

**Background:**

Staff have compiled a report of recent staff public information activities for the Committee's review.

<b><u>Project Development Committee</u></b>  <b><u>Agenda Item 6. A.</u></b>	<b><u>Expected Action:</u></b>  The Committee will receive an update regarding recent public information activities and provide guidance as needed. No action is anticipated.
<b><u>Public Policy Committee</u></b>  <b><u>Agenda Item 9.</u></b>	<b><u>Expected Action:</u></b>  The Committee will receive an update regarding recent public information activities and provide guidance as needed. No action is anticipated.
<b><u>Council Meeting</u></b>  <b><u>Agenda Item 15. A.</u></b>	<b><u>Expected Action:</u></b>  The Council will receive a report of the Committee's discussion on this item. No action is anticipated.

# October 2013 Public Information Update

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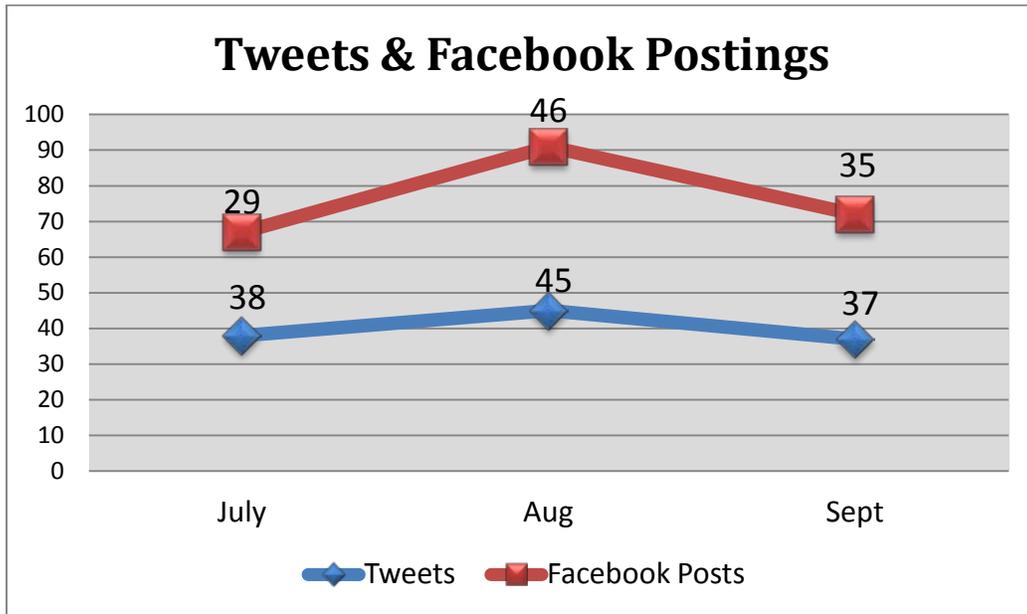
## Creating Awareness and Building Connections

- TCDD **announced 2 grant projects** during the last quarter. Cultural outreach and development grants were awarded to REACH Families in Irving for cultural outreach and development and Abundant Rain Christian Fellowship (DBA: ARCF Community Services) in Elgin. News releases are on the TCDD website under News & Features/TCDD News at <http://www.tcdd.texas.gov/category/tcdd-news>.
- Several grant projects received **web or news media coverage**, such as:
  - The Texas Autism Advocacy Yahoo group shared information regarding [Project MOVE](#).
  - The Texas State Independent Living Council publicized Onestar's [Every Member Matters Information and Resource Kit](#) and cited TCDD's article on [Sunset Review](#) in its article on the same subject.
  - TCDD Policy Director Jessica Ramos was quoted in an [article on health care reform](#) that was carried widely by the news media.
  - TCDD Public Policy Specialist Belinda Carlton and DeAnn Lechtenberger with [Project IDEAL](#) on Teacher Preparation for Inclusive Education were quoted in a Texas Tribune article on [New Teacher Training to Promote Mental Health Intervention](#). The article was picked up by dozens of newspapers and websites that distributed it across the state and nation.
- The following **TCDD materials were requested** and distributed to other organizations:
  - 150 [People First handouts](#)
  - 144 [Higher Education Resource Guides](#)
  - 10 [Next Step Higher Ed DVDs](#)
  - 6 [Biennial Reports](#)
  - 5 TCDD brochures
  - 55 [Every Member Matters Information and Resource Kit](#) produced by the [Austin Interfaith Inclusion Network/OneStar](#)
- Staff updated the [Higher Education Resource Guide](#).
- The [August edition of Field Notes](#), an Information and Technical Assistance Center for Councils for Developmental Disabilities (iTACC) newsletter (see page 2), included a full page article with photos submitted on TCDD's **positive behavioral interventions and supports projects**.
- Staff responded to more than **67 requests for information and referral** in the past quarter.

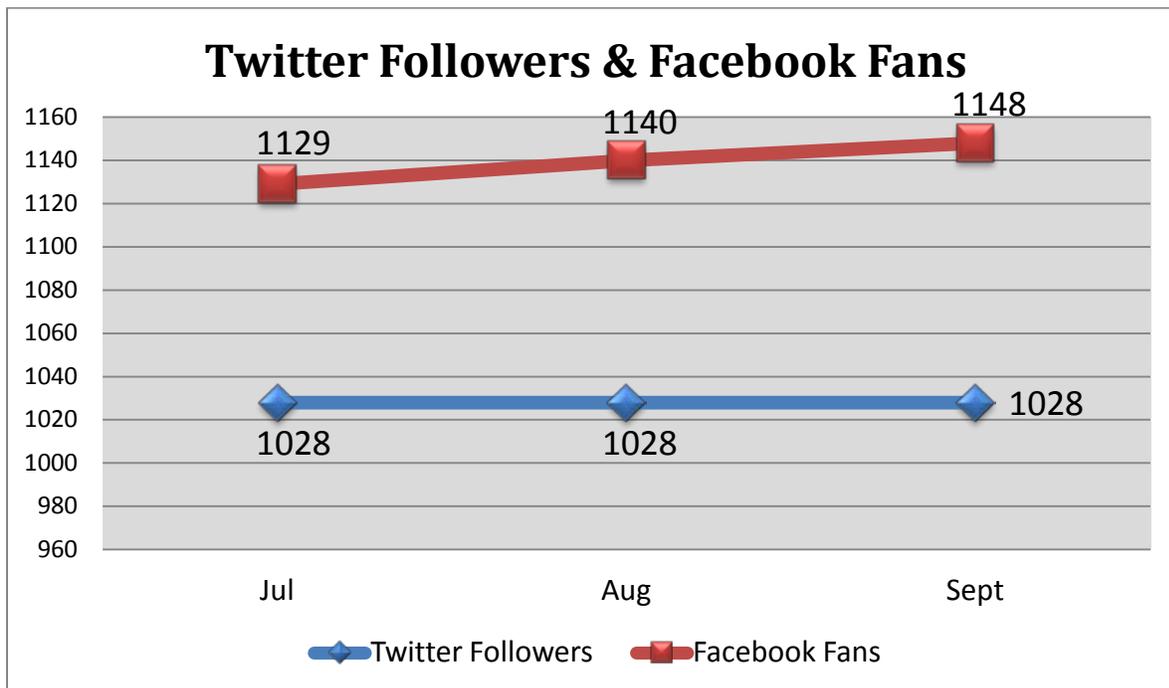
# October 2013 Public Information Update

## Social Media Update

TCDD uses its Facebook fan page and Twitter account on a daily basis to share and learn about pertinent news stories, resources and policy information.



(as of September 19, 2013)



# October 2013 Public Information Update

## Samples of TCDD Tweets:



**TxCnIDevDisabilities,**  
You were mentioned in a conversation!



**Dana Lewis | #hcs** [@danamlewis](#)

Follow

Dear everyone: patients are people, not diseases. Don't label people as/by diseases. Please and thank you. [#somanypresenterssomuchic](#)

- 17 Sep  
[More Tweets](#)



**Twice Diabetes** [@TwiceDiabetes](#)

Follow

[@ElinSilveous](#) [@danamlewis](#) I conform w that, seems tho it's ok to objectify eg "patients", bloggers, activists, Catholics. Why not diabetic? - 17 Sep



**Elin Silveous** [@ElinSilveous](#)

[@TwiceDiabetes](#) [@danamlewis](#) Here's another good one on People First Language [tcdd.texas.gov/resources/peop...](http://tcdd.texas.gov/resources/peop...) via [@TxCDD](#) [#disABILITIES](#)

11:42 PM - 17 Sep 13



**TxCnIDevDisabilities**  
[@TxCDD](#)

**A Better Bottom Line: Employing Individuals with Disabilities** [ow.ly/nW94a](http://ow.ly/nW94a) and [ow.ly/nW9eD](http://ow.ly/nW9eD)

11:32 AM - 02 Sep 13



Retweeted by



**Andy Imparato** [@Harkinista](#)

To 490 followers.

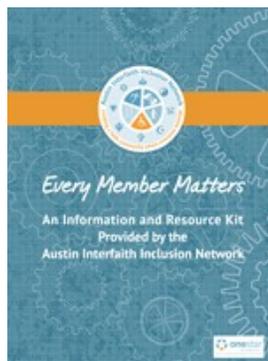
# Faith-Based Inclusion

September 27, 2013

**M**ore than 15 million Texans belong to a faith-based group. While churches and other faith-based organizations want to welcome everyone, many do not know how to reach out and create comfortable environments for people with disabilities. Last year, the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities approved funding for four projects that each holds an annual symposium and works to develop inclusive faith-based communities. These three-year projects bring together religious leaders to compare experiences, share resources and learn how to support people with disabilities in their communities.

## TCDD awarded Inclusive Faith-Based Communities Symposium grants to four organizations:

[OneStar Foundation](#) is collaborating with Jewish Family Services and the Center on Disability and Development at Texas A&M University on the Austin Interfaith Inclusion Network. The network serves the Travis County area and includes 25 faith-based organizations representing Catholic, Jewish,



*“Every Member Matters” provides tips on including people with disabilities in faith communities.*

Hindu, Buddhist, interfaith, Muslim, Protestant and Evangelical congregations. Its first symposium in October 2012 brought together 100 people from the faith and disability communities to explore best practices, goal setting and collaborative problem solving. The participants also developed action plans to work on inclusion in their community. The second symposium will be Oct. 16, 2013. The network also developed various resources for faith-based leaders, such as short videos on inclusion and links to blogs, audio clips and sermons. Additionally, it produced [Every Member Matters: An Information and Resource Kit](#) for faith-based communities. This includes tips for engaging

people with disabilities, suggestions from family members, and information on community supports, physical and attitudinal accessibility and religious education.

[Jewish Family Service of Dallas](#) is building a collaborative group in Dallas, Collin, Denton and Rockwall counties, called the Faith Inclusion Network of Dallas (FIND), and sharing strategies to build community awareness and inclusion. FIND is working with 19 faith-based communities, 42 community service agencies and 10 advocacy organizations. More than 150 people attended the first Greater Dallas area symposium on Feb. 25, 2013. The project also conducted a community survey that



*FIND is one of four projects in Texas that helps churches and other faith-based organizations include people with disabilities.*

indicated that more than half of the respondents believe their faith community does little to accommodate people with disabilities. While barriers to participation include a lack of services and inadequate staff training, many resources already exist. FIND is working to empower leaders from faith communities to create opportunities to support people with disabilities and their families so these individuals can be fully engaged socially, emotionally, academically and spiritually.

[The Arc of Greater Tarrant County](#) (IDD Needs Council of Tarrant County) is partnering with the local faith-based community to facilitate the full inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities into faith communities of their choice. Information on inclusive practices is being provided at two faith-based symposia, with the first held May 28-30, 2013. It included topics such as People First language, transportation, inclusiveness, bullying and respite. Each participating group returned to its community with an implementation plan, supports, follow-up and

a charge to assist other groups in duplicating their efforts to create more welcoming, inclusive atmospheres in places of worship. The project also plans to develop a toolkit for faith organizations on including and ministering to individuals with developmental disabilities, which includes information communication and sensory differences, as well as a guide to navigating services and local resources.



*Jacob Wempe, standing in the middle, is fully included in his church and participates as an Altar Server during worship services.*

present best practices and dispel misperceptions regarding disabilities. Topics included ministering to individuals with disabilities, different types of disabilities and experiences, tips for parents and caregivers on obtaining needed supports, behavior intervention, and resources to help adults with special needs achieve their full potential in a Christian environment. Faith-based leaders also worked on an action plan to improve the inclusiveness at faith communities. Several small events are being held this year, along with the second symposium in 2014, to increase participation across the rural region and metropolitan area to ensure active participation within faith-based communities for all.

[West Central Texas Regional Foundation](#) is working to fully include people with disabilities in faith-based communities in Callahan, Jones and Taylor counties. The project developed a self-evaluation faith-based organizations can use to determine if their programs and buildings are accessible for persons with developmental disabilities. Its results will be used to publish an online directory of faith-based organizations that lists accessible programs and structures. A symposium was held in Abilene on April 13, 2013, to

## REFERENCES

### OneStar Foundation

<http://www.tcdd.texas.gov/grants-rfps/grant-awards-grantees/onestar-foundation>

### *Every Member Matters: An Information and Resource Kit*

<http://onestarfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/every-member-matters-information-and-resource-kit.pdf>

### Jewish Family Service of Dallas

<http://www.tcdd.texas.gov/grants-rfps/grant-awards-grantees/jewish-family-service-of-dallas>

### The Arc of Greater Tarrant County

<http://www.tcdd.texas.gov/grants-rfps/grant-awards-grantees/the-arc-of-greater-tarrant-county>

### West Central Texas Regional Foundation

<http://www.tcdd.texas.gov/grants-rfps/grant-awards-grantees/west-central-texas-regional-foundation-inclusive-faith-based-communities-symposium>

# New Documents Needed to Vote

September 26, 2013

**T**o vote in Texas, you must present approved photo identification unless you meet certain disability requirements, obtain an exemption or vote by mail. You must also be registered to vote at least 30 days before an election. This means you must register by Monday, Oct. 7, 2013, to vote in the election on Tuesday, Nov. 5, which includes nine proposed constitutional amendments.

A variety of advocacy groups can help you understand the registration process, new voter ID requirements, voting rights and related information. The new [Got ID Texas?](#) website is especially helpful, offering three steps to follow and tips to be sure you can vote under the state's new requirements. "Voting is our right," Got ID Texas? proclaims, "and we want to make sure you have what you need to vote."

## Types of ID Required to Vote in Texas

You must have one of three types of documentation to vote in person.

- An approved form of identification with your photo on it, which can be a driver's license or state-issued ID; passport; military ID, Texas concealed handgun license, or naturalization or citizenship certificate with an ID.
- An Election Identification Certificate (EIC), which is a photo ID that is only for voting.

An exemption from the photo ID requirement for some individuals with disabilities as determined by the U.S. Social Security Administration or Department of Veterans Affairs.

## Election Identification Certificates

The EIC is a photo ID for use when voting that you can only get if you do not have one of the approved forms of state or national photo IDs, such as a Texas driver's license or ID card. It can only be obtained by going to specific Texas Department of Public Safety driver's license offices. While there is no cost to get the certificate, you must provide legal documentation of your citizenship and identity, such as a certified birth certificate – which you may have to buy – plus two other items from a list of allowable documents. You also must bring your voter registration card when applying for an EIC, or submit a voter registration application while at the DPS office. About 50 [driver's license offices](#) have expanded hours for people who want to apply for this certificate on Saturdays from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. through Nov. 2, 2013, in addition to their regular weekday hours.

## Photo ID Exemption for People with Disabilities

If you have a disability but do not have photo identification, you may qualify for a permanent exemption from that requirement. To qualify, you must provide a benefit verification letter from the Social Security Administration that shows you have a disability or proof from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs of a disability rating of 50 percent or more. You can request a benefit verification letter from the [SSA online](#) or by calling (800) 772-1213. To apply for this exemption, contact your [county's voter registration office](#). For more information or assistance obtaining an exemption, contact Disability Rights Texas toll-free at

(888) 796-8683 or by [email](#).

### **To Vote by Mail without an ID or Exemption**

Registered voters with a disability can request an [Application for a Ballet by Mail](#), without having to provide a photo ID or proof of disability. To vote this way in the past, however, you had to request an application before each election. Starting on Jan. 1, 2014, individuals with a disability will only have to apply to vote by mail once per calendar year. This also applies to voters who are 65 or older.

### **Register to Vote**

If you are not registered to vote already, you can [get an application online](#) or at various locations such as libraries and post offices, which you can complete, sign and mail. You can also complete the application at your [county's voter registration office](#).

### **Organizations That Provide More Information and Assistance**

A variety of advocacy organizations can help you register to vote, obtain an ID or with voting rights.

[Got ID Texas?](#) is an easy to understand website that pulls together information on “What You Need” to vote, “How to Get It” and “Go Vote!” It also offers important things to remember that are hard to find elsewhere. If you are not sure that you have what you need to vote, you can fill out a form on the website and they will let you know. If you have a problem trying to vote, you can call toll-free (866) OUR-VOTE [866-687-8683]. Got ID Texas? is a project of the Texas Civic Engagement Table, Empower The Vote Texas, and the Got ID Texas coalition. The website is also available in [Spanish](#).

**Disability Rights Texas** helps individuals with disabilities in Texas who need help registering to vote, who have general questions about the voting process, or who feel their rights have been violated or any issues with voter ID. The protection and advocacy organization has a Web page on [Voting Rights Resources](#), which contains information on the [New Voter ID Law in Texas/Options for Voters with a Disability](#), voting rights, registration and accessibility, plus links to [find out if you are registered to vote](#) and other resources. If you have questions about your voting rights or to report a violation, call the Disability Rights Texas Voter Rights Hotline at (888) 796-VOTE (8683) or [email](#) them.

[ADAPT's Disability Voting Action Project](#) is a new project to increase involvement by people with disabilities and their supporters in the election and political process. It plans to provide information on the voting process and candidates' positions on disability issues to help establish the disability community as an educated, strong and mobilized voting constituency.

# *DISABILITY VOTING ACTION PROJECT*

*1640A EAST 2<sup>ND</sup> ST \* AUSTIN, TEXAS 78702 \* 512 442-0252*

*WWW.ADAPTOFTEXAS.ORG*

Dear Disability Rights and Services Advocates:

We have recently started the Disability Voting Action Project of Texas.(DVAP)

This is a non partisan project that hopes to involve people with disabilities and their supporters in the election and political process.

We know many organizations have, over the years, been involved in non partisan election activities at the local level. We would like to gather this information so as to enhance, not duplicate or conflict with any of your activities . Would appreciate it if you could answer the following 6 questions:

1. Does your organization currently register people to vote?
2. Have you ever held a voter registration meeting and/or day?
3. Have you held local, state or national candidate forums?
4. Have you sent out issue surveys to candidates to ascertain their positions on issues important to the disability community?
5. What assistance do you think DVAP can provide to your organization/people with disabilities?
6. Would you be willing to participate in a non partisan voter registration campaign to increase the number of people with disabilities and their supporters are registered to vote?

Thank you for your support of disability rights and services,

Bob Kafka, Coordinator

DVAP of Texas