I cannot believe that another grant year has already passed! We are now in the process of wrapping up Year 2 and starting Year 3 of our five year grant cycle. Time flies when you’re having fun!

This has been a year of changes. As you know, Nicole left the project and we hired a new Family Support Coordinator, Jennifer Bigelow-Stambaugh. Jennifer has proven to be an asset to DB Central. If you have not had the opportunity to connect with her, please consider calling or sending an e-mail. Many people have benefited from her support since she began working with the project in April 2010. We have also had turn over with our secretarial position. Dee left to take a job in her field, though she trained a wonderful temp, Anne Miller, prior to her last day. Unfortunately, Anne was unable to continue with the project, as we had hoped. Once the new grant year begins, we will likely be posting the part-time position. If you, or anyone you know, might be interested, please consider applying! We also have a new Graduate Assistant, Valerie Weber. In the absence of a secretary, Val has taken on this issue of the newsletter. We think that she has given it a more “hip” look!

We have some very exciting events planned for the start of Year 3 of the grant cycle. Dr. Tim Hartshorne, a parent, professor, and our supervisor, has co-written a book on CHARGE Syndrome. The book is hot off the press, but copies are already available in the project library. Another highlight is having Dr. Jan van Dijk return to Michigan in November. Information on our events is included in this issue, with more details to be announced as they become available.
Come Ski Challenge Mountain!

Join us at Challenge Mountain for the DB Central winter family fun event on **January 15, 2011**!

Challenge Mountain is a fully adaptive ski hill between Boyne City and Petoskey, Michigan dedicated to providing therapeutic recreation to youth with disabilities. The nonprofit program is one of very few in the Midwest. Challenge Mountain has offered to create a ski experience for you and your family. Necessary adaptive equipment and trained volunteers will be available to offer a fun day in the snow and a safe, but thrilling opportunity to ski; regardless of ability. Ski equipment, instruction and lunch expenses will be paid by DB Central. Parents and siblings may ski free of charge as well. The event will take place on Saturday, January 15, 2010. Challenge Mountain information and registration forms will be mailed to families in Mid-October. For additional information, please contact Jennifer Bigelow-Stambaugh at 989-774-2725 or by email at bigel1je@cmich.edu.

Dr. Jan van Dijk is Returning to Michigan!

You won’t want to miss out on this rare opportunity to learn from one of the leading authorities on children with multiple disabilities on **November 16, 2010**!

Since 1958, Dr. Jan van Dijk has been involved in the assessment of children with multiple disabilities and helping families and professionals to better understand and provide better services to these individuals. His publications on children who are Deafblind have attracted world-wide attention. For his work he has received “The Anne Sullivan Award” and “The Deaf Blind International’s Distinguished Service Award.” Dr. van Dijk presents workshops and seminars throughout the world. In cooperation with Dr. Catherine Nelson of the University of Utah, Dr. van Dijk produced a CD entitled *Assessment of Multiple Sensory Impaired Children*. He has also produced 2 CDs on learning and behavior problems of children with CHARGE Syndrome with Dr. Arno de Kort. The latest CD production, *Challenging Behaviors of Blind and Deafblind Children with Multiple Disabilities* has been produced in Russian and has appeared in English translation since early 2006.
Distance Consultation Offers Opportunities to Professionals and Families Alike...

At DB Central, we are continuously looking for ways to be more efficient and effective in our work with families and professionals. It is sometimes difficult and often costly to provide onsite consultation to individuals and teams across the states in a timely manner. In response to these efforts, we invested in some resources to help us provide distance consultation.

Flip Video cameras, offering both 1 and 2 hour recording times, and Logitech webcams are available for loan through DB Central’s Lending Library. Each of these items are very user-friendly and come with directions and software (when necessary). Families and professionals can borrow these items to record footage of activities and/or situations for which you would like feedback on ways to include your child/student, or to do live consultation sessions with Beth and/or Jennifer.

We are very excited to offer these options, as distance consultation provides more opportunities to support you in meeting the needs of children who are deafblind. Please feel free to call or email our office if you have questions or ideas about how we can expand the use of these Lending Library items.
In these trying economic times, many of you may be asking, “How can I find the money to attend a conference?” It can be confusing to figure out where – and how - to find funding to assist you in attending the conference. So, I’m going to share some ideas about how to get the best result (approval) from the agency or organization(s) involved in providing financial assistance for individuals to attend conferences related to disabilities. Here are some tips, as well as ideas about what agencies/organizations expect, when you are applying for personal funding.

#1: Be Aware of deadlines and funding limitations or restrictions!

Often, state agencies are committing funding early in the year. Contact them directly for an application and be sure to note any deadlines. An agency may only cover registration fees. They may also limit the number of family members (typically 2). There are very few agencies that cover airfare; however, do include the cost in your proposed budget. It can be viewed as part of the funds you need to “match”, if required. A rare few agencies have no restrictions on how funds are used as long as they are used directly for conference attendance. Additionally, most agencies will only reimburse expenses after the conference is completed and all paperwork has been submitted. If you need assistance in paying for fees prior to the conference, ask the agency about their advance payments policy. If an agency offers to advance the airfare cost, book flights far in advance to obtain the best pricing. Usually, the earlier you book a flight the cheaper it is!

#2: Apply to more than one agency/organization.

Use their requirements to your best advantage: If an agency only pays registration fees, apply to another agency for hotel costs. Do indicate/note any other agencies/organizations to which you have already applied (or intend to apply) for funds. In addition, specify what funds are being requested (airfare, hotel, registration).

#3: Follow all directions carefully on the specific agency supplied form(s).

Some funding forms generated through state agencies can appear daunting and downright confusing. Contact the agency representative listed and ask about any questions you may have. They want to help you!

#4: You may need to complete a funding request form for each individual.

Some agencies will allow multiple requests on one application. Others require a separate application for each individual (Self, spouse, child, grandparent, caregiver, etc.) Minor children are typically included with a parent/guardian, but funding is often not available for children. If you can make a case for the sibling(s) of an individual with a disability becoming an advocate (in school, at your religious organization, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H, etc.) you may receive funding. Do include children in your request to show total anticipated costs.

#5: Include all contact information with your request.

A representative may need to contact you to modify or clarify your application. Some also request contact information for any other attendees for whom funds are requested, even if submitted on one form. Give them all available contact information including home phone, cell phone, fax, e-mail and/or pager.

#6: Include a copy of your completed registration.

This will show the registration fee(s), included meals, conference agenda/schedule, and a description of activities. You may want to include a copy of the payment method used to pay registration fees.

#7: Include an Expected Outcomes (Purpose) Statement for all applicants.

An outcomes statement, even for children for whom you are not requesting funding, and whether the agency asks for one or not, can increase your chances of getting those funds! Agencies want to know you are going to take some type of action when you return from the conference.

What is an Expected Outcomes Statement?

An Expected Outcomes Statement simply tells what you hope to learn by attending the conference. How will you or your family member with a disability benefit by attending? How will attending the conference increase independence, productivity, and/or integration? What do you intend to learn or gain by attending? How and with whom will you share your knowledge?

Some agencies may have a prescribed form with this item included. Other organizations may not. A single paragraph of explanation is usually sufficient.
#8: Create an anticipated budget.

This can be the most difficult aspect of submitting funding requests, but spend the time to do it thoroughly and as accurately as possible. Include airfare/travel costs, registration fee(s), hotel cost, meals outside of those included in your conference registration. (Some will have a per diem noted on the forms.) Airfare, depending on your request and the timeframe submitted, may need to be an estimate, based on general information gained through early contacts with the airlines. If your travel arrival/departure dates are outside the conference dates by more than one day, you will need to justify the reason for these dates. (Examples: Airline schedules do not allow arrival before conference starts on the first day of the conference; Medical issues require extra day of travel.) Extending dates for family/personal vacation will not be acceptable to an agency, regardless of how long it has been since you had one! You know the registration fees, and your hotel costs based on the information already available on the CHARGE syndrome website (www.chargesyndrome.org).

Some agencies may require you to show a matching amount. This means they will expect you to pay a certain percentage of the expenses/costs reflected in your proposed budget. Often, it is 30%, and usually less than 50%. Include all attendees in your budget, even children not requesting funds, to show what your total expenses are anticipated to be. Some families or individuals receiving SSI, SSDI, or other State/Federal assistance may not be required to meet the matching requirement. Follow the directions on your request forms.

(After the Conference)

#9: Submit paperwork on time!!!!

Be aware of deadlines!! Requirements for funding will typically include a deadline for submission of additional forms and original receipts. Often, you will need to submit items within two weeks following the conference.

Additional forms requested by the agency may be: Actual Expenses on Reimbursement form(s), Outcomes Statement, Action Plan, etc.

Non-reimbursable items usually include activities or fees not associated with the conference (outside trips not affiliated with the conference or noted on the agenda): tips/gratuities, events that don't provide training (other than those included with registration), sightseeing trips, ground transportation not associated with travel to/from airport, car rental (if airfare paid), phone calls, or Continuing Education Units (CEUs), to name a few specifics.

#10: Outcomes Statement

Be sure that everyone receiving funding submits an outcomes statement, even children. This states what you actually learned or gained by attending. It does not have to be different from your expected outcomes statement, but it can be. You might have learned more than expected or had some other outcome that was different than what you submitted earlier.

The funding agency may want to know how you will use your knowledge for the benefit of the community. How will you share what you learned? You might state you will share information with family and friends, school staff, civic organizations, disability advocacy groups, support groups, parent-to-parent contacts, etc. Be willing to write an article for their newsletter or other publications. If you receive funding from a community or civic organization, you might be expected to make a presentation at one of their upcoming meetings.

Some state agencies may want a commitment about what advocacy you will be involved with or perform. Such areas of advocacy might include: Attend the Partners In Policymaking Academy (a State sponsored organization that teaches advocacy for and by individuals with disabilities), organize a disability awareness activity, participate in voter registration of individuals with disabilities, survey polling places for accessibility, provide testimony at public hearings regarding disability issues, perform a media watch, etc. Many of these items do not require a large amount of time, just the commitment to accomplish them.

With a little searching, research, good writing and attention to detail, obtaining funding to assist your family with conference expenses can be easier than you think. Agencies and organizations that promote a better life for individuals with disabilities are willing to assist if you just know how to approach them and do the paperwork.
DB Central hosted a CHARGE Syndrome Presentation and Book Signing with Dr. Tim Hartshorne on October 2, 2010 at Central Michigan University. The presentation and book signing were offered at no cost to any family member, caregiver or school personnel of a child with CHARGE syndrome.

Dr. Hartshorne, PhD, is a professor of psychology at Central Michigan University and is also the father of a son with CHARGE Syndrome. Dr. Hartshorne is a Nationally Certified School Psychologist who has devoted much of his research to behavioral issues with CHARGE Syndrome. He has many publications on this topic and has presented at every U.S. CHARGE Conference. Additionally, he has presented at CHARGE Conferences in Australia, Europe, and Scandinavia.

Dr. Hartshorne recently co-authored the newly released book *Charge Syndrome* which is intended to be a resource for all individuals who are involved in the medical, educational and home/family care of a child with CHARGE syndrome.

Dr. Hartshorne’s presentation on October 2, 2010 was attended by professionals, students, parents/family members, and caregivers. Dr. Hartshorne addressed information which applied to both family and professionals as he discussed “What You Need to Know,” highlighting various aspects of the etiology. The presentation was videotaped. The link to view the presentation is already available at [www.dbcentral.org](http://www.dbcentral.org). Once on the DB Central website select the webcast tab to view. Please note- a captioned version of the webcast will be available in the next few weeks.
A valuable one-stop event with resources that are both informational and entertaining for individuals and families throughout Michigan living with various disabilities.

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 23, 2010

Finch Fieldhouse on the campus of Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant

Register today
If you're interested in participating in the Disabilities Awareness Fair at CMU as a vendor or non-profit organization:

• See attached for a registration form
• For more information contact Beth Kennedy, DeafBlind Central director, at kennedy@cmich.edu or 989-774-2726

Disability Awareness Month at CMU
events.cmich.edu

You're invited
As a business or organization dedicated to serving the needs of individuals and families living with various disabilities, you are invited to participate in the Disability Awareness Fair at CMU.

This event will be the highlight of the university's month-long effort to increase disability awareness this October. In addition to displays by more than 50 vendors and advocacy groups, this comprehensive and interactive event will include:

• Interactive demonstrations – Including safety, hand cycling, American Sign Language and tae kwon do demonstrations
• Guest speaker series – A special presentation by Duncan Wyeth of the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth and several others including the "R-Word" presentation by staff and young athletes from Special Olympics Michigan
• Therapy dogs – Featuring Dog Tales, a mid-Michigan organization that uses dogs as a therapeutic tool to help children improve their reading skills and self-esteem
• Children's activities – Clowns, face painting and a variety of arts and crafts
• Concessions

Join us for a day of information and fun for the entire family!

CMU is an AA/EO Institution (see www.cmich.edu/aaeo).

Individuals with disabilities requiring an accommodation to attend the Disability Awareness Fair are asked to call 989-774-2726 at least one week before the event.
Upcoming Events

October 5, 2010
How to Make Inclusion Happen Webinar
To register visit: https://tadnet.ilinc.com/register/ctzyxhp

October 12, 2010
TASH 2010 Symposium for Change—Eliminating Disparities for People of Color with Significant Disabilities or Support Needs
October 12, 2010—Washington, D.C.
To download the brochure and registration form, visit: www.TASH.org

October 15 - 16, 2010
North Central O&M Association Conference
Where: Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI
North Central O&M Association Conference
Conference information, including the preliminary program, is available on the Department of Blindness and Low Vision Studies at Western Michigan University Web site.

October 17, 2010
Benefit BBQ Sunday to support youth of FCC and National Federation of the Blind of Michigan
Where: First Christian Church, Lansing, MI
Tickets are $10, or 2 for $15.

October 18-19, 2010
MACMHB Annual Fall Conference
Where: Grand Traverse Resort, Traverse City, MI
For a list of workshops and registration, visit: www.macmhb.org.

October 23, 2010
Essential Communication Skills for IEP Team Meetings
Where: Power Hope and Grace Bible Church, Detroit, MI
To register, visit: www.bridges4kids.org/f2f or 800-552-4821.

October 28 - 30, 2010
2010 MAC on M.A.C. Conference: Fifth Annual Audiology Conference
Where: East Lansing, MI

November 3 - 5, 2010
The Michigan Rehabilitation Conference
Where: Grand Traverse Resort, Williamsburg, MI
Exhibitor information is now available at: http://michiganrehabilitationconference.org/exhibitors.html

November 4 - 5, 2010
Academy Conference: Refine, Reconnect, Renew
Where: Lansing, MI
For more information, visit: http://mspsphi-academy.webnode.com
Upcoming Events

December 2, 2010
ADD's "Envisioning the Future" Summit Series
Where: Detroit, MI
For more information, please contact Kathryn Fiakowski@afchhs.gov or 202-690-6590

December 8, 2010
NASDE Professional Development Series
For more information, visit: [http://files.e2ma.net/3609/assets/docs/10-1nasdseprodevelopbrochure.pdf](http://files.e2ma.net/3609/assets/docs/10-1nasdseprodevelopbrochure.pdf)

December 8-11, 2010
TASH 35th Annual Conference
Where: Sheraton Hotel, Denver, Colorado
For more information, visit: [www.TASH.org/2010TASH](http://www.TASH.org/2010TASH)

January 12, 2011
NASDE Professional Development Series
For more information, visit: [http://files.e2ma.net/3609/assets/docs/10-1nasdseprodevelopbrochure.pdf](http://files.e2ma.net/3609/assets/docs/10-1nasdseprodevelopbrochure.pdf)

February 21 & 22, 2011
2011 National EHDI Conference
Where: Omni Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia
For more information, visit: [http://ehdiconference.org](http://ehdiconference.org)

March 16, 2011
NASDE Professional Development Series
For more information, visit: [http://files.e2ma.net/3609/assets/docs/10-1nasdseprodevelopbrochure.pdf](http://files.e2ma.net/3609/assets/docs/10-1nasdseprodevelopbrochure.pdf)

May 4, 2011
NASDE Professional Development Series
For more information, visit: [http://files.e2ma.net/3609/assets/docs/10-1nasdseprodevelopbrochure.pdf](http://files.e2ma.net/3609/assets/docs/10-1nasdseprodevelopbrochure.pdf)

June 19-23, 2011
28th Annual 2011 AADB National Symposium: “The Future is in Our Hands”
Where: Ft. Mitchell, KY

June 29-31, 2011
CHARGE Syndrome Foundation Conference
Where: Orlando, FL

September 27-October 1, 2011
XV World Deafblind International Conference
Where: Sao Pablo, Brazil
For more information, visit: [www.dbi2011.com.br](http://www.dbi2011.com.br)