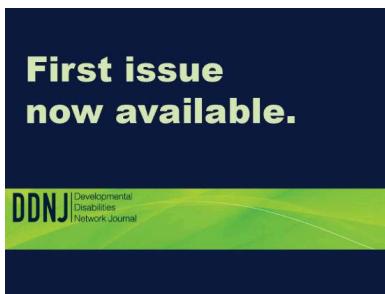


USU Publishes First Open Access Journal On Disability Issues | CPD Blog

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Utah State University (USU) Libraries , in collaboration with the Utah State University Center for Persons with Disabilities (USU CPD), published the first issue of a new open access scholarly journal focused on disability issues in the U.S. The *Developmental Disabilities Network Journal* (*DDNJ*) publishes research and evaluation on the multiple systems that serve individuals with disabilities and their families. This journal specifically highlights programs, practices, and policies that encourage the full inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of public life. Because this new journal is open access it means the latest research and information about disability programs is available at no cost to people with disabilities, as well as their parents, siblings, caregivers, direct-support professionals, and community members.

Dr. Matthew Wappett, executive director of the USU CPD and editor in chief of the new journal, said: “This new publication fills an important niche in the field of disability research, and it is groundbreaking in its focus on including people with disabilities in the publishing process.” The *DDNJ* is unique in that it is open access and inclusive. The *DDNJ* is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities are involved at all levels—from the editorial board to the peer-review process. Each article that is submitted to the journal is reviewed by an individual with a disability. “We are committed to building a cadre of reviewers who can provide a real-world perspective on the articles submitted for publication in our journal,” Wappett said. In place of an abstract, the *DDNJ* has asked that authors provide a “plain language summary.” This summary is intended to help nonacademic readers understand the focus and content of each article. The *DDNJ* also encourages authors to provide video abstracts or summaries of their articles to assist individuals who are non-readers.

This new journal is part of a growing trend of open access scholarly journals. “Through open access publishing, libraries can provide quality information to researchers and the public, removing barriers to access and actively supporting lifelong learning,” says Shannon Smith, USU Libraries’ Scholarly Communication Librarian. Projects such as the *DDNJ* are a tangible demonstration of the USU Libraries’ commitment to furthering the advancement and accessibility of USU’s research. “We are proud to partner with the CPD to expand resources that will support individuals with disabilities and their families,” Dean of Libraries Bradford Cole said.

The *DDNJ* will be published twice a year. The Winter 2020 issue will focus on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people with disabilities and the disability service system. The *DDNJ* is currently seeking research articles, personal perspectives, and preliminary analyses focused on the COVID-19 pandemic. More information can be found at <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/ddnj/>.

The CPD is housed in the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services at USU. The CPD is Utah’s federally designated University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD). The Merrill-Cazier Library is the intellectual center of Utah State University. As both a physical and virtual destination, they create collaborative, engaging environments for learning and scholarship. The USU Libraries provide access to almost 2 million print books and journals, 7,600,000 e-books, 480,000 government publications, and over 60,000 electronic journals.