

# Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program Online News

April 12, 2012

## **April 6, 2012 - Governor Bentley Details Long-Term Plan for Alabama Department of Mental Health**

Governor Robert Bentley on Friday detailed long-range plans for the treatment of patients within the Alabama Department of Mental Health. The Governor was joined by Mental Health Commissioner Zelia Baugh. "A month ago, I ordered construction of the new Bryce Hospital to stop while we carefully evaluated the needs of patients served by the Department of Mental Health and our long-term plans for patient care in Alabama," Governor Bentley said. "We have also spoken with and listened to the concerns of several stakeholders, including family members, community mental health centers, probate judges, sheriffs, local and state officials." To read press release, [click here](#).

**Stakeholders & Public Officials Joined Governor Bentley at Proclamation** In remembrance of the significant role Ricky Wyatt played in the landmark *Wyatt v. Stickney* ruling and the historic transformation of the Alabama mental health system, Governor Bentley proclaimed March 12, 2012, Ricky Wyatt Day in Alabama. Sadly, Wyatt passed away on November 1, 2011. Representatives from ADMH felt the 41st anniversary of Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr.'s landmark ruling establishing the right to minimum standards of care would be a fitting time to honor Wyatt.

Several mental health stakeholders and public officials will joined Governor Bentley at the formal proclamation signing. Consumer advocate Jon Brock escorted Ricky's mother to the signing, where she joined ADMH Commissioner Zelia Baugh, ADMH Spokesman Tony Thompson, Senator Gerald Allen, Representative Chris England, George Wallace, Jr., ADMH Board Member Paul Davis, and James Tucker and Ellen Gillespie from the Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program.



**Remembering the "Right to Treatment" The American Journal of Psychiatry, April, 2012** When I read about the recent passing of Ricky Wyatt, I felt a sense of grief and a need to reflect on the news. Mr. Wyatt was a state hospital patient in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, who in 1970 became the lead plaintiff in *Wyatt v. Stickney*, one of several landmark "right to treatment" federal lawsuits, in which state hospital patients, for the first time in history, joined together as a class and turned to our legal system to protest their inhumane treatment. Though I never met Mr. Wyatt, my own history is intertwined with him, as my father, the late Dr. Morton Birnbaum, served as his legal co-counsel in the *Wyatt* case. We can pay tribute to the state hospital patients of the past by remembering the legal battle to improve their standard of care. To read more, [click here](#).

**Report Finds Government Dollars Used to Segregate and Exploit Workers with Disabilities** In a report released today, the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) outlined how federal funding is being used to shuttle people with disabilities into sheltered workshops and deprive them of meaningful employment opportunities. "There is a total disconnect between what governments say they want to accomplish in terms of employment for people with disabilities and how they are actually spending taxpayer dollars," said Curt Decker, NDRN executive director.

The report, [Beyond Segregated and Exploited](#) is a follow up to a report released last year that examined the issue of segregating working people with disabilities in sheltered workshops and the use of the sub minimum wage to exploit their disability for the financial gain of employers. The new report is an update on progress to end those practices and move toward a system that encourages integrated employment options that pay competitive wages. To read the rest of the story, [click here](#).

## TRAININGS

**Family Voices of Alabama - Family-to-Family Health Information Center's Partners in Care Summit , April 16 - 17, 2012.** This Summit supports families of Children/Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) and the professionals who serve them. Registration fees to attend are low - just \$15 per person for family members of CYSHCN and \$20 for professionals. CEUs will be offered. You can get more details by visiting [www.familyvoicesal.org](http://www.familyvoicesal.org), by leaving us a message on our toll-free line 877-771-3862, or by calling directly on 251-635-9178. Link: <http://www.familyvoicesal.org/programs-pic-summit.php>

### **Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS) Training in Fort Payne, AL**

Mark your calendar for April 26 - 28, 2012! Who Should Attend: Individuals with at least one year of stable recovery from alcohol and/or other drugs, or has a family member in recovery, must have interest and compassion about Substance Abuse addiction and recovery. For additional information, [click here](#).

**Adult Siblings of People with Disabilities**

1st Annual Alabama Adult Siblings Investing in our Brothers and Sisters. Statewide Meeting will be Saturday, May 12, 2012 from 11am-3pm at the Hoover Public Library in Hoover, AL. Please join us for this very informative meeting! You will not want to miss this opportunity to meet other siblings of individuals with disabilities who, no doubt, are just as excited to meet you! Together we can explore, learn, share, and discuss the differences and similarities of our siblings and ourselves . . . and most importantly, our future plans! For additional information, contact [Karen Driver](#) or call 1-(205)-664-9313, ext. 1109.

**Save the Date! Alabama Family Ties - 11th Annual Family Conference**

June 22-23, 2012, Shocco Springs, Alabama Tracks include: Family, Youth, Leadership and Youth Activity. For additional information, [click here](#).

The Department of Education at Auburn University is hosting its second annual **Anti-Bullying Summit** on July 11-13 at the Grand Hotel in Fairhope. The goal of the Summit is to share information, current thinking, and research about bullying - a serious problem facing our schools and communities. The conference is designed to create on-going local, state, and national coalitions for PreK-12 educators, higher education faculty and administrators, student leaders, mental health practitioners, researchers, community leaders, policymakers, and other professionals who are engaged in on-going work to address PreK-20 bullying and cyber-bullying in learning environments. For more information about the event, click here. Link: [www.auburn.edu/antibullying](http://www.auburn.edu/antibullying)

**Does your group need a training?** If so, ADAP staff can provide a training for any size group on a variety of disability issues. One of ADAP's mandates is to provide training's to persons interested in disability issues. During our priority setting process, persons completing our on-line survey indicated that they need to receive information and be trained on disability issues. Based on these responses, ADAP added training objectives to our latest goals/priorities.

In the past, ADAP has trained persons on the rights of persons with disabilities in some of the following areas: special education, Americans with Disabilities Act, guardianships, Medicaid waivers, and voting. If you are interested in ADAP presenting to your group, please call 1-800-826-1675. Press "0" and inform the receptionist that you would like to request an ADAP staff member present a training to your group. Link: <http://www.adap.net>

**Medicaid Road Show: Back by popular demand** With a grant from the Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities, ADAP made 4 presentations throughout Alabama on Alabama's Medicaid Waivers in September 2011. Due to the positive response from persons attending the training, ADAP will conduct an additional session. There will be no costs to attend this training and a limited number of scholarships may be available to cover travel, support and other relevant expenses associated with attendance. Please be on the lookout for more specific information on this training in future e-newsletters and ADAP's web site, [www.adap.net](http://www.adap.net)

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