institutionalization. Alas, after only five years of happy freedom, we have lost her.

“During her lifetime, Elaine displayed great courage, grace, and humor in spite of the injustice and the abuse that she endured at the hands of those who ‘meant well’.”

But unlike so many others before her who have suffered institutionalization and long hours of neglect and abuse, only to die in silence and obscurity, Elaine Wilson left us a legacy. Because she was determined enough to enlist the aid of lawyers and travel to the highest court in the land in order to achieve her freedom (and thereby the freedom of countless others) and because she was generous enough to spend time with us, and speak with us, she has left a lasting impression upon her fellow disability rights advocates, state and national legislators, disability agencies and service providers, and many others.

At IHDD, we feel privileged to have known Elaine and to have worked with her to tell her story. We also feel obligated by the gifts that she has left us her face and her voice on film and in print. We will strive to live up to that obligation by sharing her words with everyone who will listen. Many people now know about the “Olmstead Decision” and the “Olmstead Plans” that are at work across the United States, we intend to make sure that everyone remembers that “Olmstead” is the story of Lois Curtis and Elaine Wilson and the countless others still institutionalized across the world.

Leonard Roscoe spoke out for his freedom, for his right to make his own decisions about what amount of risk is acceptable to enhance quality of life. He spent his entire life teaching others what freedom of choice is all about – about sharing laughter, music, and love.

“Leonard had a powerful voice, a voice that resonates even now in the hearts and minds of all who knew him.”

Leonard was a long-time ADAPT member, People First of Georgia member, and a member of the IHDD Self-Determination Team. Over the past several months, Leonard began working with the IHDD Jobs for All grant and we were able to help him to add to his collection of audio equipment necessary for his career as an events DJ.

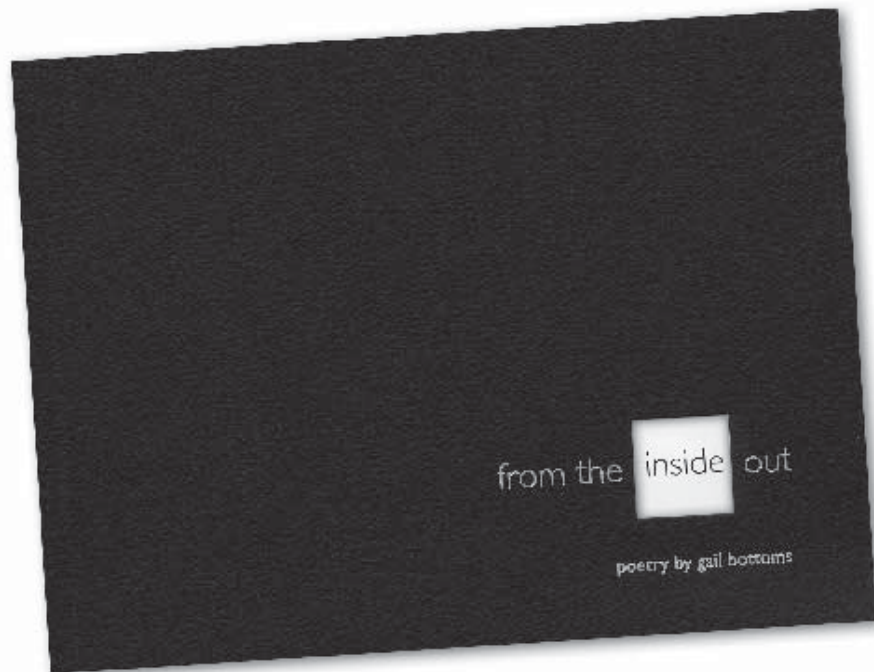
Anyone who ever saw Leonard in his element of music, “doing his thing”, knows what a talented, joyous, and charismatic individual

he was. His passion for music was equaled only by his passion for advocacy in the disability rights movement. Leonard “served a life sentence” (his words) in Brook Run (an institution in Atlanta that is now closed). Only a few months ago, Leonard and his family and friends celebrated his tenth anniversary of freedom.

Leonard had a powerful voice, a voice that resonates even now in the hearts and minds of all who knew him. We know that if he were here now, he would be telling us to “get on with it make things better do it.” Whatever the risk, whatever the cost, Leonard was dedicated to freedom for people of all abilities. Everyone who is part of the IHDD family will always remember Leonard as an inspiration and as a challenge as we strive to live up to his example.

We will miss them both. We will celebrate the times that we were able to spend together and the joy and humor that they brought to our lives. Above all we will remember what they taught us about the importance of individual freedom. That no matter what we achieve as individuals, none of us is truly free in a world where so many people are institutionalized unnecessarily.

book release



“Great! It shows that if you put your mind to, you can do anything you want to in life. Gail’s book is going in my library.”

–Joe Meadours, People First of Alabama

Gail Bottoms, a poet and self-activist for people with disabilities, released her first book of poetry in January 2005 entitled, *From the Inside Out*. The book was published by IHDD.

From the Inside Out is a compilation of fifteen poems that reflect the life of the poet and others who have dealt with the emotion and struggle of living with a disability. As former president of People First of Georgia and a frequent speaker, Bottoms is accustomed to appealing to society at large, while delivering a message of hope to her peers. The book’s content ranges from reminiscences – both fond and painful – to positive affirmations and calls for action to overcome oppression. The author expresses with forthright passion her experiences through the language of poetry, emerging – literally – from the inside out.

“I swore *My Alligator* was Gail’s best poem. And then I re-read “*From the Inside Out*.” I no longer know which one is best. There are others that I am also reading over and over again. But, that is what good poetry does.”

–Tom Nerney, Director, The Center for Self-Determination

purchase the book

From the Inside Out is available from IHDD. This collection of poems is presented with reproductions of paintings by Noah Leaf Mendelson and accompanied by a CD of the author reading her own work.

“Gail says the deepest things in a way that goes straight to your understanding and your heart.”

—Janet Hill, Georgia Dept. of Labor

Bottoms, a native of Griffin, Georgia, did not discover her talent for writing until she was more than fifty years old. Her gifts honesty, wisdom, and courage are seen in her poems that cover a wide variety of topics. Gail discusses life experiences – some warm and some heartbreaking – while confronting disability rights issues. Gail challenges stereotypes that she and her peers have faced during their lives, speaking out in poems such as You’re Different, Crippled and School.

[People] don’t understand
And say you’re slow,
They can’t see inside you
How do they know?

—School

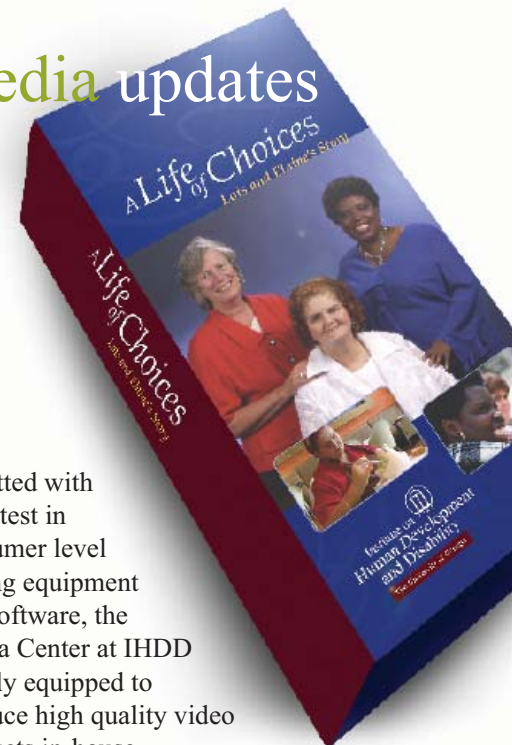
“I love it...Gail is very creative, some of the poems brought tears to my eyes.”

—Liz Obermayer, Consultant for the Council on Quality and Leadership



Gail Bottoms’ poetry encourages people with disabilities to accomplish their goals. She believes that people with disabilities can meet any challenge, if they are just given the chance. Gail, who is also a daughter, wife, mother and grandmother, has not let her disability hinder her from achieving her dreams.

media updates



Outfitted with the latest in consumer level editing equipment and software, the Media Center at IHDD is fully equipped to produce high quality video products in-house.

The Media Center has recently completed the most recent installation of the Life of Choices series. The video, entitled Lois and Elaine’s Story, highlights the lives of Lois Curtis and Elaine Wilson, participants in the Supreme Court case commonly referred to as the “Olmstead decision.” The case drew national attention to the need for community-based services for individuals living in institutions. Lois and Elaine’s Story depicts the women’s lives as they pursue jobs in the community. One thousand copies of the video were produced and disseminated to professionals and the general public. Lois and Elaine’s Story was highlighted in April as a part of the Self-Advocacy Exhibition at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute in Alabama.

Currently in production is the next video in the Life of Choices series. Betsy Wynn, who is a staff member at IHDD, will tell her personal story. The video will highlight her childhood, high school, going to college and her active life in community today.

Production is also underway for an IHDD video. This video will give a broad overview of the many activities of IHDD.

student profile

Anika Francis
Instructional Technology

Education:
B.A. English and Environmental Studies,
University of Pennsylvania
M.S. Candidate, Instructional Technology,
University of Georgia

Current Position:
Anika Francis started work as a graduate assistant with IHDD in November 2004. She is working on project aimed at understanding issues related to out-of-school care for school-age children with disabilities. She is part of a team that has been planning, conducting, and analyzing a series of focus groups across Georgia. These focus groups are collecting information from the perspectives of parents and child care providers concerning the successes and barriers to providing high quality care to children with disabilities during non-school hours. The information will be collected in a report and disseminated to state and national policy makers.

In addition to her assistantship, Anika is working on an IHDD project related to her studies in Instructional Technology. Working with Mary Rugg, Anika has developed a web-based tutorial in conjunction with the Take A Look At Me portfolio. The Take A Look At Me portfolio is a tool used to identify and create a visual record of a person's strengths and interests. This portfolio helps educators and care providers build on the individual's assets instead of focusing on their weaknesses.

Experience:
Working at IHDD has given Anika the opportunity to see the impact of a learning experience on youth first-hand. As an aspiring instructional designer, Anika plans to design learning experiences that integrate technology and education. Because of her work at IHDD, Anika is more aware the importance of creativity in a learning environment. People commonly think that people with disabilities cannot participate in certain activities, but Anika has seen their adaptive nature and she knows the importance of inclusion. According to Anika, people are all basically the same. People with disabilities deserve the same basic humans rights as everyone else. "In spite of people's differences, abilities and inabilities, we are all people trying to live life underneath it all... We all have our stories, struggles, triumphs and challenges."

Working with Mary Rugg and the Take A Look At Me portfolio has played a large part in how Anika approaches learning. Anika said, "I have learned about how important it is to promote and build upon a person's strengths and interests in order to help them learn. Learning is not confined to a classroom and it is important to draw upon a person's motivation and interests to inspire learning. This is a principle that I will continue to try and build upon when I am developing a lesson plan or designing an instructional system."

Anika plans to graduate in May 2006 and hopes to work as an instructional designer for a company or in higher education.



“ We all have
our stories,
struggles,
triumphs and
challenges. ”

training

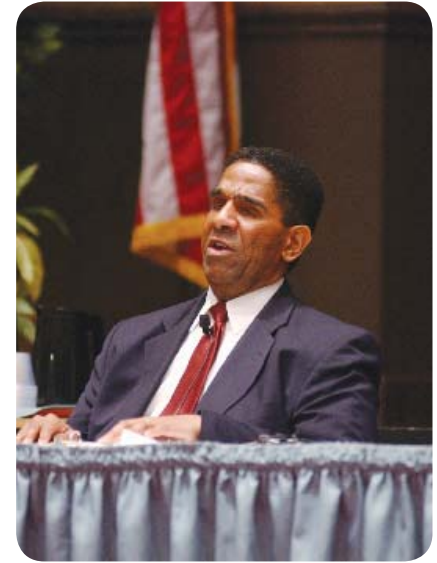
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Response from the judges has been very positive. “Accommodating people with disabilities in the courtroom has been a challenge that many judges have faced, but haven’t known how to address. They are very pleased to have the opportunity to discuss these challenges and learn about available resources,” says Dr. Manders. Richard Reeves, Director of the ICJE, agrees with importance of addressing this issue, stating, “Familiarizing court personnel with the human conditions that impinge on the effective implementation of court proceedings and judicial decisions is key.”

The main goals of the project are to help judges recognize the rates of violence experienced by children with disabilities, and to aid these judges in understanding that individuals with disabilities can be very credible witnesses to their own abuse. These victims are able to know what happened to them and who did it.

Another goal is ensuring accessibility in the courtroom for people with all types of disabilities, including intellectual disabilities and mental illness. “We are working to change attitudes and ensure equal justice for all people with disabilities who have survived violence and abuse.”



The training will be available nationally in 2006 on CD-ROM as well as through the ICJE web site: www.uga.edu/icje



Support IHDD so we can support people with disabilities!

All of the programs at The Institute on Human Development and Disability are funded solely through grant funds and contributions. FRIENDS OF IHDD is a group of people that monetarily support the various activities of IHDD and anyone is welcome to join.

As a member of FRIENDS OF IHDD, you’ll receive the IHDD newsletter, a thank you gift, and invitations to special community outreach events and fundraisers.

Most importantly, you’ll receive the satisfaction of knowing that you are playing an active role in the continued outreach, research, and dissemination in the disability field.

If you would like to join FRIENDS OF IHDD, please or give online by going to www.ihdd.uga.edu and clicking on “Give to IHDD” or fill out the form below and mail with your check payable to University of Georgia Foundation to:

IHDD
850 College Station Road
Athens, GA 30602-4806

Contributions are
tax-deductible

Name _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Amount of Contribution: \$ _____

Thank you.

on the calendar

June

- 10-12 Cochlear Implant Family retreat, Cohutta, Georgia
- 19-22 2nd Annual Long Road Home/Elaine Wilson Memorial March and Freedom Rally, Augusta/Elberton/Athens/Atlanta
- 21 River's Crossing Celebration (in conjunction with Long Road Home), 6:30-8:30 pm., IHDD, Athens, Georgia

July

- 21-22 GCDD quarterly meeting, Stone Mountain, GA
- 23 ADA Memorial, Gainesville, GA
- 26 "Spirit of the ADA" 15th Annual Festival, Atlanta, GA

August

- tba 2nd week in August – dates not confirmed – the SCEI's Credential Workshop, Decatur, Georgia
- 20 Parent Leadership Support Project (PLSP), first meeting, IHDD, Athens, Georgia
- 25 PLSP, 2nd class, IHDD, Athens, Georgia (continuing through 11/5)

Visit our web site for the latest calendar updates:

www.ihdd.uga.edu



A University Center for Excellence
in Developmental Disabilities Education,
Research and Service

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