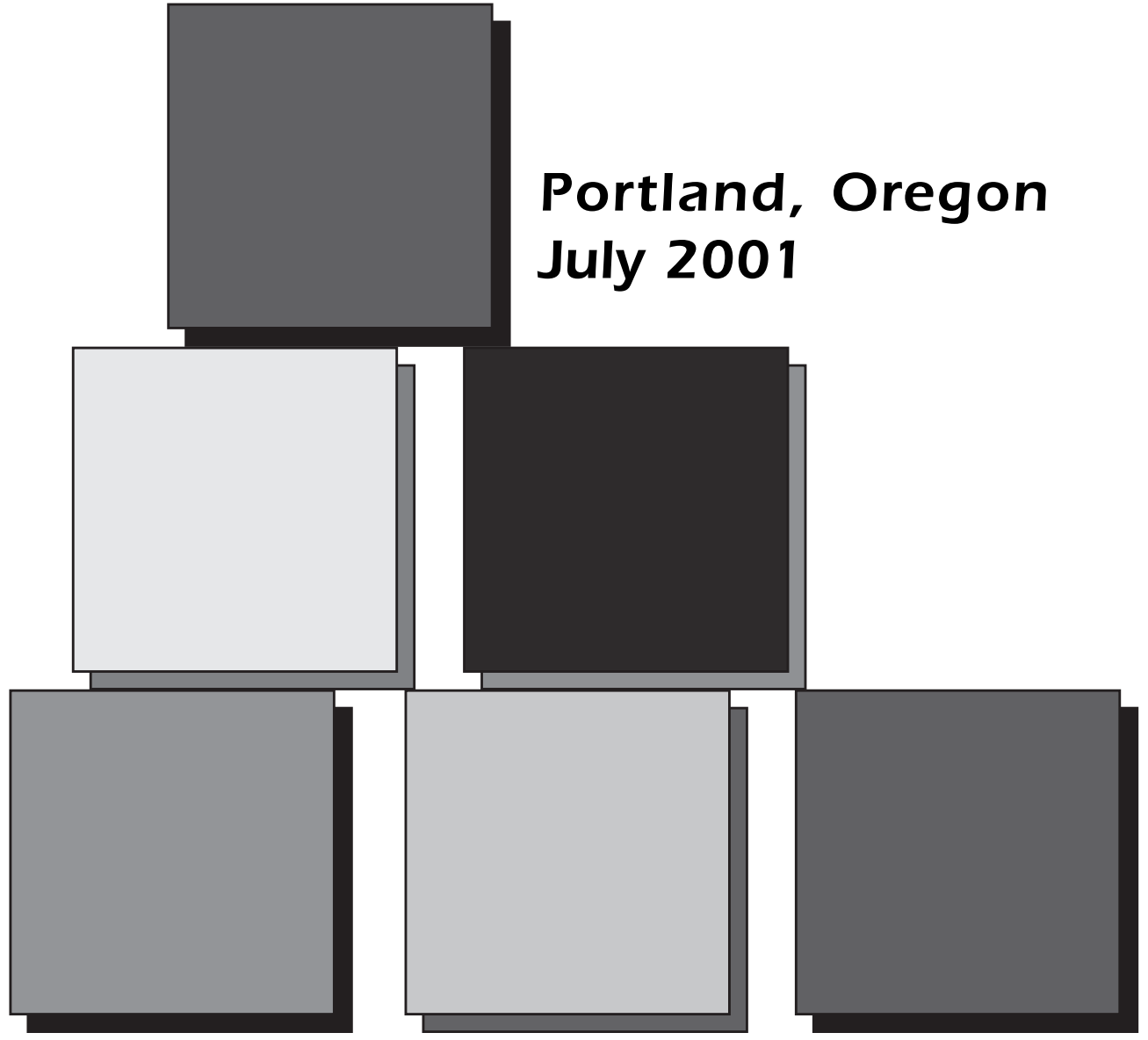


# National Capacity Building Institute Proceedings



**Portland, Oregon  
July 2001**

**National Center on Secondary Education and Transition**

**University of Hawaii at Manoa Site**

The following document is a record of the proceedings of a National Capacity Building Institute that was held in Portland, Oregon, in July of 2001. The primary focus of the Institute was how to support youth with disabilities as they transition to, and participate in, postsecondary education. These proceedings also reflect the outcome of group discussions that were begun at a similar Institute held in Honolulu, Hawaii, in March of 2001. During both Institutes, professionals, educators, and consumers gathered for presentations, discussions and strategic planning. The Institutes were jointly sponsored by the National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports (NCSPES), University of Hawaii at Manoa, and the National Center on Postsecondary Education and Transition (NCSET), University of Minnesota. A special thank you to all of the presenters, participants, students, and staff who worked hard to ensure the success of the Institutes and the comprehensiveness of these proceedings.

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# Introduction

**Megan A. Jones, Ph.D., Assistant Professor and Coordinator**  
**Kelly Chang, Graduate Assistant**

**National Center on Secondary Education and Transition**  
**Center on Disability Studies**  
**University of Hawaii at Manoa**

For the past twenty years, despite data showing the economic and social value of a postsecondary education, little attention has been given to research or policy directives in the area of transition and postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities. Until recently, not much was known about the knowledge, skills and behaviors that youth with disabilities need in order to access and succeed in postsecondary education and lifelong learning. Nor was there much empirical evidence linking specific transition and postsecondary support strategies with successful outcomes for individuals with disabilities. During the past two years, in an effort to provide empirical evidence and technical support that will lead to better policy and practice, staff at the National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports (NCSPEs) and, more recently, the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET), have aimed to increase national understanding about this important area of work.

The March and July Capacity Building Institutes of 2001 focused on the latest research findings, their implications for various audiences, and strategies for the application and dissemination of these findings. Both Institutes occurred in three phases of activity: (1) A preliminary period of online readings and discussion with authors and researchers; (2) Two to three days of face-to-face intensive discussion workshops, and (3) One month of online follow-up and discussion about next steps and the implementation of new knowledge and skills. Through the presentation of papers followed by related discussion groups, the July Institute focused upon the development of four main issue areas within the topic of transition and postsecondary support for individuals with disabilities: (1) Supporting student empowerment, self-advocacy and self-determination; (2) Working to provide quality experiences as well as accommodated experiences; (3) Enhancing the role of technology, and (4) Managing supports and related services. Although these topics are seemingly diverse, a number of common themes emerged during the Institute. **It is evident from these proceedings that our main goal is to give students with disabilities the power to live independent, productive lives in and out of school.** The reality is that secondary education for youth with disabilities does not adequately prepare them for the transition to post-secondary education or employment. We must recognize that providing an education to students with disabilities should not stop at making it possible for them to go to school, but should extend to ensuring that they have the same opportunities for post-school success as do youth without disabilities. All responsible parties, including secondary and post-secondary institutions, government, support service providers, families and students with disabilities, have an obligation to work together to prepare students for the difficult transition to post-school environments and beyond.

**T**he March and July 2001 Capacity Building Institutes are only the first in a series of Institutes that are planned by NCSPES and NCSET. Future Institutes, including those planned for March and July of 2002, in Honolulu and Washington D.C. respectively, will develop single topics in greater depth and/or will bring together members of specific audiences (i.e. policy makers, researchers, youth with disabilities, postsecondary education support providers, etc.). For further information about upcoming Institutes, please contact NCSET, Center on Disability Studies, University of Hawaii at Manoa. Contact information for NCSET is given on the back cover of this document.

**T**he proceedings in this document are primarily a record of the Institute that took place in Portland, Oregon in July of 2001. A record of the March Institute has already been distributed to participants and is available to non-participants upon request.

# Agenda

**July 1 – July 22, 2001** – Web site posting of readings and issuance of passwords to institute participants. Activate (issuance of passwords) question/answer and discussion group assignments. Conduct discussions with authors and researchers around issues identified in readings.

**Saturday - July 21, 2001** (Pre-Institute Evening Gathering)

**Sunday - July, 22 2001** (Day One of the Institute)

- 7:00 – 8:30 a.m.: Experiencing the Great Northwest morning (optional activities)
- 8:30 – 9:00 a.m.: Continental Breakfast & Review of Curriculum Materials
- 9:00 – 9:30 a.m.: Introductions and Review of Institute Format
- 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.: A Framework for Addressing Issues and Needs in the Preparation of Youth with Disabilities for Postsecondary Education & Employment (Robert Stodden)
- 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.: Reaction and Discussion of Framework: Building Capacity New Information for Policy, Procedure and Practice
- 11:30 – 1:00 p.m.: Lunch (provided) and Structured Discussion
- 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.: Student Self-determination & Advocacy Skills Preparing Youth with Disabilities for Postsecondary Education & Employment (Margo Izzo & Peg Lamb)
- 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.: Reaction and Discussion of Challenges: Building Capacity for New Policy, Procedure, & Practice
- 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.: Break for Thought, Reflection & Problem Solving
- 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.: Individual & Small Group Sharing of Expanded Thoughts
- 6:30 p.m. – on: Evening Activities & Discussion (Optional)



**Monday – July 23, 2001** (Day 2 of the Institute)

- 7:00 – 8:30 a.m.: Experiencing the Great Northwest Morning (Optional Activities)
- 8:30 – 9:00 a.m.: Continental Breakfast & Review of the Day (provided)
- 9:00 – 9:30 a.m.: Overview of Format for the Day
- 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.: Role of Technology in the Successful Preparation of Youth with Disabilities for Postsecondary Education & Employment (Sheryl Burgstahler & Soon Kim-Rupnow)
- 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.: Reaction and Discussion: Implications for Policy, Procedure, and Practice
- 11:30 – 1:00 p.m.: Lunch (provided) and Discussion with the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) Demonstration Project Directors
- 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.: Challenges to Successfully Supporting and/or Accommodating the Needs of Youth with Disabilities in Postsecondary Education & Employment. (Teresa Whelley).
- 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.: Individual and Small Group Thought and Reflection
- 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.: Reaction, Challenges and Steps for Future Action (Jane Storms, Western Regional Resource Center)
- 4:00 p.m. Closing Remarks - Robert Stodden
- 6:30 p.m. – on: Evening Activities (Optional)

**Tuesday – July 24, 2001** (AHEAD Institute on Postsecondary Supports) – Optional & held at the Convention Center with separate registration – see web URL at [www.ahead.org](http://www.ahead.org).

Title: What if Youth with Disabilities were Prepared for Success in Postsecondary Education: New Roles for Disability Support Personnel in Postsecondary Education.

The Institute will address two critical questions for disability support personnel in postsecondary education:

- (1) What are the expectations and preparation that youth with disabilities bring with them when entering postsecondary education, and
- (2) What constitutes a “quality educational experience” compared to an “accommodated educational experience” in secondary education and postsecondary education settings?

# Presenters



Robert Stodden



Margo Izzo



Peg Lamb



Sheryl Burgstahler



Weol Soon  
Kim-Rupnow



Teresa Whelley

**Robert A. Stodden, Ph.D.**  
**Director and Professor**  
**Center on Disability Studies**  
**University of Hawaii at Manoa**

**D**r. Stodden is Director of the Center on Disability Studies and the National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports, and is a Professor of Special Education at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Previously he has served as chairperson of the Department of Special Education at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and Coordinator of Career/Vocational Special Needs Training Programs at Boston College. Over the past 25 years, Dr. Stodden has served as principal investigator/director of more than 100 research and training projects spanning the areas of secondary school transition, postsecondary education, and employment for youth with special learning and behavior needs. He has been an invited speaker and presenter at many international and national conferences focused upon the preparation and employment of youth with special needs and disabilities, and has served as a consultant for several state departments and national initiatives. During the process of reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997, Dr. Stodden served as a Kennedy Senior Policy Fellow with the Disability Policy Subcommittee in the United States Senate, drafting and negotiating much of the transition service language found in the legislation. He has consulted with several countries, states and school districts in the areas of transition systems change, curriculum-based vocational assessment, and secondary and postsecondary education program development for youth with disabilities. He currently serves on numerous association and editorial boards and has an active record in the field for more than twenty years.

**Margo Izzo, Ph.D.**  
**Program Director**  
**Nisonger Center**  
**Ohio State University**

**D**r. Izzo is Program Manager for the Special Education and Transition area at the Nisonger Center. Currently, Dr. Izzo is the principal investigator of two federally funded projects, Next Steps and The Partnership Grant. Dr. Izzo has conducted numerous focus groups and trainings with faculty and students. She has identified various curriculum and IEP needs. She has established a SEED Grant program and funded projects that have created the Web Accessibility Center (WAC) and an accessible University writing center. Dr. Izzo has leveraged over \$175,000.00 from Technology Enhanced Learning & Research (TELRL) to produce examples of appropriate uses of assistive technology. Prior to her current position with OSU, Dr. Izzo was the Project Coordinator of Ohio's Transition Systems Change Grant, a five-year federally funded project located at the Ohio Department of Education. Dr. Izzo received her M.A. in Vocational/Special Education from George Washington University, Washington D.C. She completed her Ph.D. in Special Education, Rehabilitation and Research at the Ohio State University in 1998.

**Peg Lamb, Ph.D.**  
**Project Director**  
**Bridges Project**  
**Holt Public Schools**

**D**r. Lamb is currently the Project Director for Bridges, a transition model funded by the National Science Foundation. Faculty from Holt High School, Lansing Community College, and Michigan Rehabilitation Services work collaboratively to support students with disabilities at the Community College pursuing careers in Science, Mathematics, Engineering, and Technology. The Bridges Project is a comprehensive model to develop the linkages between these institutions and other agencies to better prepare students in their transition to post-secondary education. Dr. Lamb has a Ph.D. in teacher education and policy from Michigan State University. Her research interests include self-determination, transition, and post-secondary educational supports for students with disabilities.

**Sheryl Burgstahler, Ph.D.**  
**Director and Associate Professor**  
**Project DO-IT**  
**University of Washington**

**D**r. Burgstahler directs project DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking and Technology) at the University of Washington. DO-IT has been the recipient of many awards, including the National Information Infrastructure Award in Education, The President's Award for Mentoring, the Golden Apple Award in Education, and the AHEAD Program Recognition award. DO-IT is funded by the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Department of Education, the State of Washington, corporations, foundations and private donors. Dr. Burgstahler has published dozens of articles and delivered presentations at national and international conferences that focus on the full inclusion of individuals with disabilities in postsecondary education, distance learning, work-based learning, and electronic communities. She is the author or co-author of six books on using the Internet with pre-college students. Dr. Burgstahler has extensive experience teaching at the pre-college, community college, and university level. She is Assistant Director of Information Systems and Affiliate Associate Professor in Education at the University of Washington. She has had significant personal experience with disability - her first husband, who is now deceased, was a wheelchair-user.

**Weol Soon Kim-Rupnow, Ph.D.**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Center on Disability Studies**  
**University of Hawaii at Manoa**

**D**r. Kim-Rupnow earned her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology at the University of Hawaii. She has more than two decades of professional experience teaching linguistically and culturally diverse students at all levels. Dr. Kim-Rupnow has been with the Center on Disability Studies since 1993, and is currently a researcher with the National Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) on Post-Secondary Education Supports for People with Disabilities. She also serves as coordinator of the Computer ACE Reading project. Her research interests include the application of technology to improving motivation and learning for students with disabilities and students who are learning English as a second language.

**Teresa Whelley, Ed.D.**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Center on Disability Studies**  
**University of Hawaii at Manoa**

**D**r. Whelley completed her Ed.D. at Peabody College, Vanderbilt University, in 1990. She is the Research Coordinator of the National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports (RRTC). She has family members who have disabilities. Dr. Whelley has worked with and for people with disabilities for 25 years in institutions, community services, state agencies, public schools, and colleges and universities. She has worked in the area of transition from school to work for 15 years. Her research interests include postsecondary education and disability, transition to work, families of people with disabilities, and people with significant cognitive disabilities. Dr. Whelley also enjoys teaching pre-service teachers and community support personnel.

# Annotated Papers

The following annotations consist of excerpts from papers that were presented at the July Capacity Building Institute. The papers explore emerging issues and current research surrounding the area of postsecondary support for individuals with disabilities. Stodden reviews the literature in this area and also provides the reader with an overview of the goals and methodology of the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) at the University of Hawaii. Izzo and Lamb discuss the importance of self-determination to the post-school success of youth with disabilities and suggest ways of improving the self-determination skills of secondary school students with disabilities. Burgstahler emphasizes the importance of technology and describes a project at the University of Washington that aims to enhance the use of technology by youth with disabilities. She also discusses the application of distance learning and universal design. Whelley describes a national study conducted by the RRTC at the University of Hawaii that looked at the current status of postsecondary education supports for individuals with disabilities. In another paper, Whelley looks at the various challenges to providing postsecondary support to individuals with disabilities, including the issue of how best to coordinate supports.

These papers were available online approximately one month prior to the Institute. Through questions that were posted alongside the papers, participants were encouraged to reflect upon and discuss the content of the papers with their authors. Institute participants were also given a binder of materials that contained hardcopies of the papers and discussion questions. The annotated papers presented in these proceedings are currently available in their entirety online at the University of Hawaii's RRTC website and by request from the Center on Disability Studies at the University of Hawaii.



**Robert A. Stodden, Ph.D.**  
**Postsecondary Education Supports for**  
**Students with Disabilities:**  
**A Review and Response**

**T**his article conducts an extensive review of literature concerning participation and support of persons with disabilities in postsecondary education settings. It also discusses efforts to respond to identified needs and issues through the efforts of the Rehabilitation, Research and Training Center focused upon Postsecondary Education Supports at the University of Hawaii, Manoa.

**T**he Amended Rehabilitation Act of 1992 (PL 102-569) clearly acknowledges that “disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the civil rights of individuals.” Despite this legislation, persons with disabilities continually encounter various forms of discrimination in such critical areas as postsecondary education, transportation, health care, and employment. Given the increasing need for persons with disabilities to succeed in postsecondary educational programs, thus being able to access and participate successfully in the work force, it is imperative that we understand present and future needs, emerging strategies, technologies, and approaches to enhancing access, participation, and performance for persons with disabilities in postsecondary education.

**T**he transition from secondary to postsecondary education for students with disabilities is complex and challenging. Upon graduating from high school, students with disabilities move from a protective environment in which school personnel are legally responsible for identifying and providing appropriate services under the IDEA, to an envi-

ronment in which the students are expected to identify themselves as a person with a disability and seek out and request specific accommodations under Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Thus, self-advocacy/self-determination (the ability to make informed decisions, and then advocate for those decisions) appears to be the most important skills for students with disabilities to possess before beginning their postsecondary experience.

**O**ver the past twenty years, the changing demands of the labor market have increased the importance of having a postsecondary education. Research demonstrates that persons with disabilities are negatively and disproportionately affected by changes in current general employment trends. Given the low ratio of employment for persons with disabilities, access to postsecondary education becomes even more critical; a clear positive relationship between disability, level of education, and adult employment has been firmly established.

**W**hile the data show a consistent positive correlation between valued employment prospects and higher levels of education, postsecondary education enrollment levels for persons with disabilities (although on-the-rise) remain low in comparison to the general population. Even when people with disabilities overcome barriers to enrollment in postsecondary education, disturbing evidence suggests that many of these students experience difficulty staying in and completing their programs of study. Systemic failure to provide appropriate academic development services, supports, and programs for students with disabilities may explain their significantly lower than average grade-point averages. This, in turn, may hasten their withdrawal from postsecondary settings.

Though variable in quantity and quality, support services to students with disabilities are available at most of the nation's 3,000 postsecondary institutions. Any research program studying postsecondary supports should identify: (1) Which of these services students find most effective; (2) How students would like to see the services delivered; and (3) How postsecondary institutions can function efficiently and effectively while accommodating student needs in ways that are empowering for students. Any research program must also plan to identify those emerging and exemplary strategies, technologies, services, supports, and programs that are most effective and successful in (1) facilitating successful transition of students with disabilities from secondary to postsecondary settings, (2) improving student performance and graduation rates within those settings, and (3) promoting personally satisfactory employment outcomes for persons with disabilities leaving postsecondary education.

The purpose of this RRTC, or the National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports (NCSPEs), is to explore ways to increase access to and improve educational and employment outcomes for students with disabilities in a variety of postsecondary educational settings, and to directly involve students with disabilities, families, educators and other support persons in such research activities.

## **The Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports: A Formative Approach to an Emerging Area of Study**

The purpose of this document is to introduce the emerging area of study surrounding the provision of educational supports to youth with disabilities in postsecondary programs. A further purpose is to establish a rationale for following a formative approach to the development of a strategic plan of research in this emerging area of study. Given that disability-related services and supports are a relatively new addition to the postsecondary environment, there is a great need to assemble a strategic plan of research focused upon the study of postsecondary supports for students with disabilities. Currently, insufficient information exists regarding the availability and use of educational supports and how such supports might effect successful access for, and performance by, students with disabilities within postsecondary educational and subsequent employment environments.

Following a comprehensive literature review of educational support provision in postsecondary settings, faculty and staff at the University of Hawaii at Manoa determined the need to initiate a formative, consumer directed approach to the development of a Strategic Program of Research for this field of study. The approach involved the following attributes:

- (1) Structured discussions with critical stakeholders, including students with disabilities. Staff conducted a series of community discussion groups to obtain a grass-roots perspective of the issues concerning students with disabilities, those who teach

and support them, and related agency personnel in postsecondary educational programs.

- (2) A diverse group of stakeholders and a consumer vision crafting retreat. Rather than focusing only on issues and needs, the retreat sought to describe a “futuristic” and “desired vision” for students with disabilities, support providers, instructors, and other supporting agencies as they work together toward within an improved postsecondary school experience for students with disabilities for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Researchers and stakeholders concluded that a strategic research program in this field of study must address: (1) Individual characteristics; (2) Family/community/society issues; (3) Rehabilitation systems; (4) Postsecondary institutional environments, and (5) Labor force/workplace environments. Further, participating stakeholders shared the vision of educational support provision as an individualized and flexible process guided by the needs of students with disabilities as they struggle to meet the requirements of postsecondary school programs.

The purpose of our Phase I Research Plan was to review and characterize the field of postsecondary educational supports as never before. In years two through five, we will conduct a series of studies on intervention, demonstration, policy analysis, etc. During years four and five, interventions that have shown educational support value could be replicated in other postsecondary settings.

The RRTC is conceptually designed to be consumer-driven and therefore, research activities are conducted within a participatory action research (PAR) framework that maximizes the participation of consumers. This paper also presents and discusses a model for participatory action research and relates it to a case illustration at a series of focus groups that were conducted by our RRTC project.

**Margo Izzo, Ph.D. and  
Peg Lamb, Ph.D.**

**The Development of  
Self-Determination and  
Self-Advocacy Skills:  
Essential Keys for Students with  
Disabilities**

In several Capacity Building Institutes conducted by NCSET in February and March of 2001, professionals, parents and consumers discussed four significant issues that need to be addressed to improve post-school outcomes for students with disabilities: 1) The “preparation for adult life phase” received by students with disabilities in lower education under IDEA; 2) Educational supports available to students with disabilities in postsecondary education; 3) Coordination of educational supports with related service personnel, and 4) Transition or transfer of educational supports to subsequent employment settings. The issue that was addressed most frequently across settings was the need to support student empowerment, self-advocacy, and self-determination. Students with disabilities need to be empowered to act as causal agents towards their own future – that is, they need to be self-determined and have an internal locus of control. If students do not have the opportunity to learn how to make their own choices during the middle and high school ex-

perience, they are at-risk for not achieving positive post-school outcomes.

**S**elf-determination is a combination of skills, knowledge and beliefs that enables a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated behavior. Self-determined people know what they want and use their self-advocacy skills to get it. Self-determination skills consist of seven components: Self-awareness; Self-advocacy; Self-efficacy; Decision-making; Independent performance; Self-evaluation, and adjustment. Locus of control, or the place of control, has to do with where one places the responsibility for one's actions and the results of one's actions. Operating with an internal locus of control, an individual feels that they have some control over what happens to them. Most general education teachers and employers are not familiar with specific disabilities or common accommodations. It may be the responsibility of persons with disabilities to discuss strengths, limitations and needed accommodations and supports. Self-determined students approach sharing their personal experiences and educating others with a greater degree of self-assurance.

The questions that arise are:

- How can we restructure high schools to develop and guide students in practicing their skills in self-determination and self-advocacy, and develop a stronger sense of internal locus of control?
- How can we, as educators, work in partnership with parents to reinforce these skills in school and at home?

This paper discusses the need to:

- Rethink the role of the secondary special educator.
- Revisit the IEP to determine whether it leads to the exit goals students need.
- Develop a credit-bearing class on self-determination.
- Nurture self-determination skills by self-directed IEP meetings, promoting disability awareness, developing students' internal locus of control, and developing students' self-advocacy skills.

**Sheryl Burgstahler, Ph.D.**

### **Roles of Technology in Preparing Youth with Disabilities for Postsecondary Education and Employment**

**A**lthough access to technology can help people with disabilities achieve higher levels of independence, productivity and participation in academic and career opportunities, they are less than half as likely as their non-disabled counterparts to own a computer, and they are about one-quarter as likely to use the internet. This is true despite the fact that high-tech careers are particularly accessible to individuals with disabilities, because of advancements in assistive technology that have increased access to computers and scientific equipment for people with a variety of disabilities.

**T**here are two primary challenges to realizing the full potential for the use and application of technology for students with disabilities, namely, assuring access to and appropriate use of technol-

ogy. Basically, how can we assure that students with disabilities:

- Are guaranteed access to the technology that has proven effective in others' positive postsecondary and career outcomes?
- Use technology in ways that effectively contribute to positive postsecondary and career outcomes?

The following examples demonstrate how technology can be used by students with disabilities to prepare for college and careers. Specifically, technology can help them:

- Maximize their independence in coursework.
- Participate in classroom discussions.
- Provide greater access to peers, mentors, and role models.
- Offer more opportunities for self-advocacy and self-determination.
- Gain access to the full range of their educational options.
- Succeed in work-based learning experiences.
- Prepare for the transition to college and research career opportunities.
- Live more independently.
- Get involved in high-tech career fields.

However, significant challenges must be addressed in order for college-bound students with disabilities to gain the full benefits of technol-

ogy as they transition to college and careers. These include:

- Funding
- Selection of technology
- Anytime, anywhere access to technology
- Full participation in pre-college academic and employment opportunities
- Promotion of self-advocacy, independence, and self-determination
- Peer support, mentoring, and role modeling
- Access to distance learning options.

### **Working Together: People with Disabilities and Computer Technology**

People with disabilities encounter barriers of all types. However, computers help to lower many of these barriers. Although people with disabilities face a variety of difficulties in providing computer input, interpreting output, and reading documentation, adaptive hardware and software have been developed to provide functional alternatives for these standard operations. For example, some options now available are:

- Equipment that increases flexibility in the positioning of monitors, keyboards, documentation, and table tops.
- Braille keyboards for individuals who are blind.
- Voice output to read screen text to blind computer users.
- Refreshable Braille displays that allow line-by-line translation of the screen display into Braille.

- Scanners with optical character recognition that can read printed material and store the text electronically.
- Large print key-top labels.
- Screen display enlargement and background/foreground modifications.
- Voice output systems.
- Speech and hearing disorders alone do not generally interfere with computer use. However, advanced speech synthesizers are close enough to human quality to act as substitute voices and thus provide a compensatory tool for students who cannot communicate verbally.

### Equal Access: Computer Labs

Everyone who needs to use your lab should be able to do so comfortably. To make your lab accessible, employ principles of universal design. Universal design means that, rather than designing your facility for the average user, you design it for people with a broad range of abilities. Keep in mind that individuals using your lab may have learning disabilities or speech, hearing, visual and mobility impairments. Make sure visitors can:

- Get to the facility and comfortably maneuver within it.
- Access materials and electronic resources.
- Make use of equipment and software.

Also make sure that staff are trained to support people with disabilities and have a plan in place to respond to specific requests in a timely manner.

### Peer Support: What Role Can the Internet Play?

Many young people with disabilities have few friends and limited support from peers. In addition, students with disabilities are rarely encouraged to prepare for challenging fields such as science, engineering and mathematics (SEM), and they are less likely to take the courses necessary to prepare for postsecondary studies in these areas.

Computer-mediated communication (CMC), where people use computers and networking technologies to communicate with one another, can connect people separated by time and space who might not otherwise meet. The removal of social cues and distinctions like disability, race, and facial expression through text-only communication can make even shy people feel more confident about communicating with others. Adaptive technology makes it possible for anyone to participate in computer-mediated communication regardless of disability.

The DO-IT project demonstrates the role that CMC can play in helping disabled students minimize social isolation and achieve academic and career goals. DO-IT Scholars are college-bound disabled high school students from throughout the country who are interested in SEM. They meet face-to-face during short, live-in summer study programs at the University of Washington in Seattle. DO-IT Scholars then communicate year-round with each other and adult mentors and access information resources via the Internet.

Scholars report making and maintaining friendships with other disabled youth as the most significant benefit of participating in DO-IT. Scholars discuss academic issues related to science, mathematics and other academic areas, as well as college transition and adaptation. Many Scholars report that increased access to web-based resources helps them to obtain information that was previously inaccessible because of their disabilities. Scholars inspire, tutor and act as role models for each other, as well as help each other to gain valuable career skills in the process.

### **Opening Doors through Mentoring: One Program's Experiences Using the Internet**

Mentors are valuable resources for their protégés in project DO-IT. Most DO-IT Mentors are college students, faculty, practicing engineers, scientists, or other professionals who have disabilities. Protégés are high school students who are planning for post-secondary education and employment.

Frequent electronic communications and personal contacts help DO-IT protégés and their mentors explore academic, career, and personal achievements together. Participants learn strategies for success in academics and employment. Mentors act as professional role models, providing direction and motivation to their protégés and helping them to develop their own leadership skills.

Most mentoring in DO-IT takes place via the Internet. Electronic communication eliminates the restrictions of time, distance, and access that are characteristic of in-person mentoring.

### **Teaching on the Net: What's the Difference?**

Now delivered world-wide over the Internet, a course in adaptive computer technology is offered for three college credits in both rehabilitative medicine and education through the University of Washington. The course surveys the field of adaptive technology as it can benefit people with disabilities, including their ability to perform tasks related to employment, education, and recreation. Topics include use of interface devices, computer applications, compensatory tools, increasing access to information technology, legal issues, and implementation strategies. The primary vehicles for learning are text, videotape, electronic mail, an electronic distribution list of course materials, and a web server.

In the distance learning course, lessons are distributed weekly to the course distribution list; they take the place of course lectures and handouts. Once distributed, the lessons are archived on the course website where they can be easily referenced by the students and instructors.

In the distance learning class, full-class discussions take place via the class electronic distribution list.

Participants can also communicate individually with each other and with the instructor via electronic mail. Additionally, students purchase, as part of the required course materials, a videotape which overviews adaptive technology options. A guest speaker can join in class discussions easily, regardless of where the speaker lives or works, and reference materials are easily accessible from the course website. Finally, students are required to make a site visit as part of one of their assignments.

## Universal Design of Instruction

**H**ow can we design instruction to maximize the learning of all students? The field of universal design provides a starting point for developing an inclusive model for instruction. The purpose of universal design is to construct products and environments usable by all people, to the greatest possible extent, without the need for additional adaptation or specialized design. Making a product accessible to people with disabilities often benefits other users as well.

**T**he term “universal design” refers to instructional materials and activities that are designed to make learning goals achievable by individuals with wide differences in their abilities to see, hear, speak, move, read, write, understand language, attend class, organize, engage, and remember. However, employing universal design principles in instruction does not eliminate the need for specific accommodations for students with disabilities.

## **Teresa Whelley, Ed.D.**

### **Current Challenges to Successfully Supporting and/or Accommodating the Desires and Needs of Youth with Disabilities in Postsecondary Education and Employment**

**I**n ten years there have been significant changes in the population of students with disabilities, and the complexity of their supports and support activities have not kept pace. Postsecondary educational services, supports, and programs available to students with disabilities (a) vary extensively across states as well as campus-to-campus, (b) are generally not programmatically well developed, and (c) tend to lean toward advocacy, informational services, or remediation of content rather than training in the compensatory areas necessary for independent learning and self-reliance.

**T**he "National Survey of Educational Support Provision to Students with Disabilities in Postsecondary Education Settings" identified the educational supports most commonly offered in postsecondary institutions/programs as (a) note takers, (b) personal counseling, and (c) advocacy assistance. However, in a national focus group project, students with disabilities stated that the type and timing of advocacy assistance generally provided in postsecondary education was not helpful to them. Also disappointing was that only two-thirds of the institutions surveyed offered accessible transportation for students, even though students reported that access to transportation was of critical importance to them.



**A**dditional findings were that students in postsecondary education long for a partnership between disability services departments on campus and university administration, and that they feel the roles of professionals and agencies in the coordination of supports in postsecondary education are unclear. Finally, while the most obvious outcome of postsecondary education is the attainment of higher-level employment and its accompanying increase in quality of life, students with disabilities seem to fear their transition to employment.

**C**urrently, there are several significant challenges to successfully supporting and/or accommodating the desires and needs of youth with disabilities in postsecondary education and employment, including:

- Ensuring that students with disabilities in postsecondary education are capable self-advocates and feel able to self-determine.
- Ensuring the quality delivery of academic material to students with disabilities in postsecondary education.
- Ensuring that quality educational supports and accommodations are delivered to students with disabilities in postsecondary education.
- Ensuring the coordination of postsecondary supports and accommodations.
- Ensuring that all students exiting postsecondary education have opportunities for quality employment and living.

## **Current Status of Educational Support Provision to Students with Disabilities in Postsecondary Education**

**T**he focus of this study was the provision of educational supports for students with disabilities. Survey methods and statistical analyses were used to describe the range and nature of educational supports provided for students with disabilities. Specific areas of support provision explored were: Including the role of assistive technology, Special learning centers, and the Transfer of supports from educational settings to employment. The findings provide a national foundation of information regarding the provision of educational supports for students with disabilities in a diverse range of postsecondary education settings.

**L**ittle is known about the effectiveness of existing postsecondary educational supports, particularly as we consider the diversity of types of disabilities and of postsecondary programs. The situation is further complicated by a lack of consensus regarding the definition and measure of “successful” outcomes of educational support provision. The National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports (NCSPES) at the University of Hawaii at Manoa conducted a survey of educational support provision across a nationally representative sample of two and four-year postsecondary educational programs, focusing upon the types and frequency of educational support offerings for students with disabilities. Specifically, the study investigated the following research questions:

1. What educational supports are available to students with disabilities in a range of postsecondary educational settings? What is the nature and range of these supports?

2. What technical supports and assistive devices are available to students with disabilities in postsecondary educational settings?

**R**esults from the survey indicate that testing accommodations were the most frequently offered form of supports to students with disabilities in postsecondary educational settings. Disability-specific scholarships and supports for study abroad were the most infrequently offered supports.

**O**ther educational supports commonly offered in postsecondary institutions included (a) note takers, (b) personal counseling, and (c) advocacy assistance. In regards to advocacy assistance, however, there is an overwhelming tendency for disability support coordinators to advocate for students with disabilities instead of teaching students to advocate for themselves. Additionally, adjustment or self-improvement areas such as study, memory, communication, organization and time management skills, and meta-cognitive strategies were commonly offered within many postsecondary institutions. Adaptive furniture was the most frequently offered support, and real-time captioning was the least frequently offered technological support.

**W**e currently have little information on the methods used to deliver educational supports, or information on the level of student satisfaction with such supports. Future research is needed to examine these areas to further determine the effectiveness and value of educational supports in postsecondary education.

# Discussion Output

**D**uring the March Capacity Building Institute, discussion groups were formed around four major issues, namely, self-determination, quality of services, technology, and service coordination. These discussion groups continued on through the July Capacity Building Institute, giving focus to the proceedings and an opportunity for participants to interact. Most importantly, the groups served as a vehicle for directing attention towards how research in the field of postsecondary support can actually be applied to make a positive difference for people with disabilities. To this end, each group attempted to define a problem, describe the components of that problem, and come up with solutions to the problem that could be driven by research. Not surprisingly, all four groups agreed that research, training and information dissemination is needed. Suggestions among the four groups for how this should be accomplished included developing self-determination curriculum in secondary education, including youth with disabilities in decision making, providing better quality services in higher education, exploring the potential of universal design, and encouraging collaboration between institutions and individuals.

**A** comprehensive summary of the output from these discussion groups follows. Each summary is followed by an analysis of that discussion written by two of the Institute participants, Wendy Blaauw and Stacie Martin. Many thanks to Ms. Blaauw and Ms. Martin for their insight, and to the discussion group leaders who recorded and synthesized the discussion group output.

## Issue Area I:

### Supporting Student Empowerment Self-Advocacy and Self-Determination

#### What is Self-Determination?

Self-determination is a process and a problem solving strategy that can be taught and reinforced in a variety of life situations, including academic settings. It is a combination of skills, life strategies, choices, self-determination, a process, an outcome, and an attitude. Self-determination includes:

- Knowing your limits/strengths
- Knowing what you need
- Having the opportunity to choose
- Knowing options and consequences
- Making informed choice
- Setting and having goals
- Being self-directed
- Communicating your goals and needs
- Taking responsibility
- Thinking, feeling, emoting
- Being valued
- Experiencing and doing.

#### Issue 1: Acceptance of Self-Determination within the Educational Curriculum

Self-determination is not an identified and valued part of the education curriculum. To increase systemic recognition of the importance of self-determination skills, we must first change the attitudes of students and teachers about the importance of self-determination.

#### Why Is This an Issue: Issue 1

In order for self-determination to be included in the education system, it must be accepted by the system and valued. In a school system, learning objectives become valued when they are reflected in the educational standards. If self-determination is not reflected in standards, it is more difficult to infuse into both general and special education curricula. Self-determination can, but does not need to be taught within a self-contained curriculum. Since all students need self-determination, these skills can and should be taught through the general education curricula. Self-determination can be integrated into classroom activities and can enhance the delivery of content. However, completing activities in self-determination curricula does not necessarily guarantee that students will internalize the process and the skills. In other words, students can go through the motions and not really develop the internal constructs to be more self-determined. Furthermore, teachers and sometimes parents suppress students' expression of their own ideas because it changes the nature of the control in the school environment and the home. As students become more self-determined they may challenge the autonomy of authority figures such as teachers, administrators and parents. The process of becoming self-determined continues throughout life.

Many self-determination skills, such as self-awareness and the ability to self-advocate, are difficult to assess and measure. These skills are often referred to as "soft skills" – skills that will vary given the context of the situation. We need to strengthen the stature of learning self-determination skills and raise the level of importance to individuals, teachers, the family, school and commu-

nity. Students must know why it is important to self-advocate. If students know how to self-advocate, they will be more successful in postsecondary and employment settings throughout their life. Until self-determination becomes a valued commodity and is measurable, it will not be viewed as such systemically and will not be encouraged or facilitated by secondary education. School districts need to include a comprehensive pre/post evaluation of students' self-determination skills in their overall assessments.

In order to address the issue of self-determination as a society we must look at our culture and how we value people. In our society, self-worth is competency based. People are valued based on their skills and competence. The value or worth of a person is based on their abilities and what their actual and/or potential contributions to society may be. The implication of this societal view is a lack of appreciation for diversity. In this vein, students with disabilities as a group are seen by some as lacking in ability and are therefore deemed as unworthy of accessible higher education. If students with disabilities cannot meet the standards or the competencies required in postsecondary education, some question their need for access to that setting.

In truth, there is often not enough value and concern for students who are either at-risk and/or have disabilities. Many of these students do not develop the academic nor the self-determination skills necessary for economic independence. These groups of students need both academic support and direct instruction in the development of self-determination skills. Though some high school and college students are able to develop self-determination skills, many who are not academically successful can

attribute their poor academic performance in part to a lack of these critical skills.

### **Implications for Solving the Issue: Issue 1**

Research on self-determination indicates that individuals with higher ratings of self-determination have more positive outcomes. More specifically, self-determined individuals with disabilities are more likely to be employed and are more likely to have enrolled in postsecondary education. Students with disabilities who are successful seem to have and gain self-determination skills.

### **Recommended Research, TA Training, and Information Dissemination: Issue 1**

#### **Curriculum-Standards and Assessment**

##### Research Questions

- Is there a relationship between assessment and self-determination skills?
- How do we ensure curricula and supports are in place within an educational system so teachers have the opportunity to teach self-determination skills?
- Is there a correlation between “passing standards” in schools and improved employment outcomes? Are these school standards aligned with employment outcomes/workplace skills?

### Recommended Strategies

- Develop a position paper that outlines how self-determination can be taught through existing general curriculum. Self-determination skills training may already exist in general education curriculum.
- Infuse self-determination in all levels of an institution and make self-determination available for all students. Self-determination is both a process and an attitude.

### Changes to the Law and IEP

#### Recommended Strategies

- Change IDEA policy language to involve students in the process of developing the IEP. Student's IEP (using the IEP team) should be based on his/her self-determined vision, informed choices, knowing one's limits/strengths, knowing one's needs, knowing options and consequences, setting and having goals, being self-directed and person-centered, communicating goals and needs, taking responsibility, having value, experiencing and doing, and being appreciated for one's wisdom.
- Within the IEP process, outline approved accommodations and determine how the student will take responsibility to negotiate these accommodations in general education.

### Technical Assistance, Dissemination and Resource Support

#### Recommended Strategies

- Develop and provide a framework for technical assistance on self-determination so LEAs/SEAs understand how to incorporate self-determination into the IEP process. Use person-centered planning strategies and incorporate self-determination into the development of "defensible" IEPs.
- Self-determination skills need to be presented as part of curriculum, professional development for teachers, standards for schools, and standards for states.
- Promote awareness with web resources, video, print, and testimonies that address self-determination curricula, resources, importance, and process, for students (curricula, youth groups), teachers (CEC, schools), parents (PTI), and policy-makers. Use websites to collect and disseminate best practices for teaching and developing self-determination skills. See website: [www.uncc.edu/sdsp](http://www.uncc.edu/sdsp).

### Issue 2: Effective Teaching of Self-Determination Skills

Self-determination is not being taught effectively in an educational setting and students are not exiting school as self-determined young adults who are able to participate in post-school settings (such as community living, employment, and life-long learning).

## Why Is This an Issue: Issue 2

Though curricula exist, strategies to teach self-determination are often poorly understood. If asked to teach self-determination, teachers might not know what a self-determined student is supposed to look like and what resources exist to support the teaching of self-determination in schools. Even if teachers do have the knowledge and skills necessary, they may not feel that they have time to teach self-determination because of the competing demands for instructional time (i.e. graduation requirements and competency testing).

Another challenge to teaching is the type of disability and maturation of the student, which may change the delivery of self-determination training and necessitate approaches that fit unique learning styles and needs. Furthermore, the concept of self-determination is scary and may be intimidating to students, families and teachers. Having choices may be both liberating and threatening. Parents and teachers become the facilitators for self-determination, which may be viewed as a threat to an adult's control over a child. On a related note, parents and teachers may not believe students are able (i.e., mature enough, responsible enough) to make good personal decisions.

Most parents do not understand the importance of self-determination and self-advocacy because they are so focused on making sure their student graduates from high school. Special education teachers are so bogged down with helping students to meet graduation requirements and pass proficiency tests that they do not have time to devote to teaching self-determination and self-advocacy. Frequently, parents have difficulty advocat-

ing, so they sometimes cannot serve as role models in that capacity for their children.

## Implications for Solving the Issue: Issue 2

- We need to look at how to increase opportunities in secondary education and supports in postsecondary education to create balance between opportunity and supports. We also need to look at how to set standards for a knowledge base, in order to determine what should be included.
- Employers looking for trained employees are willing to accommodate workers with disabilities if it fits their bottom line.

## Recommended Research, TA Training and Information Dissemination: Issue 2

### Teachers/Professionals

#### Research Questions

- How do we empower teachers to teach the concept of self-determination?
- How do we balance the need to assist students and yet allow them to experiment, learn, test and face consequences for themselves, i.e., allow students to drive their own learning process?



## Students

### Research Questions

- What does a quality self-determination experience on campus look like compared to an accommodated self-determination experience? What is the profile of a self-determined student? What is the profile of a student who is not self-determined? (Create a composite or case study).
- Do students in general education take advantage of accommodations? In what ways, and with what results? Accommodations are a way to help students to increase their ability to self-determine.
- What are the results of training for students with disabilities? What are the costs of accommodations? How are accommodations used and what are their contributions to student performance?

### Recommended Strategies

- By the time students graduate from high school they should have an articulated self-advocacy plan describing their strengths, challenges, and necessary accommodations (including assistive technology) in written or electronic form.
- Students should have ongoing assistive technology assessment from elementary school and beyond so that technology can be a tool for them to incorporate into their learning process as they enter

postsecondary education and employment.

## Parents

### Research Questions

- How can facilitators help parents understand that there is a shift after secondary education, and that self-determination is critical beyond high-school?

## Curriculum and Assessment

### Recommended Strategies

- Teach the process of decision-making and allow students to actively participate in the decision-making process, even allowing them to experience the consequences of their own decisions.
- Select model programs that have integrated self-determination, career guidance, effective use of technology, and disability awareness into a credit-granting course of study.
- A neutral person needs to teach the curriculum for self-determination and address the development of these skills.
- School districts need to include a comprehensive pre/post evaluation of self-determination skills in their assessment of students with disabilities.

## Technical Assistance, Dissemination and Education

### Recommended Strategies

- Determine effective strategies for empowering parents, students and service providers, and help them get the information they need to make good decisions.
- There needs to be ongoing communication between secondary special education teachers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, members of other agencies, and postsecondary disabilities counselors, on exit competency skills in self-determination for students with disabilities.
- Disseminate self-determination information to a broader audience involving general educators, principals, administrators, and legislators.
- Postsecondary institutions need to build some capacity to continue the development of the self-determination/self-advocacy skills of students with disabilities, in order to increase their probability of success in that setting and bridge the gap between IDEA and ADA. A self-determination experience on campus includes a classroom opportunity or seminar for students with disabilities to further develop their self-determination skills for college success.
- Infuse in general and special teacher education training programs knowledge about the culture of the school and issues of control, and how to develop self-determination skills in students. The concepts of self-determination and student locus of control need to be part of the required curriculum for pre-service teachers in special education and vocational rehabilitation counselors.
- Parents need to better understand the concept of self-determination and the skills related to this concept. They need to serve as role models for their children with disabilities.
- Parent Training and Information Centers/ Network may be a vehicle for families to better support their students with disabilities. We need to leverage parent information centers to teach parents more about self-determination.
- Self-determination skills can be further strengthened during summer classes or through programs such as Outward Bound, student foreign exchange programs, summer camps, and summer sports programs.
- Identify research strategies about how to disseminate information about transitions and accommodations disseminated to families. For example, use focus groups at the secondary level to clarify families'/ students' current perceptions about this transition.

- In order to improve student outcomes, we need to highlight models that implement program improvement cycles, and models that gain feedback from employers.

## **Issues Analysis**

### **Stacie L. Martin**

#### **Issue 1: Supporting Student Empowerment, Self Advocacy and Self-determination**

There were two main issues that were identified in the document. The issues addressed were whether or not the concept of self-determination is being valued in the school curriculum and if teachers are effectively teaching the skill of self-determination that students need to be successful in school and post-school environments. Overall, in my opinion the group's discussions were very comprehensive in identifying factors and some future ideas on how to address the issues. Even though I am not in the educational system, but in the vocational rehabilitation field, these issues will affect how consumers ask for and utilize services.

There was a statement made that made reference to self-determination as a process that continues through life. I agree that teaching self-determination is a life long process and not a nine-week course. Teaching self-determination skills needs to start when a child enters elementary school. Participation from the student, parent/guardian and school personnel are critical. I agree with some type of outcome measurement with the usage of pre/post skill checks. I feel this could help to evaluate whether or not teaching strategies used are effective. I do question the idea that most parents do not understand the importance of self-determination. From

my experience the system “forces” parents into a role of having to be an advocate for his/her child in order to obtain the appropriate resources. This involvement may not be formally recognized as self-determination, but advocacy skills are being utilized. In my opinion, once a diagnosis is formally made, we as professionals need to give parents the tools and resources that they need to become better advocates. I would like to add a response to the question, “How can we help parents to understand that there is a shift after post-secondary, so that parents really know that self-determination is critical beyond high school?” I suggest that the entire Individualized Education Planning Team would begin to address this at the age of 14 as part of the transition plan.

I was a participant in the discussion area. The group's discussion seemed to be tied to the wording and placement of ideas of the previous group's written output. The facilitators did a great job making sure everyone had input. The group interacted with sharing of some common challenges. The group did seem to rely on one member for wording and placements of thoughts. This member tended to bring a more philosophical viewpoint to the group.

**Wendy Blaauw**

**Issue I: Supporting Student Empowerment, Self-Advocacy, and Self-Determination**

I agree with the majority of this group's output, and much of it mirrors discussion we had in the group I participated in. Students with disabilities do not typically exit the secondary school experience as empowered, self-determined young adults. However, neither do many students who do not have disabilities. The educational system for all students, those with disabilities and those without, needs to be restructured in a way that will teach students the wide variety of skills they need to become self-determined. For most students, this would mean that they would have a solid base of self-knowledge from which to make sound decisions about educational and employment opportunities. This self-knowledge should include an understanding of personal strengths and challenges, as well as any accommodations and supports that have been a factor in past successes.

I am not sure I agree with the notion that all students should complete pre and post training assessment of their self-determination skills. The majority of students who are in special education have volumes of information about their strengths and deficits, and, if the student is ages 14 or older, the IEP team probably has compiled information that would indicate how self-determined the student is as part of the transition planning process.

I support the notion that all educators, special education and general education, should receive training and instruction at the pre-service level on how to build in self-determination as part of the general curriculum. Additionally, if school boards adopted standards around employment and adult living objectives for all students, educators would be looking at ways to bolster instruction in this area.

Finally, I am hopeful that the language of IDEA in the area of self-determination will be strengthened in the next reauthorization. So much of what educators are required to do under IDEA is carried out for the student rather than with the student. Ideally, IDEA would include language or clarification to increase the student's responsibility in meeting post-school goals.

## Issue Area II:

### Working to Provide Quality Experiences as Well as Accommodated Experiences

#### What Is a Quality Experience?

When an individual comes away having benefited from an experience, that is one indication of a quality experience. This is distinct from an accommodated experience, where an individual is given the opportunity to participate.

#### What Is the Issue?

A growing number of students with and without identified disabilities are exiting secondary education without the necessary skills to transition to post secondary education, employment, or community living. Greater attention needs to be focused upon providing individuals with disabilities with a quality as well as an accommodated educational experience.

- The culture (process and content) of special education program provision in secondary education settings is NOT available in post-school environments.
- Secondary schools need to be responsible for preparing youth with disabilities for the manner in which accommodations and supports are provided in post-school settings, as well as how to advocate for those supports and accommodations.
- Postsecondary educational settings need to provide a wider range and more individualized supports and accommodations for a diverse population of youth with disabilities.

- Secondary school educators need to understand the potential of, and set high expectations for, youth with disabilities as these youth prepare for adulthood.
- Secondary school educators need to have a better awareness and understanding of the culture and expectations of post-school educational and employment environments.
- Youth with disabilities in secondary school need to pass through “reality checks” regarding the needed skills and knowledge required to succeed in postsecondary educational and employment environments.
- Parents of youth with disabilities need to be aware of and understand the culture and realities of supports and accommodations found in post-school educational environments, and ways they can prepare their child for success in such environments.

#### Why Is This an Issue?

Vast differences exist between secondary and postsecondary environments in terms of the content of learning, methods of instruction, and assessment procedures.

#### Secondary School

##### Content of Learning

- General education standards are set for all students in the State.
- Less than 1% of youth with disabilities participate in individualized curriculums or certificate programs.

- All students are assisted to learn – responsibility of the instructor.
- Accommodations can be made to one or more standard or content areas.

### Methods of Instruction

- Schools are responsible for diverse and individualized methods.
- Teacher-parent-student conferences are required.
- Teachers have flexibility in classroom management and learning strategies.
- There is greater use of effective instruction methods.
- Accommodations can include increased time, tutoring, segmenting of materials or content, adjusting class size, getting help

through a student support team, assistance through pre-referral strategies.

- For students who need it, specialized instruction is provided (special education classes).
- IDEA mandates that instruction be individualized according to the needs of the student; the local education agency is responsible for funding the necessary supports, services, and/or programs.

### Assessment Procedures

- Some students participate in regular assessments, with test taking skill assistance.
- Students can receive extra time on a test, be in a smaller group, or receive the text in different formats.

## Current Status

	Secondary	Postsecondary
Content of Learning	Standards Set Low Number Individual Certificate Programs Responsibility of Instructor Accommodations Cross Standards/Content	Vary by Instruction Minimum Program Standards Instructor Freedom Must Request Accommodations Require Disclosure of Disability, Negotiation with Personnel Standards can be Modified
Methods of Instruction	Individualized Conferences Teacher Flexibility Use of Effective Methods Variety of Accommodations Special Ed Classes IDEA Mandates Participation/Responsibility	Lack of Faculty Teaching Skills Students's Responsibility to Learn Diverse Teaching Methods and Materials Lack of Funding for Accommodations Support Not Mandated, Depend Upon Funding
Assessment Procedures	Regular and with Assistance Extra Time, Smaller Groups, Different Formats Out of Level, Measure Progress Alternatives	Adjustments Faculty-Member Specific ADA & 504 Provide Limited Guidance No Standards or Guidelines

- Students can take “out of level” assessments, or take tests which measure progress toward their IEP goals.
- Approximately 1% of youth with disabilities can take an alternative assessment depending upon their IEP goals.

## Postsecondary School

### Content of Learning

- Courses and programs vary by institution.
- Most schools are accredited for minimum program standards in undergraduate education or vocational training programs.
- Instructors have significant freedom to teach what they want in a course.
- Some content accommodations are available, but are often provided on a person request basis.
- Any content accommodation requires student disclosure of disability and negotiation with disability support personnel and instructors.
- Standards can be modified, extended, or made functional.

### Methods of Instruction

- Postsecondary faculty have little or no training in teaching methods.
- General sense that it is the student’s responsibility to learn.
- Diverse teaching methods and materials are individual faculty person specific and require the student to personally advocate for any support, accommodation or assistance.

- Little funding is available for support provision or assistance.
- Services and supports are not mandated and depend upon funding and availability.

### Assessment Procedures

- Any adjustments or accommodations are faculty-member specific.
- The ADA and 504 provide some guidance for equal access.
- No standards or guidelines for assessment, accommodations, or supports exist.

## Implications for Solving the Issue

A focus upon a quality as well as an accommodated experience in both secondary and postsecondary environments will increase the likelihood that individuals with disabilities are successful in a variety of educational, employment, and community living settings. There is a need to develop and articulate a vision of a quality secondary and postsecondary experience for youth with disabilities.

## Secondary School

### Content of Learning

- High Standards for academics and career preparation are maintained for all youth, including all those with disabilities and other diverse learning needs.
- Standards are focused upon the requirements of the next environment (i.e., post-school environments).
- Students receive learning within the context of “real life” experiences.

- Infuse self-determination skills within the context of secondary education experiences.
- Require early exposure to post-school options and environments including the range of postsecondary education options.
- Need joint responsibility (school-family-community) for preparing youth with disabilities for post-school environments.
- Need to include “student voices” in decisions of what needs to be improved and in making it happen.
- Self-advocacy skills and behaviors are a part of curriculum for all students.

#### Methods of Instruction

- Create communities of learning and eliminate content departments.
- Seek to restructure the way students are supported to look more like postsecondary education and employment settings.
- Build in processes for students to increasingly take responsibility for decisions about their lives in secondary school (what they learn, how they learn it, including when, where, and why they are learning it).
- Adjust IDEA to make “Age of Majority” a meaningful learning experience for youth with disabilities and their family members.
- Build in processes where youth with disabilities (all youth) take increasing responsibility for their own learning (including the supports and accommodations needed to learn) as they go through the secondary school years.

- Encourage use of technology as a primary support for all youth with disabilities.

#### Assessment Procedures

- Use assessment as a process to assist youth with disabilities to discover and understand their strengths and weakness, as well as their need for accommodations and supports in different setting context.
- Make assessment a meaningful learning experience for all students.

#### Transition

- Alter IDEA and other legislation to reflect the preparation for, and assumption of, adult environment responsibilities as required in post-school settings.
- All secondary educators, counselors, and youth with disabilities and their parents will have the necessary information to explore and select postsecondary education and life-long learning programs.
- Increase the use of natural supports (as represented in post-school environments) as youth move into and through secondary school.
- Gradually mold the preparing or sending environment to match the context and requirements of post-school environments.
- Increasing involve and make responsible, students themselves, their family, and community members in choices about life preparation.
- Seek to further the awareness and understanding of persons within post-school receiving environments to better support



# Projected Status

## Post-Secondary School

Involve Youth with Disabilities in Improvements  
 Faculty Apply Diverse Teaching Methods  
 Individual Needs Rather Than Categories of Services  
 Expand Universal Design Concepts  
 Evaluate Disability Support Services and Share Info



## Transition

Alter IDEA for More Futures Preparation  
 Access to Information  
 Increase Natural Supports  
 Sending Environments Match Post-School Environments  
 Include Students and Families in Choice  
 Increase Awareness in Post-School



## Secondary School

Content of Learning	High Standards Focus Upon Next Environment "Real Life" Experiences Self-Determination Skills Early Exposure to Post-School Options Joint Responsibility, School-Family-Community Include "Student Voices" Self-Advocacy Skills
Methods of Instruction	Communities of Learning Restructure Supports Student Responsibility Make "Age of Majority" Meaningful Technology as Primary Support
Assessment Procedures	Use to Promote Self-Awareness Meaningful Learning Experience

and accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities.

- What are the issues related to an accommodated experience?

### **Postsecondary School**

- Actively involve youth with disabilities in all recommended improvements.
- All postsecondary education faculty increase their capacity to teach diverse learners including those with disabilities.
- Instructional support offices focus upon the individual needs of youth with disabilities rather than offer categories of service or programs.
- Work to expand Universal Design concepts throughout postsecondary education settings, benefiting all students toward improved learning.
- Encourage those programs providing information to youth with disabilities and their parents to review and evaluate disability support services on postsecondary campuses-this information should be shared widely.

### **Develop A Series of Practice Briefs**

These should be two page descriptions of “What’s Working” for administrators, teachers, parents, youth, etc. For example, “What do teachers need to know to support the successful transition of students to post secondary education?”

### **Develop A Series Of Professional Development Papers**

Possible Topics:

- Teaching and learning- differentiated teaching
- Assessment
- Linking secondary and post secondary education
- School leadership: Developing a school culture that promotes a quality secondary experience and promotes successful post secondary outcomes
- General and special education collaboration within secondary education
- Articulation
- Diverse learning opportunities – multiple strategies for helping students achieve to high standards
- Alternative education options
- Business education partnerships that support an improved secondary experience.

### **Recommend Research, TA, Training and Information Dissemination**

#### **Position Papers/Research Synthesis**

Survey Existing Exemplary Research-Based Models For Secondary Education

- What are the lessons and implications for youth with disabilities?
- What specific challenges need to be addressed to ensure a quality secondary experience for youth with disabilities?

## Capacity Building Workshop(s)

These should focus on one topic or a related cluster of topics. Develop a workshop or series of workshops that provide state and local teams with an opportunity to learn from a combination of content experts and practitioners. The suggested composition of the teams would be based on the topic area and the individuals needed to promote change. Each team would be provided with facilitated planning time during the workshop. Content experts and successful practitioners would be available to participate in team planning time and to answer questions. Each team would develop a plan of action. Center staff would provide post workshop follow and support to teams to insure implementation of workshop plans.

- Emphasize the role of technology as a support or accommodation for all youth with disabilities.
- Ensure that the process of obtaining supports and accommodations for persons with disabilities is consistent across secondary school and post-school environments to be accessed in adult life.
- Recommend and fund demonstration projects that support the development of skills and behaviors necessary to successfully advocate for and access services, supports, and accommodations as needed in various post-school context.

## Input to Policy Makers

- As a part of the IDEA reauthorization process, advocate for language that will train and increase student responsibility for determining and acquiring accommodations and supports in secondary school.
- Make it clear that the student outcomes (around support and accommodation provision) should not be the same in secondary school as they are in elementary school – There is a need for a different kind of education in secondary school.
- Insert wording in the IDEA that will ensure that “transition” is not an add-on activity or class, but an ongoing process to be experienced by all youth as a part of their elementary and secondary education.
- Coordinate policy recommendations with the newly reauthorized ESEA.

## **Issues Analysis**

**Stacie L. Martin**

### **Issue II: Working to Provide Quality Experiences as Well as Accommodated Experiences**

The main issues discussed were the differences between secondary and postsecondary environments. In my opinion, the group's product clearly outlined the differences between secondary and postsecondary in the areas of learning, instruction and assessment. I thought the group gave some clear recommendations in the three different areas. I particularly noticed they included a section for policymakers, who we all know are key players.

In my personal experience I have found that I too, have come across the differences that were described in the document. I feel the information presented was accurate. There were a couple of statements made that I have questions about. For example, the statement "postsecondary educational settings need to provide a wider range and more individualized supports and accommodation for a greater range of youth with disabilities." My experience is that when a consumer who has a disability goes to the Student Support Office on campus, provides documentation of disability and knows what supports he/she needs, the campus is obligated under law to provide those needed accommodations. These accommodations are provided. However, it's been my experience that not all postsecondary institutions will provide the same level of support; some will provide minimal supports enough to meet the requirements of the law. The other statement is, "Youth with disabilities in secondary school need to pass through 'reality checks' regarding the needed skills and knowledge required to succeed in

postsecondary educational and employment environments." I would add that all students, not just students with a disability can benefit from these "reality checks."

An additional idea might be to explore the concept of peer mentoring. I am presently looking into setting up such a program. The idea is to connect potential or new students with other students who are attending that institution.

**Issue II: Working to Provide Quality Experiences as Well as Accommodated Experiences**

This is the group that I participated in, and we had lots of good discussion. I think our group struggled to wrap themselves around this issue. It took us awhile to fully grasp the key elements of this topic area and to decide how best to address those elements. Until this topic area was presented, I honestly hadn't given it much thought, and I think my thinking shifted as we talked through specific issues.

Much of the discussion in our group focused on the reality that the educational experience in the secondary school setting under IDEA and the postsecondary environment are set up very differently. For students in special education who are on IEPs, educators spend a great deal of time identifying the individual student needs and providing the appropriate supports and services to enable the student to progress in the general curriculum. Little responsibility rests with the student for understanding one's own needs and accessing assistance. At the postsecondary level, all of the responsibility falls on the student to self-identify and request supports and services. The "accommodated experience" is in reality poor preparation for students with disabilities to achieve post-school success.

As our group worked through this issue and tried to identify key elements, I was inclined initially to advocate that the postsecondary setting needed to more closely resemble the secondary setting. Furthermore, secondary educators should be trained more like elementary educators in that all teachers would be able

to provide instructional accommodations for individual student learning styles and needs. As we talked through this, however, I came to realize that the accommodated experience is not real life experience. If we continue to provide students with disabilities the safety net of IDEA without also providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills to understand their own needs, preferences, and interests, we are probably doing them more harm than good. Potentially, we are creating students who are ill-equipped for the "real world" - young adults who don't know how to cope with failure and fully participate in the human experience.

I do agree it would be helpful to somehow align the secondary and the postsecondary experience so that students don't fall into some black hole of services after exiting secondary school with no knowledge of how to successfully navigate the system and access supports. We must also look to find ways to ensure that all students, especially those with disabilities, take on increasing responsibility in planning their educational experience.

I still concur with most of the recommendations made by our group for influencing policy and research. I am not sure I see the implications for assessment around this issue. I feel this topic area is largely one of successfully preparing students (and their families) and educators to meet the challenge of IDEA to use the transition planning requirements to positively impact post-school education and employment outcomes.

## **Issue Area III: Enhancing the Role of Technology**

### **What is Technology?**

**T**echnology can be defined as products outside of an individual's natural system that support learning, employment, and/or independent living. Technology includes such items as calculators, keyboards, software, computers, splints, and wheelchairs. Technology has the potential to improve the educational, career, and adult living outcomes for people with disabilities. However, this potential will not be realized unless barriers to its selection, acquisition and use are overcome. Issues that must be addressed include those related to 1) funding, 2) knowledge of stakeholders, 3) transition planning, and 4) accommodation vs. universal design.

### **Issue 1: Funding**

**F**unding technology is often cited as a barrier to technology access for people with disabilities, although the cost of technology is often lower than anticipated. This issue is likely to grow increasingly important as secondary educators are faced with implementing the assistive technology requirements of IDEA, as technology in general becomes more widely available as an effective tool for improving student learning, and as awareness of adaptive technology increases. Besides overall costs, deciding who (school, government agency, family) should pay for technology under specific circumstances, and who owns the technology as a student transitions between various levels of education and employment, create additional challenges to be overcome. How these issues vary at different levels of education and between private and public institutions should also be

explored. Besides selection and purchase, the question of who is responsible for upgrades and technical support must be answered.

### **Why is this an Issue: Issue 1**

**F**unding is an issue because it directly and immediately impacts whether students are provided with needed technological devices and services. Concerns include:

- Choices are too often driven by the availability of funding instead of individual needs.
- There is lack of clarity about who is responsible for paying for technological devices and services (e.g., schools, families, insurance), particularly as students transition to postsecondary settings.
- There sometimes is a lack of funding for training personnel to deliver technological services and increasing awareness among key stakeholders (e.g., families, general educators, administrators).
- There is also a concern about who is responsible for providing technological services to students at the secondary level—should it be an “expert” model or one in which all stakeholders are involved in the selection of and the provision of technological services and resources?

### **Implications for Solving the Issue: Issue 1**

**I**f funding issues, including who pays for the initial technology and who provides support and upgrades, are adequately addressed, more students

will have access to empowering technology that will increase their participation, independence and productivity in education and employment settings.

### **Recommended Research, Training and Information Dissemination: Issue 1**

The following research, training, and information dissemination is recommended to resolve funding issues regarding technology for students with disabilities:

- Research is needed regarding cost-effective uses of technology to help educators and others select devices and services that maximizes opportunities for the student while minimizing costs, duplication of services, etc.
- Research is needed to identify exemplary models of shared funding service agreements at the state and local level.
- Longitudinal studies are needed to document the long range effectiveness of technology in helping students gain access to the general education curriculum and extracurricular activities.
- There is a need to study state policies regarding initiatives for the funding of technology in the following areas: (1) How funding for technology in general addresses the needs of students with disabilities; (2) How it impacts funding and decision-making at the local level and, (3) The extent to which it includes shared funding through interagency agreements and integration of service systems.
- The relationship between technological access and lifelong learning should be explored.

- We need to explore successful practices for making funding systemic and system-wide.

### **Issue 2: Knowledge of Stakeholders**

The planning and implementation of effective technological supports for students with disabilities requires enhanced knowledge, skills, and awareness among all stakeholder groups, including: general and special education teachers, related services personnel (occupational therapists, physical therapists, etc.), policymakers, paraprofessionals, pre-service and in-service trainers, employers, inter-agency and community service providers, students, families, technological professionals, medical equipment providers and others. All represent key stakeholders that participate in the planning process and are responsible for ensuring that students are provided with the appropriate technological devices and services to meet their individual needs.

#### **Why is this an Issue: Issue 2**

If key stakeholders are not aware of how technology can support the needs of students with disabilities, the following issues are likely to emerge:

- Technological needs will not be accurately assessed or considered as required by IDEA.
- Technological needs will not be integrated into the IEP nor integrated into the curriculum.
- Service providers will not have the capacity to keep pace with rapidly changing technologies that will benefit students with disabilities.

- Students with disabilities will not be provided with developmentally appropriate devices or services.
- Students with disabilities will fail to use technology effectively and will not be able to self-advocate regarding their technological needs.
- Other key stakeholders will fail to understand the value of technology to the student (general educator perception that technology “gets in the way” of learning basic skills, misunderstanding among employers, fears of expensive accommodations, etc.).

**I**ncreasing knowledge, skills, and awareness of technology can lead to improved levels of identifying resources available to students and facilitate cooperation among all types of service providers to ensure that students are provided with the supports that will increase readiness, motivation, and transition to postsecondary and adult living. Smaller institutions and programs face special challenges in maintaining current information about technology and its most appropriate applications for students with disabilities.

### **Implications for Solving the Issue: Issue 2**

**I**f teachers, related services personnel (occupational therapists, physical therapists, etc.), policymakers, paraprofessionals, pre-service and in-service trainers, employers, interagency and community service providers, students, families, technological professionals, medical equipment providers and other stakeholders were more aware of the potential uses and the availability of technology for people with

disabilities, technology would be employed more effectively to maximize independence, productivity and participation of people with disabilities at all levels of education and employment.

### **Recommended Research, Training and Information Dissemination: Issue 2**

**T**he following research, training the information dissemination is recommended to improve knowledge of stakeholders:

- There is a need for baseline data on the present skills, knowledge and awareness of key stakeholders that can be used in the planning and implementation of technology for students with disabilities.
- Information is needed regarding effective training approaches for each stakeholder group. With regard to the training needs of students, age and interest-appropriate strategies are needed.
- Research is needed regarding the efficacy of the “expert” model vs. a team planning approach—(e.g. study whether experts are any more effective than the IEP planning team). Also, we need to investigate the effectiveness of an interdisciplinary assessment process.
- Research is needed about effective ways of training students to self-advocate regarding the use of technology in the classroom and workplace.
- Training is needed to increase collaboration among various stakeholders, in order to provide students with an integrated and seamless system of technological supports that facilitate transition into



postsecondary settings.

- Information is needed regarding the extent to which students with disabilities are provided with technology, but don't know how to use it. The following question should be addressed: "To what extent can students with disabilities research their own technological needs?"
- Internet technologies (e.g., email, Web pages, discussion lists, bulletin boards) should be used to effectively train stakeholders.
- Training needs to target pre-service teachers.
- Research and training should be focused on early technological access and training for children with disabilities.

### **Issue 3: Address Role of Technology in Transition Planning**

The concept of transition is integral to students' planning of postsecondary and adult living objectives. Like all other aspects of the transition process, the role of technology must be addressed.

#### **Why is this an Issue: Issue 3**

Many people believe that technology has the potential to promote positive school and career outcomes for students. However, this is contingent upon a number of various factors, systemic and otherwise, to be successful. Coordinated education and community service systems are essential in ensuring that the transfer of technology is a seamless process for students. This can be facilitated by the development on the transition IEP of inter-agency and/or cost sharing agreements that iden-

tify specific roles and responsibilities of agencies. In addition, student transition plans need to include self-advocacy objectives so that students are able to articulate their technological needs to others (e.g., teachers, professors, employers).

#### **Implications for Solving the Issue: Issue 3**

A considerable body of information exists on the transition process, but little has been focused on technological issues. If technological issues were adequately addressed in a student's transition to higher education and employment, fewer problems would result as the student moves from pre-college to postsecondary education to employment settings.

#### **Recommended Research, TA Training and Information Dissemination: Issue 3**

- Research is needed regarding the use of technology at the secondary level that "scales" or generalizes well to postsecondary and employment objectives.
- Information is needed about effective models that promote interagency collaboration in the transition process with regard to the provision of technological devices and related services.
- Research is needed to study effective approaches to the development of student knowledge and self-advocacy skills in the area of technology. For example, effective participation in the transition IEP development process is essential for students in the assessment of their technological

needs. Effective strategies are needed with regard to how students can “negotiate” with teachers and employers as they transition from the “umbrella” of IDEA to the ADA.

- Research is needed to study the role of technology in secondary education in relation to postsecondary education and employment outcomes. Proposed research questions include: “What is the progression and cross-application of technology through stages from elementary to middle school and secondary education and how can it best be integrated into instruction and transition planning to achieve postsecondary school and employment outcomes?”

#### **Issue 4: Accommodations vs. Universal Design**

It is important to create inclusive environments that are universally accessible to all people, with and without disabilities. A universal design approach to the development of technological devices and services will help to ensure that students with disabilities will be provided with full access to programs and activities in the school and community.

#### **Why is this an Issue: Issue 4**

One concern about the use of technology is that it can often involve the use of devices that are highly specialized and only applicable to a limited consumer market. As a result, there is little incentive for commercial vendors to engage in research and development activities in this area, reflected in high technology costs for students with

disabilities. A universal design approach can help to reduce the cost of technology as well as to:

- Facilitate the transfer of technology from secondary to postsecondary education
- Promote cross-application and compatibility in education and workplace settings
- Reduce stigma, cultural and attitudinal barriers; and
- More immediately and cost-effectively, adapt to the changing technological needs of students (e.g., developmental appropriate technology).

#### **Implications for Solving the Issue: Issue 4**

If universal design were more often employed when technological hardware, software and facilities were being designed and purchased, fewer adaptive technologies and other special accommodations would be required by people with disabilities as they attempt to use computing products and labs.

#### **Recommended Research, Training and Information Dissemination: Issue 4**

- Research is needed to study the extent to which the application of universal design results in less of a need to provide students with special accommodations.
- All stakeholders need training so that they will be proactive in employing universal design principles to design and select facilities, computers and software in order to minimize the need for special accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

- Technology-related postsecondary technology programs should include the principles of universal design regarding hardware, software, and facilities.
- Efforts should be made to assure that all Web developers employ universal design principles to make their pages accessible to everyone.
- Policies and procedures should be established at all levels to assure the purchase and use of hardware and software that is accessible to everyone.

**Issues Analysis**  
**Stacie L. Martin**

**Issue III: Enhancing the Role of Technology**

The main issues discussed encompassed funding, knowledge of stakeholders, role of technology in transition planning and concept of universal design. I have limited knowledge and experience in the area of technology. My overall impression with the document was that the information made sense and touched upon some critical issues for continued discussion.

My limited experience has been with the challenges of funding issues for students at the postsecondary level. I agree with the issue of the need to address what agency will be responsible for ensuring that upgrades and technical support are given on an ongoing basis. I agree that educating key stakeholders is important. In my opinion, when you talk about technology most people think about the expense. When in reality a simple adaptation can be of minimal cost but make a significant dif-

ference in the life of a student. There was a point made regarding cost sharing agreements. In Kansas we are fortunate to have the Assistive Technology for Kansas project (ATK). There is a statewide board. The majority of members are consumers with other members from school, VR and other related agencies involved with assistive technology. My favorite piece of this document was about the concept of universal design. My personal perspective is that too many times people get labeled because not everyone can fit that “ideal” mold. If we can break that mold, then who is to say who is different?

**Wendy Blaauw**

### **Issue III: Enhancing the Role of Technology**

**T**his group identified four core issues around this topic area. The first area, funding, of course, is and probably always will be an issue. And it is not an issue that is easily solved. The other three areas, knowledge of stakeholders, the implications for transition planning, and universal design are, potentially, the areas where policy and research can be most influential.

**O**ften when technology needs of students with disabilities are addressed, the discussion is focused on assistive technology needs, and educators do a fair job of considering those supports. I think access to basic, everyday technology for students with disabilities is often overlooked. Most students in general education are provided computer lab time as part of their educational experience beginning in kindergarten. Do we consistently provide students with disabilities the same experience? The whole concept of universal design is important here. Many schools are not physically equipped to provide students with disabilities with equal access to areas like computer labs, etc.

**W**hen it comes to transition planning, again, assistive technology is one piece. IEP teams must also consider and give equal weight to evaluating how well students with disabilities are accessing and receiving instruction in basic computer skills that employers and postsecondary education expects.

**O**ne suggestion I would make for this topic area is that further exploration be done to look at ways to partner better with businesses and employers. So much of what can be done in the area of technology and the use of technology for persons with disabilities directly impacts the business community. One impact is how well consumers with disabilities can access the service or product of the business. The other area of impact is how technology can be used to better equip persons with disabilities to become successful employees.

## Issue Area IV:

### Managing Supports and Related Services

#### What are the Challenges to Managing Supports and Related Services?

Students with disabilities face many challenges as they try to access supports when leaving high school and entering postsecondary education. Challenges include, but are not limited to, a lack of coordinated services between secondary school and postsecondary school (e.g., conflicting eligibility criteria, processes, implementation issues and terminology), the need for instruction in self-determination and leadership skills before, upon entry to, and during postsecondary education, and the need for greater linkage with employment related supports.

#### Issue 1: Collaboration and Coordination of Services

Access issues must first be addressed through collaboration between institutions, agencies, providers, and individuals and families to ensure that coordinated services are available at all levels of education and on to employment. Primary challenges to access for students include lack of information about how secondary and postsecondary environments differ, how eligibility for support is determined, what constitutes effective supports for individual students, and how various supports might be financed. Inconsistencies between adult human service agencies regarding eligibility, evaluation and outcome data further confuse the already complex processes of gaining access to, participating and progressing in postsecondary education.

#### Why is this an Issue: Issue 1

The challenge to effective transitions and coordinated supports for students with disabilities is complex. These challenges include resistance to change at the secondary and postsecondary level, attitudes framed by low expectations for students with disabilities, the need for professional development in high schools and colleges, personnel, different missions of institutions (i.e. academic standards), concerns regarding resource availability, and legal mandates that are unclear and sometimes contradictory.

#### Implications for Solving the Issue: Issue 1

- Evaluate models for flexibility in and collaboration between institutions and agencies involved in transition.
- Delineate effective versus ineffective practices and strategies of support services.
- Identify resources needed for successful transition to postsecondary education and develop agreements to co-mingle funds and other resources.

#### Recommended Research, TA Training and Information Dissemination: Issue 1

- Identify effective practices: Identify where they are happening and how are they doing it.
- Identify a common agenda for all agencies to endorse that encourages interested students with disabilities to continue their education after high school.
- Examine resource mapping, agency

- funding, processes and evaluations.
- Design data collection systems linked to funding, services provision and student outcomes.
- Encourage professional development at all levels (secondary education, college and community support institutions) in the acquisition, application, and alignment of supports for students in postsecondary and employment settings.

## **Issue 2: Self-Determination and Leadership**

Students with disabilities often face additional difficulty accessing postsecondary education because they have not actively participated in many of the experiences that would prepare them for the challenges of life after high school. Like their peers, however, students with disabilities want to advocate for themselves. Self-advocacy training—self-determination, management, self-knowledge—needs to be in place throughout their educational experience, including in college where students are mandated to advocate for their own services and accommodations.

### **Why is this an Issue: Issue 2**

As students move into adulthood, all students are expected to advocate for their own needs. Students with disabilities and their families may not have the additional knowledge or role models they need to make this process less confusing. The transition originates in an environment where the identified “adults” (teachers and parents) make most decisions. In addition, accommodations and services for students with disabilities are linked to institu-

tions and agencies with conflicting purposes and the cost of services is often perceived as too high.

### **Implications for Solving the Issue: Issue 2**

- Determine the impact of techniques of self-determination on the acquisition of supports.
- Identify the elements, educational and cultural, that determine and support self-determination.
- Identify the administrative processes that support or are barriers for self-determination.
- Identify the unintended prejudicial factors that prevent students with disabilities from attending postsecondary education.

### **Recommended Research, TA Training and Information Dissemination: Issue 2**

- Self-determination training at both the pre-college and postsecondary education level is needed for students, faculty and support personnel, to determine success in acquiring support. Training should be integrated within typical curriculum and activities.
- Investigate the use of service brokers across the transition period to facilitate coordination.

## **Issue 3: Postsecondary Education and Links to Employment**

In order for students to transition to work, it is necessary to develop work place skills (SCANS)

as well as specific occupational skills. Information about adult services and related assessments are not available early enough in the educational process or simply do not exist for students with disabilities. Non-inclusive educational and vocational instruction in high school or college, lack of career exploration and internships, and low participation in typical early employment experiences (e.g., after school jobs), deny students with disabilities the full range of learning experiences necessary to make important career decisions. Department of Labor Initiatives, like the Ticket-to-Work, and One-Stop Centers may be able to assist students in their effort to connect with education that leads to employment.

### **Why is this an Issue: Issue 3**

Students with disabilities continue to be at a disadvantage because they are underrepresented in postsecondary and employment settings. Students with disabilities do not enter postsecondary education because expectations—theirs and others—are low, and without postsecondary education students are less likely to succeed in the workplace. Studies show that alignment of services and supports is effective but is not widely practiced. Often there are concerns regarding insufficient resources to support students, particularly if their supports and accommodations seem complex. At each stage, a person with disabilities faces policies and procedures that their non-disabled peers need not address.

### **Implications for Solving the Issue: Issue 3**

- Share resources, for example, between general education and special education (including career-related courses and

internships).

- Determine commitment and knowledge
- Could we mimic the way support is provided in the postsecondary world and remain in compliance with IDEA?
- Determine to what extent is gate-keeping at colleges or high schools a factor in college attendance.

### **Recommended Research, TA Training and Information Dissemination: Issue 3**

- Identify and disseminate best practices in secondary, postsecondary, and employment-related supports (to cover career preparation — for example, affiliations and internships required by college career tracks).
- Identify what factors contribute to successful/unsuccessful transitions to target employment following postsecondary education.

## **Issues Analysis** **Stacie L. Martin**

### **Issue IV: Managing Supports and Related Services**

**T**here were three main issues that were addressed relating to managing supports and related services. Those issues focused upon collaboration and coordination of services; self determination and leadership and post secondary education and links to employment. Overall, the group touched upon issues that are relevant to challenges students face when planning for their future needs.

**A**s I was reviewing this document there were statements made in which I have had different experiences and perspectives. For example, under the issue of postsecondary education and links to employment. There was a statement made “that information about adult services and related assessments are not available early enough in the educational process or simply do not exist for students with disabilities.” I question what type of transitional plans are being made for students with disabilities. It is my understanding of I.D.E.A. that transition is required for all students with disabilities. Person-centered planning strategies can be incorporated into the Individual Education Plan. I have had experience with being a grant reviewer for School to Work grants. Those grants awarded included the concept of work from Kindergarten to Secondary school. Through my work at VR we have vocational evaluators that often provide assessment for secondary students who are referred from his/her VR counselor. The assessment can cover from interests to aptitude to job tryout situations

to “try out a particular job of interest.” I agree that students with disabilities continue to be at a disadvantage because they have to go through extra hoops sometimes to receive services.

**T**he document addressed employment, self-advocacy and postsecondary education options. An additional perspective would be to include life skills or independent living skills as an issue. In my experience the three are interrelated. Independent living can cover from basic daily living skills ( hygiene, dress, cooking) to managing ones own affairs such as banking , paying bills and knowing resources in ones community.



**Wendy Blaauw**

#### **Issue IV: Managing Supports and Related Services**

This group identified three key themes for this topic area: Collaboration and coordination of services; Self-determination and leadership, and Postsecondary and links to employment. It is interesting that common threads were identified in all four major topic areas, namely self-determination and postsecondary education and employment.

Collaboration and coordination of services is a complex issue, and I think one that is typically more challenging for students with more severe disabilities. IDEA clearly articulates the expectation that other agencies that may be involved in and potentially pay for identified transition services should be invited to the IEP. However, since the school is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the IEP is carried out, I think that there is a reluctance to invite outside agency participation. Funding and turf issues complicate the collaboration issue further. Certainly evidence supports the research implications identified by the group of exploring flexible interagency models of collaboration. This is a recurring topic in practice as so many federal grant initiatives currently exist to fund these endeavors in an attempt to influence systemic change.

The discussion of self-determination echoes the issues described in other groups. Clearly, this is an area that has been identified as having significant potential to positively influence the post-school outcomes of students with disabilities. Self-determination models and demonstration projects have

shown that students benefit from this type of curriculum and instruction. The challenge now is to better prepare educators and school systems to build this component into existing practice.

The successful transition of students with disabilities into postsecondary education and employment certainly is an indicator of how well education collaborates and provides for the coordination of services. Longitudinal studies like the national study currently being conducted will hopefully provide the field with additional insights into how effective current practice has been in improving these outcomes. Continued dissemination of best practices and successful demonstration projects should be encouraged.

Reflecting upon the two days of the institute, it is encouraging to see so many researchers and professionals sharing information and resources designed to help students with disabilities achieve post-school successes. It would be easy to look back over the 10 plus years since transition was written into IDEA and become discouraged that we are still battling so many of the same issues. However, there is also a significant increase in the development of materials, trainings, and research that demonstrates that we are, in fact, making progress. Opportunities to participate in institutes such as the one in Portland go a long way to reinforce these efforts.

# Evaluation Form

**National Capacity Building Institute  
Summer 2001  
July 22-23, Portland, Oregon  
Evaluation Form**

Please help us to improve our future Institutes by filling out the form below. Please email the completed form to [meganj@hawaii.edu](mailto:meganj@hawaii.edu) or print out the form and mail to Megan Jones, Center On Disability Studies, 1776 University Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96822. Thank you!

Rate the areas in the corresponding box using a scale of 1-5; 5 being excellent, 3 being satisfactory, and 1 being unsatisfactory. We also welcome comments in the space provided.

Registration

Ease of registration [ ]  
Responsiveness to enquiries [ ]

Comments:

Online Papers and Discussion

Relevance of papers to my interests [ ]  
Format/style of papers [ ]  
Ease of access to papers on-line [ ]  
Relevance of discussion questions  
to my interests [ ]  
Ease of access to discussion on-line [ ]

Comments:

Presentations

Stodden

Relevance of presentation to my interests [ ]  
Presentation style [ ]

Izzo

Relevance of presentation to my interests [ ]  
Presentation style [ ]

Burgstahler

Relevance of presentation to my interests [ ]  
Presentation style [ ]

Whelley

Relevance of presentation to my interests [ ]  
Presentation style [ ]

Comments:

### Discussion

Relevance of discussions to my interests [ ]

Discussion format [ ]

Discussion outcome/output [ ]

Comments:

### Morning and Evening Activities

Comments:

### Lunchtime Discussions

Comments:

### Materials

Content of binder materials [ ]

Style/format of binder materials [ ]

Comments:

### **Please answer the questions below:**

What was the highlight of the Institute?

What would you improve about the Institute?

What is the most valuable idea/contact that you took away from the Institute?

What would encourage you to use the pre-Institute on-line discussion?

What suggestions do you have for future Institute themes, papers and presentations?

For more information about training, technical assistance, and dissemination activities mentioned in these proceedings, or for information about future Institutes, please contact:

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