

# THE ALERT

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## Letter from the Editor: *Emily Singer*



### Happy Holidays everyone!

It never ceases to amaze me how quickly the semester flies by. It seems like yesterday we were welcoming our new students. Throughout the semester, we all continually use various lists and discussion groups to ask questions and share opinions and discoveries. Oftentimes I see people asking a question about how others address certain types of situations and many responding saying that they would like to know as well. Knowing that there is so much information out there that is useful to all of us, I felt that it was time for us to add a new section to the ALERT. In all future issues of the ALERT, we will have a section called Editorials. If you have an opinion on something or have a piece of information you would like to share that you feel would be helpful to our members and to the profession as a whole;

items that might shape, guide, influence and/or inform our best practices, please feel free to send them to me and I will put them in the ALERT. Please note, that we may not be able to print everything due to space limitations. I will try my best to include a variety of subjects in each issue. But, the success of this section is dependent on you. The next issue of the ALERT will come out in February. Therefore, submissions must be e-mailed to me no later than the third week in January ([singere@cua.edu](mailto:singere@cua.edu)). I look forward to receiving your e-mails. Please remember that this newsletter is for you, and I am always happy to get your feedback and comments on the ALERT so that we can inform and serve the needs of our members to the best of our ability.

Enjoy your holiday break,  
*Emily Singer*

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Emily Singer, ALERT Editor

## Letter from AHEAD President: *Jean Ashmore*

December finds us at a reflective and also exciting time of the year. Reflections on our good fortunes and friends abound amidst a general sense of excitement as we near holidays and the start of a new year. As an organization, AHEAD has many good fortunes and friends for which to be thankful and looks forward to an exciting and productive new year.

This is the time of year that AHEAD asks members to renew their commitment to the organization. For the first time in five years, the membership fees have gone up by a small percentage. The Board of Directors commits to not raise dues every year, and we have worked hard to be fiscally sound without frequent and extreme increases. I should note that professional membership in AHEAD, compared with many other professional associations, is still a good bargain! With your 2011 renewal, you will have access to the on-line searchable legal database available only to those who are members – a good reason to expand campus members to include your ADA Coordinator or Legal Counsel through an institutional membership. Additionally, in 2011 the Journal on Postsecondary Education and Disability, our beloved JPED, will be sent to members electronically. When renewing membership, you opt for the JPED format of your choice. This is an exciting transition for AHEAD and a universally accessible system; if people wish to continue to receive paper copies there is a fee for hardcopy.

Starting in 2011 AHEAD will launch a professional mentoring opportunity for members. We hope to have a lot of “seasoned” members interested in mentoring newer members. Notices on this will come out soon in the New Year. The great work that is done in disability resource and service departments can only be sustained with smooth transition to new and newer professionals. So if you’re seasoned, please consider signing up to mentor someone newer to the field.

AHEAD continues to be engaged in major issues of the day. A number of AHEAD members have been asked to consult with a Government Accounting Office Task Force researching issues relative to high stakes testing for students with disabilities. On another hot topic, Tom Thompson of the AHEAD board has been invited to serve on an Illinois steering committee exploring postsecondary enrollment of students with intellectual disabilities; Tom is spearheading a white paper for members on this very topic. And several AHEAD members are working closely with the Institute for Human Centered Design to further inclusive design concepts and careers. You’ll see some other articles in this edition of the ALERT that give more detail and reflections on these hot topics.

Margaret Camp, 2011 Conference Program Chair, and Richard Allegra have been very busy processing all the proposals for conference presentations. We were thrilled to receive well over 200 proposals!

The very difficult task is upcoming though, evaluating all the proposals and selecting those that line up best for the conference. Bree Callahan and Robert Harden, 2011 Local Conference Chairs, are busy already getting people together to host us in Seattle. For me, there is a feeling of excitement thinking about how all the pieces will come together for another excellent AHEAD Conference next summer.

Another thing to look forward to early next year is the AHEAD Management Institute in Atlanta. This is a wonderful opportunity for in-depth training – select a track that is right for you. Go to <http://www.ahead.org/events-and-workshops/management-institute> for details.

As I close this letter, I reflect on my own good fortunes from being affiliated with AHEAD and hope that you also share the sense of community and professional support that I value with AHEAD. Don’t hesitate to contact me at [jean@ahead.org](mailto:jean@ahead.org) if you have a comment or question. Happy Holiday wishes to one and all and may the New Year be wonderful for you personally and professionally.

*Jean Ashmore , President*

# Editorials

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## Some Thought on One University's Decision to Withdraw a Student with Down Syndrome

I don't know if you have seen the blog or articles (links below) concerning Eliza Schaaf. Ms. Schaff is a 20 year old woman with Down's Syndrome that was taking a ceramics course at Southern Oregon University until she received a letter from the institution that because her need for extensive one-on-one assistance "resulted in a disruption of curriculum delivery and interfered with the teaching and learning environment for the instructor and other students" she was being administratively withdrawn from the course and would be given a refund. Because of FERPA there is essentially no direct information being provided by the instructor, university or disability services offices so the articles should be read with a reflective and critical eye. What seems clear to me after reading them is that:

- Ms. Schaff was enrolled as a non-matriculated student through standard processes typical of most colleges;
- She began the course for a grade but eventually changed to Audit status part way through the semester;
- There was no program, grant or focused services on campus for students with intellectual disabilities;
- Ms. Schaff clearly had a disability and was a university program participant;
- She tapped services/support institutions disability services office for accommodations;
- One accommodation was the use of an personal attendant whose support was limited by agreement (Ms. Schaff senior was the personal assistant);
- The only instructional support identified was additional time from the professor and the assistance of other students enrolled in the class; and
- The peers enrolled in the class support this young woman's continued participation.
- With better than 20/20 hindsight I can hypothesize that If Ms. Schaff had started in Audit status where grading and grades would be a non-issue. Instead of Ms. Schaff senior serving in the role as personal assistant, who was appropriately limited so that it was clear that she did not perform any of the graded academic/creative/technical work, an assistant in an expanded role might have been provided. Perhaps a matriculated student interested in art education who could provide direct guidance, instruction and support to the student, reducing the time demands on the instructor and other students, would have been possible and appropriate even though it is outside the typical approach, experience and resources of disability services offices focused on serving matriculated students. My hindsight and philosophical issues to the side there are some practical questions to address:
  - How often is this scenario and its corollaries playing out across the country?
  - What policies, practices and resources would you put in place to guide these activities and prevent a situation like the one above from occurring on your campus?
  - Is this a case study for why the Office of Postsecondary Education grants to identify, refine and disseminate best practices for inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities is so important?

### Eliza's University Experience

A blog about Eliza Schaaf's experiences at Southern Oregon University  
<http://www.elizaschaaf.com/p/one-page-summary.html>

SOU students protest rejection of woman with Down syndrome  
<http://www.mailtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20101119/NEWS/11190333>

SOU dean reaffirms decision to drop art student with Down syndrome  
<http://www.mailtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20101122/NEWS07/11220340/-1/NEWSMAP>

*L. Scott Lissner,*  
 University ADA Coordinator, The Ohio State University

AHEAD President Elect & Chair, Public Policy Committee, Association on Higher Education And Disability

# Professional Development Opportunities

*Take advantage of these upcoming events, conferences, and other opportunities to increase and share your knowledge.*

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## **MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES ON ACCESS, INCLUSION & DISABILITY: FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE**

May 4th and 5th, 2011

The Ohio State University's Columbus Campus

The Eleventh Annual Multiple Perspectives conference continues our tradition of exploring disability as both a reflection of the human condition and the environment seen through the lenses of art, law, societal and individual experience. Multiple Perspectives reaches across typical divisions between disciplines and communities focusing on the intersection of disability with education & employment; scholarship & service; business & government; religion, race, gender & ethnicity.

Past programs and conference updates as they become available can be found at: <http://ada.osu.edu/conferences.htm>. To be on the mailing list for the conference, send e-mail to [ADA-OSU@osu.edu](mailto:ADA-OSU@osu.edu)

## **55TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE COMPARATIVE AND INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SOCIETY (CIES)**

May 1st- may 5th, 2011

Montreal, Canada

Theme: "Education is that which liberates," from the Sanskrit, "Sa' vidya' ya' vimuktaye."

For more information: [http://cies2011.mcgill.ca/CIES\\_2011\\_Montreal/CIES\\_2011\\_Montreal.html](http://cies2011.mcgill.ca/CIES_2011_Montreal/CIES_2011_Montreal.html)

## Affiliate's Corner

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**One of the best ways to be active in AHEAD is to get involved with your local affiliate. The affiliates offer great opportunities for networking and professional development close to home. Following are updates as submitted by some of our affiliates:**

**KANAHEAD:** Kansas held their Fall mini-conference on October 22. We had a speaker on the subject of the WAIS-IV, it's history, how the testing is completed, what the subtests cover. Discussion of Asperger's and dealing with faculty/staff issues. Discussion about the National AHEAD conference and the topic of Intellectual Disabilities. The Kansas affiliate will be conducting a membership drive by contacting all of the colleges in Kansas- 2-year and 4-year to invite their disabilities coordinators to join KanAHEAD. We would like to have more community college representation. Kansas State University is hosting Temple Grandin, a public speaker who has high functioning autism and was the subject of the movie, "Temple Grandin." *-Jeananne Gross*

**ILLOWA AHEAD:** Illinois AHEAD had their biennial conference April 15 and 16th where we had a vendor sponsor for coffee break (new thing for us to implement) and also most number of vendors at conference (5- both profit and non-profit vendors). Recently we surveyed our members on issue/areas for Roundtable Sessions in the Fall & Spring. We are also looking into receiving payments via credit card in the future. Recently we became official non for profit with both states (IL & IA). We sponsored and co-coordinated a transition conference at University of Illinois. *-Garth Rubin*

**AHEAD of the Northern Rockies:** Montana State University in Bozeman hosted a meeting in August. Brenda York shared information from the AHEAD session that she did on returning veterans. *-Trudy Carey*

**C-AHEAD:** We just elected a new board, with several new people, expanding our board to include representatives from Northern VA, MD, and DC. October 19, 2010, we opened our new year with a "Hot Topics" discussion at lunch. After lunch, our members were invited to a seminar on "Making Materials Accessible", sponsored by The Catholic University of America. *-Ruth Brodsky*

**KYAHEAD:** We have had a busy fall semester and the 2011 conference committee is diligently working to plan our state conference. The Kentucky AHEAD conference will be held at Blue Licks State Park and Resort in Carlisle, Kentucky on May 19-20, 2011. In addition to our state conference, KYAHEAD is planning to pilot a number of regional meetings across the state to provide disability services providers additional networking and problem-solving opportunities. We look forward to a great year! *-Lisa Besnoy*

**AzPAC:** AzPAC put on a workshop last summer titled "Alternative Format: The Nuts & Bolts." This was a requested topic from several members who are in one person offices and have difficulty providing alternative format accommodations. We had about 60 people in attendance. Per requests from members at this workshop, AzPAC started a Facebook page in order to increase our public awareness and bring more resources to our membership.

In September, two of our members presented "AzPAC: Past, Present & Future" to a local Ethics and Compliance conference; we were invited to participate and it was a great success. We had about 15 people in attendance and had great networking opportunities. We are also considering collaborating with our local PEPNet on a workshop in the spring. *-Cindy Jepsen*

**MO-AHEAD:** The board met in October for our primary planning session for our upcoming regional conference in Kansas in April 2011. We continue to provide statewide transition training for K-12 special ed teachers, students, and parents. *-Kim Fernandes*

# Veteran's Issues

## ***A Veteran Friendly Campus, A 3-Part Series***

### **What You Need to Know About 21st Century College Military Veterans**

*Mary Lee Vance, Wayne K. Miller, & Paul Grossman*

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*Nearly two million veterans, including those who remain in active military service, will be eligible for postsecondary education, courtesy of the Post-9/11 GI Bill. These servicemen and women have earned the right to a college education, and many are on their way to campuses across the country. When they arrive, they bring a new culture, a new set of opportunities, and new challenges. Regardless of personal or political beliefs about Operations Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Enduring Freedom (OEF-Afghanistan), we are all indebted to veterans.*

Veterans, servicemembers, and wounded warriors represent a group of mature individuals who have seen the world and understand that this nation's lifestyle, wealth, and values are not typical of the rest of the world. These individuals have come face to face with great moral questions and have developed a clear vision for what is right and wrong. They have experienced a purpose of greater gravity and meaning than many of their peers may ever know. They have risked their lives for their nation and fellow warriors; learned to operate, command, and work with individuals of all races, national origins, and genders; and internalized the discipline of doing whatever it takes to achieve a mission, from securing a village to obtaining a degree. Veterans bring enormous promise for enriching college and university campuses, but is your campus ready to help them reach this potential?

Many campuses are contemplating the arrival of veterans and servicemembers, yet apparently little attention has been given to the specific issues that these individuals, particularly veterans with disabilities, will face when they return to the classroom. A recent nationwide survey conducted by the authors of this article revealed that the majority of disability professionals and academic advisors surveyed did not feel prepared to adequately serve veterans with disabilities. While not every returning veteran will have a physical disability, it is undeniable that all veterans who served in the Middle East will return from service as changed persons.

Battlefield service for OEF/OIF veterans is distinguished by a number of factors: Soldiers rarely get a break from the line of

fire, the stresses of battle, and the highly destructive force of the weapons involved, such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and rocket-propelled grenades. Modern medical technology and protective gear make these battles particularly traumatic and uniquely survivable. With U.S. servicemen and women deployed to combat zones for three or more tours of duty, each deployment significantly increases the risk for obtaining visible and hidden (cognitive) disabilities.

The total number of veterans and servicemembers with disabilities remains vague. Some estimate that 40 percent of individuals who have served in Iraq or Afghanistan have a disability. This estimate includes the "signature wounds" of traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as well as a number of other well-acknowledged impairments, such as amputation and loss of mobility, loss of hearing or vision capacity, disfiguring burns, and toxic chemical exposure. In addition, a significant number of individuals enter military service with specific learning disabilities, which will persist after service.

These disabilities alter how higher education institutions must provide educational opportunities to students. Few schools have extended experience with the cognitive "signature wounds" of OEF/OIF. Moreover, these veterans are new to their disabilities. Many returning soldiers enter college struggling to acknowledge their disabilities in a culture that traditionally views disability as a sign of weakness. Additionally, they may lack any familiarity with their rights and responsibilities as individuals with disabilities. Unlike the many college-

age students with disabilities who attended elementary and secondary schools under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, most veterans with disabilities are entirely unfamiliar with the accommodation process.

It is incumbent on higher education professionals to make these students aware of their rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974 and Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Higher education institutions utilize and provide universal access and accommodations to students. Close coordination among service providers for students with disabilities, student health services, and counseling and veterans' services will be critical. Colleges and universities that use veterans' services merely to process benefits and aid are unlikely to be successful in enabling veterans to persist to graduation.

#### **The GI Bill**

Prior to World War I, there was no link between veterans and higher education. The 1917 Vocational Education Act and the 1918 Rehabilitation Act opened the door to future educational benefits for all veterans. The benefits veterans enjoy today began with the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1943 (Pub L. No. 78-16, 1943), through which Congress authorized education benefits for World War II veterans with disabilities. The most well known GI Bill, the GI Bill of 1944, was available to World War II veterans. Implementation of this bill diversified colleges and universities in a manner that would forever change post-secondary student demographics. Prior to the war, the majority of students were economically privileged white males; after

the war, increasing numbers of students of color, students from low-income and first-generation backgrounds, and female students attended colleges and universities across the country.

Veterans serving on or after September 11, 2001, depending on service length, are eligible for the “new GI Bill,” the Post-9/11 GI Bill. This bill, with nearly \$4 billion of funding, provides the most attractive tuition, book, and living stipends since the original GI Bill. Today’s veterans are more diverse, highly trained, and mission driven than their predecessors. The Post-9/11 GI Bill may produce change within academia of a similar magnitude as the GI Bill of 1944, with a host of economic and human advantages awaiting “veteran friendly” campuses.

### **Making the Transition**

For veterans of OEF/OIF, the shift from military to civilian culture can be extreme. The profound sense of purpose, commitment to a critically important mission, deep camaraderie, and intense stimulation of the battlefield is greatly missed. The relative calm of the classroom, filled with many less mature peers whose greatest challenge is passing exams, can feel mundane and unreal. On many campuses, a successful transition will depend almost completely on the individual veteran’s success in establishing goals, finding mentors, and developing confidantes. Without a commanding officer or “point person” to guide the way and provide specific guidance, these individuals may flounder. On the other hand, at “veteran friendly” campuses, confidantes and mentors, primarily other veterans, are readily available sources of assistance and support.

### **Help Veterans Succeed**

Faculty and staff will need a thorough program to build an understanding of what distinguishes veterans, servicemembers, and wounded warriors from other students, even other students with disabilities.

It “takes a campus” to capitalize on the assets of veterans and to address the challenges they will encounter. Every campus will need an interdisciplinary committee to address their needs. Its members should include students and staff from the disabilities services office and representatives from veterans’ services; advising, counseling, and student health; academic dean’s office; curriculum development; campus

security; student discipline; drug and alcohol abuse programs; housing; physical education, athletic, recreation, and intramural sports; online learning, technology acquisition, and adaptive technology; campus transit; and, grounds/facilities access personnel. The interdisciplinary committee should conduct a comprehensive review of policies that may impact veterans. Those policies include:

- Assigning academic credit for military service
- Relaxation of academic standards for students who recently returned from service
- Modification of “late drop” rules for unforeseen military service demand
- Procedures for requesting the removal of architectural and program access barriers for persons with mobility impairments
- Procedures for contracting with and bringing to campus personal attendants and/or service animals for persons with sensory and mobility impairments
- Services for and discipline of individuals who engage in drug and alcohol abuse
- Programs for suicide prevention
- Programs for family and marriage counseling.

It not only “takes a campus,” it also “takes a community” to most effectively support veterans. Every institution will need to survey and reach out to a number of community resources, including drug and alcohol abuse services; suicide prevention programs; nearby Veterans Administration medical facilities and local resource centers; local Vocational Rehabilitation Offices; and state Transition Assistance Program participants, such as employment development agencies.

There is overwhelming anecdotal evidence of the need for a physical location on campus that veterans can call their own. Combining veterans and non-traditional students in a common resource area/lounge may make economic sense, but, in reality, veterans, especially those who have been in combat, have little in common with other students who have limited understanding or appreciation of the veteran experience.

Veterans must be given the opportunity

to easily connect with others who share their experiences. Similarly, veteran-centric housing and new student orientation programs should be considered. Freshman, veteran-centric orientation and survey classes have proven to be popular and successful with veterans. Ultimately, these gathering places and programs can serve as incubators from which veterans may emerge as campus-wide leaders. In time, they can play more critical roles in supporting their OEF/OIF peers. Recreation courses and facilities must be welcoming of veterans, especially those who are “wounded warriors.” Veterans have been trained to build physical endurance and take pride in their physique. Exercise and physical competition are proven elements for successful recovery from PTSD. Without athletic opportunities, veterans are more likely to seek alcohol, drugs, or other destructive methods to cope with their pain or stress. Participation in team and individual athletic activities helps rebuild physical and psychological confidence.

Universal Design (UD) in the curriculum and in the physical environment provides all faculty, staff, and students dignified access to needed resources. The requirement for veterans to self-identify a “disability,” along with the need to produce specific medical documentation, should be limited. In an ideal UD world, veterans would have access to needed resources, such as free tutoring and access to instructor notes by doing little more than demonstrating need. This same access should be available to other students as well.

### **Advocate for a Veteran Friendly Campus**

We encourage all senior student affairs officers to serve as advocates for a veteran friendly campus. From offering assistance with dropping or registering for courses to queries about financial aid, veterans may need greater patience, understanding, and time than other student populations. Take an active role in your institution’s interdisciplinary veterans’ council. Visit the Veterans’ Center (or help establish such a center), and familiarize yourself with the needs of the veterans. Identify graduate students in organizations and programs who would work well with veterans. Attend activities that honor veterans. Ensure that the accommodations for veterans with disabilities are fully implemented. Participate in in-service training programs concerning

veterans, and encourage disabled veterans to make use of the Disability Services Center.

The list is endless, but the rewards are great for your campus and your country. Do what you can to help veterans emerge as campus leaders and guide them along the path to finding successful, rewarding careers.

#### About the Authors

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## New Standards Provide a Framework For Establishing and Assessing College Veterans Services Programs

Washington, D.C.—New standards responding to real-time student needs for military service members, veterans, and their families transitioning from military service in higher education have been released today by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). CAS, composed of 39 collaborating professional associations representing over 100,000 professionals in higher education, has developed Veterans and Military Programs and Services (VMPS) Standards and Guidelines grounded in scholarship through the work conducted by experts within the field of veterans and military services. “The CAS standards and guidelines for Veterans and Military Programs and Services are a culmination of the work of several experts and scholars in the emerging study of and service to veterans in higher education,” stated Douglas Franklin, Assistant Dean of Students at Ohio University and College Educators for Veterans Higher Education (CEVHE) Board Member.

After many years of military conflict higher education has faced a wave of military service members requiring more consistent approaches to meet their unique educational needs. “Since the end of the Second World War, many colleges and universities have provided services to military veterans, but not in ways that fully recognized the educational aims of those students,” said Bob Ackerman, Professor of Educational Leadership at UNLV and Student Veterans of America (SVA) Board Member. “Consistent with the premise of the CAS Standards effort, these guidelines are intended to provide direction to campus leaders as they implement programs and services designed to support students, who are also military, veterans, and their families.”

“The CAS standards are a set of guidelines to assist schools in helping their student veterans help themselves. They are not a ‘one-size-fits-all’ standardization but rather seek not to recreate the wheel on every campus as we can learn from the best practices of each other,” said John Mikelson, President College Educators for

Veterans Higher Education, Co-founder of the Student Veterans Association and the Director of Veterans Affairs at Association of Non-Traditional Students in Higher Education CAS was established in 1979 to develop standards that promote college student learning and promote self-assessment for institutional effectiveness. There are now 42 CAS standards in diverse areas of the college student experiences.

“I fully support the CAS standards and guidelines of the VMPS. The standards are greatly needed and a tremendous achievement that will ensure many veterans, service members, and their families receive the outstanding higher education that they deserve,” said Doug Herrmann, Emeritus Professor of Psychology, Indiana State University and Past President and Co-founder of the College Educators for Veterans Higher Education (CEVHE)

The new Veterans and Military Programs and Services (VMPS) Standards and Guidelines is available at [www.cas.edu](http://www.cas.edu)

*Susan R. Komives*  
CAS President

# Initiative's Corner

## J.U.S.T. CHANGE INITIATIVE (JCI) Designs for Social Justice

*Ruth Lusher*, Access to Design Professions Retired, ADA Technical Assistance Program Manager, Disability Rights Section, U. S. Department of Justice

*Gladys Loewen*, JUST Change Initiative

Members of AHEAD's JUST Change Initiative are in discussion to collaborate in a project with the Access to Design Professions (ADP) project through the Institute for Human Centered Design (IHCD). Our idea is to explore ways in which disability service providers can play a role in reframing disability and encouraging inclusive design strategies across campuses and supporting students with interests in the design field. IHCD's E-Mentoring program offers an easy way for DS providers to offer professional resources to disabled students in design programs. E-Mentoring provides disabled students in design programs the opportunity connect with a professional in a specific field in order to gain information, support, and guidance.

The E-Mentoring Program was designed to provide mentorships between design professionals and college level students with disabilities who are interested in design, entry level designers with disabilities and designers who become disabled in mid-career. This program provides short term mentoring and advice as well as longer term mentoring using the Internet and text messages for the majority of contact. Ultimately, the goal of E-Mentoring is the recruitment and support of individuals with disabilities in the design professions in order to increase diversity and improve the practice of universal design, offering designs for all people. Mentors are available in the following design fields:

- Accessible Design / Home Modification
- Architecture
- Graphic Design
- Interior Design
- Landscape Architecture
- Urban Design/Architecture & Planning

One big advantage of e-mentoring is that mentors and protégés can be located anywhere as long as they have electronic access. While most of the mentors and protégés are located in the US, some are located in other countries. The following profiles demonstrate the power and the importance of the e-mentoring relationship.

### Profile 1:

Fourteen months ago we were contacted by an older student who had returned to school to obtain a design degree because his disability prevented him from continuing to work at his job. He was struggling and although he had very good grades, he was about to drop out of school to find work to support his family. At his request, our mentor helped him hone his resume and portfolio and practice interviewing skills. He was successful in obtaining interviews in the midst of the recession but no job. With guidance from our mentor, he decided that returning to school to finish his degree was his best option. Even before graduating with a design degree and he found a paid internship with a state affiliated organization. He is now being groomed for a permanent position as he completes his degree.

### Profile 2:

About one year ago, we also matched a mid-career architect who recently lost his sight with an architect in Portugal, who is a member of the International Network of Designers with Disabilities, another component of the ADP Project. Our Network member provided advice on technology and other issues and other Network members helped out in response to queries to the e-list. Both architects are now colleagues and fellow members of the Network. The two recently met face to face in NY City and half-jokingly called the meeting "the first International Conference of Blind Architects." This example illustrates how the E-Mentoring Program and the Network synergistically builds upon and improves the success of the other.

The biggest challenge IHCD faces is recruiting protégés and mentors. They do outreach to the design schools and at conferences with presentations, posters, brochures and program advertising. There is information about this program on the IHCD website and publications. They have recently expanded their outreach to Facebook with two ADP groups and an ADP page which all highlight the mentoring program. And, of course, there is a network of friends, colleagues, affiliated groups and members who offer support and resources. Many mentors and protégés find IHCD after searching the internet or through friends or personal contacts.

JUST Change members encourage DS professionals to consider design fields when advising disabled students about career options or if disabled students are already enrolled in a design program, recommend a mentor by contacting Ruth Lusher at [rlusher@HumanCenteredDesign.org](mailto:rlusher@HumanCenteredDesign.org)

More information on the E-Mentoring program can be found at: <http://www.adaptenv.org/index.php?option=Project&Itemid=70>

IHCD and JUST Change members are looking forward to collaborating to ensure higher education environments are designed so that everyone can participate, engage in activities, and be a full member of the educational community.

# Initiative's Corner

## Reframing Disability: Social Justice Through Inclusive and Universal Design

*Christopher S. Lanterman, Northern Arizona University*

In her keynote address at the 20th anniversary celebration of Adaptive Environments, Leslie Kanes Weisman, a leader in the field of universal design stated, "Universal design provides us with important guidelines for sustaining life by recognizing the interdependence among all of humanity, the natural world and the products of human design, including the built and planned environment, and by teaching us to think, to act, and to design out of that recognition and understanding" (Kanes Weisman, 1999).

Social justice offers a framework for exploring our interconnectedness through equity, fairness, and opportunity. Loewen and Pollard (2010) point to respect, dignity, economic and social equality, inclusive environments, and equity of opportunity for full participation as hallmarks of social justice for disabled persons. This latter point is echoed in the work of Levin (1976) in his taxonomy of equal opportunity in educational environments. Levin (1976) identifies four standards of equity in educational opportunity: "(1) equality of educational access; (2) equality of educational participation; (3) equality of educational results; and (4) equality of educational effects on life chances" (p. 148). Recognizing that there is a meaningful difference between equity and equality, this author takes liberty with Levin's taxonomy to suggest the implication of these levels of opportunity argue for equity, rather than equality.

The first standard, equity in access, might be described as opening the door to the schoolhouse and letting all in. This concept establishes a premise for inclusion of all students in educational institutions. Thus, as some have interpreted the "equal protection" clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, no child shall be denied the right to an education, though where and how this education occurs is not necessarily relevant at this level. This foundational level of access can easily be related to the concept of identifying and removing physical barriers in the built environment, in accordance with regulations like the Americans with

Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines [ADAAG] (28 CFR Part 35).

Equity of opportunity in participation suggests that all students, once in the school, should have equal opportunity to participate. For example, a student with a disability may be admitted to a school, but must be called on by the teacher, provided appropriate materials, and included by peers in class discussions, social activities, and co-curricular programming to have equal opportunity for participation. The expectation for students to receive "reasonable and appropriate" accommodations to ensure equitable participation, under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 USC §12101 (1990), serves to illustrate components of this level in Levin's taxonomy. Martin Espada (1996) illustrates lack of such equity in his poem, "PUBLIC SCHOOL 190, BROOKLYN 1963," writing, There were vandalized blackboards and chairs with three legs, taped windows, retarded boys penned in the basement. Some of us stared in Spanish (p. 25).

While "reasonable and appropriate accommodations" in the classroom can be part of the solution for creating equal opportunity for participation, other aspects of the postsecondary experience, including participation in campus events and co-curricular activities, seem to fall off the radar for many institutions (Getzel, 2008; Wilson, Getzel & Brown, 2000).

The third level in Levin's model, equity of educational results, outlines that students should be able to succeed, regardless of their personal characteristics or circumstance. Murray, Wren, and Keys (2008) report that results for students with disabilities appear to benefit from an increasingly positive demeanor of faculty toward students with disabilities. However, Denhart (2008) found that student perceptions of instructional climates continue to have negative impacts on student persistence and achievement. Denhart (2008) writes, "The phenomenon of being misunder-

stood occurs both intrapersonally as well as interpersonally leading to devaluation and marginalization" (p. 484). Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Garza, and Levine (2005) report that nearly sixty percent of postsecondary students with disabilities choose not to disclose their disability to the institution in which they are enrolled. In part, Field, Sarver, and Shaw (2003) argue that the cumbersome and tedious bureaucracy of registering with a disability services office and requesting accommodations from faculty each semester are humiliating and stigmatizing.

Finally, equity of educational effect on life chances moves the discussion into the social context, suggesting that equity of opportunity in education is only achieved, in its fullest capacity, when the individual's education leads to such relative markers of success as employment, housing, health care, and economic stability (Levin, 1973). This, perhaps, begins to surface the inequities that appear to exist for disabled persons transitioning from higher education to employment. Even with the requirements of the ADA, educational impact on life chances for disabled graduates is disheartening. Imparato, Houtenville, and Shaffert (2010) report that only 33.7% of the U.S. population reporting a disability participated in the labor force, compared with 77.7% of the population without disabilities. Additionally, the Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS] (2010) found that regardless of educational level, disabled persons were less than half as likely to be employed as their non-disabled counterparts, and they were less likely to work in management, professional, or related occupations - 31% compared with 38% of the non-disabled workforce (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010).

Inclusive and universal design within the learning environment may afford an opportunity to elaborate socially just methods of teaching and learning, which may translate to achieving each of Levin's (1976) levels of equality in education. In its broadest context, universal design is "an orientation

to any design process that starts with a responsibility to the experience of the user” (Institute for Human-Centered Design, 2010). The elements of universal design in the educational context focus on both access and equity (Scott, McGuire & Shaw, 2001). For example, in this model, the materials used in a class should be both accessible and usable by students (Scott, McGuire & Shaw, 2001). This demonstrates equality of access and participation in Levin’s (1976) taxonomy. Scott, McGuire, and Shaw (2001) also add welcoming and inclusive learning environments that maintain high expectations for all learners. In other words, learning environments that apply universal design principles provide the necessary supports and instructional design considerations that eliminate barriers to learning for diverse students. Examples of such supports include providing class notes online, using a variety of instructional strategies, providing grading rubrics, use of formative assessment, supplemental online practice problems, using study groups, and fostering respect and tolerance among class participants (Scott, McGuire & Shaw, 2001).

At this level, universal design still appears to function at the level of equality of access and participation, with the expectation that such applications will lead to equality of educational results. Rose and Meyer (2002) and Thompson, Johnston, and Thurlow (2002) point to the use of universal design to assess student learning which may be a more direct route to equality of educational results. Assessments that allow for student choice or flexible modes of delivery, such as computer-based assessments, allow students to demonstrate learning without the arbitrary barriers of conventional paper-pencil assessments (Acrey, Johnston & Milligan, 2005; Rose & Meyer, 2002; Thompson, Johnston & Thurlow, 2002).

There is far more to supporting equality in educational results than creating usable instructional environments. However, as Enright, Conyers, and Szymanski (1996) argue, the ease of social interactions with non-disabled peers is as important as the willingness of faculty to make accommodations. Participation in co-curricular events, residence hall activities, and entertainment opportunities are elements of the

postsecondary experience that are critical elements to the equality of educational results (Lanterman & Shuttic, 2009).

The real promise of universal design, however, is in its ability to change perspectives about the diversity of learners. Citing Izzo, Murray, and Novak (2008), McGuire and Scott (2006), and Rose and Meyer (2002), Loewen and Pollard (2010) argue that inclusive and universal design is the best approach for creating socially-just environments for persons with disabilities in post-secondary environments. Barajas and Higbee (2003) also posit that universal design provides an impetus for changing the ways in which we think, design curricula, establish pedagogic practice, and implement educational policy. This extended view of universal design challenges us to discover embedded inequities in education. Barajas and Higbee (2003) note that reflection on changes in teaching practice, not simply the changes, is essential to the efficacy of teaching practice. “However, part of that reflective process is being critical about what we think and do. Otherwise, we end up believing we have created a universal design because we have added some information to our classroom strategies, but few of us have substantially restructured our thinking, practices, and policies” (Barajas & Higbee, 2003, p. 287).

The potential for universal design to frame and reframe perspectives and beliefs about “difference” in an educational context is powerful. Teachers, parents, staff, and students become aware of the interplay between environments and differences. This interplay, in turn, becomes the focus for intervention; the deficit is removed from the individual who is different and placed upon the way educational, societal, and political environments act upon the individual. When we come to this point, the effect of education on life chances approaches equity for all.

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# Resources & Announcements

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## National Council on Disability Welcomes New Executive Director Aaron Bishop

WASHINGTON—National Council on Disability (NCD) Chairman Jonathan Young, announced today that Aaron Bishop of Washington, DC, will become NCD's new Executive Director on November 15. NCD is an independent federal agency charged with advising the President, Congress, and other federal officials and entities on all policies, programs, practices and procedures affecting people with disabilities. NCD's mission is to further the goals enshrined in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990: equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency for all people with disabilities.

According to Young, "NCD is delighted to have selected Aaron Bishop as its new Executive Director. Mr. Bishop, a well-respected disability advocate in his own right, comes to NCD directly from the United States Senate, where he has been on the Hill since 2003 and top disability policy adviser to Wyoming Senator Michael Enzi, who is the Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions since 2005. His legislative background and disability expertise will be a very nice addition to the NCD staff. We look forward to working with Mr. Bishop. He holds great promise for NCD."

"We also want to thank Joan Durocher for serving as NCD's interim Executive Director until a permanent director could be chosen. Ms. Durocher has been promoted to NCD's General Counsel and Director of Policy," Young said.

### Biography of Aaron Bishop

Aaron Bishop is currently a Professional Staff Member for the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee for Senator Mike Enzi. He has almost 20 years of experience working with and for individuals with disabilities in both the direct practice and public policy sectors. In his capacity as Professional Staff Member, Aaron handles disability related issues. Most recently he was a legislative assistant for the HELP Committee when

the committee was chaired by Senator Judd Gregg.

Mr. Bishop began his career in high-school while acting in marketing videos for the Attainment Company, a production and marketing firm that creates products that assist individuals with developmental disabilities with daily living skills. As an undergraduate student he worked as a counselor for the Mental Health Center of Dane County, providing mentoring services for children with mental health disorders. After completing his graduate degree he served as a project coordinator for the Waisman Center University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, managing projects that advanced the rights of individuals with disabilities.

Mr. Bishop moved to Washington in 2001 accepting a position as the Site Coordinator for the National Service Inclusion Project for the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) before becoming the Director of Technical Assistance for AUCD. In January of 2003, he received a Kennedy Foundation Public Policy Fellowship to work on federal disability policy and legislation and was placed as committee staff for Senator Judd Gregg, Chairman of the HELP Committee.

In addition to these positions, he has worked as a researcher at several laboratories across the country. He has also held conducted numerous presentations on disability and race, and has volunteered with several sports and charitable organization such as the Madison Memorial Youth Basketball League, the Committed 100 Black Men Helping Boys, and People First of Wisconsin.

Furthermore, Mr. Bishop recently spent 10 months in Australia, where he conducted a comparative policy analysis of the Australian health care system and new health care delivery model in Massachusetts. Specifically the analysis compared policies relating to the individual cost of health care services and supply of quality health care services for people with disabilities.

Mr. Bishop received his Master's of Science in Social Work degree, with an emphasis in public policy, and two Bachelor of Science in Natural Sciences degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

For more information, please contact NCD's Director of Communications, Mark Quigley, at [mquigley@ncd.gov](mailto:mquigley@ncd.gov) or by telephone at 202-272-2004.

# Resources & Announcements

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## Suggested Reading

*Prove Them Wrong: The Kids Who Refused To Quit*

Author: Nancy Shugart

Foreword by Erik Weihenmayer

ISBN: 978-0-9846094-1-3

LCCN: 2010909134

Now available at all bookstores.

*Prove Them Wrong: The Kids Who Refused To Quit* is a book of twenty real-life stories of people who, as children, were not expected to amount to much because of a disability but, as adults, they each achieved incredible success.

They reveal their success principles, something all young people living with a disability should know as they pursue their educational and employment goals.

To read the Foreword and watch the book trailer, visit [www.ProveThemWrong.com/kids.htm](http://www.ProveThemWrong.com/kids.htm)

## About the Author

After going blind at age eight, Nancy Shugart grew up to earn two college degrees and live her dream as a public school teacher for twenty-one wonderful years. Today Nancy is an author of two books and one DVD, an award-winning speaker, and the owner of *Prove Them Wrong*, a company whose mission is to stop the quitting, improve high school and college completion rates, and increase the employment success of people with disabilities. To learn more about Nancy and to contact her, visit [www.ProveThemWrong.com](http://www.ProveThemWrong.com)

## Adaptech Research Network Announces the Launch of the Redesigned adaptech.org Website

The Adaptech Research Network announces the launch of the redesigned adaptech.org website. The site provides an updated look and feel, along with enhanced accessibility and a streamlined list of free and inexpensive software in our Downloads section. We hope the redesigned web site will make it easier to learn about and access information on our research, publications, and popular library of free or inexpensive software.

Check it out at <http://www.adaptech.org> and tell us what you think by e-mailing us at [info@adaptech.org](mailto:info@adaptech.org)

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