Since 2000, the HEATH Resource Center has served as a national clearinghouse on postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities, managed by The George Washington University Graduate School of Education and Human Development. Now, The HSC Foundation has partnered with the George Washington University to expand the content of this resource and to designate it as the official site of The HSC Foundation’s National Youth Transitions Center.


Effective Practices for Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Transitioning into Postsecondary Education: Information and Recommendations for Parents

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High school students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are entering postsecondary education programs in increasing rates (Camarena & Sarigiani, 2009; Sanford, Newman, Wagner, Cameto, Knokey, & Shaver, 2011). While postsecondary education was often viewed as an unobtainable goal for students with ASD for many years, a recent study found that 46.6% of students with ASD are enrolling in a postsecondary education program within six years of transitioning from high school (Luckett & Powell, 2003; Sanford, et al., 2011). Recent research has found that parents play a particularly important role in guiding youth with ASD through the transition process (Ciccantelli, 2011; Shook Torres, 2013). Therefore, this article will provide an overview of the key areas that parents should be aware of to support their child with ASD who is transitioning into postsecondary education.

What is ASD?

ASD refers to individuals who have been diagnosed with autism, Asperger’s Syndrome (AS), or Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS), lifelong neurological disabilities that impact an individual’s social interaction skills, ability to communicate, and cause individuals to exhibit stereotyped and patterned behaviors (Klin, McPartland, & Volkmar, 2005). Recently, the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders omitted the separate categories of autism, PDD-NOS, and AS. Instead, it classifies these separate categories under “Autism Spectrum Disorder” (ASD) (APA, 2013). The concept of the “spectrum” recognizes that
although individuals diagnosed as having an ASD may present with common characteristics, there is variation in the manifestation and severity of the disability (Klin et al., 2005).

**Students with ASD Transitioning into Postsecondary Education**

Until recently, very little was known about students with ASD transitioning into postsecondary education. However, recent research has shed light on students with ASD transitioning into postsecondary education and their postsecondary educational experience (Ciccantelli, 2011; Schlabach, 2008; Shook Torres, 2013). While additional research is needed to fully understand the transition and postsecondary experience of students with ASD, the growing body of available information shows that students with ASD have considerable potential, but require supports to be successful in their first year of postsecondary education and beyond. Key findings that parents of students with ASD should be aware of include:

- High schools often provided inadequate transition planning and parents had to fill the gaps in providing students with transition support (Shook Torres, 2013);
- Students with ASD have been found to display mixed academic performances in postsecondary education, often excelling in specific subject areas, but requiring academic supports and services (Ciccantelli, 2011; Schlabach, 2008; Shook Torres, 2013);
- A student’s prior academic experience, including their academic performance and preparation in high school, has been found to be an important factor for determining a student’s first-year academic performance (Shook Torres, 2013);
- Parents have played a crucial role in supporting students with ASD who are transitioning into postsecondary education. Parents have been found to be instrumental in helping students self-disclose their disability to their postsecondary educational program and for providing students with emotional and social support (Shook Torres, 2013);
- Students with ASD often struggle socially in postsecondary education and would benefit from social skills preparation in high school and at their postsecondary educational institution (Schlabach, 2008; Shook Torres 2013);
- Despite encountering social and academic difficulties, students with ASD displayed high levels of resilience in the postsecondary educational environment (Shook Torres, 2013);
- University disability support providers have been found to play a significant role in supporting students academically and socially as they navigate the postsecondary educational environment (Ciccantelli, 2008; Schlabach, 2008; Shook Torres, 2013).

**High School Transition Supports**

The academic and social preparation that students receive in high school is important in fostering a smooth transition to postsecondary education (Shook Torres, 2013). Students with ASD who attend public schools are entitled to various levels of transition support, depending on whether they have an Individual Education Program (IEP) or a 504 plan. Parents and students should be actively involved in the transition planning process to make sure that the goals and supports that students
receive from their high schools meet their individualized needs and post-school goals (Kochhar-Bryant, Bassett, & Webb, 2009; Morningstar, Kleinhammer-Tramill, & Lattin, 1999).

**Students with IEPs.** Students with ASD who have IEPs in place are entitled to comprehensive transition support under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004). The IDEA defines transition support as a “a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability,” which are “designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.” The law also states that transition services are required to be “based on the individual child’s needs, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests” (IDEA; 2004, Sec. 602 (34)). IDEA mandates that transition services begin no later than the student’s sixteenth birthday, and that they are updated annually (OSEP, 2011). However, some states require transition services to start earlier than the student’s sixteenth birthday, so it is important for parents and students to contact their respective State Education Agency (SEA) to find out more about state and district-specific transition practices.

**Measurable Postsecondary Goals**

Perhaps the most important transition-related support for postsecondary education-bound students with ASD are measurable postsecondary goals. The law specifically states that the student’s IEP must contain “appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills” (IDEA; 2004, Sec. 300.320 (b)). These goals are often written in the form of a transition plan (Kochhar-Bryant et al., 2009). The postsecondary goals should be informed by individualized transition assessments and align with the student’s individual needs, strengths, weaknesses, and future postsecondary goals (Kochhar-Bryant et al., 2009). The students’ courses of study should also support their postsecondary goals. High school students with ASD who are more academically prepared for the rigors of postsecondary education generally perform better during the first year of their postsecondary education program (Shook Torres, 2013). The high school must provide transition services that “assist the child in reaching those goals” (IDEA, 2004, Sec. 300.320 (b)).

The IEP Team plays the most important role in developing the students’ transition goals. In additional a student’s special education teacher, at least one general education teacher, a representative of the public agency, an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluations, and individuals who provide students related services, parents and students are an integral part of the IEP Team (IDEA, 2004). If a student is unable to attend the meeting, the IEP Team must speak to the student about the goals. However, participating in the transition goal development process could help students better understand their goals and develop self-advocacy skills that will be important in the postsecondary education setting (Bremer, Kachgal, & Schoeller, 2003).
Parents of students with ASD should ensure that the postsecondary goals that are outlined in the student’s IEP match their child’s unique needs. This means that the IEP of students who are considering or bound for postsecondary education should include goals and courses that prepare them for their respective postsecondary education programs. The IEP of high-achieving students with ASD who plans to attend a four-year postsecondary program away from home should contain goals that are individualized and prepare the student for the academic and social requirements of a particular postsecondary educational setting and would differ from a the goals of a student who plans to live at home and attend a local two-year postsecondary educational program. For instance, a student who plans to live on campus may benefit from a goal that provides students with the opportunity to learn how to appropriately interact with peers in a dormitory setting. All students who intend to enter postsecondary education would benefit from information sessions that inform them how to self-disclose their disability in the postsecondary educational environment.

**Summary of Performance**

When a student is in the last year of his or her high school program, the student’s IEP Team must develop a Summary of Performance (SOP). The SOP is intended to serve as a transition document to help students during their transition to postsecondary education, employment and independent living (Kochhar-Bryant, et al., 2009; Madaus & Shaw, 2006). The SOP provides documentation of the student’s disability, a summary of the student’s “academic achievement and functional performance,” and lists recommendations on how to assist the student to meet his or her postsecondary goals (IDEA; 2004, Sec 614; Kochhar-Bryant, et al., 2009; OSEP, 2011). While evaluations to certify a student’s disability are not required during the student’s final year of high school under the current law, IEP Teams may still offer evaluation opportunities for students (IDEA, 2004, Sec.300.305).

Although it is the discretion of a particular postsecondary educational program whether they accept the SOP, IEP, and transition plan as documentation of a student’s disability, parents and students should be familiar with these documents and retain copies of them (Dukes & Shaw, 2004; Getzel, 2008). Once a student enters their postsecondary educational program, students should present these documents to the postsecondary educational program’s disability support office because they may provide the institution with valuable insight regarding the types of academic and related supports and services that the student requires to foster a smooth transition (Shook Torres, 2013). This is particularly imperative for students with ASD because this group of students has been found to experience social and academic difficulties during their transition to postsecondary education (Shook Torres, 2013).

*Students with 504 Plans.* Unlike students with ASDs who have IEPs in place, students with 504 plans are not entitled to the same level of individualized transition supports. However, parents should still work with professionals within the high school, such as the 504 plan coordinator and the guidance counselor, to locate an appropriate postsecondary program for their son or daughter.
Supports in Postsecondary Education for Students with ASD

Research has shown that students with ASD benefit tremendously from academic and social supports and services provided by postsecondary educational institutions (Ciccantelli, 2011; Schlabach, 2008; Shook Torres, 2013). Therefore, it is imperative that students and their parents understand the legal rights of students with ASD in postsecondary education and how to access these support services.

Legal Protection & Supports

It is important to recognize that the legal protection and supports that high school students with ASD receive differ significantly from the protection that students are entitled to in postsecondary education. In high school, students with ASD are mostly provided services and supports through IDEA. In postsecondary education, the services and supports under IDEA cease and students are provided protection by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. While IDEA (2004) is an education entitlement law focused on providing students with disabilities an individualized and comprehensive education, Section 504 and the ADA and its amendments are civil rights anti-discrimination laws (Simon, 2011; Sitlington, 2003; VA Help, 2007). IDEA focuses on providing students with disabilities comprehensive services according to their individual needs, but Section 504 focuses on providing students with disabilities access to the academic curriculum (Eckes & Ochoa, 2005; OCR, 2011). As a result, postsecondary educational institutions are not legally required to administer comprehensive direct or related services, such as tutoring, social and behavioral support, and academic interventions, which are commonly administered to students in the K-12 setting (Eckes & Ochoa, 2005).

Self-Disclosure

In order to receive services and supports at the postsecondary level, students with ASD must self-disclose their disability to their postsecondary educational institution. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the postsecondary student, not the institution, to initiate a request for services and provide documentation of their disability to the postsecondary educational institution (Eckes & Ochoa, 2005; Madaus & Shaw, 2006). While the student’s IEP, SOP, and most recent evaluations might be accepted as documentation of a student’s disability, each postsecondary educational institution is authorized to set its own process of determining a student’s eligibility for supports and services (NCSPES, 2000). Also, the types of services that students receive can differ significantly across institutions. The structure of institutional supports can vary from a small disability support office with personnel who have limited expertise in rendering services and offer no comprehensive direct academic services, to large offices with a number of well-trained service providers who offer comprehensive direct services to students (Dukes & Shaw, 2004; Wilson, Getzel, & Brown, 2000). It is therefore critical that students with ASD and their parents understand the specific requirements for requesting and receiving services from the institution that the student will be attending well before the student arrives on campus.
Disability Support Services

Since the types of services vary so drastically across postsecondary educational settings, the level of services offered by postsecondary educational institutions should also be an important factor when students with ASD select a postsecondary educational program. As discussed, students with ASD have unique needs and often struggle socially in postsecondary education (Shook Torres, 2013). While Section 504 does not require postsecondary educational institutions to provide students with ASD comprehensive support services, including social skills support and individualized tutoring sessions, many campuses provide students with ASD supports and services that are “above and beyond” what is required by the law (Schlabach, 2008; Shook Torres, 2013). For example, some postsecondary educational programs provide individualized tutoring sessions and emotional support for students with ASD (Shook Torres, 2013).

Helpful Resources for Parents and Students

There are a variety of resources that parents and students can reference for students with ASD planning to enter postsecondary education. These resources range from legal guides to information about postsecondary programs that offer specific supports and services to students with ASD. Key resources include:

- [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html) - Office for Civil Rights Postsecondary Guide.
- [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/auxaids.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/auxaids.html) - Office for Civil Rights Information on Auxiliary Aids and Services.

About the Author

Elizabeth Shook Torres is the Co-Founder of Washington Global Public Charter School, a newly approved public charter middle school in the District of Columbia. She is also an Adjunct Professor of Education at The George Washington University. Prior to founding Washington Global, Elizabeth was as an education program specialist and policy analyst at the U.S. Department of Education. Elizabeth began her career in education as a D.C. Teaching Fellow and served as a special education teacher and administrator in the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). Elizabeth holds an A.B. in History from Vassar College, an M.A. in Education from The George Washington University, and an Ed.D. in Education and Neuroscience from The George Washington University where she focused her research on transition-aged students with autism. Contact: liz.shook@gmail.com.
References


The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), 20 U.S.C § 1401 et seq.


Schlabach, T. (2008). The college experience of students with Asperger's disorder: Perceptions of the students themselves and of college disability service providers who work with these students. Illinois State University Dissertation. UMI 3323938


Please join us on Thursday, June 12th, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., for The HSC Foundation’s presentation of the 2014 Advocates in Disability Award, as well as our annual National Youth Transitions Initiative briefing. The Foundation’s Advocates in Disability Award (ADA) program recognizes and supports a young person with a disability between the ages of 14 and 26, who has dedicated himself/herself to positively affecting the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families. The program also supports an innovative project developed by the ADA recipient that serves and empowers individuals with disabilities.

The reception will be held at the National Youth Transitions Center at 2013 H Street NW, in DC. The closest metro stop is Foggy Bottom on the Blue or Orange Lines. From Foggy Bottom, make your way down Eye Street to 21st Street then turn right on 21st Street and go to H Street. Turn left on H Street and go half a block down. The Transitions Center will be on the left. Please RSVP at: www.eventbrite.com/e/advocates-in-disability-award-national-youth-transitions-initiative-event-tickets-11625747925 by June 11 to let us know if you can attend. Any guest(s) you wish to bring should RSVP separately. If you need additional information, please contact Ryan Easterly at 202-454-1258 or via email at reasterly@cscn.org. We hope to see you on June 12th!

Youth Transitions Collaborative Alliance Agreement

The Youth Transitions Collaborative is part of a new alliance agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and The Center for Health Care Transition Improvement (Got Transition). This alliance will focus on demonstrating the linkages between the health-care transition and employment transition fields. To learn more about the alliance, please see: http://www.dol.gov/odep/alliances/hscf2.htm.
Archived Webinar: Making the VR Connection

The Youth Transitions Collaborative, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), hosted an educational seminar, *Making the VR Connection*. This seminar was designed to inform youth with disabilities, their family members, practitioners, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselors, educators, public and private sector agencies, and other stakeholders about the importance of collaboration to ensure a smooth transition process for students with disabilities as they exit school and prepare for post-school activities. The webinar featured information about interagency collaborative models, the VR process, transition practices, and requirements. To see the resources and materials from the webinar, please go to: [http://www.thenytc.org/highlighted](http://www.thenytc.org/highlighted).

2014 ADA Celebration

The American Association of People with Disabilities is hosting an evening of celebration to recognize the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and reflect on the accomplishments of the disability community in the twenty-four years since the ADA was passed. The celebration will be held on **July 23, 2014**. To learn more and/or purchase a ticket, go to: [http://power.aapd.com/site/Calendar?view=Detail&id=100282](http://power.aapd.com/site/Calendar?view=Detail&id=100282).

Transition Videos

As part of the 2013 National Youth Transitions Center’s Program Advisory Committee grants, The Treatment and Learning Centers developed some videos designed to discuss successful transition and related resources from a peer-to-peer perspective. To view these videos and resource list, please see: [www.thenytc.org/resources/other](http://www.thenytc.org/resources/other).

National Youth Transitions Resume Database

The Youth Transitions Collaborative is developing a resume database. We are seeking the resumes of young people and young veterans with disabilities, who are looking for work (full-time or part-time) in the private sector. These resumes will be incorporated into a database that will help employers connect with qualified young candidates with disabilities. The National Youth Transitions Resume Database will be national in scope and will be open to young people and employers from across the country.

If you are, or know of someone, interested in submitting a resume, please submit it at ytf@aapd.com. Once a resume is received individuals will be asked to complete a short form, which details their occupational and geographic preferences, etc.
Resume Guidelines

All resumes should include the following:

- Objective statement (a 1-2 sentence statement regarding your skills, interests, or career aspirations to give employers a better sense of the type of employment you are seeking)
- Contact information (Name, Address, Phone Number, and Email Address)
- Education history
- Work history
- Volunteer experience
- Professional skills
- Font size no smaller than 11 pt.
- Word or PDF format
- Maximum of 2 pages

New National Youth Transitions Center Website!

The National Youth Transitions Center TheNYTC.org is officially live! The new website offers a distinct online presence for both the National Youth Transitions Center and the Collaborative. Check out these great features, including an “Event Pages” and the addition of the NYTC Resume Database & Job Listings. Let us know what you think by emailing Ryan Easterly at reasterly.org, and stay tuned for additional updates to come!

Updated: The HEATH Resource Center at the NYTC Website!

The HEATH Resource Center at the National Youth Transitions Center website has been updated. Please continue to check our website for latest transition news, events, and publications. To browse our website, please go to: https://heath.gwu.edu. We welcome the opportunity for the HEATH NYTC website to be linked from sites of other organizations. In addition, we invite practitioners, researchers, and families to submit proposals for articles pertaining to postsecondary education, employment, and independent living for youth with disabilities. You may contact us at askheath@gwu.edu.
Follow the National Youth Transitions Center!

The National Youth Transitions Center officially has a Facebook page (at www.facebook.com/thenytc)! If you or your organization has a Facebook account, please “Like” the NYTC page. The NYTC has a Twitter account (at https://twitter.com/The_NYTC). Please check out their information and resources for youth and veterans with disabilities!! Please “Like” and “Follow” their Facebook and Twitter pages!!

Follow the HEATH Resource Center!

The HEATH Resource Center at the National Youth Transitions Center has a Facebook page (at https://www.facebook.com/pages/Heath-Resource-Center). We have a Twitter account (at https://twitter.com/#!/heathcenter). Please check out both of our social media sites for the latest updates, resources, and scholarship information for students with disabilities!! Please “Like” our Facebook page and “Follow” us on Twitter!

Educational Opportunities at The George Washington University

Transition Special Education Distance Education Certificate Program

There is still time for candidates to enroll in the Fall ’14 cohort for our 12-credit Transition Special Education Certificate Program. Students who have enrolled in this program will be given priority when being considered for admission to the Master’s program and all credits earned will be easily transferred. Candidates who decide to apply to this program using ApplyYourself, the on-line application system, can use the link: https://app.applyyourself.com/AYApplicantLogin/ApplicantConnectLogin.asp?id=GWUGRAD.

Please list only official degree transcripts that indicate completion of a Bachelors and/or Masters. Listing all colleges attended may delay approval of your application. This will allow sufficient time for your application to be reviewed and approved, which must take place before they can register for class. **Deadline: Rolling Admissions.** For further information or additional questions, please contact Dr. Michael Ward, Program Coordinator, by e-mailing mjward@gwu.edu.
Secondary Special Education and Transition Services: Distance Education, Master’s of Arts (Non-teacher Licensure)

This 39 credit, on-line Youth Transition, Career, and Vocational Services Master's degree program prepares professionals as change agents in teaching, leadership and support roles that assist youth with disabilities and youth at-risk to make successful transitions through high school to post-secondary education, employment and independent adulthood. Students will build knowledge and skills for performing the roles and functions of transition specialists through assessment, interdisciplinary planning, collaboration, and implementation of services for individuals with disabilities. The program encourages student involvement in research, scholarship, publishing and leadership activities as adjuncts to their program of study. Candidates who decide to apply to this program using ApplyYourself, the on-line application system, can use the link: https://app.applyyourself.com/AYApplicantLogin/ApplicantConnectLogin.asp?id=GWUGRAD. For more information about the program, please email Dr. Michael Ward at mjward@gwu.edu.

Secondary Special Education and Transition Services: Acquired Brain Injury Master’s Degree Program with Teacher Licensure

Prepare to become a special education teacher to serving school age children and youth with traumatic and acquired brain injuries. The program includes on-campus and on-line coursework, and is possible to complete within two years.

The George Washington University was the first post-secondary institution in the nation to have developed and implemented a specialized graduate degree program, geared toward training professionals in the field of special education and brain injury. The brain injury special educator may work directly with children with acquired brain injury (ABI) or with the school teams and families who support them.

The curriculum is focused on training teachers to work in high need school districts and high poverty schools where the incidence of pediatric brain injury is very high. Students are offered the opportunity of specialized coursework, high quality supervised practica and internships, as well as ongoing school and community-based mentorship opportunities.

Already a licensed teacher? Become a recognized brain injury professional by completing the Master’s Degree in two years! Professionals interested in the content may also apply for the 15-Credit Graduate Certificate Program, all 5 courses are offered through distance learning! For more information on the ABI focus, please contact Theresa Sacchi Armstrong at tjsacchi@gwu.edu. Deadline: Rolling Admissions.
NCWD/Youth Publishes New InfoBrief Entitled, *Understanding the New Vision for Career Development: The Role of Family*

NCWD/Youth's new InfoBrief introduces families, including families of youth with disabilities, to a new way of looking at career development for youth. This brief discusses the three phases of career development, highlights Individualized Learning Plans as a tool for facilitating the career development process, and offers strategies on how families can encourage the young people in their lives to pursue lifelong learning and skill-building in preparation for entering the world of work.

ODEP Releases Individualized Learning Plan Interactive Policy Map

The U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) has developed an Interactive Policy Map and accompanying brief, Individualized Learning Plans Across the U.S., to provide a snapshot of how individualized learning plans (ILPs) are being implemented nationwide. This map and brief are part of a collection of resources that ODEP has developed in partnership with NCWD/Youth, Altarum Institute, and Social Dynamics, LLC. To learn more about ILPs, take a look at NCWD/Youth’s resources including the Individualized Learning Plan Fact Sheet, Promoting Quality Individualized Learning Plans: A “How to Guide” Focused on the High School Years, and Using Individualized Learning Plans to Produce College and Career Ready High School Graduates. The full scope of NCWD/Youth’s ILP resources are also available online.

White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics releases ¡Gradúate! A Financial Aid Guide to Success


Department of Veterans Affairs Launches Employment Center Website

A new one-stop-shop resource for veterans, including student veterans with disabilities! The Department of Veterans Affairs has launched the Employment Center website, the single federal source for Veterans looking for new career opportunities in the private and public sectors, as well as service members transitioning to the civilian workforce, military spouses and dependents looking for employment.
opportunities, G.I. Bill beneficiaries transitioning from training to the job market and employers looking to connect with high quality applicants. This new site integrates multiple tools and resources for both job seekers and employers, including the Veterans Job Bank. To visit the Employment Center website, please go to: https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal/. To read the White House press release regarding the online Veterans Employment Center, please go to: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/04/23/obama-administration-launches-online-veterans-employment-center-one-stop/

**Autism Matters Series—Download 13 Podcasts Free**

The Autism Matters Podcasts Series provides interested stakeholders (e.g., academics, researchers, students, individuals with autism and their families) opportunities to learn about the latest research and best practices published in a journal entitled, *Autism: The International Journal of Research and Practice*. In a recent podcast, posted March 2014, the topic of discussion is focused on issues surrounding employment support and the barriers that people with autism face when looking for or attempting to retain a job. To listen and download the podcast series, please go to: http://aut.sagepub.com/site/podcast/podcast_dir.xhtml.

**Center on Transition Innovations (CTI)**

The Virginia Department of Education created a new online statewide resource called the Center on Transition Innovations. The website provides evidence-based resources and information along with emerging practices in the field. The website resources include free web courses for Virginia’s middle and high school educators, online newsletters, fact sheets on transition, and webcasts from state and national experts in the field. CTI research and demonstration projects (e.g., Customized Employment, Project SEARCH, Self-Determination Study) funded through the Virginia Department of Education will be highlighted on the website as well. To review the website, please go to: http://www.centerontransition.org/index.html.

**New Guidance on Transition Services from Rehabilitation Services Administration**

Attention special educators and transition coordinators—a new resource addressing transition issues between Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and state educational agencies (SEA)! The RSA has released a technical assistance circular (referred to as a TAC) that addresses a variety of transition-related issues that VR agencies have raised during monitoring activities. The issues pertain to: (1) the effective collaboration between VR agencies and SEA for the provision of transition services; (2) the VR process as it relates to referral and application for services, the determination of eligibility and the development of the individualized plan for employment (IPE); and (3) the services that may be provided through the VR program. The guidance contained in this TAC will better enable VR agencies to implement policies and engage in innovative strategies designed to improve the transition of students with disabilities including those with the most significant disabilities, from school to the achievement of integrated employment outcomes and careers. Additionally, the statutory and regulatory provisions described in this TAC are intended to provide a strong foundation on which VR agencies can build partnerships with schools, institutions of higher education, CRPs, and employers for
the delivery of a wide range of services to students in pursuit of competitive integrated employment and careers. RSA encourages VR agencies to use the flexibility afforded under the Rehabilitation Act and its implementing regulations to engage in innovative strategies, involving students with disabilities and their families in the transition process as early as possible. The TAC can be downloaded from: http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/rsa/tac/2014/tac-14-03.pdf.

HEATH Resource Center at the National Youth Transitions Center

2014 Summer Pre-College Programs for Students with Disabilities

Each year, HEATH staff members compile a list of summer pre-college for students with disabilities for families and educators. All programs listed in the publication are designed for high school students, usually rising juniors and seniors, and high school graduates who are planning to attend college. Campus disability support providers report that students with disabilities who receive some preview of the college experience can manage the first year with fewer adjustment problems than others. Pre-college programs are usually held on the campus residence halls or as day training, leisure, and recreational activities, and typically include some computer training. To review the publication, please go to: http://www.heath.gwu.edu/assets/199/summer_pre_college_programs_for_students_with_disabilities.pdf

Plummeting Labor Market Fortunes of Teens and Young Adults Report

The Rockefeller Foundation published a report entitled, Plummeting Labor Market Fortunes of Teens and Young Adults. The report highlights how employment opportunities for teens and young adults in 100 metropolitan areas have plummeted between 2000 and 2011. In 2000, teens (45%) between the ages of 16-19 were employed. In contrast, by 2011, teens (26%) between the ages of 16-19 were employed. In addition, the report shared outcomes of groups that fared better in the labor market: Non-Hispanic whites, those from higher income households, and those with work experience. To increase employment opportunities for teens and young adults, the report highlighted recommendations for stakeholders including: incorporating more work-based learning (e.g., apprenticeships, co-ops, and internships) into education and training; creating tighter linkages between secondary and postsecondary education; ensuring training meets regional labor market needs; and facilitating the transition of young people into the labor market through enhanced career counseling, mentoring, occupational and work-readiness skills development. To access the full report, please go to: http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/5e395490-75bf-46fo-b302-43247ae60883.pdf.
Conference, Webinar and Forum Opportunities

June 15, 2014, Call for Proposals
2014 Southwest Conference on Disability
October 7-10, 2014
Albuquerque, NM

The 2014 Southwest Conference on Disability is conducting a Call for Proposals on the following themes:
- Disability, Diversity, and Social Justice: Looking into the Future Through a Common Lens
- Life After a Brain Injury: Pathways to Increasing Quality of Life
- Increasing the Quality of Life of Youth in Transition: Breaking Down Barriers

To learn more about the conference and proposal requirements, please go to: http://cdd.unm.edu/swconf/.

June 23-26, 2014
American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 138th Annual Meeting
Theme: Embracing Complexity: Inclusion, Participation, and Citizenship
Orlando, FL

The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) is hosting the 138th Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida. The conference plenary sessions focus on embracing complexity by having discussions with stakeholders regarding supported decision-making, federal initiatives, and inclusion, participation, and citizenship for individuals with disabilities. For more information about registration and sessions, please go to: http://aaidd.org/education/annual-conference#.U4X0Nl4cXj-.

June 24, 2014, 2:00p.m.-3:00 p.m.
Participate in Coordinated Transportation Planning in your Community Webinar

Students can contribute to a community transportation plan as a way to inform the system and create new accessible transportation options. Learn how to participate in the coordinated transportation planning process in an upcoming free Webinar sponsored by a project funded by the Administration for Community Living.

Announcing an Upcoming Inclusive Transportation Planning Webinar
Collaboration across Untraditional Partners: Strategies and Suggestions

Engaging unique partners and organizations in coordinated transportation planning can seem daunting. Learn from the experiences of ACL Catalysts representing a regional planning agency and an independent living center regarding how to identify and engage non-traditional partners in coordinated transportation planning – and in ways that capture the voice and perspectives of diverse audiences. Panelists will share:

• Why reaching out to unique partners in coordinated transportation planning is important;
• Strategies to engage these audiences; and
• Challenges and successes.

Panelists:
Judy Shanley, Ph.D., Asst. Vice President, Youth Transition & Education, Easter Seals – Moderator
Amy St. Peter, M.P.A., Human Services and Special Projects Manager, Maricopa Association of Governments, AZ
Judy Telge, Director of Development & Mobility, Coastal Bend Ctr for Independent Living, TX

Use the following link to register for the Webinar: https://www.formstack.com/forms/?1745566-SW Zac6Gwyj

June 29-July 2, 2014
American School Counselor Association, Annual Conference
Theme: Building Magical Futures
Orlando, FL

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) will focus on “Building Magical Futures” for all students, including students with disabilities, at Orlando, Florida. The ASCA conference will have over 100 breakout sessions that will feature sessions on career counseling, transition programs, and improving graduation rates. For individuals who cannot attend the conference, you can register to attend the conference webstream. For more information about registration and sessions, please go to: http://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors-members/professional-development/annual-conference#.U4Ytv14cXJ8.

July 1-3, 2014
APSE’s 25th Annual Conference
Theme: Living the dream...building the future for Employment First!
Longbeach, CA

The 25th Annual APSE National Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Long Beach in Long Beach, CA. The conference focuses on best practices and research relating to integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. For more information regarding the conference, please go to: http://www.apse.org/conferences-training/national/.
The AHEAD conference will focus on “Access Always, in All Ways” in higher education. The conference will present on the current research and best practices in delivering services to young adults, including student veterans, with disabilities in higher education settings. The topics that will be presented at the conference range from universal design, assistive technology, self-determination, disability services, and experiences from college students with disabilities. For more information about registration and the program for the conference, please go to: http://www.ahead.org/meet/conferences/2014.

The primary purpose of this conference is expand the capacity of schools, agencies and communities, in partnership with youth, young adults and families, in promoting the successful transition of youth/young adults with disabilities to post-school outcomes of employment, postsecondary education and training, community participation and healthy lifestyles. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about effective practices to assist youth/young adults with disabilities to DREAM about the future, BELIEVE in their potential, and actively advocate to ACHIEVE their future goals. To register and learn more about the conference, please go to: http://www.pattan.net/category/Training/Calendar/event/event.html?id=09bc9658-a116-4aa8-b1c4-224128aed5e.

The Autism Society’s National Conference and Expo is the only event to consistently bring together professionals, individuals on the autism spectrum, family members and advocates in energetic forums for in-depth presentations that cover what’s new in the field of autism and explore how to improve existing services and supports. Presentation content areas include bullying prevention, criminal justice, education, employment, and transition. The varied expertise and experiences of presenters enables attendees to learn how to more effectively advocate and obtain needed services and supports. The ultimate goal of the Autism Society’s Conference is to empower family members, individuals on the spectrum and professionals to make informed decisions. Overall conference content addresses the full range of the autism spectrum and encompasses life span issues. To register and learn more about the conference, go to: http://www.2d-hosting.com/autism-society/get-involved/conference/.
Money, Money, Money! Who’s got the money?

Autism Society Award and Scholarship

The Autism Society Award is presented each year at the Autism Society’s 45th National Conference on Autism Spectrum Disorders. Autism Society members must do all nominations for the awards. Each applicant is required to submit the following materials: cover page, essay (500 words), and additional materials. **Deadline: June 15, 2014.** For more information and application, please go to: [http://www.autism-society.org/about-the-autism-society/awards/](http://www.autism-society.org/about-the-autism-society/awards/).

Brain Injury Association of Washington Academic Scholarships

The Brain Injury Association of Washington Academic Scholarships provide high school students with brain injury with an opportunity to receive $1,000 towards their postsecondary education. The scholarship is only available to residents that live in the state of Washington. Applicants must submit all of their application material postmarked by **June 30, 2014.** For more information and application, please go to: [http://www.biawa.org/scholarship.php](http://www.biawa.org/scholarship.php).

Possibilities: A Financial Resource for Parents of Children and Youth with Disabilities

“Possibilities: A Financial Resource for Parents of Children with Disabilities,” first published in 2004 by the National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE) and PACER, updates this financial planning guide to an online format, and includes more content relevant to parenting transition-age youth with disabilities. The guide offers tips and information on many financial issues and concerns of families raising children with disabilities from infancy to young adulthood. Topics include organizing financial records, managing money, preparing income taxes, health insurance options, dealing with debt, saving for college, preparing youth for adult employment, etc. [http://www.pacer.org/publications/possibilities/](http://www.pacer.org/publications/possibilities/)

2014-15 Do You Need Money for College? Federal Student Aid at a Glance


While education beyond high school in the United States is optional, it has become a necessary investment in future employment and life satisfaction for many people. Most, however, cannot afford to make this investment without some outside monetary assistance. Over the years, public and private sources of money have been developed specifically to meet this need. As increasing, but limited, amounts of money have become available, a standardized method of determining eligibility has evolved to promote equitable distribution of student financial aid. To all families and youth with disabilities looking for information on financial aid, please check out the different options in grants, loans, work-study, and scholarship opportunities. This is a resource guide that explains financial aid as well as highlights various scholarship resources for youth with disabilities listed in the back of the publication! To obtain a copy of this publication, please go to: http://heath.gwu.edu/2014-2015-heath-nytc-planning-ahead-financial-aid-students-disabilities.

The Washington Center Scholarship

The Washington Center Scholarship for Students with Disabilities funded by the AT&T Foundation and HSC Foundation, these awards provide housing assistance in varying amounts (up to a full housing scholarship) to competitively selected students who self-identify as having a disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Priority consideration is given to undergraduate students; however, Postgraduate Program applicants may be considered. http://www.twc.edu

Web Accessibility Toolkit

The Web Accessibility Toolkit provides postsecondary education stakeholders with information on making digital resources usable and accessible in research libraries. The Toolkit disseminates information on standards & best practices, how to foster an inclusive institution, community of practice, and additional resources. The Toolkit was developed based on the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) accessibility initiative. To learn more about ARL accessibility initiative, please see the 2012 Report of the ARL Joint Task Force on Services to Patrons with Print Disability. To review the Web Accessibility Toolkit, please go to: http://accessibility.arl.org/.
National Research Center for Career and Technical Education (NRCCTE)

The National Research Center for Career and Technical Education provides professional development opportunities as well as disseminate research, publications and resources to educators, families, and professionals who serve youth with interested in Career and Technical Education (CTE). The NRCCTE recently released a report on four-year longitudinal study highlighting student outcomes in CTE programs of study. The results in one district highlighted “...increased student graduation rates by increasing the number of CTE they earned.” To learn more about the report, student outcomes, and recommendations. Please go to: http://www.nrccte.org/.
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Submissions

We welcome submissions from transition-related organizations and entities to post resources and information in our quarterly newsletter. Please email us at askheath@gwu.edu to include your submission in our next newsletter.