

# HEATH Resource Center Newsletter

National Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities  
Summer Edition 2010



## Road Trip: Finding the Right College for You



By: Dr. Susan King

Summer is a great time to visit colleges. Use the time to explore and decide whether you can envision yourself living and learning there for four years. Outlined below are some questions and resources to assist with finding the "right" college to meet your needs. Prior to visiting the campus do your research. Guidance offices, bookstores, libraries and the internet all have information you may find useful. Remember to avoid questions which can be answered with a simple yes or no. Open ended questions force people to elaborate on their answers and feelings.

Campus Visit: Remember the objective is to determine if you can live and learn at this college. Go to the information session, take a tour, meet with admissions officers, attend class, meet with professors, and schedule an on-campus interview.

Information Sessions: Plan to attend the college's information session, generally they are hosted by admissions officials and frequently include current students.

The session will feature information on the admissions process, you should be prepared to take notes and ask questions. Remember your notes may be instrumental in your future decision making. If you are interested in scheduling an individual appointment with an admissions officer, you should call prior to your visit. Prepare for the appointment, review the information about the admissions process and the programs you are interested in. Make a list of questions and take your questions to the interview.

Tours: Use the tour as an opportunity to see the campus and interview the tour guide (student). Ask questions about academics and campus life.

- Are there are activities on the weekend or do most students tend to go home every weekend?
- What is the atmosphere of the dorms? Are they "party" oriented versus "study" oriented?
- How is the quality of the food? Does the school offer healthy meals - salads, fresh vegetables, and fresh fruit?
- Ask to visit a dorm, if it is not included in the campus tour. Observe the condition of the dorm. Is the dorm clean? Are the common areas of the dorm in good condition? How many students per room? Are their laundry facilities in every dorm?
- Is it easy to get off campus to public transportation - airports, train stations, buses and subway?
- Is it easy to get to a nearby town or city?
- What is close to the campus? Are there movie theatres, local attractions and are the things you enjoy doing nearby?

Financial Aid: You may ask some general financial aid questions in an information session. However specific questions should be addressed in a private meeting versus a group meeting. Most colleges have a

financial aid office that is separate from the admissions office. You may want to schedule an appointment with a financial aid officer in order to ask specific information questions and to discuss potential scholarship opportunities. Some general financial aid questions are listed below:

- What percentage of students receives financial aid?
- Is the majority of the aid awarded on need or merit based?
- What scholarships are available from the college?

Learning: Try to identify the academic climate. You want to determine whether or not the college can challenge you as well as support your academic needs?

- Are courses taught by professors or teaching assistants?
- Are professors accessible?
- What are the hours of the libraries?
- Does the campus have a Writing Center? Where the Writing Center located and what are the hours?
- Does the school have a computer lab? Is there computer support available to students?
- Prior to your visit, schedule a class visit. Remember to arrive

on time to the class you are scheduled to visit.

- How are academic advisors assigned to students?

### Students with Special Learning

Needs: Prior to your campus visit, you should schedule an appointment with the office responsible for providing reasonable academic accommodations. This office can have a variety of names: Disabled Student Services, Office of Students with Disabilities, and Academic Support Services. Check the college website to identify the tests required of perspective students and how recent your educational evaluation must be. A few questions you may want to ask regarding learning support are:

- What are the requirements to register for support services? What forms are required by the college?
- Can the college provide the accommodations outlined in your educational evaluation? (Bring your recent educational evaluation with the reasonable accommodations required for your academic success.)
- What credentials are required for the learning specialist at this particular college?
- What is the caseload for the learning specialist? How are

learning specialist assigned to students?

- What are the graduation rates of students with disabilities? (This information will help you determine how committed the college is to assisting students with disabilities to facilitate success.)
- Take notes on your conversation to help with your future decision making process.

### Remember:

- Stay open minded so you can discover the benefits of all different types (private, public, Liberal Arts), sizes (large, medium, small and very small) and locations (urban or rural) of colleges.
- After your campus visit immediately write down your impression of the college. Your impression will determine whether or not you keep a college on your list.
- You will need to visit a campus more than once. Some colleges offer overnight experiences which may help you make your final selection.
- When you meet with a college or university official, ask for a business card, you will need the information for a thank you note. Once at home write a

thank you note that is positive and complimentary.

visits should help you narrow your choices.

The main reason to visit colleges is to talk with students, professors and learning specialist to determine whether or not you feel you could live and learn there. Finding the "right" college is a challenge but investing the time and energy will help you to confidently decide on a list of potential colleges you would like to apply. Applying to college can become a costly endeavor; college

About the Author  
**Susan King, Ed.D.**, is an educational consultant and teaches diagnostic assessment at The George Washington University. Her current interests include the transition from secondary education to college, technology, diagnostic assessment and disability documentation. Email: [kings@gwu.edu](mailto:kings@gwu.edu)

## Health Care Options for Students Transitioning to College

By: Candice Cloos

Health care is essential for college students because it fosters independence and provides security for families. It enables students to take preventative health measures, perform better academically, and achieve educational objectives. Health risks in a collegiate environment include athletic injuries, accidents, and contagious illnesses, such as the flu, meningitis, and mononucleosis (mono). Further, many students with special needs rely on health insurance to provide assistance such as prescription drug benefits and mental health services (Government Accountability Office (GAO), 2008).

Roughly seven million, or 80% of college students aged 18 - 23 have health insurance. Of these:

- 67% are covered by employer-sponsored plans
- 7% are covered by private plans (i.e. individual market plans or college health plans)
- 6% are covered by public programs (i.e. Medicaid).

About 20%, or 1.7 million college students do not have health insurance (GAO, 2008).

Several groups of college students including part-time, older, and minority students, are less likely to be insured than other students. About 31% of part-time students do not have access to health care, which may be attributed to the challenges they face in qualifying under many plans. Older students face similar issues and as a result 25% of 22 year olds and 35% of 23 year olds do not have insurance. Finally, 26% of Asian students, 29% of African-American students, and 38% of Hispanic students do not have health coverage (GAO, 2008).

There are six major health insurance options families can explore:

- Employer-Sponsored Plans
- College Health Plans
- Individual Market Plans
- COBRA
- Medicaid
- SCHIP

The benefits, drawbacks, and recommendations for each are addressed in the subsequent sections.

### **Employer-Sponsored Plans**

As mentioned, almost two-thirds of college students select employer-sponsored plans. Employers typically subsidize a portion of the employee's premiums for health insurance; premiums are calculated based on the risk of the entire group, not individuals. About 87% of college students who use employer-sponsored plans receive coverage through another person's policy, typically a parent (GAO, 2008).

Employer-sponsored plans are extremely popular because they tend to offer good coverage at reasonable rates. However, due to the current economic state, many employer-sponsored plans are cutting benefits to reduce spending. Areas such as prescription drugs or mental health services are frequently targeted. Another way to save money is to lower the cut off age of dependents. The average cut off age for dependents is usually 18 for non-students and 22 for students, but your plan may incur changes. Please refer to the section on Legislation for implications from the Health Care Reform Act (GAO, 2008; Murray & Montgomery, 2010).

Also, some insurance companies only accept full-time students as dependents. Full-time students usually must take a minimum of 12 credits in college. This mandate

can result in a loss of coverage if the student needs to take a leave of absence or lighten a course load to part-time. Another potential drawback may occur if the student attends a college outside of network coverage (GAO, 2008; Murray & Montgomery, 2010).

*Recommendations:* Families should recheck their employer-sponsored plan's benefits, as well as the age and credit requirements for student dependents. It is also necessary to verify coverage if the student will be attending a school away from home (Murray & Montgomery, 2010).

### **College Health Plans**

The type of college a student attends will likely influence whether it offers a health plan. About 57% of all colleges offer their own health policies:

1. 71% of four year private colleges
2. 82% of four year public colleges
3. 29% of two year colleges

There is great variation between states and colleges, but typically, larger schools with more than 5,000 students and health centers have better plans. The provisions vary widely, especially in terms of preventative care and prescription drug coverage. The premiums range from \$30 to \$2400 and depend on the types of benefits offered (GAO, 2008).

Some colleges require health insurance and those that do usually have better plans because more students select the school insurance, thus increasing the benefits. To help maintain affordable premiums and sustainable plans, colleges often limit access to health plans for part-time students. It is not uncommon for a student who is elderly or has a preexisting condition to enroll in a class merely to reap the benefits of the school's health plan. Therefore, many schools limit coverage to full-time, degree seeking students. About 30% of colleges offer health services for all part-time students, 61% for some part-time students, and 8% for none of the part-time students (GAO, 2008).

*Recommendations:* First, look to see if the college offers a plan and how many credits a student needs to take in order to enroll. It is important to determine the plan's coverage; plans usually offer the same categories of services but differ in terms of how they pay for them. Depending on the need of the student, having a

health center that offers immediate care on campus may be valuable. However, receiving care under a new doctor may pose challenges for some students (GAO, 2008).

### **Individual Market Plans**

Individual market plans are sold by insurance companies to individuals who do not receive coverage from any other group. These plans are usually allowed to review the health status of each person applying for insurance. Applicants can be rejected based on factors such as health status, age, and gender. This point is very important if the student has special needs that are considered a pre-existing condition. Please refer to section on Legislation for implications from the Health Care Reform Act (Konrad, 2009; GAO, 2008).

Individual market plans are usually expensive and individuals pay the full price of the health care premium. However, one of the benefits of selecting this option is the ability to tailor a plan to an individual's specific needs (Konrad, 2009).

*Recommendations:* Families should look into several individual market plans to compare the cost and benefits. For more information visit:

<http://www.healthcare.gov/>

<http://eHealthinsurance.com>

Choosing an individual market plan may be advantageous if families select a high-deductible health plan with a pretax health savings account. This option can provide lower premiums and more control of spending (Konrad, 2009).

### **COBRA**

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) can be another option for college students. COBRA can provide coverage for students who lost their eligibility to receive health insurance as a dependent under their parent's employer-sponsored plan. COBRA only offers coverage for a limited time; students who qualify have the option of purchasing up to 36 months of continuation coverage under the employer-sponsored plan. However, COBRA allows employers to charge 100% of the premium and an additional 2% administration fee, thus making COBRA a costly option (GAO, 2008; Konrad, 2009).

COBRA offers the consistency of health care and students would be able to receive care from their normal providers. Unfortunately, COBRA is only a temporary option that lasts up to three years, which is not enough time for a student to complete a four year degree. COBRA is an important plan to remember if the student needs to drop credit hours to become a part-time student or exceeds the dependent age limit and loses other insurance coverage. Please refer to section on Legislation for implications from the Health Care Reform Act (GAO, 2008; Konrad, 2009).

*Recommendations:* COBRA is a good way to fill the gap between plans. Individuals should contact their current insurance company to find out more information about COBRA (GAO, 2008; Konrad, 2009).

## **Medicaid**

Medicaid is a joint federal-state program that finances health care coverage for selected low-income families, children, pregnant women, and people who are aged or disabled. It is important to note that poverty alone does not qualify individuals for services; a person also has to fit into one of the above categories, thus making it difficult for many to receive coverage. The definition of disability is also a barrier to receiving Medicaid, as it is defined as a medically determinable physical or mental impairment that can be expected to cause death or last more than 12 months (Social Security Administration, (SSA, 2010; GAO 2008).

Medicaid's eligibility and services vary from state to state. Medicaid does not pay people directly, but sends money to health care providers. Depending on the state's laws, you may be asked to pay part of the co-payment for select services (SSA, 2010; GAO, 2008).

*Recommendations:* It is necessary to check with the state Medicaid program to determine eligibility and learn about the program (SSA, 2010). To learn more about Medicaid programs in the 50 states visit:

<http://www.cms.gov/MedicaidGenInfo/>

<http://64.82.65.67/medicaid/states.html>

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/medicaid.jsp>

<http://www.kff.org/medicaid/>

## **SCHIP**

The State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) provides health care coverage to low-income children through age 18. These children must be from a family whose income exceeds their state's Medicaid eligibility and is not insured through another source. Specifically, families must be at or below 200% of the federal poverty line to receive coverage. About seven million children are enrolled in SCHIP (SCHIP Information Center, 2010; GAO, 2008).

While SCHIP may be an option for students entering college, it only provides coverage until age 19. Therefore, families must determine another source of health care for the remainder of college. Also, in order to qualify for SCHIP, the children must not be eligible for Medicaid (SCHIP Information Center, 2010; GAO, 2008).

*Recommendations:* It is necessary to check with the state SCHIP program to determine eligibility and learn about the program (SCHIP Information Center, 2010). To learn more about SCHIP visit:

<http://www.insurekidsnow.gov/state/index.html>

<http://www.kff.org/medicaid/>

## **Legislation**

### *Health Care Reform Act*

Though the specific details of the Health Care Reform Act of March 2010 are not yet decided, two components of this legislation will directly impact families and health insurance. As of September 2010, insurance companies will be prohibited from denying coverage to children based on pre-existing conditions. At the same time, parents will have the option of keeping children on their insurance plans until age 26 (Murray & Montgomery, 2010; Pacer Center, 2010). Two of the nation's largest health insurance companies announced they would start meeting this requirement early; WellPoint Incorporated serves 33 million people and United Healthcare 24 million, so this policy will impact hundreds of thousands of dependents. Families should check with their insurance company to see if it implementing the law prior to September (Rovener, 2010).

The reform act also provides immediate help for those who are uninsured with pre-existing conditions, beginning on July 1, 2010. These individuals will receive immediate access to insurance through a temporary high-risk pool. This set up is only temporary until the exchanges are operating normally in 2014 (Office of Speaker Nancy Pelosi, 2010).

There are other provisions that go in effect in 2014 in addition to not discriminating against adults with pre-existing conditions. There will also be a cap on out-of-pocket expenses for people who have private health plans (Office of Speaker Nancy Pelosi, 2010). There are many changes in the Medicaid program as well; states will be allowed to offer additional services through the 1915 (i) Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waivers State Plan Option. The federal share of Medicaid for personal attendants will be increased and centers for Medicare and Medicaid services will be required to collect information on access to primary care services of beneficiaries with disabilities. Further, the US is creating a national long term services insurance program to help select people and their families receive health care without forcing them into poverty to be eligible for Medicare services (Pacer Center, 2010).

### *State Insurance Requirements*

Many states require select students to have health insurance, including Massachusetts and New Jersey. Massachusetts passed a law in 1989 requiring all students who are enrolled at least 3/4 of full time status to have health coverage. In 1991, New Jersey began mandating all full-time students attending college have insurance (Health and Human Services, 2010; State of New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance, 2010).

In 2006, Maryland enacted a law requiring part-time students with documented disabilities to have health insurance. Maryland defines part-time students as enrolling in at least seven credits per semester. This law impacts students in accredited institutions of higher education (Michie's Legal Resources, 2010).

Families should be aware of what the laws are in their respective states. To learn information about your state visit:

[http://www.naic.org/state\\_web\\_map.htm](http://www.naic.org/state_web_map.htm)

## *Leave of Absence*

Previously if an injury or illness forced a student to take a leave of absence from college or to lighten his or her course load, some insurance policies would no longer provide coverage as a full-time student. However, in October of 2009, Michelle's Law (PL 100-381) was passed to ensure students who go on medical leave would have health insurance coverage for up to one year (Gov Track US, 2008).

Unfortunately, some insurance companies take advantage of families not knowing this law and still encourage them to purchase additional coverage (Konrad, 2009).

For more information about Michelle's Law visit:

<http://www.michelleslaw.com/>

[https://www.cms.gov/HealthInsReformforConsume/Downloads/Michelles\\_Law.pdf](https://www.cms.gov/HealthInsReformforConsume/Downloads/Michelles_Law.pdf)

## **Additional Online Resources**

Find Insurance Options

<http://finder.healthcare.gov/>

Tips for Rechecking Insurance Benefits, Verifying Coverage, Identifying Loopholes, and Choosing Policies

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/02/health/02patient.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/02/health/02patient.html?_r=1)

Disability Starter Kit

[http://www.ssa.gov/disability/disability\\_starter\\_kits\\_child\\_factsheet.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/disability/disability_starter_kits_child_factsheet.htm)

American College Health Association

<http://www.acha.org/>

## **About the Author**

**Candice Cloos** is a graduate research assistant and doctoral student in Special Education at The George Washington University. Her current interests include issues impacting low income and diverse learners and international education.

Email: [ccloos@gwmail.gwu.edu](mailto:ccloos@gwmail.gwu.edu)

## References

- Government Accountability Office (GAO) (2008). Health Insurance: Most college students are covered through employer-sponsored plans and some colleges and states are taking steps to increase coverage. Retrieved from <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08389.pdf>
- Gov Track US. (2008). H.R. 2851: Michelle's Law. Retrieved from <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h110-2851>
- Health and Human Services. (2010). Student Health Insurance. Retrieved from <http://www.mass.gov>
- Konrad, W. (2009, May). A maze of options on health insurance for college students. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/02/health/02patient.html>
- Michie's Legal Resources. (2010). Maryland Code. Retrieved from <http://www.michie.com/maryland/lpext.dll/?fn=documentframe.htm&f=templates&2.0#>
- Murray, S. & Montgomery, L. (2010, March). House passes health-care reform bill without republican votes. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/21/AR2010032100943\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/21/AR2010032100943_pf.html)
- Office of the Speaker Nancy Pelosi. (2010). Affordable health care for America: Key provisions that take effect immediately. Retrieved from [http://docs.house.gov/energycommerce/IMMEDIATE\\_PROVISIONS.pdf](http://docs.house.gov/energycommerce/IMMEDIATE_PROVISIONS.pdf)
- Pacer Center. (2010). Access to healthcare 2010. Retrieved from <http://www.pacer.org/tatra/pdf/healthcareact2010.pdf>
- Rovener, J. (2010, April). Sebelius: Insurers to meet health requirement early. *National Public Radio*. Retrieved from <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=126126323>
- SCHIP Information Center. (2010). What is SCHIP? Retrieved from <http://www.schip-info.org/>
- Social Security Administration (SSA). (2010). Medicaid information. Retrieved from <http://www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/medicaid.htm>
- State of New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance. (2010). Health insurance programs. Retrieved from [http://www.state.nj.us/dobi/division\\_insurance/ihcseh/index.html](http://www.state.nj.us/dobi/division_insurance/ihcseh/index.html)

# New Transition Resources

## **Improving Transition Outcomes for Youth Involved in the Juvenile Justice System: Practical Considerations (Brief)**

This InfoBrief from the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability-Youth describes the characteristics of and issues faced by youth involved with the juvenile justice system, including those with disabilities. It provides a framework for youth service professionals to help youth avoid or transition out of the juvenile justice system, promotes cross-systems collaboration, and highlights promising practices being used around the country. (This InfoBrief is based on "Making the Right Turn: A Guide about Improving Transition Outcomes for Youth Involved in the Juvenile Corrections System," available at: <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/juvenile-justice-guide>.) Available in pdf (12 pages, 291 KB). <http://tinyurl.com/3xq7qcx>

## **NCWD/Youth and ODEP Release Cyber Disclosure Workbook for Youth with Disabilities (2010)**

The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability-Youth (NCWD/Y) and the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) have released "Cyber Disclosure for Youth with Disabilities," a supplement to "The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A

Workbook for Youth with Disabilities," to help youth learn about disability disclosure and what it means for them. Search sites like Google, social networking sites like Facebook, and micro-blogging sites like Twitter have added a new element to disclosure. Without even being aware of it, an individual can disclose disability status on the internet, for instance, by including a picture of oneself using a wheelchair, or commenting on a friend's blog about disability, or posting a profile on a disability organization's website. This document provides youth suggestions on how to make informed decisions about their own disability disclosure and to manage their disclosures online.

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/cyber-disclosure>

## **NCWD/Youth Releases Workbook to Aid Adults Supporting Youth with Disability (2010)**

The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability-Youth (NCWD/Y) has released "The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Families, Educators, Youth Service Professionals, and Adult Allies Who Care About Youth with Disabilities," for adults in the lives of young people (both those with visible disabilities and with disabilities not apparent to others). This workbook helps adults make informed decisions about teaching a young man or woman about his or her rights and responsibilities in disclosing his or her disability, a decision that will affect the young

person's educational, employment, and social life. It also helps adults learn how to support a young person with a disability as he or she takes steps in becoming more independent and self-sufficient.

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure-for-adults>

### **ODEP Releases Making the Move to Managing Your Own Personal Assistance Services (PAS): A Toolkit for Youth Transitioning to Adulthood (2010)**

Through the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability-Youth, the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) has released "Making the Move to Managing Your Own Personal Assistance Services (PAS): A Toolkit for Youth Transitioning to Adulthood." Whether moving from school or a home setting to work, college, or living on their own, transition-aged youth with significant disabilities and their families or friends can benefit from the information and guidance offered by the toolkit in navigating the complex world of PAS. This toolkit assists youth in strengthening some of the fundamental skills essential for successfully managing their own PAS: effective communication, time-management, working with others, and establishing professional relationships.

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/PAS-Toolkit>

### **SparkAction.org**

Formally known as Connect for Kids, SparkAction has re-launched a new, improved site: SparkAction.org. The new site merges the comprehensive CFK library of articles and resources

with the Youth Policy Action Center's high-tech online advocacy tools and the National Youth Development Information Center's publications.

SparkAction was developed with input from hundreds of organizations and young people across the country.

<http://sparkaction.org/>

### **Earning a High School Diploma through Alternative Routes (June 2010) (NCEO Synthesis Report 76)**

Earning a standard diploma has become increasingly important. Not only does it improve post school outcomes, but it also has become a part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) accountability system at the high school level, with the required graduation rate including only those students who have earned a regular or standard high school diploma or higher. The purpose of the study reported here, from the National Center on Educational Outcomes, was to examine the alternative routes to passing the high school exit exam that were available during the school year 2008-09 to students to earn a standard high school diploma. It examines alternative routes in the 26 states with active or soon-to-be active exit exams, and documents the alternative routes available for all students and those specifically for students with disabilities. Available in pdf (110 pages, 963 KB).

<http://www.cehd.umn.edu/nceo/OnlinePublications/Synthesis76/Synthesis76.pdf>

### **NICHCY's 2010 Guide to Online Publications (2010)**

NICHCY (National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities) has updated their guide to their online resources. People organizing conferences relevant to people with disabilities or arranging trainings for parents or practitioners about IDEA or disabilities could include news of NICHCY and its free online resources in the conference packet or training information. Available in pdf (142 KB, 4 pp).

<http://tinyurl.com/2bt2y5g>

### **NICHCY Research-Based Resources on Specific Disabilities (May 2010) (Resource List)**

NICHCY (National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities) has updated their list of resources on medical research into disabilities and the findings of research on the use of academic and other interventions with children who have special needs. The final section covers research associated with the specific disabilities of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, autism, emotional disabilities, intellectual disabilities, and learning disabilities.

<http://www.nichcy.org/Research/Basics/Pages/Disabilities.aspx>

### **Family Support Center on Disabilities: Knowledge & Involvement Network (KIN)**

This Web site offers a national clearinghouse of family support for individuals with disabilities and their families. The Build Your Knowledge

section has information on important issues, policies, and services related to the needs of individuals with disabilities and families.

[www.familysupportclearinghouse.org](http://www.familysupportclearinghouse.org)

### **NASDE Brief on Collaborative Transition Strategies of Eight States: Preparation for Postsecondary Life for Students with Disabilities (June 2010) (Policy Brief)**

This brief policy analysis was designed by Project Forum at the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) to identify collaborative strategies that states have implemented to address the needs of students with disabilities whose IEP transition services specify postsecondary career and technical education, vocational rehabilitation and/or immediate employment upon departure from secondary school. Project Forum collaborated with other organizations and agencies to identify eight states and interviewees. The eight states interviewed for this document offer a variety of programs built on collaborative efforts that may serve as models for other states.

<http://www.projectforum.org/>

## Future Transition Conferences and Webinars

**August 20, 2010, 12:00-1:30 PM ET  
Strategies to Increase School  
Completion Rates for Students with  
or at Risk for Emotional/Behavioral  
Disorders  
Webinar**

Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders (EBD) continue to demonstrate the worst post-secondary outcomes among all groups of students, in part due to their large dropout rate. This webinar will focus on two current federally funded Centers that focus on prevention and intervention among high school students at risk for school failure due to problem behavior. First, the need for consistent pro-active environmental supports across a continuum will be discussed through School-wide Positive Behavior Supports. Second, preliminary work will be presented from a recently funded research center focusing specifically on students with EBD within high schools. Participants will be provided with promising ideas and directed to available resources to assist them in implementation.

[http://online.krm.com/iebms/coe/coe\\_p2\\_details.aspx?oc=10&cc=0015143&eventid=17096](http://online.krm.com/iebms/coe/coe_p2_details.aspx?oc=10&cc=0015143&eventid=17096)

Think College, in collaboration with TASH, is providing an exciting five-part webinar exploring challenging and complex issues in postsecondary education for people with intellectual disabilities. Each webinar will examine closely the latest breakthroughs and best practices in postsecondary education, including practical research-based strategies to enhance educational opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities.

The webinar brochure and registration form can be downloaded from the Think College website. Click HERE to register online.

For more information, contact Mary Staley at [mstaley@tash.org](mailto:mstaley@tash.org) or 202-540-9014.

### SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

#### SEPTEMBER 15 SESSION 1

*Postsecondary Education for People with Intellectual Disabilities: Overview, Higher Education Opportunity Act, Benefits, Best Practices and Quality Indicators*

Debra Hart, Cate Weir, ICI, UMass Boston, Claire Bible, student, Edgewood College, Madison, Wis.

This webinar is the first in a series that will cover issues related to postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities. The session is an overview of what is happening nationally, recent changes to the Higher Education Opportunity Act that relate to students with intellectual disabilities and a review of benefits and emerging standards and quality indicators for these programs.

#### SEPTEMBER 22 SESSION 2

*Funding Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities*

Judy Shanley, Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Dept. of Education, Washington, D.C.; Paula Sotnik, National Service Inclusion Project, University of Massachusetts Boston, Boston, Mass.; Carole Gothelf, AHRC, New York, N.Y.

This webinar will feature several speakers who will discuss creative approaches to the funding of postsecondary programs. These funding approaches will include the use of Medicaid funds, how to take advantage of

education awards through national and community service programs as well as the new access to financial aid that students with intellectual disabilities now have as a result of changes to the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

### **SEPTEMBER 29 SESSION 3**

#### ***Transition to College for Students with Intellectual Disabilities***

Meg Grigal, TransCen, Inc., Rockville, Md.

Helping students with intellectual disabilities from school to adult life can be an overwhelming experience. This presentation will share information on how college and other adult learning opportunities might be possible for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Meg will share strategies and ideas to help transition specialists, educators and parents of transition-aged youth get a handle on what they can do to support a smooth transition to college.

### **OCTOBER 6 SESSION 4**

#### ***Creating Inclusive College Options: Strategies and Promising Practices***

Molly Boyle, ICI, UMass Boston, Boston, Mass.; Jill Sloan, Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, Ga.; Paulette Apostilides, parent, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Katie Apostilides, Pittsburgh, PA.

This session will feature a discussion of promising practices in postsecondary education for people with intellectual disabilities from professionals in the field, parents and students. Participants will have an opportunity to learn specific strategies that work from people with first-hand experience.

### **OCTOBER 13 SESSION 5**

#### ***Strategies to Support Employment in PSE Programs***

Amy Dwyre, TransCen, Inc. Rockville. Md.;  
Student and parent presenters TBA

Learn about specific strategies that support employment outcomes, how college course access can support career interests, and hear from a professional, a student, and a parent about how going to college and starting a career can be successful for students with ID.

**September 22-23, 2010**

#### **6th National Organizational Change Forum**

**Indianapolis, IN**

This Forum is designed to be interactive and action oriented, featuring discussions and planning related to policy and systems change, leadership, management, transition, career development, and integrated employment, including discussions to establish a National Agenda on Employment First and Organizational Change. Forum planners encourage state teams to attend, including state Vocational Rehabilitation, Developmental Disabilities agency representatives, Behavioral Health Centers, local community providers, One Stop career center staff, local education agency staff, university faculty, self-advocates, and interested others.

<http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/?pageId=7&newsId=222&newsType=0>

**October 21-23, 2010  
2010 Closing the Gap Conference  
Bloomington, Minnesota  
(Conference)**

This year's conference builds on a tradition of providing a comprehensive examination of the most current uses of technology by persons with disabilities and the professionals who work with them. Topics will cover technologies being applied to all disabilities and age groups in education, rehabilitation, vocation, and independent living. First-hand information about products and best assistive technology (AT) practices and strategies will be presented by and for teachers, therapists, clinicians, parents and end users alike.

<http://www.closingthegap.com/conference/>

**New Financial Aid &  
Scholarship Information**

**HEATH Resource Center  
Financial Aid Information  
2009-2010**

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.

[www.heath.gwu.edu](http://www.heath.gwu.edu)

**The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr.  
Foundation:  
Public Policy Fellowship Program  
2010-2011**

The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation seeks exemplary professionals and/or family members of persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities who are currently working or volunteering in the field of inclusive services and supports for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities for an intensive one-year Public Policy Fellowship in Washington, DC. The purpose of the Fellowship is to prepare both early career and veteran leaders be leaders in public policy in their home state and/or nationally. The program provides a one-year full-time exposure to the federal public policy making process, and includes a stipend and modest relocation expenses.

<http://www.jpkf.org/>

**Disaboom Scholarship Directory**

Disaboom recently launched a scholarship directory for students with disabilities, listing over 125 scholarships.

<http://www.disaboom.com/scholarships>

## **Federal Student Aid Grant Program Fact Sheet**

Disability.Gov has created a fact sheet that provides an overview of the major federal student aid grant programs. The federal government provides grant funds for students attending colleges, including career colleges and universities. Grants, unlike loans, do not have to be repaid. (A Spanish version is

at: <http://tinyurl.com/yz2zheg>.)

Available in pdf (1 page, 164 KB).

<http://tinyurl.com/yfbe5tb>

## **Funding Education Beyond High School**

The US Department of Education's *Guide to Federal Student Aid (2009-2010)* provides information for students and families on applying for federal student aid to pay for post-secondary education.

This guide explains the application process, the various federal loans, grants, and work-study programs available, and how to apply for them.

Education creates opportunities and is an important step toward success. Available in pdf (64 pages, 2.95 MB).

<http://tinyurl.com/yk7uot7>

## **NASFAA and Casey Family programs: Guide to Financial Aid Assistance to Students from Foster Care and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth**

This guide provides information for those who help youth from foster care and unaccompanied homeless youth to secure financial aid for postsecondary education or training programs. It describes how to respond to new FAFSA questions 55-60 that will determine federal financial aid status for these students. A section on sensitive communications is also included. This guide will be useful for financial aid professionals, independent living coordinators, guidance counselors, financial aid counselors, social workers and advocates who are helping youth to secure the maximum allowable financial aid.

[www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/ProvidingEffectiveFinancialAid.htm](http://www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/ProvidingEffectiveFinancialAid.htm)

## **Scholarships and Internships for Latino Students with Disabilities**

The World Institute on Disability (WID) has a five-year grant to establish the National Technical Assistance Center for Latinos with Disabilities living in the United States, through Proyecto Vision. Proyecto Vision's website has a list of scholarship opportunities for college students who are Latino and who are living with disability.

<http://www.proyectovision.net/english/opportunities/scholarships.html>