

**AAIDD Newsletter**  
**American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**  
**Georgia Chapter**

Fall 2006

Page 1 of 6

**Note from the Chair:**

Change seems to be the constant in our field. Our Georgia chapter was excited to see that the National Association approved our name change to the American Association for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). Until the new logo is developed, you can still access information using the same web address of [www.aamr.org](http://www.aamr.org).

We are pleased to announce that we are updating our website. Come see our progress at [www.gaaaidd.org](http://www.gaaaidd.org). Check our site for news on upcoming events as well as information on how to join AAIDD. Of course, you can still find us throughout this coming year using our old web address at [www.gaaamr.org](http://www.gaaamr.org).

**We are excited to announce that the 2007 National AAIDD conference will be held in Atlanta on May 21 - 24, 2007 at the Sheraton Atlanta Hotel.** This event will be the first conference as the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and will provide a wealth of information and training opportunities on Supports for Quality Living. Make sure you go ahead and mark your calendars. There will also be opportunities to present papers on cutting-edge information on supports that reflects both current research and its practical application to benefit people with intellectual and developmental disabilities coming out of Georgia. We hope you go ahead and consider this conference as an opportunity to showcase your work.

Georgia is honored that our state was chosen for this opportunity. In order to show our guests from around the world what a strong state we have, we ask you to consider offering your help. There will be many opportunities to be a part of making this conference a success. Please email Debbie Conway @ [drconway@charterinternet.com](mailto:drconway@charterinternet.com) if you would like to volunteer.

Georgia's Chapter of AAIDD continues to remain committed to keeping you informed about events that involve developmental disabilities. Please contact me if you would like to share an event date.

Dave Blanchard  
[dave@aadd.org](mailto:dave@aadd.org)

## RESULTS OF NAME CHANGE

The members of the American Association on Mental Retardation have voted to:

- 1) change the name of the organization, and
- 2) adopt "American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities" as the new name.

This change will not alter the mission of the organization but will rather bring the name more in line with general usage in the field and with the day to day work of our members. Stay tuned at [aamr.org](http://aamr.org) for more information about the implications of this exciting change over the next several months as we move to implement the name change through all of our activities.

## **NATIONAL AAMR CONFERENCE**

**May 21 - 24, 2007**

**Sheraton Atlanta Hotel**  
**165 Courtland, Atlanta, GA 30303**  
**[www.sheratonatlantahotel.com](http://www.sheratonatlantahotel.com)**

It is that all important time to get ready for conferences in our area. This year the GA chapter of AAIDD has been asked to help with the local arrangements for the National Conference which is scheduled for **May 21-24 2007**. This is an exciting collaborative effort to work with the National Office. We will be asking for a time for our chapter to meet for our yearly conference during this time as well. The yearly conference includes elections of new officers and awards. Look for updates in the next newsletter. Please keep these dates available.

Renee Simoneaux

[r.simoneaux@thefraziercenter.org](mailto:r.simoneaux@thefraziercenter.org)

### **REPORT FROM THE TREASURER**

The Spring AAMR Conference was a great success. The registration fees and 50/50 drawing brought in \$5052.50 in revenue. The expenses were \$3509.78, netting a profit of \$1542.72 for the association. Well Done!

Other expenses since April 2006 include the 2006 Retreat, the development of the website and a membership promotion at the SPADD conference in June for a total of \$776.64. Our checking account has a balance of \$10660.38; our money market account has a balance of \$11542.11 (as of June 30, 2006).

Estelle Mulherin Duncan

### **SOUTHEASTERN AAMR/AAIDD RETREAT**

The SEAAMR Retreat was held at Big Canoe on July 10-13<sup>th</sup> with representatives from 5 states in attendance and NC represented via conference call. Highlights of the minutes from the Retreat are:

Mark Yeager, who is a National officer, presented the following highlights of the activities of National.

AAMR continues to struggle with its identity, but is still the organization that defines the clinical term of mental retardation as it evolves. There is an approved name change for the organization, effective July 1, 2006; it is American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, or AAIDD. The new name has created some issues with other disability organizations. A committee charged with working on the new definition of mental retardation is very divided on the name change issue. The Action Plans that entities within the organization have submitted are helping to determine who and what the organization is and will become.

The reorganization and resulting Action Plans have had a positive effect on the organization and that the organization has a positive momentum. There are no Division Chairs in the new organization, only ad hoc committees with defined tasks and expected products/outcomes. Members can write and present action plans to National to pursue interests, research. Current goals of the organization include maintaining the benchmarks/cutting edge standards for developmental disabilities. The organization must market to young people...must look to the future to offer something to the next generation who is electronically savvy and seeking expertise and products.

The Region has a lot of autonomy under the new structure, but must stay within the goals of the National organization. See the attached 13 AAMR Principles on the website and National goals of:

- Building Association capacity
- Building capacity to serve professionals
- Building societal capacity

The Support Intensity Scale is taking off. There are pilot projects underway to use the SIS with other populations, e.g. mental health. Initial results appear that the SIS will also be useful with these populations. Research here is tied in to the web-based data collection on the SIS.

The old new MR definition is 10 years old. The committee working on the new definition will likely submit the first 3 chapters by the end of July, 2006.

Another hot issue is the court cases around the death penalty that will likely narrow the definition of MR is consideration of "malingering mental retardation" for people on death row. Regulations are still using the old definitions for funding and eligibility issues.

The following mission statement was adopted by the Board at the retreat. Note the name change to Southern American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (SAAIDD)

### **SOUTHEASTERN AAMR/AAIDD RETREAT (cont)**

*The mission of SAAIDD is to provide a regional network for the sharing of knowledge, education and resources for professionals working in the field of IDD.*

Goals of the Organization are to provide support to the membership of the Southern Region through:

- Internet access to training info (website)
- Member education
- Annual professional retreat
- Chapter Financial assistance
- Access to states activities

This support is to be delivered 75% electronically, and 25% face-to-face.

Other items discussed included:

- Richard B. Dillard, Larry D. Scott, and Skeet Spence Awards will be opened for nominations as decided by the Board on a year to year basis.
- Upcoming Meetings: National Meeting, Atlanta, GA in May, 2007  
SEAAMR Conference in NC, in November, 2007
- Outlook 7 Name Change was approved - The Outlook.
- Committees were formed to address revenue generation, and the content and function of the SAAIDD website
- It was unanimously decided that the organizational structure must be 1) local...membership must be driven by the states, 2) flat...less encumbered, and 3) dynamic...the ability to deliver a product/outcome to members.
- Functions of the Board will include: Financial oversight for the organizations resources and ensuring actions of the organization are consistent with its mission.
- By-Laws will be revised to reflect the new structure.

Service terms for slate of officers. Transition plans were also made to move to new structure.

- President- 1 Year Term
- President Elect- 1 Year Term
- Secretary/Treasurer- 2 Year Term
- 3 Members at Large- 3 year term
- Appointments by President (Editor, Ad Hoc Committee/s)

### **FUTURE CONFERENCES/BOARD MEETINGS**

Per Beth Allison, NCAAMR will host the SEAAMR Conference in either Greensboro or Raleigh, NC in November of 2007. Beth indicated, via conference call, that conference planning will begin in August of 2006 including the development of a budget for the conference. The contact person will be Marc Tasse, who is the current NC Chair. SEAAMR President Elect Patti Martin will be the contact person for SEAAMR for this conference/meeting. The next SEAAMR Board Meeting will be at the National Meeting in Atlanta in May of 2007.

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
***“Conversations that Matter:  
Town Hall Meetings on Disability”***

Please join other parents, professionals, legislators and self-advocates from Gwinnett in a community discussion about services for people with disabilities in Georgia. In collaboration with a number of organizations and advocates in your community, the Unlock the Waiting Lists Campaign presents an educational event we know you will want to put on your calendar.

**Our Special Guest for the evening will be  
Dr. Steve Hall, Director of the Office of Developmental Disabilities,  
Georgia Department of Human Resources**

**Other Speakers to include: Darlene Meador, GA Department of Human Resources  
Dave Blanchard, Director of the Unlock the Waiting List Campaign!**

**December 5th – Alpharetta**

Location to be determined

Contact: [Jennifer Carroll](#)

**January 16th – Albany**

Location to be determined

Contact: [Rosalyn Horne](#)

**January 23rd – Macon**

Location to be determined

Contact: [Nalini Isaac](#)

**February 20th – Savannah**

Location to be determined

Contact: [Mary Poncy](#)

**Sponsors from Across the State**

Atlanta Alliance on Developmental Disabilities (AADD) • The Department of Human Resources • Babies Can't Wait • Parent Mentor Program, Madison, Clarke, Hall, Oglethorpe and Elbert Counties • Connections for Special Parents • Northeast Georgia Learning Resource System (GLRS) Transition Consortia • Northeast Georgia Coalition: Babies Can't Wait/Five's Too Late • Families of Children Under Stress, (FOCUS) • Medical College of Georgia Children's Medical Center • Parent to Parent • GA-ParentNetwork • Gwinnett Coalition for Health and Human Services • Gwinnett County Public Schools • Gwinnett Early Childhood Interagency Council (GECIC) • SPECTRUM (Gwinnett County Autism Support Group)

### **INFORMATION FROM UNLOCK continued**

Unlock needs your help! We will e-mail an action alert out to our full list tomorrow, but need you to send your own call to action to people on your e-mail lists as soon as possible. We are asking you to help us because we know that this is an issue you care about - and we need this extra push to create the tipping point we need this year.

Our message will be simple - but please take the time to put it into your own words:

The Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR), recommended 1,970 new MRWP services for the FY08 budget to unlock the waiting lists for home and community based services! This is great news...However, our concern is that they only were able to find a way to pay for 170 new MRWP services! For the remaining 1,800 services, they left it up to the Governor to find a way to fund them. The bottom line...it is up to the Governor!

**WE MUST SEND A STRONG MESSAGE:** Ask the Governor to continue his commitment to people with disabilities waiting for help in Georgia by funding 2,000 new MRWP services in the FY08 budget.

Simply, go to <http://www.unlockthewaitinglists.com/actionalert.html> to make a difference today!

We are looking to see over 2,000 e-mails/letters or phone calls to the Governor's office by Nov. 7th. We have made it as easy as possible with just a few clicks. Once you have made your contact, let us know by clicking the link "Once you have sent your letter or made your phone call, let us know by clicking here" on that same page and check back often to see our progress.

### **AAMR/AAIDD Membership**

There's no better time to become a member of AAMR. Being a member means having access to the latest information on research, resources and programs related to the field of developmental disabilities. Memberships are offered to individuals or organizations so go to [www.aamr.org](http://www.aamr.org) to see which membership plan works best for you. **DON'T DELAY, JOIN TODAY!**

Sheryl Arno, Membership Chair