

**NOTE FROM THE CHAIR:**

Hope the Georgia Chapter of AAMR's Spring newsletter finds you well.

\*\*It is time again for nominations to the Georgia Chapter of AAMR Executive Board. If you or someone you know is interested in taking on a leadership role in the Georgia Chapter, see the next panel for information.

\*\*Our Spring 2006 conference, **TRANSITIONS**, will be April 20<sup>th</sup> at the Clairmont Presbyterian Church in Decatur. You can find details on pages 2 and 3. This will be an exciting opportunity to learn the latest information on the new waiver for Georgia and learn about the many transitions in the DD world.

\*\*Our first annual Georgia Chapter of AAMR membership drive will be in June 2006. This will be a gathering for current and potential AAMR members. We will be sponsoring a meet and greet at the annual SPADD (*Service Provider Association for Developmental Disabilities*) meeting prior to dinner. It is our hope to take advantage of having 125+ folks involved in the disability field gathered in one place to share the message of AAMR and the benefits of membership. Feel free to contact me for further information on the event.

As always, we want to make sure we are keeping members informed about events that involve developmental disabilities. Please contact me if you would like to share an event date.

Sara Case  
[sarac356@comcast.net](mailto:sarac356@comcast.net)



**Call for Nominations**

The Georgia Chapter of AAMR is looking for individuals to assume leadership roles in the Chapter. Positions available:

- \*\*Vice-Chair (one year term; becomes Chair Elect)
- \*\*Treasurer (two year term)
- \*\*Secretary (one year term to finish out vacated position)
- \*\*Member-at-Large (one year term, 3 positions)

Send nominations to: Margo Staley  
[mstaley@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:mstaley@dhr.state.ga.us)

**Barbara F. Wood award**

Georgia AAMR is calling for nominations of candidates for the Barbara F. Wood Extra Mile Award. This annual award honors a direct care support person who consistently goes the extra mile to ensure positive outcomes in the lives of consumers. The award winner will receive a plaque as well as a \$100 cash award. This is a great chance for you to reward the most important people on your staff in front of their peers!

Here is a link to the survey:  
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?A=71239531E15099>

The award winner will be recognized at the Annual Georgia AAMR Conference on April 20, 2006  
Thanks for your participation,

Renee Simoneaux

**WE NEED YOUR INPUT**

If you would like to share how you got into the field of Developmental Disabilities, please email your story to [sarac356@comcast.net](mailto:sarac356@comcast.net).

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS:**

**Bregman Education Conference**  
March 11-12, 2006  
Perimeter College

**Georgia Chapter of AAMR Executive Committee meetings**  
\*\*April 5, 2006 10:30-2pm  
2660 Osborne Road Atlanta, GA  
\*\*June 2-3, 2006 (annual retreat)  
Big Canoe

**Creative Expression Conference**  
**Co Sponsored by AAMR**  
April 6-7, 2006  
Milledgeville, GA.

**SEAAMR/ALABAMA Joint MH/MR Conference**  
April 17-19, 2006  
Perdido Beach, AL

**Georgia Chapter of AAMR Spring Conference**  
April 20, 2006  
Clairmont Presbyterian Church

**SPADD Conference**  
June 15-16, 2006  
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**AAMR Membership**

There's no better time to become a member of AAMR. If you have let your membership lapse or if you have never been a member before, you can join on-line at [www.aamr.org](http://www.aamr.org). 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!**

The Georgia Chapter OF AAMR Presents

**Georgia's Transition to Community Living:**

CLAIRMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

DECATUR, GEORGIA

THURSDAY APRIL 20, 2006

The Georgia AAMR Chapter will host a presentation of Georgia's new waiver for developmental disability services by **Gary Smith**, Senior Project Director for the Human Services Research Institute in Portland Oregon, and **Steve Hall**, Georgia's Director for the Office of Developmental Disabilities. In the afternoon we will host a panel discussion on life transitions for persons with developmental disabilities.

*Gary Smith is a Senior Project Director at the Human Services Research Institute in Portland, Oregon. Prior to joining HSRI in 2001, he served for 14 years as Director of Special Projects for the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities and held senior management positions in the Illinois and Colorado state governments. Gary has provided technical assistance to many states (including Georgia) in employing the Medicaid HCBS waiver program to support people with developmental disabilities in the community. Most recently, he served as the technical writer for the Centers on Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in restructuring the federal HCBS waiver application and preparing the accompanying application instructions and technical guidance for the new application. Gary has authored numerous publications concerning the role that Medicaid can play in supporting people with disabilities in the community.*

*Steve Hall has been a school administrator and taught at the University of Colorado, Indiana University and Virginia Commonwealth University. Before being Georgia's first Director of the Office of Developmental Disabilities, he was the Executive Director of a large private organization in Colorado for ten years and was the Executive Director of a three county agency that included the city of Indianapolis for five years. While widely published, he is best known for developing services, supports, and funding mechanisms that encourage family and personal choices that lead to men, women, and children with developmental disabilities having a real life in the community alongside other citizens.*

Afternoon speakers and topics will be moderated by Viola Perry, Residential Services Coordinator with Pathways and will include:

- **Life after School: Transitioning to Adult Services.** Gwendolyn Allen, Job Training Liaison with the Department of Exceptional Education and Lu Nations-Miller, Education Program Specialist for Transition with the Department of Education
- **Community Living: Moving to Independent Living.** Dr. Sally Carter, transitions coordinator and Zo Stoneman, Director & University Professor for UGA's Institute on Human Development & Disability/UCEDD
- **Living Longer: Supports for Aging Persons.** Jane Zanca, Parent, Laura Prough, Co-director of the Aging and Disability Resource Connection and Riki Bolster, Information, Referral & Resource Manager for AADD's Aging and Disability Resource Connection

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

8:30 am	Registration
9:15 am	A New Way-ver of Doing Things
12:00 pm	Lunch (included)/ GA AAMR Business Meeting
1:00 pm	A Lifespan of Transitions
4:00 pm	Presentation of the 2006 Barbara Wood Award
4:30 pm	Closing Remarks

For information concerning scholarships contact:

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

## Registration

**Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Employer/Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Special Accommodations/ Dietary:** \_\_\_\_\_

Person with Disability      Family Member      Direct Service Professional  
 Educator      College Student      Manager/Director-level

Early Member-Level Registration Fee	Early Nonmember-Level Registration Fee	Late Registration Fee, after April 3rd <i>(Both member and nonmember)</i>
\$40	\$50	\$55

**Space is limited.**

Members attending \_\_\_\_\_ x \$40 = \_\_\_\_\_  
 Non Members attending \_\_\_\_\_ x \$50 = \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Names as those attending:**

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**Make checks payable to GA AAMR**  
**Mail to:**  
**c/o Sara Case**  
**2660 Obsourne Road**  
**Atlanta, GA 30319**

**Driving Directions**

Located at 1994 Clairmont Rd. Decatur, GA 30033 at the intersection of North Druid Hills Road and Clairmont Road.

**From I-85 Northbound:** Take Exit 91 (Clairmont Road) and turn right.

**From I-85 Southbound:** Take Exit 91 (Clairmont Road) and turn left. Travel along Clairmont Road for approximately 3 miles. At the intersection with North

Druid Hills Road, turn right. The entrance is the first drive on the right.

**From I-285 and Highway 78 (Stone Mountain Freeway):** Take Highway 78 east. Exit at Valley Brook Road and North Druid Hills Road and turn right. Travel

along North Druid Hills Road for approximately 3 miles. Cross the intersection with Clairmont Road. The entrance is the first drive on the right after the intersection.

## State of Georgia Adopts SIS: Interview with Steven Hall

December 05, 2005

Georgia becomes the first U.S. state to adopt the Supports Intensity Scale to gauge the needs of its citizens with intellectual disabilities, marking a major shift in the way services and supports are delivered to people with disabilities. Starting November 1, 2005, developmental disability professionals across the state have started using [SIS Online](#), a web-based version of the Scale developed by the American Association on Mental Retardation (AAMR).

"With the Supports Intensity Scale, some day soon, Georgia's families will know that the work being done on behalf of their loved ones is tailored specific to meet their son's or daughter's exact needs," says Steven Hall, Director of the Georgia Office of Developmental Disabilities in an interview with [AAMR F.Y.I.](#), the association newsletter. Read more...

**AAMR:** Why did Georgia decide to adopt the Supports Intensity Scale?

**Director Hall:** Georgia wanted to develop a fair, equitable, and transparent system of funding based on the person with disabilities' individual support needs. In my first meeting with the Georgia Department of Human Resources Commissioner B.J. Walker, the Commissioner made it clear that resource allocation to help these citizens should be based on each person's individual need. It was also very important to have a tool that could so readily guide the development of the person's individual plan from his or her assessed support needs.

**AAMR:** It is clear from talking to you that you feel passionately about the Supports Intensity Scale. Can you explain why?

**Director Hall:** The Supports Intensity Scale is the first assessment that recognizes that disability is much more of a social construct than a biological one. Rather than determining what is wrong or deficient within the person, as most current assessments do, the SIS helps us determine what kind, amount, and intensity of supports are needed for someone to succeed in the important areas of his or her individual life. The intent of assessment is providing a foundation for the development of real individualized plans that, when carried out as intended, will improve someone's life. No other currently available assessment can so readily be used to help develop good individual plans.

**AAMR:** As you know, families are wondering how SIS will impact services provided. How will they benefit from SIS?

**Director Hall:** The individual's plan of services will be developed in a manner that considers the time, intensity, and duration of the intervention based on the person's exact need. With the Supports Intensity Scale, some day soon, Georgia's families will know that the work being done on behalf of their loved ones is tailored specific to meet their son's or daughter's exact needs. No longer will these citizens have to fit into a program that was never designed specifically to meet an individual's needs. There is a great difference between these citizens that have a developmental disability that most assessments and most programs designed for "the developmentally disabled" fail to recognize. Never again, in Georgia, will a person with a disability have to fit into a preconceived set of services or programs. Instead, with the Supports Intensity Scale, these citizens will be respected for their individual strengths and individual needs for support.

**AAMR:** What would you say to other states considering adoption of SIS?

**Director Hall:** States know their primary mission is to ensure that, given limited dollars, those citizens who have the most need actually get the most—their fair share—of the financial support. The Supports Intensity Scale can go a long way to ensure that the very real support needs of each individual is determined relative to the needs of other individuals. The Supports Intensity Scale ensures that the very real support needs of the individual are addressed, instead of the imagined support needs based on a disability label.

**AAMR:** What is the schedule for rolling out SIS in Georgia?

**Director Hall:** Key personnel from our case management organizations received training sponsored by AAMR in Baltimore. Following that training, we had a consultant under contract with AAMR and Georgia complete six trainings in Georgia. And finally, we had three days of follow-up trainings by experienced SIS consultants to ensure inter-rater reliability. Between these formal trainings were several information sessions given statewide for providers of services. At every opportunity, the SIS was mentioned as a key component of Georgia's new Medicaid Waiver implementation. The Supports Intensity Scale began full implementation on November 1, 2005 with every Georgia citizen with developmental disabilities receiving services having a completed SIS by June 30, 2006.

**AAMR:** Any other thoughts you'd like to convey to our readers?

**Director Hall:** Someday, almost every state will require the Supports Intensity Scale to determine the real support needs of these citizens with developmental disabilities. No longer will case managers or others who write individual service plans have to guess what goal or objective to write in order to meet the individual's support needs. When solid person-centered planning precedes the Supports Intensity Scale's assessment and is followed by meaningful objectives, citizens with developmental disabilities have a real chance at a much-improved life.

Steven Hall can be contacted at [srhall1@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:srhall1@dhr.state.ga.us)

***NEXT NEWSLETTER:  
Summer 2006***