

Training Events

CD Casts

Getting More Mileage from Your Job Development Efforts by Tyler Paris

Time/Date: 2:00-4:00 PM, November 16, 2006
Fee: \$20.00 per site

Ethics: A Professional Perspective

by Karen Edens

Time/Date: 2:00-4:00 PM, December 13, 2006
Fee: \$20.00 per site

Supporting the Participation of Students with Disabilities in IEP/Person-Centered Planning Meetings by Cathy Haarstad and JoLynn Webster

Time/Date: 2:30-4:30 PM, January 23, 2007
Fee: \$20.00 per site

For pre-registration contact:

Teri Aufforth @ 1-800-233-1737

The COLLABORATOR

North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities at Minot State University

Executive Director: Bryce Fifield, Ph.D.

The Collaborator format by Sheldon Dokken, layout and logo design by Susan Anderson, edited by Kari Arrayan.

For additional information ...

Voice/TDD: (701) 858-3580

Toll Free: (800) 233-1737

Email: ndcpd@minotstateu.edu

Website: www.ndcpd.org



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The State of The Center

Bryce Fifield, Ph.D., NDCPD Executive Director



This marks the sixteenth year of operations for the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities. It has been a remarkable journey for this University

Center of Excellence on Disabilities. For example, at the beginning of 2002, just four years ago, we employed 35 individuals. We currently employ three times that number with many telecommuting from communities around the country. In 2002, we were managing approximately 20 projects. This year we have more than doubled that number of active grants and contracts.

This rapid growth over the past several years has been a result of several factors. For example, the hard work of our dedicated faculty, staff, and associates has helped build our capacity and reputation for creativity and excellence. The constant collaboration between our staff and others in the disability community has also helped create opportunities for developing new resources and extending the impact of our work to

others. Finally, the constant contribution of people with disabilities who work with us as colleagues, advisors, peers, and co-workers has helped anchor our work in the real day-to-day challenges faced by many in the disability community.

While we are pleased with the growth of NDCPD, we are more concerned with the degree to which our efforts impact the lives of people with disabilities and their families. Having more grants and more funding and more employees is meaningless to us unless it translates into better opportunities for people with disabilities to lead independent, productive, and self-directed lives.

During the past year, Hurricane Katrina devastated communities in Mississippi and Louisiana. The lives of thousands of people with disabilities were disrupted beyond words as the fragile service systems that support their independence fell apart. There is much to be learned from this tragedy. Unfortunately, these seem to be lessons that we must learn time after time, not just as a nation, but as states and communities as well.

One of those lessons is that independence is not just about where you live or work. It is also about *how* you live and work. It is not just about making your own

(Continued from Page 1 – Dr. Fifield)

decisions; it is about having the tools and resources to be informed as you make decisions.

NDCPD's mission is to provide leadership and innovation that advances the state-of-the-art and empower people with disabilities to challenge expectations, achieve personal goals and be included in all aspects of community life. The mission statement was originally developed in 1997 by a committee made up of members of the consumer advisory council, NDCPD staff members (including consumer employees), and NDCPD's Executive and Associate Directors. We take the mission statement seriously at NDCPD. All of the activities we undertake are evaluated in terms of how well they help us achieve our mission statement.

Early next year, we will submit a proposal to continue operations of NDCPD. This "continuation proposal" is an important opportunity for us to re-examine our priorities, our organizational structure, and how we operate. We have already begun some of the important planning steps in preparation for submitting the continuation proposal. For example, NDCPD core coordinators and the center's management team recently participated in a planning retreat at which we conducted an internal scan examining our culture, competencies, and capacity. Later in October, we will engage in a formal review of our accomplishments with our consumer advisory council and will also solicit their input into the emerging issues that we need to address.

We are currently reviewing the planning efforts of other members in the North Dakota disability community including the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Protection & Advocacy Program, the ND Disability Advocacy Consortium, self-advocacy

groups, and state service agencies to identify common needs and issues. As these issues are identified, we will be looking for leverage points where NDCPD can make unique contributions.

As a university-based center, we have a frame of reference unlike any other in the disability arena. We believe that our mission is furthered by the values, expertise, and resources of the university. Ultimately, these assets will help us make lasting contributions that help people with disabilities and their families lead enviable lives.

New Staff at NDCPD

Tina Mack began in September 2006 as an Administrative Assistant to the NDCPD Associate Directors. Her responsibilities include assisting with new grant development, as well as specific grant projects including Transition, Job Corps, and PIERS. Tina and her family moved to Minot recently from Hampton, VA.

Deb Bingeman is the newest member of the Northwest Infant Development Program, which is operated by NDCPD in Williston. Debbie began in August 2006 as a part-time Early Interventionist.

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For additional copies of the Collaborator contact Kari Arrayan at 1-800-233-1737.

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**National Disability Employment Awareness Month**

By Amy Armstrong, Board Member, North Dakota APSE, The Network on Employment, and NDCPD Project Director

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). This year's theme carries the message, Americans with Disabilities: Ready for the Global Workforce. The NDEAM is a way to bring awareness to the general public about employment for people with disabilities. We celebrate this month to help us better understand why laws were created to protect people with disabilities and how they work, to appreciate the contributions people with disabilities make, and to help improve the attitudes and eliminate barriers to the employment of people with disabilities. These are important messages for everyone including employers, co-workers, teachers, families, and children.

The first national effort to bring awareness to these issues began in 1945, when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week of October as the "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." Then in 1962, the word "physical" was removed to include all types of disabilities in order to bring awareness to the fact that all people with disabilities should be included in employment opportunities. In 1988, congress expanded this week to include the entire month of October and called it "National Disability Employment Awareness Month." From these changes one can see that some attitudes have changed regarding inclusion of people with disabilities in the work place. However, there is still work needed to be done. According to the 2004 Disability Status Report, the employment rate of working-age people *with* disabilities in North Dakota was 51.7% in 2004, compared to the 84% employment rate for people *without* disabilities. Also in 2004, the median labor earnings of working-age people *with* disabilities who worked full-time/full-year was \$25,000 in North Dakota compared to \$28,000 which was the median labor earnings of working-age people *without* disabilities.

People with disabilities describe the challenges they face daily to access meaningful employment in their communities. For people with disabilities, as well as for people without disabilities, employment is not just about a paycheck but about full inclusion and participation in community life. When a person has a job the benefits not only include wages, but also the opportunity to contribute to the community. In order for this to be possible there are barriers that need to be removed.

Currently there are national, state, and local initiatives taking place to help breakdown some of the barriers and encourage employment opportunities for people with disabilities. These efforts support the meaning behind NDEAM 2006, theme of Americans with Disabilities: Ready for the Global Workforce. Some of the programs in place include: Social Security Work Incentives, Benefit Planning, Assistance & Outreach programs, the Ticket to Work Program, and the North Dakota Workers with Disabilities Coverage. Other groups and initiatives that focus on these issues include APSE: The Network on Employment, the Comprehensive Employment Systems (CES) Grant located at NDCPD, local Mayors' Committees on Employment of People with Disabilities, and local Business Leadership Networks (BLNs).

Help bring awareness of employment for people with disabilities by organizing or participating in state or local NDEAM activities. Get involved. If you are looking for activity ideas, as I always say, borrow when possible. With a little time and searching on the internet I was able to come up with a handful of links that contained a variety of NDEAM activity ideas. These various ideas could be adapted to fit your needs. Some groups planned activities for each day of October while others took a simpler approach of planning only a few. If anything, order NDEAM posters to display. Do whatever works for you but do something to help make the month of October stand out to employers co-workers, teachers, families, and children as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. Have a great 2006 NDEAM! Here are a few websites to try: 1) California Business Leadership Network: National Disability Employment Awareness Month – October (activity ideas): www.cab1n.org/ndeam.htm, 2) For various NDEAM posters, see the special interest section: www.diversitystore.net, 3) US Dept. of Labor-Office of Disability Employment Policy: www.dol.gov/odep.

*U.S. Department of Labor-Office of Disability Employment Policy, Washington D. C., www.dol.gov/odep, August 23, 2006.

*Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Demographics and Statistics, (2005). *2004 Disability Status Reports: North Dakota*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, www.DisabilityStatistics.org.

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Ticket sales for the Raging Rivers Waterpark wrapped up at the end of summer. **Thanks to Cenex** for assisting with ticket sales from their **North Minot** location.

NDCPD sponsored a booth at the ND State Fair in July. Visitors to the booth were able to try the new electronic voting machine that became available statewide for the 2006 primary elections. Fairgoers who stopped by the booth were also able to register for tickets to the Raging Rivers Waterpark in Mandan. Four tickets were given to a lucky winner each day throughout the duration of the fair.

Thanks to those who continue to bring in Marketplace receipts. They can be dropped off at the main NDCPD location in Memorial Hall on the MSU campus or mailed to Rich Berg, NDCPD, 500 University Avenue West, Minot, ND 58707. Be sure to include your name and phone number on the back of the receipt to become eligible for a door prize!



Meet Maseray.....



"My name is Maseray Severn. I am originally from Regina, SK. I am currently a senior majoring in Communication Disorders with a minor in psychology. What I hope to gain out of the experience of being an intern for NDCPD is that I would have better awareness for people with disabilities. I also hope to gain some insight and experience working with professionals and non-professionals who advocate for people with disabilities. My educational major specializes in working with people with disabilities and so far I've found that I can only benefit from learning about how my major relates to other aspects of the disability career field."

Meet Brittany.....

"My name is Brittany Bishop and I am from Killdeer, ND. I am currently a junior at Minot State pursuing Elementary Education and Business Administration. Last year I had the experience of working on the Transition Project at NDCPD. This gave me a chance to really see all that NDCPD was about and motivated me to pursue the pre-service training program. I have already learned a great deal in the two weeks that we have been hard at work. I am very excited to see what else this year has in store. I am hoping to gain all the knowledge and skills that I can to contribute to my ability as a future educator and possibly make me stand out when the job-seeking process comes around. As some may know already, I love to talk and meet new people so please stop by for a visit!"

NDCPD Committee Chairperson Speaks Out About Diversity

By Priscilla Carlson, NDCPD Consumer Advisory Committee



Note from the editor: Priscilla Carlson recently participated in a panel discussion as part of Diversity Culture week on the MSU campus. This information is from Priscilla's handout, and is reprinted with her permission.

Being disabled affects ALL aspects of life...

Being disabled means leading an entirely different way of life, while trying to lead as normal of a life as possible. Nothing is ever simple; everything takes more time and requires detailed planning. I always have to think ahead of how I'm going to do something, whether it's as simple as reaching for something or tending to a personal need and not falling out of my chair (been there, done that-OUCH!), on up to deciding how to go about switching gears in life and choosing a career. With anything, it's never just "get up and go," there are a million different things to take into consideration. The list is endless! For instance:

Accessibility - width of doorways into buildings and restrooms, door handles, faucets, stairs vs. elevators, curbs vs. ramps and curb cuts, mirrors, well.....everything!

Dining out - buffets are never my cup of tea! I can't see what's in there and how do I know if I want to try something that resembles a chicken strip or whatever?? Scary! Crowded tables, booths, sitting in high-traffic spots, getting bumped into or spilled on all the time, not fun unless planned ahead.

Entertainment - ballparks with steps and bleachers instead of ramps and chairs, concerts where people stand up-even some accessible concert and game seating now have rails that are eye level with someone sitting in a chair that block your line of sight. Bars with high tables and high stools for chairs can make you feel left out and also be demeaning. Calling ahead and ensuring a table or the right seats is always necessary to have a relaxed and fun event.

Family functions - not everyone in your family has a house with wide doorways and ramps leading in, and you can't reasonably expect them to. It may mean having to suck it up and have someone push you around the whole time or carry your plate, but in the end, just having that

time with your family and friends is worth it!

You may not have known this, but these famous people were also disabled!

- Albert Einstein - had a learning disability and didn't speak until he was 3 years old.
- Ludwig van Beethoven - known to be deaf
- George Washington - had a learning disability and could barely write
- Robin Williams - diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder as a child
- Cher & Tom Cruise - both severely dyslexic
- Franklin D. Roosevelt - had polio that affected his mobility
- Walt Disney - had a learning disability

Something to think about:

It's not what you push, it's what pushes you.

Bottom Line

Just because someone has a disability doesn't mean they have to miss out on all that life has to offer. It's important to always go in with a positive attitude, compromise when you have to *without endangering yourself*, and realize that while you may not always be in an ideal situation or have the most independence during some of these functions, just being with your friends and family means a lot to everyone involved, plus new experiences never hurt! By keeping an open mind and planning ahead, anyone with a disability can go on to lead a very full and happy life, accomplishing their goals and dreams!

Something to Take with You...

Whether they are in a wheelchair or not and no matter what type of disability they may have, it's important for friends and family to be supportive and respectful of their needs and feelings. However, pitying them or doing everything for them won't help either. Look for ways to help them and accommodate their independence instead. Treat someone with a disability like you would anyone else and use **common sense**. This includes:

(Continued from Page 3 – Priscilla Carlson)

- ✿ Talking with the person and not the person with them when you want to ask a question or know anything about them. Look them in the eye and *assume ability*. Speak with them normally and if they can't hear or understand you, they or the person with them will let you know.
- ✿ Be respectful of whatever mobility aids they might have (cane, walker, wheelchair, etc.) and consider it an extension of their body. That means being mindful of them in close or narrow spaces, allowing extra space for them to pass by, being patient when walking behind or around them, and *never* moving their mobility aid without first asking if it's okay, especially when they're using it!
- ✿ If someone appears to need assistance and you want to help, that's great! But ask first, how you may help before taking a hold of their mobility aid or whatever they're using.
- ✿ Always use People First language. A while ago, NDCPD created bookmarks and flyers and posters depicting certain scenarios that may come up when you encounter someone with a disability and things that everyone should remember, including the things that might be said or random comments which could be hurtful or offensive to someone.

Last piece of advice from my own personal experience: NEVER stand behind a wheelchair without letting them know first!!! We can't see you so, therefore, cannot be held responsible for flattened toes or bruised shins! I've been told it hurts!!!

~ NEW LOOK FOR NDCPD ~

NDCPD has a new logo, which is featured in this edition of The Collaborator. Our website also has a new look. Check it out at www.ndcpd.org. Let us know what you think! Email us at ndcpd@minotstateu.edu.

The **North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities** is a member of the **Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)**. AUCD is a national network of interdisciplinary centers advancing policy and practice through research, education and services for and with individuals with developmental and other disabilities, their families and communities.



NDCPD Associate Director Receives Award

Dr. Brent Askvig, Associate Director of NDCPD, was one of four people selected to receive the MSU Alumni Association's 2006 Golden Award. Selection is based on outstanding service to the

University or the Alumni Association and distinguished leadership in the recipient's career or community. It is the highest honor bestowed by the Alumni Association; the first Golden Award was presented in 1967. Others receiving the 2006 Golden Award were John Kincheloe, Curtis Zimbleman, and Thomas Myhra.

Over the years, Dr. Askvig has been involved in numerous local, state, and national activities in the disability community. He has served as state president for the Council for Exceptional Children, has worked on many state and regional disability boards, and was the Governor's appointed member of the state Interagency Coordinating Council for Early Intervention, serving as president of the Council for two years. Dr. Askvig's most noted accomplishments include starting the first severe disabilities program in the Bismarck public school district, 1984 ND Teacher of the Year awards from Burleigh County and The Arc, authoring the book *100 Years: The History and Chronology of the North Dakota Developmental Center*, and national recognition from the American Council on Rural Special Education for an Exemplary Program in Personnel Preparation in 2006.

NDCPD Job Corps Disability Training and Technical Assistance Resource Center

By Janet Green, NDCPD Program Coordinator

The North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) has received funding to support a Job Corps Disability Training and Technical Assistance Resource Center. A preliminary needs assessment with Job Corps management trainees in the summer of 2005 showed a need for staff and center support regarding Job Corps student employees with disabilities. Although Job Corps has existing resources available related to disabilities, use of these resources is not widespread. The resources are also not fully understood.

Background Information

In the summer of 2005, a Job Corps Executive Management Program (JCEMP) training cohort participated in an initial assessment process related to disability issues in Job Corps centers. The trainees were asked to discuss challenges and barriers to providing appropriate accommodations, modifications, and instructional supports to Job Corps students who have learning, sensory, and other hidden and identified disabilities.

Participants representing twelve Job Corps Centers identified 44 challenges and barriers their programs face when serving students with disabilities. As a group, participants categorized the individual challenges into four broad areas: 1) training to increase staff awareness and competence in addressing disability issues, 2) more easily available information about effective accommodation strategies, 3) more consistent level of implementing policies and practices addressing disability issues (including federal disability laws, rules, and regulations), 4) a more effective way to make the fine distinctions when addressing disability, academic, social, and mental health issues with students.

Current Project

NDCPD Job Corps Disability Resource Center, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, is designed to assist Job Corps centers with developing a comprehensive approach to working with student-employees with disabilities. This project focuses on positive teaching and learning environments for all student-employees in all areas, including instructional and non-instructional settings. This assistance will be

available center-wide, department-wide, classroom-wide, individually for staff, and/or on a case-by-case basis for student-employees.

NDCPD Job Corps Disability Training and Technical Assistance Resource Center staff has conducted a comprehensive needs assessment including 23 Job Corps centers in the Dallas region (Region IV). These centers stretch from North Dakota and Montana through Texas and Louisiana, including states in the Central Plains region. The results of the survey are currently being analyzed. However, preliminary analysis suggests that Job Corps center staff identified a need for technical assistance in at least one of the topic areas indicated on the questionnaire. An executive summary is currently being sent to the directors of the Job Corps centers in the Region IV.

Technical assistance (TA) is being offered to Job Corps centers in Region IV. **Technical Assistance** is an intricate communication and problem-solving process for providing specialized information, skills, and other types of supportive help to designated [centers]...ideally, one of the long range goals of technical assistance is to develop the necessary skills and competencies within the [center] to enable it to define and solve its own problems (Clifford & Trohanis, 1980). The TA may be in the form of onsite consultation, in-service training, online support, and curriculum review/accommodations. TA is offered for topics such as instructional support in the classroom, techniques and strategies for working with student employees with disabilities, disability awareness training, review of applicable disability laws, making appropriate accommodations, accessing testing accommodations as provided by testing services, and providing a team oriented approach to services for student employees with disabilities. Job Corps center staff can complete a TA request form and send it to NDCPD Job Corps Disability Resource Center. The request will be reviewed by NDCPD Job Corps Disability Resource Center staff. If technical assistance is appropriate, discussions will be held between Job Corps center staff and NDCPD staff to negotiate the TA agreement.

