



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Lessons Learned from Rural Job Development
- FY2011 Committee Priorities
- Restraint & Seclusion
- Full Lives Conference, Direct Services Professionals
- Alaska Work Initiative Planning Summit
- Project SEARCH in Alaska
- Supportive Employment
- Governor Appoints New Board Members
- Lunchtime topic at the Governor's mansion: Improving the lives of people with disabilities
- New Council Member

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES & SPECIAL EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

Lessons Learned From Rural Job Development, by Jennifer Jones

It is important, as rehabilitation specialists, that we learn from the creativity that the rural environment demands. Living in Alaska, one of the most rural states in the country, we have had to learn to be successful in the rural environment and the importance of being creative and building relationships as we assist individuals with disabilities to be successful in employment. We have been successful in making employment a possibility for individuals with some of the most significant disabilities in the most remote locations.

Setting the stage

Alaska is the largest state in the union and is more than twice the size of the largest of the lower 48 states. Many communities are not accessible by the road system and require travel by air, snowmachine or boat to visit with clients. Winter lasts approximately six months of the year and many communities rarely reach temperatures over 50 degrees. The estimated population is 692,314 and as of April 2010 the unemployment rate was 8.4%. Additionally, Alaska has a very large Native population which requires all professionals to be sensitive to the needs of our diverse population. Almost 20% of Alaska workers are non-residents, which means we have a

Governor's Council on Disabilities
& Special Education
3601 "C" Street, Suite 740
P.O. Box 240249
Anchorage, Alaska 99524-0249

Toll Free: 1 (888) 269-8990
From Anchorage: (907) 269-8990
Fax: (907) 269-8995

On the Web: hss.state.ak.us/gcdse/
[Twitter](#)
[Facebook](#)

RURAL JOB DEVELOPMENT ...

Continued on from page 1

large number of people who work in our state but travel home to other states in their off time. 90% of state revenue is derived from oil development, which also accounts for many of the out-of-state workers. It is common for people to work on the North Slope for two to three weeks or more and then travel home to another state in their off time. While oil revenue, mining and the seafood industry are large drivers of the state economy, the majority of business in Alaska is small business. This means that, as rehabilitation specialists, it is important to reach out to the small business community and to understand the needs of the small business owner. As you can see, there are many challenges to understand and successfully

extreme rural state with unique geographic, cultural and economic circumstances, many other states share our challenges in providing services and have also had to learn how to work with the challenges of working in rural communities.

Making It Work

In many communities, you come to a community with a job already in place, make your own job, or work for state or local government. Hunting and fishing are an important supplement to the majority of Alaskan households. They are important to subsistence living and are a critical component to the Alaska way of life. For many people, this is an important

they experience a disability or not. Everyone in a community has something to contribute. Disability is often viewed very differently in Native culture and it is accepted that each individual has his or her own strengths and challenges. So we have found success in a respect for Native ways, working closely to build relationships and understanding the needs of each community to be successful in job development.

Success Stories

The largest employer in Alaska is state and local government, including the state university system. We are currently working on an initiative to make the state a model employer, much like the federal government. Because government is such an important source of jobs, we want to see the state looking to employ as many qualified people with disabilities as possible. We will be starting with an anonymous survey of state employees to get a better sense of how many people the state is already employing and then move on to changing policy as needed.

Many of our success stories involve self-employment. We find that, especially in rural communities, self-employment or creating your own job makes the most sense. The options for

We believe that all people can work and when we find the strengths and gifts of every individual, we can find success.

navigate to assist individuals with disabilities in this kind of rural environment. While Alaska is an

job. We find that in many small communities everyone experiences the same challenges whether



people with disabilities are often very advantageous in self employment, especially if they are receiving Social Security benefits. We have found that excellent Work Incentives planning is critical to the success of any individual seeking employment. As a result, we have been successful in changing the policy of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to make certain that all beneficiaries receiving services from the Division are required to receive a Work Incentives plan as a part of their services.

Self-Employment in Rural Alaska

One of our favorite examples of a true Alaska success story is a woman who lives in a small town called Delta Junction. Delta is a remote town with extreme temperatures. Fairbanks is the next closest town which is 100 miles from Delta. The woman we worked with is now 53 years old and has lived the majority of her life on subsistence. She has a variety of physical and mental health disabilities but has been successful all of her life hunting and fishing to survive. For a time in her life during her teens, she lived completely alone on a remote island and lived solely on what she was able to hunt, fish and grow. She came to our program obviously a very independent person, but felt she was getting older and it was important that she begin looking at other

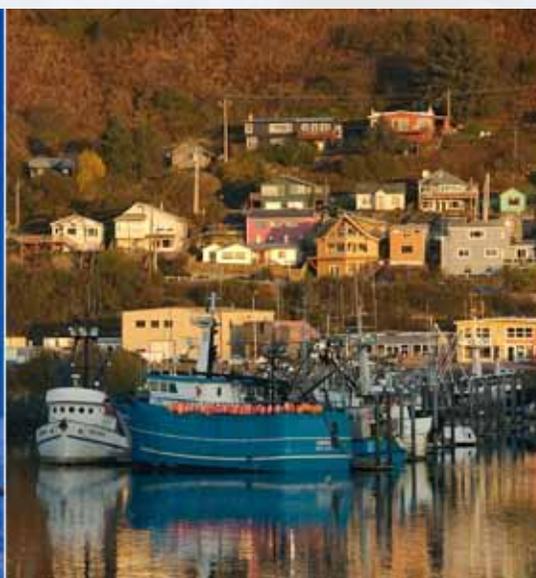
opportunities to survive as she ages. She was able to work with our program and together we were able to partner with a variety of agencies and began our work with her through a thorough discovery process. We learned that a few years ago she purchased a couple of Yorkies and a Poodle and began to breed them. She initially began doing this for her own pleasure but discovered there was such a demand for the animals that she often had a waiting list for people who wanted to purchase a dog. She is the only breeder of papered Yorkies and Yorkiepoo's in the northern region of Alaska. With the partnership of DVR and a local microenterprise grant fund, she has been able to access approximately \$18,000 in resources to purchase covered kennels, dog doors into her cabin, covered dog runs so the animals are not accessible to predators and a video monitoring system so that she can keep track of them at all times. She has a thriving business because she was able to partner with our program to get support in writing her business plan. She was the first person to try out online counseling as our staff live in locations very far from her. She was able to locate a veterinarian who was willing to mentor her to learn to do the majority of her own vet work and recognize the quality of her animals. She also has a mentor in Minnesota who breeds the same animals, so she

has access to someone who can share stories and experience.

This woman has been a success because we were able to find something that she loves to do, make sure there was a thriving market for her product and to find mentors and partnerships in the service and business community. We learned to be creative in how we provide services and respect her chosen lifestyle.

Conclusion

We believe that all people can work, and when we find the strengths and gifts of every individual, we can find success. This is only one example, and we have many more involving traditional employment and other models. In the rural environment, we have discovered that self-employment makes a lot of sense for people, but regardless of their choice, success is most likely to happen when we find partners in the business and service community. The more we partner, use technology and are creative in our methods, as well as having an open mind to the options, we can find success for any person who wants to work.



FY2011 COMMITTEE PRIORITIES



Eric Gebhart, Council Vice Chair



Council Members



Council members from around the state came together for their annual planning board meeting in May of 2010 in Fairbanks, Alaska, to develop their top priorities for the coming year. Presentations were conducted by key partner agencies from across the state representing a wide variety of disciplines. Reports were presented by the Council's standing committees and project groups. Consumers, advocates, families and professionals voiced their current concerns at one of the most well-attended public testimony gatherings in recent history.

Presenting partner agencies included: the Division of Senior & Disabilities Services; People First; Center for Human Development; the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; Disability Law Center; Stone Soup Group; the State Board of Education & Early Development; the Department of Education & Early Development; Special Education Services Agency (SESA); the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority; the Office of Children's Services; Infant Learning Program; and the State of Alaska; American with Disabilities Act Program Office.

Council's standing committees reported on accomplishments made over the past year and gave recommendations for consideration for the upcoming year. The four standing committees for the Council are Early Intervention; Education; Developmental Disabilities; and Legislative. In addition, updates were presented by Council projects and initiatives groups including the Rural Ad Hoc Committee; Alaska Works Initiative and Start-up Alaska; Alaska Safety Planning Empowerment Network (ASPEN) and the Alaska Alliance for Direct Service Careers.

Brainstorming sessions were conducted to assess the current variety of need. Voting members then worked to focus efforts on the issues of the greatest significance for the coming year. As a result of these efforts, the following priorities were developed for these committees and projects for FY2011:

Rural Services Ad Hoc Committee

1. Advocate for implementation of transition services for youth with disabilities in rural Alaska.
2. Advocate for the use of video technology services for Infant Learning Program (ILP) services in rural Alaska (occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech therapy).
3. Work with General Communications Incorporated (GCI), Tanana Chiefs Council and the State Library Association to improve Internet access and broadband capacity for rural communities using video technology.
4. Advocate for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD) services in rural communities.

Developmental Disabilities Committee

1. Increase direct service workers to a living wage.
2. Continue to participate in the Ad Hoc Committee on Autism to develop, support and make recommendations to the Legislature.
3. Establish a housing work group to look at affordable transitional housing resources.
4. Advocate for the implementation of Center of Excellence in Alaska to



Public Testimony Session



Eric Gebhart



Public Testimony Session

reduce and eliminate out-of-state placements for Alaskans with the most challenging behaviors.

- 5. Work with the Key Coalition and the Alaska Association on Developmental Disabilities (AADD) to implement and develop a state rate methodology and review process for Home & Community Based Services (HCBS).

Early Intervention Committee

- 1. Change the eligibility determination for ILP services from 50 percent to 25 percent delay for families with a child that has been diagnosed with cognitive, physical and sensory limitations.
- 2. Address concerns about early intervention services for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- 3. Support Stone Soup Group's parent conference this coming year.
- 4. Advocate for the strengthening of the early childhood development workforce.

Education Committee

- 1. Support a bill to remove the requirement for the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSQE) in order to receive a diploma, and recommend alternative solutions for graduation from high school.
- 2. Advocate with an Alaska university to create a four-year program, to include distance education for special education.
- 3. Ensure that Special Education Services Agency (SESA) has adequate, permanent funding and remove the sunset provision.
- 4. Advocate for training of regular education staff and administration on special education and 504.

Legislative Committee

- 1. Support a Statutory rate review for HCBS.
- 2. Establish an in-state Center of Excellence.
- 3. Support private autism insurance.
- 4. Change ILP eligibility to a 25 % delay.
- 5. Remove HSQE and recommend alternative solutions for graduation from high school.

by Duane Mayes

Join us
there's a **New**
way to stay
connected

fb

Twitter bird icon

Access GCDSE's Facebook & Twitter pages by clicking the images above
or on GCDSE webpage: <http://hss.state.ak.us/gcdse/>
<http://twitter.com/GCDSE/> • <http://www.facebook.com/>

RESTRAINT & SECLUSION



children and staff, provide appropriate training for school staff, create a system to collect and analyze data on restraint and seclusion as well as to identify and implement effective evidence-based models of school-wide positive behavior support. The Council sees S. 2860 as a child safety bill and not just an education bill.

The Council feels strongly that restraint and

seclusion should only be used in an emergency situation (imminent risk of danger to self or others) because of the high risk of physical injury or death as well as the long-lasting psychological damage often associated with using such techniques.

neighborhood where that school is located without her son becoming extremely upset and agitated. The Council also supports the prohibition of restraint and seclusion in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). An IEP is designed to provide educational benefit and to include a plan for positive behavioral supports. Restraint and seclusion are not therapeutic, do not promote learning and are not considered positive behavior supports. If restraint and seclusion are only to be used in emergency situations for all students, the Council feels it should not have special exemptions for students with disabilities. The Council feels strongly that the IEP should include: a plan to prevent behaviors using positive behavior supports, a plan to teach replacement behaviors and environmental changes to the classroom or teaching techniques.

In order to create an effective system that ultimately reduces the incidence of restraint and seclusion, a system must be established to collect and analyze data. This data will be used to show whether or not the incidence rate of restraint and/or seclusion is being reduced. This system should include an emphasis on not only data collection, but using the data to drive decision-making that will reduce the number of incidents.

by Teresa Holt

The Council feels strongly that restraint and seclusion should only be used in an emergency situation (imminent risk of danger to self or others) because of the high risk of physical injury or death as well as the long-lasting psychological damage often associated with using such techniques.

On May 5, 2010, the Council unanimously voted to support federal Senate bill 2860 (<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=s111-2860>) which addresses the issues of restraint and seclusion in schools. The House passed a similar bill (H.R. 4247) on March 3, 2010. The Council strongly supports the bill's intent to protect students and school staff by reducing the use of seclusion and physical restraint in schools and ensuring that it is only used in emergency situations. Additionally, the Council strongly supports the creation of state policies and procedures to increase the safety of

seclusion should only be used in an emergency situation (imminent risk of danger to self or others) because of the high risk of physical injury or death as well as the long-lasting psychological damage often associated with using such techniques. The Council began an informal stakeholder group to discuss this issue in 2009. One story told to this group speaks to the ongoing psychological damage that often continues long after the incident has occurred. A mother told the stakeholder group her son was restrained and secluded by school staff 15 years ago. She still cannot drive by the

News Flash

The Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education will be meeting October 13, Trust Authority, main conference room in Anchorage, Alaska. For more information on t

ALASKA WORKS INITIATIVE

Planning Summit

The Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education held a summit in Girdwood on June 16th and 17th with the goal of developing a new action plan for the Alaska Works Initiative. The initiative has been in place since 1998 and its overall mission is to ensure that "Alaskans who experience disabilities are employed at a rate as close as possible to that of the general population." Over 40 individuals representing state agencies, nonprofit organizations, the Governor's Council, and self advocates participated in the event to assist with the development of a new plan for the Initiative.

Participants were given information about how the AWI has been working across systems to develop policies and procedures to improve the rate of employment of people with disabilities. An open discussion took place regarding the employment of Alaskans with disabilities, and participants provided input that ultimately resulted in the prioritization of future activities that could lead to sustainable solutions in three focus areas.

These focus areas include:

- Transforming disability programs to emphasize employment as an expectation.
- Ensuring access to needed resources for employment.
- Collaborating with business and industry to assist youth and adults with disabilities in securing employment.

The feedback and priorities will be used in applying for the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant which has funded the Initiative for the past 12 years. The Council and staff of the Alaska Works Initiative would like to extend a special "thank you" for all who took time out of their busy schedules to attend and provide valuable input and direction on this important Initiative.

by Richard Sanders



*Catie Wheeler, Alaska Works Initiative Employee,
Jennifer Sinner, Chief of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation*



*Cheryl Walsh, Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;
Millie Ryan, Executive Director of the Council*



Summit participants in session

**14 and 15, 2010, to conduct their fall training meeting at the Alaska Mental Health
this upcoming meeting, visit our website at: hss.state.ak.us/gcdse/.**

PROJECT SEARCH IN ALASKA



Governor's Council Supports the Start Up of Project SEARCH in Alaska

community business. Project SEARCH serves as a workforce alternative for students in their last year of high school. Each student applies to the program and is accepted through a selection committee process.

The cornerstone of Project SEARCH is total immersion in a large health care organization or business. Each day, students report to the host business, learn employability and job skills while participating in three internships during the year. Students participate in monthly progress meetings to define their career goal and plan necessary steps to achieve that goal. In Alaska, both Providence Hospital in Anchorage and Fairbanks Memorial Hospital have committed to participating. The Governor's Council is seeking other potential large employer worksites in the Mat-Su Valley. The Anchorage, Mat-Su and Fairbanks school districts are all very interested in participating.

Managers at the internship sites work with the Project SEARCH instructor and job coaches to support the students. Students get continual feedback from

the internship manager, co-workers and Project SEARCH staff. They end their day by reflection, problem solving, planning and journaling key knowledge. The ultimate goal upon completion of the program is competitive employment utilizing the skills learned during the internships and throughout the program.

The founder of Project SEARCH, Erin Riehle, and other staff from the Cincinnati Children's Hospital will be coming to Anchorage for a two-day planning session, August 26-27. Representatives from each of the school districts and employers will attend, along with staff from state Special Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Governor's Council. The goal is to develop the program for each of the communities, do a "soft" launch of the program in each of the districts beginning in the winter term of January 2011, and then do a full-scale program in each of the communities with 10 students beginning in the fall of 2011.

by Patrick Reinhardt

The Governor's Council is partnering with the Department of Education and Early Development and the Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to bring Project SEARCH to Alaska beginning in 2011.

Project SEARCH is a one-year, high school transition program that provides training and education leading to the employment of students with disabilities, ages 18-21. The program occurs on-site at a high status

ALASKA OUTSTANDING DIRECT SERVICE CAREER PROFESSIONALS

Every year in April there is a great event, the Full Lives Conference. Each year during the Full Lives Conference, the Alaska Alliance for Direct Service Careers highlights five individuals that work in the field as direct service professionals and honors them as the Outstanding Direct Service Professionals of the Year. The reason there are five people who are honored is because we highlight professionals in different areas of expertise. We like the

nominations to come from co-workers, consumers and associates — instead of coming from the executive directors — because we hope that this gives everyone a better and more equal footing. It also prevents one supervisor or executive director from writing 10 or 20 nominations! The nominations are then judged by direct service professionals — usually the previous year's winners. It is a very nifty program that receives nominations from everywhere

across the state. This year the Outstanding Direct Service Professionals for 2010 are:

- **Dayna McGuire** — professional working with people with developmental disabilities, she lives in Anchorage and works for Ready Care.
- **Albert Nells** — professional working with people in treatment for chronic alcoholism and/

CAREER EXPLORATION DAY

On October 20th, 2010, we are holding a special event for people with disabilities. They will be working at coffee shops, in law offices, with the elderly, at the railroad, and a variety of other locations. There will be more people with disabilities at work that day than any other day of the year. This is 'Career Exploration Day'. Career Exploration Day is open to people with disabilities that are 16 years old and older. To participate in Career Exploration Day, a person must fill out an application. If the person is under 18 years old, a parent or guardian must sign the application. If attending school, the teacher must also be involved in the process. If the person is over 18, all we need is the completed and signed application. If they are working with a DVR counselor or job coach, we want them to be involved in Career Exploration Day too.

To make Career Exploration Day work, we need to ask a lot of questions. We want to know what type of work the person likes to do; what hours do they like to work? Do they work better in a group or alone? Do they like their surroundings to be quiet or loud?

Then we work with the businesses, non-profit organizations, and government agencies to see what type of jobs might match the person's preferences. We do a lot of matching because usually we have around 50 people attending. On the day of the event, there are many things going on. First, we all meet at one location and get to know each other. Then mentors are paired up with people who are interested in the work they do. They then head out to begin the day. At the end of the day everybody gathers again

for celebration of a job well done. Sometimes, the person does so well at the workplace that the mentor might offer them an interview or a job. Even if that doesn't happen, the person will walk away with a better understanding of the details involved with their career of interest. They will be able to use that work experience to decide whether they want to do that job or look into something else.

Would you like to participate in a Career Exploration Day? Maybe you would like to coordinate a Career Exploration Day in your area? Contact Heidi Frost, Heidi.frost@alaska.gov or at 269-8999 for more information.

by Heidi Frost

COUNCIL MEETS WITH THE GOVERNOR AND FIRST LADY

Members and staff of the Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education (the Council) were invited to attend a luncheon with Governor Parnell, First Lady Sandy Parnell, Commissioners Larry Ledoux (Department of Education) and William Hogan (Department of Health & Social Services) and staff from the Governor's office at the Governor's Mansion in Juneau, Alaska.

The Council entered the Governor's Mansion for a

pleasant lunch of swordfish. Council members and staff conducted a presentation covering:

- Intensive Supports and Intervention Services (ISIS) in place in Alaska to provide services to those with the most challenging behaviors;
- State of Alaska as a Model Employer in hiring Alaskans with disabilities into state government;

- need for a deaf center in Alaska to address the growing concerns of deaf Alaskans struggling to access services; and
- private autism insurance reform (House Bill 187).

Several self-advocates on the Council were given the chance to share with the Governor the difficulties they experience on a daily basis in living with various

Continued on page 11

or substance abuse, he works for Southcentral Counseling in the Pathway Home in Anchorage.

- **Nils Dihle** — professional working with the elderly and those with Alzheimer's and related dementia, he works for Southeast Senior Services in Juneau.
- **Jennifer Defreest** — professional working with people with brain injuries, has worked in

the field for 34 years, and now works for Ready Care in Soldotna.

- **Katie Wells** — professional working with people with mental illness, has worked for Peninsula Community Health Services in Soldotna for two years and has been in the field for seven years.

The nomination forms for 2011 will be coming out in

the late fall, so don't forget to nominate your favorite direct service professional for the 2011 Outstanding Direct Service Professional of the Year Award! If you have questions, please contact Heidi Frost at heidi.frost@alaska.gov or by phone at 269-8999.

by Heidi Frost



SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Task Force Meeting June 2010

In mid June, the Alaska Works Initiative hosted a meeting with key stakeholders from Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS), the Council, Developmental Disabilities (DD) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provider agencies and key DVR staff. The task force came together to flesh out the details of a strategic plan that was started in 2007. The strategic plan focuses on 12 goals, including undertaking a formal values clarification process within SDS. These include:

- setting a specific target for increasing the number of people with developmental disabilities receiving supported employment services;
- developing a clear written state agency policy and convening a meeting of providers to overview values, assumptions and expectations;
- creating a core leadership team dedicated to implementation of the new policy and the systems change needed to translate that policy into practice;
- developing an effective data management system to ensure the cost effectiveness, quality and community impact of supported employment;
- continuing to participate actively in the Alaska Works Initiative's activities to increase the employment rate of Alaskans with severe disabilities;
- helping facilitate similar structures at the local level and assisting in disseminating information about state level activities to other SDS staff and providers;
- updating or developing a collaborative agreement with DVR for individuals deemed eligible for supported employment services from both agencies and with DVR and the Department of Education and Early Development to address the needs of transition-aged youth;
- developing and implementing specific rules, regulations and statutory language changes to support increasing integrated employment outcomes for people with DD;
- developing an ongoing, collaborative partnership with provider organizations that actively encourages organizational transformation and reallocation of human, fiscal and capital resources to programs and services that emphasize integration and employment;
- exploring how to stimulate the development of providers for supported employment services and new organizational sponsors for supported employment programs; and
- exploring new ways to fund supported employment services;
- develop a method for providing an ongoing program of training and technical assistance, training and support for purchasers and providers of day and vocational services in Alaska.

By the end of a long but successful day, the team had developed strategies and implementation plans for all 12 goals. Work is underway to make those goals come to fruition. Meetings with the SDS Director and management staff are underway. For more information please contact Jennifer Jones at 269-6492 or e-mail at Jennifer.jones@alaska.gov.

by Jennifer Jones

NEW COUNCIL STAFF

Michelle Jenkins is pleased to join the staff at the Governor's Council for Disabilities and Special Education. She has worked for the State of Alaska for over 4 years, returning to paid employment after devoting almost 15 years as a "stay-at-home" mom raising her 4 children; Emma, Noah, Kala, and Keyn.

Previously, Michelle taught adult education for 12 years, both in Fairbanks and Anchorage, working with a wide variety of students — many

referred for training from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and numerous Native corporations. Michelle loves teaching and encourages the pursuit of lifelong learning.

Michelle moved to Fairbanks from Florida in 1981 to finish her bachelor's degree in business administration. Having lived many places, Michelle is emphatic that there is no better place on earth than Alaska in the summertime!

MICHELLE JENKINS



GOVERNOR APPOINTS COUNCIL MEMBERS

August 27, 2010, Governor Sean Parnell announced his appointments to the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee.

Governor Parnell appointed Art Delaune, Heidi Haas and Ernest Manzie, and reappointed Julie Broyles, Eric Gebhart and Ric Nelson to the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education. The Council serves as the interdepartmental planning and coordinating agency of the Department of Health and Social Services, the Department of Education and Early Development, and other departments that deliver services to people with disabilities or provide special education.

Art Delaune, of Fairbanks, has 15 years of experience working with developmentally disabled children. He currently works with people with disabilities at Access Alaska. Delaune is also a parent navigator for the Fairbanks Fetal Alcohol Diagnostic Team under the Alaska Center for Children and Adults, a licensed foster parent, and a former terminal and operations manager for Lynden Transport. He served in the U.S. Air Force for four years. Delaune is appointed to a consumer seat.

Heidi Haas, of Fairbanks, is the founder and president of the Autism Society of Alaska, as well as a community member of the Play N Learn Community Head Start Program. She is also a member of the Autism Society of America and was presented the society's Alaskan Volunteer of the Year award and the Flint Hills United Way Golden Hearts award. As the mother of a child with a disability, Haas is appointed to a second consumer seat.

Ernest Manzie, of Fairbanks, is the director of educational programs at the Boys and Girls Home for Family Centered Services of Alaska. Manzie served as superintendent of the Valdez City Schools and as assistant superintendent in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District. Manzie is appointed to a seat reserved for a special education director.

Julie Broyles, of Anchorage, is a special education teacher at Service High School and a board member of the Alaska Down Syndrome Congress. Broyles earned a bachelor's degree in

education from University of Alaska Fairbanks and a master's degree in special education from the University of Alaska Anchorage. She has 12 years of teaching experience. Broyles is appointed to a special education teacher seat.

Eric Gebhart, of Nenana, is the superintendent of the Nenana City School District. Formerly a superintendent and principal in the Kake School district, Gebhart was also a member of the Kake Economic Development Council and Kake City Council. Gebhart is reappointed to a secondary consumer seat.

Ric Nelson, of Anchorage, is a regional president of TASH International, an advocacy organization for people with disabilities from birth. Nelson has received an associate's degree in small business management from the University of Alaska Anchorage and is working toward a bachelor's degree in business management. Nelson is reappointed to a primary consumer seat.



Governor Sean Parnell meets with Council President Donna Swihart and Kathy Fitzgerald, Council board member



Council meets with Governor and First Lady at Governor's mansion luncheon

Continued from page 9

disabilities. Council member Sharon Miranda gave examples of situations and challenges that she faces as a deaf woman living in Anchorage. Donna Swihart, Council Chair, spoke about the difficulties she experiences while living with children who have

autism and how there is not enough intervention support to assist these children at an early age.

First Lady Sandy Parnell and her staff were particularly warm and inviting while the Council visited her home. Those who attended had the opportunity to learn that often, telling your personal

story and the difficulties you experience can truly help in creating change for the better.

The Council would like to thank Governor Parnell and First Lady Sandy Parnell for inviting us to their home and for letting us share issues that are important to individuals who experience disabilities

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Art Arnold

State Special Education Director
Juneau
art.Arnold@alaska.gov

Marlene (Anna) Attla

Self-Advocate
Committee: Education, Rural Ad Hoc
Anchorage
marleneattla@hotmail.com

Julie Broyles

Parent, Special Education Teacher
Committee: Education
Anchorage
broyles.julie@gmail.com

Jennifer Card

Parent, Special Education Teacher
Committee: Education, Autism
Anchorage
jcard@scf.cc

Milton Cheemuk

Self-Advocate
Committee: Legislative, Rural Ad Hoc
St. Michael
Fax: 923-2406

Sean O'Brien

DVR Representative
Fairbanks

Kathy Fitzgerald

UCEDD Representative, Parent
Committee: DD, Leg and Exec.
Anchorage
anklf@uaa.alaska.edu

Dean Gates

Self-Advocate
Committee: Legislative
Anchorage
dgates@ak.net

Eric Gebhart

Council Co-Chair
Parent, Superintendent and Principal
Committee: Education, Legislative,
Executive and Rural Ad Hoc
Nenana
egebhart@hotmail.com

Taylor Gregg

Self-Advocate
Committee: Education
and Rural Ad Hoc
Ketchikan
grengetta@hotmail.com
greggmary@yahoo.com

Kama Gregory

Parent
Committee: Early Intervention
Anchorage
kama_gregory@yahoo.com

Tara Horton

Commissioner's Designee
Department of Health & Social
Services
tara.horton@alaska.gov

Vacant

Disability Law Center Representative

Heidi Haas

Parent
Fairbanks

Wes Keller

Legislator
Wasilla
rep_wes_keller@legis.state.ak.us

Banarsi Lal

Alaska Commission on Aging
Committee: Legislative Committee
Fairbanks
blal@gci.net

Kaleene Lamb

Self-Advocate
Fairbanks
unicornhorse2000@gmail.com
Glenda@fra-alaska.net

Sharon Miranda

Self-Advocate
Committee: Education
Anchorage
sharon@wvs.org

Ric Nelson

Self-Advocate, College Student
Committee: Developmental
Disabilities, Legislative and Education
Anchorage
ricnelson2008@aol.com

Lelia (Lucy) Odden

Self-Advocate
Committee: Developmental
Disabilities and Legislative
Anchorage
lucy_odden@fws.gov

Ernest Manzie

Special Education Director
Fairbanks

Art Delaune

Parent
Fairbanks

Amy Simpson

PIC Executive Director
ILP Provider
Committee: Early Intervention and
Legislative
Eagle River
asimpson@picak.org

Donna Swihart

Council Chair
Parent
Committee: Executive
Wasilla
dswihart@mtaonline.net

Tonja Updike

Parent
Committee: Education
SESA
Soldotna
tonja@acsalaska.net

Fredrick Villa

Parent
Assoc. Vice President for
Workforce Programs,
University of Alaska, Fairbanks
Committees: Developmental
Disabilities, Legislative, Education
Fairbanks
fred.villa@alaska.edu

GCDSE STAFF MEMBERS

Millie Ryan, Executive Director

millie.ryan@alaska.gov

Duane Mayes, Operations Director

duane.mayes@alaska.gov

Heidi Frost, Program Coordinator I

heidi.frost@alaska.gov

Teresa Holt, Program Coordinator I

teresa.holt@alaska.gov

Jennifer Jones, Health Program Manager I

jennifer.jones@alaska.gov

Carrie Predeger, Research Analyst III

carrie.predeger@alaska.gov

Patrick Reinhart, Program Coordinator I

patrick.reinhart@alaska.gov

Richard Sanders, Program Coordinator II

richard.sanders@alaska.gov

Sheryl Granger, Administrative Assist I

sheryl.granger@alaska.gov

Michelle Jenkins, Office Assist II

michelle.jenkins@alaska.gov