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Southeast Missouri Receives \$200,000 For Autism Research

Tailor Institute Awarded Research Contract

Cape Girardeau— Sen. Jason Crowell, R-Cape Girardeau, today announced that a \$200,000 grant for autism research has been awarded to a Cape Girardeau-based nonprofit, the Tailor Institute. The award comes as a result of a competitive bid request for proposal issued by the Missouri Department of Economic Development.

“I am very pleased to see these research dollars finally come to Southeast Missouri,” Sen. Crowell said. “Through this research, a model will be developed that identifies and evaluates the potential exhibited by specific individuals with autism, allowing for employment opportunities that have never been previously explored.”

Crowell explained that although much good work and research is being conducted to better understand and serve individuals with autism, there remains an unexamined population of individuals with this disorder.

“No one has really looked at the capabilities of those in the ‘high-functioning’ end of the autism spectrum,” he explained. “Some of these people have areas of giftedness that are virtually untapped and not well understood. What are they capable of? How can they better function in society? No one really knows.”

The program will study and develop services for this segment of the autism community and is being applauded by autism researchers and specialists throughout the nation.

The incidence of autism was once reported as affecting only 1 in 10,000 people but now affects 1 in 166 according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. With early intervention, thousands of individuals with autism can be given the chance to live as independently as possible and be gainfully employed, but only if their gifts and capabilities are identified and fostered.

“We are absolutely thrilled to be awarded this contract and are looking forward to getting started on this important project,” said Dr. David Crowe. “I have seen first-hand the potential of high-functioning individuals with autism, and I look forward to working with individuals and families in Southeast Missouri,” Crowe said. “This is a remarkable opportunity to do things that have never been done before. It has the potential of taking individuals who otherwise would essentially be wards of the state and giving them meaningful employment and richer, fuller lives.”

The Tailor Institute will be partnering with the Autism Research Institute to conduct the necessary research for model development.

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