



GSAT HOSTS ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

The Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT) held its annual AT Conference on April 11, 2025 at Westin Resort Guam. This year's theme was "Empowering Mental health through Assistive Technology". Members and staff of the Guam DD Council joined hundreds of participants in support of our Tri-Agency partner – University of Guam Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (CEDDERS).



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GSAT ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE





EVERYONE, REGARDLESS OF ABILITY OR CONDITION, DESERVES A CHANCE TO THRIVE

Jermaine Alerta

Guam DD Council Executive Director

Remarks at GSAT AT Conference, 4/11/25

Mental health and disabilities are often invisible struggles - challenges that so many face every day, sometimes silently. Whether it's living with anxiety, depression, or physical limitations that affect emotional well-being, the road to stability and inclusion can be long and isolating. But we're living in a time where technology isn't just about convenience - it's about connection, empowerment, and healing.

Assistive technology (AT) is revolutionizing the way people with mental health challenges and disabilities live their lives. It is helping to move barriers that, for too long, seemed immovable. AT can be found in apps that provide real-time therapy and emotional support - offering calming exercises, crisis text lines, and even virtual companionship for those who need to talk but aren't quite ready to speak. Software such as speech-to-text help those with difficulties communicating to more easily and freely express themselves. Noise-canceling headphones assist those with sensory sensitivities, giving them the power to more comfortably navigate the world. For people with mobility issues, home systems now exist and allow them to control their environment using their voice or with a simple tap. Items that monitor stress and anxiety levels can be worn on wrists or carried in pockets or purses. These help us to understand and manage our emotional levels in real time.

But let's be clear, AT isn't just about devices. It's about dignity. It's about allowing people to feel and be seen, heard, and in control of their lives again. When we combine understanding, compassion, and innovation - we create a world where no one has to feel limited by their condition. Of course, there's still work to be done. Access, affordability, and awareness remain big challenges. But with continued investment, advocacy, and empathy, we can close those gaps. And as we do, we move closer to a future where mental health and disabilities are not met with stigma - but with solutions. So let's continue to support technology that uplifts lives. Let's build systems that don't just assist, but empower. Because everyone, regardless of ability or condition, deserves a chance to thrive.

GSAT ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY EXPO

Members and staff of the Guam DD Council participated in the Guam System for Assistive Technology Expo at Micronesia Mall on April 19, 2025. Thank you to the organizers and for all who supported the event!





ACT AUTISM AWARENESS FAIR

The Guam DD Council participated in the 16th Annual Autism Awareness Fair on April 27, 2025 at the Micronesia Mall. We were fortunate to join the Autism Community Together organization and dozens of families for a celebration of strength, talent, abilities, support, and love. Biba to the families, organizers, and supporters for an amazing event!



GUAM DD NETWORK PROGRAMS APPEAR BEFORE LEGISLATURE



Representatives of our island's DD Network programs - June De Leon of Guam CEDDERS, Attorney Daniel Somerfleck of Guam Legal Services Corporation-Disability Law Center, and Jermaine Alerta of the Guam DD Council - appeared before the legislative committee that oversees disability services. We were asked to present information about the work we do and its community impact. Thank you to the Legislature for giving our offices a very public platform from which to speak and reaffirm our dedication to the people and families we serve.



MEETING WITH CONGRESSMAN'S OFFICE

On May 17, 2025, Michael Sciacca, Legislative Director for Congressman James Moylan, met virtually with representatives from Guam's Tai-Agency to discuss issues related to the proposed reorganization of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the budget for DD Act programs.



UPCOMING EVENTS

June 7, 2025

What: Building Language and Literacy in Children, Part 1 – Developmental Milestones & More

Whom: Michele P. Camacho, M.S., CCC-SLP, Guam CEDDERS, University of Guam, Guam EHDI

Time: 8:00am-2:00pm

Where: UOG School of Business and Public Administration, Lecture Hall Room 131

Contact: (671) 735-2433 or 2498

June 11, 2025

What: GENERAL MEMBESHIP MEETING

Whom: Guam Developmental Disabilities Council

Time: 11:00am-2:00pm

Where: Virtual via Google Meet Platform

Contact: (671) 735-9127/28 or email guamddc@gddc.guam.gov

June 12, 2025

What: Training Session: Assistive Technology, Akudi Loan, Disability Sensitivity and Awareness Training, Information and Communication Technology

Whom: Guam CEDDERS, University of Guam

Time: 9:00am-12:00pm

Location: University of Guam Dean Circle, House No. 19, Mangilao

Contact: (671) 735-2490/1 or email gsat@guamcedders.org

June 14, 2025

What: Building Language and Literacy in Children, Part 2 – Strategies and Activities to Build Interaction and Language Skills in Children

Whom: Michele P. Camacho, M.S., CCC-SLP, Guam CEDDERS, University of Guam, Guam EHDI

Time: 8:00am-2:00pm

Where: UOG School of Business and Public Administration, Lecture Hall Room 131

Contact: (671) 735-2433 or 2498



PARTNER CONTACT INFORMATION

Autism Community Together

238 Archbishop Felixberto Flores Street,

DNA Building, Suite 304, Hagatna, GU 96910

Tel: (671) 687-1284; Web: www.facebook.com/autismguam

Bureau of Statistics and Plans

P.O. Box 2950 Hagatna, GU 96932

Tel: (671) 472-4201/2/3; Web: www.bsp.guam.gov

Department of Integrated Services for Individuals with Disabilities

138 East Marine Corps Drive, J&G Commercial Plaza, Suite C102, Hagatna, GU 96910

Tel: (671) 475-4624; Web: www.disid.guam.gov

Department of Public Health and Social Services

Director's Office, 155 Hesler Place, Hagatna, GU 96910

Phone: (671) 922-2503/04

Down Syndrome Association of Guam

P.O. BOX 20391, Barrigada, GU 96921

Tel: (671) 688-7719; Web: www.downsyndromeguam.org

Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center

790 Gov. Carlos G. Camacho Road, Tamuning, GU 96913

Tel: (671) 647-5440; Web: www.gbhwg.guam.gov

Guam Department of Education, Special Education

501 Mariner Avenue, Barrigada, GU 96913

Tel: (671) 300-1536; Web: www.gdoe.net/District/Department/2-Special-Education

Guam Housing and Urban Renewal Authority

117 Bien Venida Avenue Sinajana, GU 96910

Tel: (671) 477-9851; Web: www.ghura.org

Guam Legal Services Corporation - Disability Law Center

434 W O'Brien Dr Ste 102 Hagatna, GU 96910

Tel: (671) 477-9811/2; Web: www.downsyndromeguam.org

Guam Regional Transit Authority

542 N. Marine Corps Drive, Tamuning, GU 96913

Tel: (671) 475-4686/4616; Web: www.grta.guam.gov

Guma' Mami, Inc.

Room 4 and 5, Sinajana Community Center, Sinajana, GU 96910

Tel: (671) 477-1505/1757; Web: www.gumamami.net

Guam Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research & Service, University of Guam

University of Guam, House 29, Dean Circle, Mangilao, GU 96913

Tel: (671) 735-2481; Web: www.guamcedders.org



DISABILITY RIGHTS are HUMAN RIGHTS

 Guam Developmental Disabilities Council

 Guam Developmental Disabilities Council

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

June 11, 2025

11:00 am - 2:00 pm
via Google Meet

Meeting will be livestreamed on the Guam DD Council's Facebook page: facebook.com/guamddcouncil

 Guam Developmental Disabilities Council

General Membership Meeting June 11, 2025 | 11:00 a.m. AGENDA

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

II. Public Notice Requirement

- A. Wednesday - June 4, 2025
- B. Monday - June 9, 2025

III. Review of Minutes, March 12, 2025 Meeting

IV. Reports

- A. Executive Director
- B. Council Membership Status
- C. Standing Committees
- D. Agency Presentation - DISID

V. Old Business

- A. 2025 State Plan Work Plan Activities (Self-Advocacy and Community Living)
- B. Public Health Workforce Grant
- C. FY2025 Budget Update
- D. 2027-2031 State Plan Development: Timeline, Public Input, & Survey

VI. New Business

- A. 2024 Program Performance Report: Submitted April 9, 2025
- B. 2026-2027 Election of Officers: September 10, 2025
- C. 2024-2025 Reprogram of Funds
- D. 2026 Budget Proposal: \$275,000.00
- E. Salary Adjustment: Program Coordinator I
- F. Council Training

VII. Announcements

VIII. Adjournment

For additional information, please contact the Guam Developmental Disabilities Council office at (671) 735-9127/8. This meeting will be livestreamed at [www.facebook.com/guamddcouncil](https://facebook.com/guamddcouncil). Requests for reasonable accommodations must be made seventy-two (72) hours prior to meeting by calling (671) 735-9127/8. This ad is funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Guam Developmental Disabilities Council serves as Guam's State Council on Developmental Disabilities (DD). In accordance with Public Law 106-402, each state and territory is authorized to establish a Council on DD, which receives funds to carry out initiatives for systems-change, capacity building, and advocacy. Through these activities, the Council promotes the inclusion, integration, independence, and productivity of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in all areas of community life.

Feedback

We want to hear from you! Was this newsletter helpful? Is there other information that you would like to see included? Please let us know by contacting the GDDC staff via trephine at (671) 735-9127 or email at guamddc@gddc.guam.gov. You may also visit our website or Facebook and Instagram pages.



www.gddc.guam.gov



[guamddcouncil](https://facebook.com/guamddcouncil)

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