



August 2007

### Special points of interest:

- GAPSE website
- 2007 Conference Schedule



### GAPSE Board

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## GAPSE

### Highlights from the GAPSE President

Your GAPSE board and conference planning committee members have been busy on your behalf! I am very pleased to announce that we now have a website. Our website address is [www.gapsenetwork.com](http://www.gapsenetwork.com); within the site, we have a *Members Only* area. In the next couple weeks, I will be sharing the username and password so GAPSE members can access this area. Also included are areas with easy access to join GAPSE/APSE, information about our annual conference with a registration form, helpful links to many resources, and public policy information. The website allows you to make suggestions and share ideas with board members. It offers an opportunity to let us know that you want to be more involved – check your area of interest and click *Submit* – we definitely need your help and we have just made it easier for you to do so.

Our big item keeping us busy has been planning the annual conference. I thank the conference planning committee for their tremendous work. As you know, last year we partnered with other statewide organizations that shared our interest in integrated employment for people with disabilities. That planning effort resulted in an outstanding conference at Epworth By The Sea. It was a no brainer to continue these partnerships for planning the 2007 conference. I thank the folks representing the Governor's Advisory Council for MHDDAD, the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, Georgia Department of Human Resources, Georgia DOL/Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Georgia State University – CRP-RCEP, The University of Georgia - HSMI, Cobb-Douglas CSB, and Employment First Georgia – it has been a team effort! My message in the May '07 Newsletter reported information about a tremendous group of keynote speakers (Kathie Snow, Dennis Drake, Mindy Oppenheim, & Celane McWhorter). We now have a lineup of outstanding presenters for our concurrent sessions. Please check out our *Schedule at a Glance* on page three for a breakdown of concurrent session presenters and topics. This is going to be an exceptional conference – join us at the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Macon, October 24-25. There are limited rooms and space – register early and reserve your spot.

I anticipate our involvement in the *Public Policy* arena to increase substantially. We are actively supporting Employment First Georgia and share their vision: *Advance Economic Development In Georgia By Prioritizing "Employment First" For Persons with Disabilities Within Georgia's World Class Workforce*. Georgians with disabilities have tremendous unmet needs. Services vary depending on where you live. We are committed to reducing service gaps for people with disabilities just as we are committed to having highly skilled service providers. Unfortunately, GAPSE does not enjoy the same level of partnerships with our national and state legislators as we do with our partner organizations. However, we hope to become very good friends with the men and women representing us in Congress and in the State Legislature. As we find our place in public policy, we also recognize that a priority must be to support the meaningful and valuable work of GAPSE members.

Folks, the GAPSE train has left the station and is building up speed – it is not too late to jump on board!

Phil Chase, President



**SE: Building bridges to a better tomorrow**

I am a simple woman  
Legally blind,

I see, I walk, I read,

But felt no purpose  
Until I met a special,

Honest woman  
Who wanted to work &

I helped her

& she thanked me,  
but what she didn't realize

was she gave me a gift;

whatever you want,  
just do it!

Ask for help,

Miracles can happen!

We teach each other.

Liz Kellogg,  
Job Coach  
Community Friendship  
Inc

## Action Now

There are a number of epidemics in this country. I want to address one of them. In this country, we punish people for being poor. We punish with our ignorance, indifference and neglect.

In this country, we punish those who are a different ethnic group, those who haven't had a minimum of education, those who don't make enough money, and those who are mentally, physically, and emotionally challenged.

We punish them by withholding opportunity, paying a minimum wage that isn't sufficient to live decently; we punish them by parceling out our health care system according to what can be afforded, and we punish them with a disability insurance system that is in itself disabling and perpetuates itself.

It is my hope that our political leaders have the fortitude to unravel this systemic crisis our country has inherited and lay the groundwork for a government and a society that cares for each other.

There are many courageous people working within the system in order to better those less fortunate while at the same time battling the same system, trying to improve it. It is these people who see every day how the attitudes of so many in our society affect profoundly the quality of life for those with limited resources.

Of the three- ignorance, indifference, and neglect-indifference is the worst. The judgment that for whatever reason, people deserve what they get, is erroneous. We are all interdependent, and those that succeed in life know that without the help of others, they would be nowhere.

Certainly, in a culture that values entrepreneurship and self-determination, we can begin to see our way through to a more inclusive system. Indifference towards the man or woman living on the street, or towards someone who works at a menial job, or indifference towards someone of a different ethnic group, is a sign of not just narrowmindedness, but a diminished heart. We lose a piece of ourselves when we judge according to whose better than whom. This stance of "I'm better than they are" is borne of fear.

We are a fearful society. We fear those who are different from us. From this fear has come an overzealousness in war, and a deepening, systemic neglect by our government of those in our country who are in need.

In recent years, there has been a groundswell of compassionate individuals, some famous, some not, who have committed themselves to using their talents to come to the aid of those in this country and around the world. Must we continue to look only to these people to provide the resources for compelling causes, or can we as a society come together with our time and our vote and hold accountable those in political power?

It is true that, on a local level, many are active in addressing the needs of the disenfranchised. Our state and national leaders must give these helpers efficient and well placed tools so that they can provide people the opportunities and resources they need to climb out of poverty and lead fulfilling, self-determined lives.

Katherine Davis,  
Community Friendship Inc.  
Job Coach

**GAPSE: THE NETWORK ON EMPLOYMENT  
EMPLOYMENT FOR ALL - TOGETHER**

October 24 – 26, 2007  
Ramada Plaza Hotel, Macon, GA

DAY	TIME	ACTIVITY	SESSION
Wednesday	10:00-1:00	Registration	
	1:15 – 1:30	Conference Opening	Welcome & Introductions Phil Chase, GAPSE President
	1:30 - 2:00		Employment for All (invited, not confirmed) Introduction: Gylna King Presenter: Michael L. Thurmond, Commissioner, GA Department of Labor
	2:00 – 5:00	Opening Keynote w/break	Inclusion for All: Making It Happen! Introduction: Adele Patrick Presenter: Kathie Snow
	5:00 - 5:30	Registration	
5:30 - 7:00	Networking Reception		

Thursday	7:30 – 8:30	Chef's Bakery Breakfast	
	8:30 – 9:45	General Session	Do Other People See What You See? Introduction: Michael Powell Presenter: Dennis Drake
	9:45 – 10:00	Break	
	10:00 - Noon	Thursday Keynote	What I've Learned So Far Introduction: Jean Mevoli-Cannon Presenter: Mindy Oppenheim
	Noon - 1:00	Buffet Lunch	
	1:00- 2:15	Concurrent Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Customized Employment Strategies Kathleen Murphy, Michelle Robinson, &amp; Yvonne Spellman</li> <li>2) Job Development: 6 P's for Program Success Mindy Oppenheim</li> <li>3) People with Significant Disabilities in Professional Careers: One Woman's Story Tracy Rackensperger</li> <li>4) Speech Craft Rebecca Buck</li> </ul>
	2:15 – 2:30	Transition to next session	
	2:30 – 3:45	Concurrent Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Direct Support Professional Certificate Program Doug Rhome, Linda Walker, Rick Strickland &amp; Craig Wentworth</li> <li>2) Innovations in Learning &amp; Teaching: How to Individualize Job Matching &amp; Mindy Oppenheim</li> <li>3) Emerging Leadership Charlie Murphy, Michele Berg &amp; Ivan Britto</li> <li>4) Employment First Georgia Institute Rich Toscano, Tracy Rackensperger, Patty Cassidy &amp; Pat Nobble</li> </ul>
	3:45 – 4:00	Transition to next session	
	4:00 – 5:15	Concurrent Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Art as Employment: Crafting a Craeer Panel of Artists facilitated by Patty Cassidy</li> <li>2) Certified Peer Specialist Project: Carol Coussons de Reyes</li> <li>3) Strategies for Working with Individuals with Autism Marcie Sitton</li> <li>3) Your Own Work Plan: Using Social Security's PASS to Help You Get to Work Steve Doty</li> </ul>

Friday	7:00 – 8:30	Chef's Bakery Breakfast	
	7:15 – 8:15	Member B'fast	Facilitator: Phil Chase
	8:30 – 10:00	General Session	<b>Employer Panel</b> (Arranged by Council on DD & Council for MHDDAD)
	10:00 - Noon	Closing Keynote	<i>How Are We Doing? How Can We Do It Better?</i> Introduction: Michael Miller Presenter: Celane McWhorter

**GAPSE: The Georgia Network on Employment** is a member organization formed to improve and expand integrated employment opportunities, services and outcomes for persons experiencing disabilities. If you are not a member of this very important movement we invite you to join our group. Visit the GAPSE website at [www.gapsenetwork.com](http://www.gapsenetwork.com)

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## Training Opportunities

Register now for The University of Georgia's online certificate program for employment specialists and job coaches. The next session begins September 24, 2007. Check out the course curriculum by clicking *Syllabus* at the Human Services Management Institute web site, [www.coe.uga.edu/hsmi](http://www.coe.uga.edu/hsmi) or call the Institute at 1/866-248-HSMI.

### **September 4-7**

The National Adult Protective Services Association Hyatt Regency Hotel Atlanta, GA  
<http://www.apsnetwork.org>

### **September 15, 2007**

*The ARC of Georgia Annual Meeting One Community For All* Forsyth, Georgia  
[www.thearcofgeorgia.org](http://www.thearcofgeorgia.org)

### **September 16-19, 2007**

*Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging and Georgia Gerontology Society Aging Takes Center Stage* Savannah, Georgia  
[www.georgiagerontologysociety.org](http://www.georgiagerontologysociety.org)

### **September 26, 2007**

*Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University*  
Georgia's Aging Population: What to Expect and How to Cope Atlanta, Georgia  
<http://aysps.gsu.edu/aging.html>

### **September 27, 2007**

*Discovery Day*, The Home Depot

### **October 6, 2007**

*Here I Come! Transition from High School to College Summer Workshop 2007*  
The University System of Georgia & the Alternative Media Access Center (AMAC)  
The University of Georgia, Tate and Student Learning Centers, Athens, Georgia 30602  
To Register: <http://www.amac.uga.edu/sw2007.php> Contact: (706) 542-1299

Note from the Editor: GAPSE strives to stay in the know and advocate for individuals that receive SE services. If you have articles or success stories that you would like to submit please contact Sabrina Tuten at (912) 449-7236 or e-mail at [stuten@satilla.csb.state.ga.us](mailto:stuten@satilla.csb.state.ga.us)