HEATH Resource Center at the National Youth Transitions Center Newsletter

National Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities
Summer Edition 2011

HEATH Resource Center at the National Youth Transitions Center

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 Resources**. 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**. http://www.hscfoundation.org/aboutus/publications/NYTCbrochure.pdf

Transition to Employment for Individuals with Disabilities
by: Dr. Cindy Miller

The support of individuals with disabilities as they transition to postsecondary education and/or employment is critical to individual success. Individuals with disabilities are employed at lower numbers (27%) than individuals without disabilities (70%) (U.S. Department of Labor, 2011). They attend postsecondary education at a rate of 19%, while their nondisabled peers attend at a much higher 40% (Wagner, M., Newman, L., Cameto, R., Garza, N., & Levine, P., 2005). Statistics indicate that 17% of individuals with disabilities have not completed high school, while 11% of those without disabilities have not (Taylor, Krane & Orkis, 2010).

Research indicates that individuals with disabilities are disproportionately represented in occupations that have the lowest projected growth and the lowest pay (Butterworth, Smith, Hall, Migliore, & Winsor, 2008). According to the Kessler Foundation/NOD 2010 Survey of Americans with Disabilities, there are still large gaps between individuals with and without disabilities in the areas of employment, including access to transportation, health care, socializing, going to restaurants, and satisfaction with life (Taylor, Krane & Orkis, 2010). While only 32% of individuals with disabilities are employed, there are an estimated 54 million of them in the U.S. (Taylor, Krane & Orkis, 2010). This disparity indicates a lack of opportunity, skills, incentive, education or possibly a combination of these.

Link Between Employment and Postsecondary

An individual's ability to obtain higher wages can be tied to access to training after high school (Flannery, Yovanoff, Benz & Kato, 2011). This can be helped through partnerships by providing additional supports through collaboration between postsecondary institutions such as community colleges and agencies (e.g. vocational rehabilitation). The combination of short-term training programs can support individuals with disabilities participating in college, while learning those skills that can help them earn a living wage (Flannery, Yovanoff, Benz & Kato, 2011).

Employability Skills

Short term training programs can support college participation

It is important to identify the basic foundation skills that employers uniformly expect in order to prepare individuals for employment. Work-based skills can be divided into hard and soft skills. Practically all individuals who are hired to do a specific job have hard skills. They are the task-related skills. Soft skills are interpersonal skills that enable the person to socially interact in the work place and emotionally handle the daily stresses of working and living with others. Employers identify soft skills as critical for job success. A person might get a

position because of hard skills, but it is often difficult to advance without lack of soft skills. For example, the welder who is hired to complete the welding on a new structure has specific skills that are documented through training and certification. If the welder cannot get to work on time, cannot work with other people, or complete simple paperwork the employer expects, he/she lacks the necessary soft or foundation skills that can keep him/her employed or make them successful in that position.

Hard Skills

Each job has specific tasks that enable the worker to physically and accurately perform the job. The following gives a very brief overview of the kind of skills needed to do some entry level tasks. A list of job descriptions and essentials functions for each job should be available to the potential worker. For example, a job in a coffee shop would require communication skills, writing and reading skills, the ability to take an order, deliver food, stand and walk for the entire time of the shift, carry about 20 pounds of dishes, balance, clear and clean a table. All of these tasks are in addition to soft skills. It is expected that an individual will need some level of training to learn the process used by a given employer or how to complete each individual task. It may be necessary for the transition teacher and job coach to work on general skills that apply to most jobs such as dexterity and endurance and to learn the tasks specific to the job the student is seeking in order to help the student complete the hard skills.

Hard Skills are specific tasks needed to perform a job

Soft Skills

Soft skills are often associated with Emotional Intelligence or a person's Emotional Intelligence Quotient (EQ) and the ability to get along with others. These are also called "people" skills and include communication skills, team skills, problem-solving skills, and organization skills. The foundation skills have been detailed by Jones (1995) as: Basic

Skills, Thinking Skills, People Skills, and Personal Qualities. These skills include the following:

- **Basic skills**: reading, writing, mathematics, speaking and listening
- **Thinking skills**: creative thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, and visualization skills
- **People skills**: social, negotiation, leadership, teamwork and cultural diversity skills
- **Personal qualities**: responsibility, self-management, and self-esteem.

The need for soft skills training is common to all employers. Knowing that the young person being hired will have the necessary social and entry-level employment skills to adequately represent the business is critical.

Soft Skills are basic skills including communication and people skills

Employers

Employers serving as planning partners for individuals with disabilities can be problematic, yet individuals with disabilities can benefit a great deal from employers and community leaders being a part of their transition team. These individuals provide valuable information concerning the labor needs of business and industry, changes in technology and the impact it has on instructional programs and curricula, and current and future job prospects (e.g., job shadowing, guest speakers, job fairs).

DiversityInc compiles a list of companies that every year are evaluated for recruiting individuals with disabilities, providing accommodations and other benefits, providing resources for groups of individuals with disabilities and their caregivers, and supporting web sites and communication materials that features individuals with disabilities. From submissions of over 400 participants, the current list

Individuals with disabilities benefit when employers participate in transition

includes well-known names: IBM Corp, Ernst & Young, Proctor & Gamble, Aetna, KPMG, Cisco Systems, SC Johnson, Eli Lilly & Company, Merck & Co., and Sodexo (www.DiversityInc.com, 2010).

There are companies that provide consulting services using individuals with disabilities. One firm, Bender Consulting Services, Inc., provides consulting jobs to those who have expertise in the information technologies fields. This has included Computer Sciences Corporation, JP Morgan, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Bayer Corporation and others. A worker for BCS, Staci Kaczkowski, states that the high-tech field is one area that is easy for people with disabilities to work in due to the assistive technology advancements. Kaczkowski believes that, with technology, disability can be a non-issue (EmploymentGuide.com). This is echoed by Debra Ruh of TecAccess. TecAccess has hired more than 60 individuals with disabilities to work for the Virginia-based IT company. Research suggests that 1-in-5 individuals with disabilities report that they have received ergonomic equipment for their workstation or a consultation on it, to assist them in the work place (Taylor, Krane & Orkis, 2010).

Continuum of School-based Work Experiences

Many employers maintain that they would prefer an experienced person over someone with no job skills, yet many youth with disabilities are new to working and have no previous work experience. One solution to this is to engage youth with disabilities in community, volunteering or employment opportunities over the summer and include these plans in the transition document (Trainor, Carter, Owens, & Swedeen, 2008). In determining whether a student might fit into a specific job, a comparison of the student skills or potential skills might be compared to a job analysis. A job analysis would examine the demands for a specific job and identify the tasks, skills, and equipment necessary. If the student or individual does not have those skills, but may attain them, it can then be

used to drive employment preparation to ensure the individual has the proper instruction for performing those tasks, skills and using the equipment (Test, Aspel & Everson, 2006).

Paid and Unpaid Supports

In order for individuals to successfully work, they must be able to have basic entry level skills. When previous experience is lacking, volunteer and civil work can provide examples of work completed. An example is the Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) is one program that is federally-sponsored and offers internships for college students with disabilities placed in positions in the federal government. What specific employers want is going to depend on a broad array of factors that include demographics, local economy, employees available, and the history that company has with hiring. For example, in St. Louis, the recently published State of St. Louis identified the shortcomings of recent job applicants as primarily lack of general knowledge of the business or industry (25%), followed by poor work ethic (24%), lack of critical thinking and problem-solving skills (22%), lack of communication/interpersonal skills (22%) and lack of technical skills specific to the job (19%) as the top five (St. Louis Community College, 2010). In an employer survey conducted in Oregon, those skills considered critical were listed in the following chart:

Work Ethic	99%
Honesty, being dependable and productive	
English Language	96%
Oral/written communication skills	
Reading and Writing	95%
Reading & writing skills	
Problem Solving & Critical Thinking	94%
Understanding and solving problems	
Interpersonal Skills	94%
Ability to work well with others	
Math	90%
Computer Software	68%

Source: WorkSource Oregon Employment, 2008

Identification of skills lacked can be further divided by the disability and level of severity (Garcai-Iriarte, Balcazar, & Taylor-Ritzler, 2007). Employers face hurdles and some may be reluctant to hire individuals for fear that the person cannot work successfully or there may a cost associated with hiring a person with significant disabilities. These ongoing concerns have led to a continuum of employment options listed below (Wehman, 2006). This continuum is a reality that continues to need attention and efforts to increase options for all individuals.

- Competitive Employment
  - Supported Employment
    - Work Crews
      - Sheltered Workplace
        - Activity Centers
          - Day Care Programs

Transition

Many students leave high school with not enough skills to find or maintain an entry-level job (Levinson & Palmer, 2005). In addition, schools continually emphasize preparation for college for all students, often to the exclusion of work-readiness skills. Preparing students with disabilities for employment should begin with transition planning. Trainor (2008) identified four practices, based on capital theory, for assisting students with transition to postsecondary. These include self-determination, family participation in planning, linkages to service agencies, and access to both academic and career and technical education (CTE). This includes elements of Kohler's (1996) taxonomy that identified important employment skills for assisting students in transition programming for work (student-focused planning, student development, interagency collaboration, program structure and family involvement). It is important to note that academic and CTE are not

exclusive. The current CTE is often blended with and supports the general academic curriculum, and vice versa.

Public schools should support students in achieving employment by assisting the student in planning and providing activities to assist in increasing employability. The level at which a school assists students in finding employment varies. Some schools have specific personnel who fulfill that task or use counselors and teachers. Advisory committees can provide contacts for work-based experiences and jobs. Ongoing assessment and attention to the transition and career plans will help the individual complete the steps required to prepare for work. Transition coordinators need to identify student characteristics and potential career and work paths. A collection of these items may be contained in a student portfolio that is attractive, well organized, labeled and contains a resume, work samples, school assessments, awards, letters of recommendation, a possible CD of the individual working or photographs of completed projects, community service or experiences.

Career Programs

CTE education is based on the grouping of occupations and broad industries based on commonalities or common knowledge and skills (Losh, 2002). One of the more important pieces of the Career Cluster Project was to identify the knowledge and skills for broad sets of industries and occupations. Career Clusters help prepare students for not just career, but for postsecondary education as well (Miller, 2005).

CTE lends itself to the Career Cluster Framework for several reasons. First, CTE draws its standards and curriculum from the workplace. Secondly, CTE is a critical and integral part of the total education system. Third, CTE is a critical component to the workforce development system (Green & Stacey, 2004). An issue for some students with disabilities in CTE programs is state and national certifications that many career programs have that are job related. These are set by the job requirements, rather than the professional educator, and therefore, there may be no choice in any accommodations or

modifications. While the individual with a disability may be able to access the course and obtain the curriculum, the testing for certification may be restricted due to national or state standards with regard to allowing accommodations or modifications.

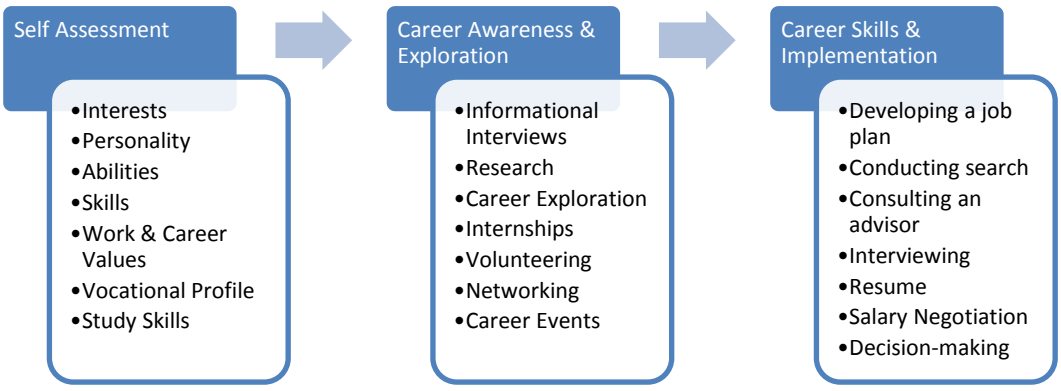
Career Programs (CTE) have academics built in

The goal of all students is competitive employment with pay, benefits, and an income that will allow independent living. A percentage of students with high incidence disabilities such as speech and language disorders, learning disabilities, Asperger's Syndrome, and emotional disabilities will qualify for post-secondary education in community and four-year colleges. It is expected that those individuals will achieve certifications and degrees that enable them to enter the workforce and achieve the goal of gainful employment. There are other options for those who want to work right out of high school or combine school with education.

Transition assessment should be related to the individual's lifelong career development and roles, the assessment of skills related to work and employment is typically referred to as vocational assessment, and functional assessment considers the environment in which the skill will be used (Greene & Kochhar-Bryant, 2003). Research being conducted on the Individualized Career Planning Model indicates it is effective in forming collaborative structures across individual, school, and agency domains to provide effective employment opportunities for students and youth with significant disabilities. The focus of this model is seamless transition without any significant loss in services, funding, opportunity or support. The model integrates Social Security Work Incentives, Workforce Investment, Vocational Rehabilitation, and other agencies for career development and transition planning. This is done through customized employment opportunities, increased choice through Social Security Work Incentives, linkages between stakeholders, and entrepreneurial options (Condon & Callahan, 2008).

There are many career planning models available for review. Most have similar career planning steps or strategies that fall around three main components: self-assessment, career exploration or awareness, and career skills/implementation. The first step is to complete a self-assessment (or as Cogdon & Callahan identify it as "who is the person?"), that includes interest surveys, personality, work and career values, lifestyle, study skills, and abilities. When the self-assessment is complete, this information should drive the next step, which is career awareness or career exploration. Career exploration or awareness revolves around conducting research on various careers and occupations, finding out about potential employers, developing networks, completing volunteer and internships, and participating in career events and fairs. The final process is where decisions are made and strategies are implemented for completion of employment goals. This can include completion of the resume, conducting the job search, interviewing, using an advisor or participating in salary negotiation. This should provide feedback for continued self-assessment for a career change.

Model Steps: Preparing for Work



For the adolescent or youth interested in employment, making a plan that includes self-assessment, career exploration and an implementation phase will support them through the process. This should be completed through, the "lenses of capital theory" (Trainor, 2008), which promotes student self-determination, family participation in

planning, linkages to service agencies, and access to both the standard general curriculum and vocational or career education.

Summary

Current research still shows large gaps between individuals with and without disabilities in several areas including employment and satisfaction with life. In order to shorten this gap, it is critical that support be provided to individuals with disabilities in their transition to postsecondary education and/or employment. This can be provided through knowledge of employability skills, the use of employers as planning partners, integrating a continuum of school-based work experiences and/or CTE classes, and using a career planning model. Through comprehensive career planning in the form of assessment, self-awareness, career-awareness and exploration, and the implementation of career skills, youth with disabilities can have greater opportunities for success in postsecondary education and employment.

Helpful Web Sites

- Transition and employment practices with emphasis on youth with disabilities and transition. http://ruralinstitute.umt.edu/transition/default.asp
- The American Bar Association Commission on Physical and Mental Disability Law. Searchable cases and advice. www.abanet.org/disability/mentorprogram/mentee.shtml
- The United States Access Board: A Federal Agency Committed to Accessible Design www.access-board.gov
- DBTAC: Mid-Atlantic ADA Center. One of 10 regional centers established to provide training, information, and technical assistance on the Americans with

Disabilities Act (ADA) for consumers, schools, businesses, and state and local governments. Provides online modules for learning (free). www.adainfo.org/

- Promoting the inclusion of individuals with disabilities, Community Inclusion provides advice and help. www.communityinclusion.org
- The Employment Guide identifies who is hiring and provides help in preparing for the job search www.EmploymentGuide.com
- The VCU-RRTC or Worksupport provides resources for professionals, individuals with disabilities and their representatives on employment. www.worksupport.com
- National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth www.ncwd-youth.info/odep
- Route 21: A helpful web of information and partnerships for 21st Century skills information. http://www.p21.org/route21/index.php
- Office of Disability Employment Policy is an information network by the federal government on programs, services, laws and benefits. www.disability.gov
- Living Wage Calculator: Helps determine what a living wage is in different parts of the U.S. http://www.livingwage.geog.psu.edu/
- Family Center on Technology and Disability assists with knowledge of how technology can help with equality for individuals with disabilities. www.fctd.info/
- US Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy www.dol.gov/odep/

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HSC Foundation Announces Winner of 2011 Advocates in Disability Award

Young Advocate, Trenton Gilstrap will use the award for H.I.P. Kids outings

WASHINGTON – June 1, 2010 – The HSC Foundation (HSCF) is pleased to recognize the outstanding leadership of a young disability advocate and recipient of the 2011 HSCF Advocates in Disability Award (ADA), Trenton Gilstrap of Brandywine, MD. A young entrepreneur, Gilstrap is the co-founder of Mind Expansion Community Services, Inc.'s Hidden Inspirations Project (H.I.P Kids), a nonprofit project committed to fostering relationships among young adults with and without disabilities.

"As someone living with epilepsy, I felt sharing my story helped those without disabilities understand my perspective – thereby bridging a gap most people choose to ignore," said Trenton Gilstrap. "Far too often, individuals with disabilities can be unfairly isolated and even hide their disability from others. My hope is to continue to expand and strengthen peer relationships through community service, social events and disability awareness."

In its fifth year, the ADA program honors an individual between the ages of 14 and 26, who has been dedicated to positively affecting the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. The winner is awarded $3,000 as a result of their advocacy on behalf of individuals with disabilities and receives up to an additional $7,000 to be used towards a project that will benefit the disability community. Gilstrap will use the $7,000 in funding to provide three outings for H.I.P. Kids members, all designed to promote socialization and life skills. The group will be traveling to the Baltimore Aquarium, Six Flags and Great Wolf Indoor Water Park.

"Trenton is truly an exceptional individual and has made such an impact within the Washington, DC area," said Thomas W. Chapman, EdD, MPH, president and CEO of The HSC Foundation. "He is the ideal role model for disability advocates and we thank him for what he's done to empower and engage the disability community."

Gilstrap's award is made possible by the Sarah Beth Coyote Foundation and The HSC Foundation. Past winners have achieved a variety of noteworthy accomplishments, from establishing a new contest that commemorates the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, to eliminating outdated and stigmatizing language from Virginia State code. Ari Ne'eman, a winner from 2008 who founded a nonprofit organization which advances the principles of the disability rights movement with regard to autism, was recently appointed by President Barack Obama to the National Council on Disability.

HSCF will present Gilstrap with his award on June 9, 2011 at a reception from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm on the rooftop terrace of the Nixon Peabody building located at 401 9th Street NW. Press interested in attending should contact Korenna Cline by email at korenna@epicprgroup.com or by phone at (703) 299 – 3404.

About HSC Foundation

The HSC Foundation (HSCF) is dedicated to improving access to services for individuals who face social and health care barriers due to disability and chronic illness. It puts a particular emphasis on youth, especially those who are transitioning to adulthood. . Health Services for Children with Special Needs, Inc., The HSC Pediatric Center, HSC Home Care, LLC and Special Needs Consulting

Services are subsidiary organizations of the Foundation. To learn more about The HSC Foundation, visit http://www.hscfoundation.org.

About The HSC Foundation's Youth Transitions Initiative

The Advocates in Disability Award Program is part of HSCF's Youth Transitions Initiative. As a component of the initiative, this year the HSCF will open the first National Youth Transitions Center in Washington, DC. The facility will offer programs and services to help young people and veterans with disabilities build paths to independence and to the world of work. The center will also be a hub for regional and national disability organizations, policymakers, government agencies, and disability advocates.

Policy Corner!!!

All Means ALL: Secretary Duncan's Remarks to the American Association for People with Disabilities

On March 15, 2011, at the 2011 American Association of People with Disabilities Leadership Awards Gala, featured speaker Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education spoke on the "2% proxy rule" and his promise to eliminate it as well as the effect of it on the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The full transcript of the speech has been posted. http://tinyurl.com/44eoklb

Winning the Future: Improving Education for the Latino Community

The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics presented a new report called "Winning the Future: Improving Education for the Latino Community". President Obama's educational initiative is to have the highest percentage of college graduates by 2020. As one of the largest growing minority groups in America, the report discusses opportunities to improve education for the Latino Community to achieve President Obama's goal. Available in pdf (590 KB, 28 pp). http://1.usa.gov/iS9x1V

Guía sobre las Leyes de Discapacidad

The Spanish language version of "The Disability Law Handbook" is available to school personnel, families, and consumers. The "Guía sobre las Leyes de Discapacidad," provides an FAQ format on variety of law topics such as the ADA, the ADA Amendments Act, the Rehabilitation Act, Social Security, the Air Carrier Access Act, the Individuals with Disabilities, Education Act, the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act, and the Fair Housing Act. (The English-language version is at http://www.swdbtac.org/html/publications/dlh/index.html.)
http://www.swdbtac.org/html/publications/Spanish/gld/index.html

Updated Partners in Policymaking E-Learning Courses

Partners in Policymaking is designed to educate consumers on becoming involved with people who create policy at the local, state, and national level. Partners in Policymaking now offer online courses that help consumers learn about self-advocacy and the world around them. These courses do offer transition related material such as self-advocacy, community living, and preparing for employment. There are six self-directed, online courses:

- "Partners in Living," a seven-hour course to help people with developmental disabilities (and their families, friends, educators and service providers) understand the concepts of self-determination, family support, community living and assistive technology
- "Partners in Time," an eight-hour course on the history of society's treatment of people with disabilities from ancient times through the present
- "Partners in Education," a six-hour course to help parents with children with developmental disabilities maximize the benefits of special education services and inclusion for their children (including information on IDEA 2004 and current thinking on educational reform and the importance of digital technology in improving educational outcomes)
- "Making Your Case," a three-hour course on how to communicate with public officials effectively to tell your personal story

- "Partners in Employment," a six-hour course on how to find a job, write a resume, participate in an interview, and plan for a career (updated to include information for people with autism and other developmental disabilities seeking employment)
- "Partners in Employment EZ Read," using the same information as the regular course, but with icons (visuals) to help in understanding the concepts
  http://www.partnersinpolicymaking.com/online.html

Transition Headliners!!

Postsecondary Education and Students with Disabilities

Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities have opportunities in postsecondary education. The University of Minnesota's Institute on Community (ICI) Integration developed a Policy Research Brief on "Postsecondary Education for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: A Critical Review of the State of Knowledge and aTaxonomy to Guide Future Research". Postsecondary education for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities is a budding field for research and practice. The Policy Research Brief presents a taxonomy to "better organize and structure research and program descriptions" to increase the knowledge of the field. ICI's Evaluation Group conducted the review.
http://ici.umn.edu/products/prb/211/default.html

National Center for Education Statistics Projections of Education Statistics to 2019

The U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES), National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has added the "Projections of Education Statistics to 2019" to their online publications. The report contains national-level data on enrollment, teachers, high school graduates, and expenditures at the elementary and secondary school level and enrollment and earned degrees at the postsecondary level for the past 14 years and projections to 2019. This type of publication began in 1964 and this is the 38th edition.
http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2011017

Double Jeopardy: How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation

The Annie E. Casey Foundation provided a report entitled "Double Jeopardy: How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation". The report delivers findings that if students do not read proficiently by third grade are four times more likely to leave school without a diploma. Students who do not learn the basic reading skills by third grade the likelihood of not receiving a diploma is six times greater. The report provides three possible environments in which new policies and programs could provide success for students: schools; family; and federal, state, and local policy. Reading is a critical skill for students as they transition from grade to grade as well as from high school to college.
http://tinyurl.com/3v384wy

Education and the Economy: Further Costs of the Crisis

The Alliance for Excellent Education provided a report of their study on "Education and the Economy: Boosting State and National Economies by Improving High-School Graduation Rates". The study highlights how states would benefit economically if they would cut their dropout rate in half. The economic benefits are highlighted in the report in state-by-state profiles: higher individual earnings, increased home and auto sales, job and economic growth, higher levels of spending and investment, and larger state tax revenues. A report on how the metropolitan areas would benefit from an improvement of the dropout rate will be released later in the spring.
http://www.all4ed.org/publication_material/EconStates

Family Engagement from Cradle to Career

The Harvard Family Research Project's April 2010 Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE) Newsletter feature on family engagement from birth through adulthood. The articles highlight initiatives taken in Cincinnati, Ohio that support family engagement practices for parents of adolescents as well as cradle-to-career support system.
http://tinyurl.com/3r3ze2f

Internships: The On-Ramp to Employment

To learn about possible careers, internships provide a unique opportunity for career exploration for youth with and without disabilities. The National Consortium on Leadership and Disability for Youth developed a publication guide entitled, "Internships: The On-Ramp to Employment, A Guide for Students with Disabilities to Getting and Making the Most of an Internship". The guide provides a step-by-step process of finding, applying for, participating in, and evaluating an internship. A variety of topics are discussed in the guide such as career exploration, interview and resume building, goal setting, networking, as well as information for youth with disabilities on accessible housing, navigation of the transportation system, disability disclosure, and employing a personal care attendant.
http://www.ncld-youth.info/index.php?id=16#internship-guide

MetLife Survey: The Challenge to Meet Diverse Needs

"The Challenge to Meet Diverse Needs" was the second part of the 2010 MetLife Survey of the American Teacher. The survey focused on how teachers prepare students for college and careers, looks at student differences, how teachers are addressing them, and how well students feel their needs are being met. More than 90% of middle and high school teachers surveyed say strengthening programs to help diverse learners with the highest needs should be a priority, with 59% saying this "must be done as one of the highest priorities in education."
http://tinyurl.com/yeygrcw

NICHCY Information on Summer Camps for Children with Special Needs

The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY) has provided an updated list of summer camps for youth with and without disabilities. (Many communities have additional summer camps or recreational opportunities available. For information on local camps/recreation, useful sources of information include parks and recreation departments, schools and teachers, religious organizations, other community groups, parent centers, and fellow parents.)
http://nichcy.org/publications/camps

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disabilities: Individual Learning Plan Fact Sheet

An individual learning plan is tool that youth in high school can use to self-direct their learning as they begin to plan to transition from high school to the postsecondary environment. The individual learning plan allows youth to define their preferences and goals related to their career plans as well as develop a course plan and activities to participate in during their high school career. The fact sheet does present an overview of Individualized Learning Plan as well as provide state initiatives on ILPs to serve ALL students.
http://www.ncwd-youth.info/fact-sheet/individual-learning-plan

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disabilities: Tapping into the Power of Families

The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disabilities (NCWD) highlight the positive role that families can have on youth as they transition from high school to employment. NCWD published an InfoBrief, "Tapping into the Power of Families: How Families of Youth with Disabilities Can Assist in Job Search and Retention," featuring how families can assist youth with disabilities in planning for careers, searching jobs, building work skills, and being successful in the workplace.
http://www.ncwd-youth.info/infobrief/tapping-into-the-power-of-families

Special Ed Advocate May Issue: Certificate Program v. Regular Diploma? No Way!

As youth get ready to leave high school to move into the postsecondary environment, it is important to understand the different types of graduation options are offered at secondary schools. The May issue of Wrightslaw "Special Ed Advocate" focus on the different graduation options such as regular diploma v. alternate diploma, course standards for a diploma, and graduation expectations.
http://www.annenberginstitute.org/VUE/

Conference Opportunities!

June 9-11, 2011
Mental Health America's Annual Conference
Washington, DC

The 2011 Mental Health America (MHA) conference will gather advocates, consumers, educators, researchers, business and community leaders, health professionals, and MHA affiliates to examine opportunities to strengthen wellness in individuals and communities through advocacy, education, and service delivery.
http://www.nmha.org/go/conference

June 13-15, 2011 Federal Inter Agency Conference on Brain Injury

Sponsored by many federal agencies and advocacy groups and held in Washington, DC. For more information go to http://tbi-interagency-conference.org/

June 27-28, 2011
Strengthening Institutions That Serve Asian American And Pacific Islander Americans
Washington, DC

Sponsored by APIASF and held in Washington, DC. As a part of the APIASF Higher Education Summit series, the Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF) will host the APIASF College Completion Forum: Strengthening Institutions that Serve Asian American and Pacific Islander Americans. The forum will bring together multicultural political leaders, higher education researchers and administrators, representatives from the private and government sectors, community organizations, foundations, and students, to discuss the national college completion agenda and its impact on the APIA community. The attendance on the first day of the forum is open to the public. The second day of the forum is by invitation only.
http://www.apiasf.org/higher_ed_2011.html

July 11-12, 2011
Advisory Commission on Accessible Instructional Materials in Postsecondary Education for Students with Disabilities

Sustainable Access through Partnership
The 34th Conference of the Association on Higher Education And Disability (AHEAD)
Washington Convention Center
Seattle, Wash.

Commission Meeting
July 11
8:30 AM–4:00 PM

Commission Meeting
July 12
8:30 AM–3:30 PM

Public Hearing
July 12
4:00 PM–9:00 PM

August 1-5, 2011
National School Safety Conference
Phoenix, Arizona

The School Safety Advocacy Council's 2011 National School Safety Conference, held in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice, and featuring a specialized training by G.R.E.A.T, will be held August 1-5 in Phoenix, AZ. The conference is for law enforcement officers or educators who work in the school environment on best practices in education safety and strategies to keep schools safe.
http://www.schoolsafety911.com/

August 3 - 5, 2011
"Transition, Independence AND Empowerment"

Sponsored by Edinboro University and held in Edinboro, PA. For more information go to
http://www.edinboro.edu/empowerment/

September 16-19, 2011
Arc National Convention: Achieving New Heights
Denver, Colorado

The theme of The Arc's 2011 convention is "Achieving New Heights." Members of The Arc, chapter staff and volunteers, professionals and experts in the field, individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families, and others in the intellectual and developmental disability community will meet to spotlight best ideas and share best practices.
http://www.thearc.org/page.aspx?pid=2865

October 16-19, 2011
USBLN® Aligning Disability With The Bottom Line: Talent, Market Share, And Supplier Diversity
Louisville, Kentucky

The 2011 US Business Leadership Network (USBLN®) Annual Conference & Expo will gather business executives, government, community, and industry leaders, experts from USBLN® and the Job Accommodation network (JAN), entrepreneurs with disabilities, and others interested in business and people with disabilities to network, learn how to enhance business development efforts, and expand internship and mentoring programs to include students with disabilities. Sessions will focus on how including people with disabilities improves the bottom line.
http://www.usblnannualconference.org/registration.html

Archived Webinar: Ready by 21 Webinar Series

The Forum for Youth Investment's February 2011 "Ready by 21" webinar focused on the transition to adulthood and the importance of postsecondary completion as a critical goal for communities to work on. The webinar

materials, a summary, Q& A and a link for the recording are at their Web site.
http://tinyurl.com/3j895k2

Archived Webinar Transcript and Video: Strategies to Increase School Completion Rates for Students with or at Risk for Emotional/Behavioral Disorders

The National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities has archived their August 2010 webinar, "Strategies to Increase School Completion Rates for Students with or at Risk for Emotional/Behavioral Disorders" on their Web site.
http://www.ndpc-sd.org/dissemination/teleseminars.php

Archived Webinar: Parent Technical Assistance Network on College Access for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

Parent Technical Assistance Network has archived its April 2009 webinar, "Why Not College: Inclusive College Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities," along with other information on the Higher Education Act and Students with Intellectual Disabilities.
http://tinyurl.com/3r6d48t

Archived Video: American Youth Policy Forum: Overview of Pathways to Prosperity: Meeting the Challenge of Preparing Young Americans for the 21st Century

American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF) has archived a video of the event it hosted February 2 for the release of the Harvard Graduate School of Education report "Pathways to Prosperity: Meeting the Challenge of Preparing Young Americans for the 21st Century." The report argues that the national strategy for education and youth development has been too narrowly focused on academics and classrooms, and that a more comprehensive approach, using career and technical education and work-based learning, is needed. The event featured an overview of the report, reactions of a panel of education and business leaders, and special remarks from U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.
http://www.aypf.org/events/pathways020211.htm

Archived Webinar: Building a Grad Nation: Understanding the Political Environment and Ensuring that Your Voice is Heard

The webinar hosted March 14 by the Alliance for Excellent Education, America's Promise Alliance, and United Way World, has been archived. The webinar focused on the two March events, the "Building a Grad Nation Summit" and an "Education Town Hall." Video and PowerPoint presentations from the webinar are included.
http://media.all4ed.org/webinar-mar-14

Money, Money, Money! Who's Got the Money?

AIAA Foundation: Grants for Excellence in Math, Science, Technology and Engineering

American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Foundation Classroom Grants encourage excellence in educating students about math, science, technology, and engineering. Eligibility: current AIAA Educator Associate or AIAA Professional members actively engaged as K-12 classroom educators. Maximum award: $200. Deadline: rolling. http://www.aiaa.org/content.cfm?pageid=244

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/

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

School Grants, College Scholarships, Financial Aid and More

This website provides essential information to obtain school grants to make education affordable. It highlights different types of grants, their sources and how to apply for them. It is designed to be user friendly for everyone.
http://www.schoolgrantsblog.com/

2011-2012 Counselors & Mentors Handbook on Federal Student Aid

This guide has information on federal and non-federal student aid programs, how financial need is determined for

students who may have expenses related to their disability, information for students with intellectual disabilities (page 9), the application process and tips for completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. For more information visit this link: http://www.disability.gov/education/financial_aid/loans

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

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

Do Something: Seed Grants

Do Something Seed Grants can aid project ideas and programs that are just getting started, to jump-start programs and realize ideas for the first time; or projects that are already developed and sustainable and moving toward the next steps of the project and organization as the project expands. Maximum award: $500. Eligibility: U.S. or Canadian citizens aged 25 or under. Deadline: ongoing. http://www.dosomething.org/grants/faq

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

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/node/8142#disabilities-scholarships

Add to your Favorites!! (websites)

Able Forces

The mission of Able Forces is to address the critical employment and training needs of our combat injured veterans of OEF/OIF and all disabled veterans. They emphasize continuity of support and focus on providing employment opportunities and community-based job preparation training to the Nation's heroes suffering from Severe Physical Disabilities, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and minor to profound Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).
http://www.ableforces.org/

Student Veterans of America

The goal of the organization is to assist military veterans in locating resources, support, and advocacy to support veterans in reaching their desired educational, career and employment goals. Student Veterans of America have student chapters all over America to assist veterans in obtaining the support needed to achieve their educational and employment goals. The website includes resource materials such as Federal Benefits for Veterans and Combat to College: A Transition Guide for Vets.
http://www.studentveterans.org/

Career Technical Education

Career Technical Education (CTE) website is dedicated to assisting youth in developing foundational skills, core workplace competencies, and specific skill competencies. CTE provides educational opportunities for youth to experience internships, practicums, cooperative education, school-based enterprises, dual enrollment programs, and apprenticeships. These types of experiences provide opportunities for youth to integrate and apply their academic and technical skills in the employment environment. The CTE website offers lesson plans and resources for teacher educators and youth with disabilities.
http://www.cte.unt.edu

PEPNet: Transition Resources

PEPNet is focused on delivering transition resources and educational opportunities to youth who are deaf or hard of hearing. PEPNet has a variety of resources that assist youth and their families for the postsecondary environment. PEPNet has financial aid resources, college information, and additional resources such as the College Guide, Financing Your Education, Transition Toolbox, and PEPNet Tipsheet on Transitioning to College.

- College Guide

The guide is about finding the right college by highlighting issues such as location, major study, and services available to youth who are deaf or hard hearing. This guide is designed to assist youth in making the right decisions in choosing a college.

- Financing Your Education
  This section focuses on the financial aspects to college funding such as financial aid, vocational rehabilitation, social security administration, and potential local funding sources for youth who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Transition Toolbox
  The toolbox provides transition website links, ready-to-use materials, and events that could be beneficial to stakeholders (teachers, parents, and other professionals) and consumers.
- PEPNet Tipsheet: Transitioning to College
  The tipsheet is a question and answer sheet that lists several questions that youth who are deaf or hard of hearing might have about transitioning to college. Check out this resource to see if it answers your questions about transitioning from high school to college!

http://www.pepnet.org/

U.S. Department of Labor Launches New Web-Based Occupational Information Tool

My Next Move is an online tool to provide youth with information on over 900 occupations as well as potential employment and training opportunities. Youth can search for jobs in three categories: jobs with a "bright outlook" in growing industries, jobs that are part of the "green" economy, and jobs with Registered Apprenticeship programs. A one-page profile provides the youth on the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are needed in that the particular job. In addition, the website focuses on the career occupational outlook, level of education required, technologies used in the job, other similar jobs, and links to local salary information, training opportunities, and relevant job openings.
http://www.mynextmove.org

Dare to Dream Student Leadership Conferences Highlights

The annual Dare to Dream Student Leadership conference hosted and sponsored by the New Jersey Office of Special Education Programs. The objective of the conference was student self-advocacy and leadership. The conference presentations have been uploaded to the internet. Presenters included students and young adults with disabilities who showcased their leadership and self-advocacy skills. Several topics were discussed at the conference such as goal setting, self-discovery, student self-advocacy, and planning for college. This video presents the conference highlights.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yv5N6eugyik

Leadership in the History of the Developmental Disabilities Movement: A Web-Based Instructional, Discussion, and Wiki Program

A great to way to highlight self-advocacy and leadership of people with disabilities is to go to the wiki website on the leadership in the history of the developmental disabilities movement. The Research and Training Center on Community Living at the Institute on

Community Integration developed the historical website. The website highlights the experiences of some of the key leaders in the developmental disabilities movement from 1845 through the present through historical trends and public and professional perceptions, including the evolving context of acceptance of and services available to persons with disabilities, the features of effective leadership, and the different styles of leadership (e.g., visionaries, researchers, organizers, policy-makers, opinion-makers) required for sustainable change.
http://www.disabilityhistorywiki.org

AAIDD Online Learning Website

The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD), in partnership with Essential Learning, developed an online learning website featuring continuing education courses and training for professionals that deliver services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. AIDD offers over 300 courses developed by experts in the field of behavioral health and human services. Professionals can continue to stay on top of their training requirements while improving staff performance in delivering high quality services individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Courses are delivered on a variety of topics that affect individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities such as developmental disability, aging, substance abuse, mental illness, domestic violence, compliance, workplace skills and more.
http://www.cequick.com/myeln/AAIDD/default.asp

AskEARN Web Site

The National Employer Technical Assistance Center (NETAC) and the Employer Assistance Resource Network (EARN) has revealed a new web site for employers pursuing qualified individuals with disabilities. This website is featured as a one-stop resource for employers to recruit, hire, and retain individuals with disabilities. The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) funds NETAC at Cornell University.
http://www.askearn.org/

NICHCY Dissemination Initiative Page

The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY) has incorporated a Dissemination Initiative page to provide information on Technical Assistance projects on effective dissemination practices in the field.
http://nichcy.org/dissemination

NICHCY New to Disability Page

The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY) has developed a New to Disability page to provide disability information to consumers, educators, and families who are new to the "world of disability".
http://nichcy.org/families-community/new-to-disability

PARCC Web site

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) has developed a web site to deliver information and updates on the 25-state PARCC consortium highlighting

the next-generation common assessment system that will enable all students that graduate from high school to be prepared for the postsecondary environment (e.g. college and employment). The website contains material on PARCC's goals, governance structure, key stakeholders, timeline, and challenges; information about PARCC's major design and development work; implementation issues to address for successful implementation of the Common Core State Standards and PARCC assessments; "In the Classroom," on instructional resources being developed through PARCC, as well as other instructional resources for the Common Core State Standards being created by other organizations; and progress on implementing PARCC goals and the Common Core State Standards in each of the 25 PARCC States. http://www.parcconline.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.