



**MARCH IS DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
AWARENESS MONTH**
“Transitioning to Employment Success”

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Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is a time set aside annually to raise community awareness about the thousands of residents with developmental disabilities living in the District of Columbia. A developmental disability is a significant and lasting mental and/or physical impairment that occurs prior to age 22 and substantially limits a person in three or more major life activities such as learning, speaking, self-care, mobility, understanding language, ability to make decision and financial independence. People with developmental disabilities are an important part of our community, and this is the time to celebrate them for their many gifts, talents and accomplishments.

The District of Columbia Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC), along with the Arc of the District of Columbia, District of Columbia Department on Disability Services, Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development (University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities), Project ACTION!, Quality Trust for Individuals with Disabilities and University Legal Services (DC Protection and Advocacy Program) sponsored this Annual Developmental Disabilities Awareness Celebration at the National Youth Transition Center on Wednesday, March 21, 2012. The theme, “Transitioning to Employment Success,” guided us in a celebration of successes people with developmental disabilities have achieved. There were over 125 people in attendance.

To commemorate the occasion, Ryan Easterly, HSC Foundation; Steven Powe, Project ACTION!; Ari Ne’eman, Autistic Self-Advocacy Network; and Sue Swenson, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services gave remarks. The Honorable Vincent C. Gray, Mayor of the District of Columbia, read the Proclamation and the Honorable Kwame Brown, Chairman of the District of Columbia City Council, read the Resolution.

Susie King, DDC Member, shared, “The event was representative of all groups that sponsored it. It was a delight to see persons with developmental disabilities on the program as presenters. It’s good to know that we have the support of a mayor who knows the needs and has the awareness of persons with developmental disabilities. All of the organizations that sponsored the event are working for the common cause of independence, self-determination and employment services for persons with developmental disabilities.”

There is work yet to be done. Get involved and join the DDC in renewing its strength, commitment and efforts! You do not have to be a DDC member to become involved in promoting self-determination, integration and inclusion of people with developmental disabilities.

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The DDC is a federally funded program supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Developmental Disabilities, and is authorized by the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000, Public Law 106-402 (42USC 1500), dated October 30, 2000.