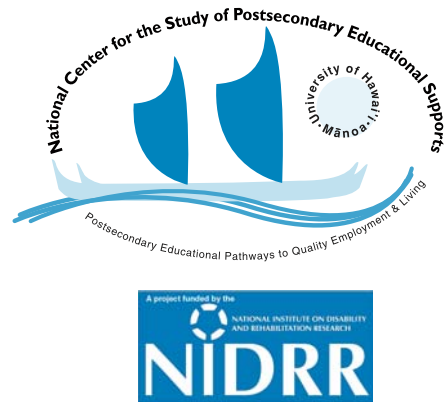


# National Capacity Building Institute Spring 2002 Proceedings

"Supporting Individuals with Disabilities Across  
Secondary School, Postsecondary School and Employment"



March 6-8, 2002  
Honolulu, Hawaii

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## INTRODUCTION

Aloha and welcome to the Proceedings document for the National Capacity Building Institute, “Supporting Individuals with Disabilities Across Secondary Education, Postsecondary Education and Employment.” The Institute was held in Honolulu, Hawaii, on March 6-8, 2002, and was co-sponsored by the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) and the National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports (NCSPES).

The Institute consisted of several different components:

- (1) **Online readings and discussion with authors & researchers.** Approximately a month prior to the Institute in Hawaii, participants were given the opportunity to read papers authored by the presenters. A rich on-line discussion evolved from these readings, with participants expressing their views about the goals of service delivery, the role of self-determination, the potential of postsecondary education for individuals with severe disabilities, and strategies for improving the employment of individuals with disabilities.
- (2) **Intensive presentations and discussions in Honolulu, Hawaii.** Participants came to Honolulu, Hawaii for a three-day workshop in collaboration with the Pacific Rim Conference on Disabilities. Five speakers presented current information on topics ranging from differences in how supports are provided across secondary school, postsecondary school and employment

(Robert Stodden and Megan Jones); supporting individuals with severe disabilities to be fully integrated into secondary school (Douglas Fisher); establishing minimum standards of support provision in postsecondary school (Stanley Shaw); finding the “fit” between employees with disabilities and employers (Richard Leucking); and providing natural supports to individuals with disabilities in the employment environment (David Mank). Each presentation was followed by a reaction (Richard Radtke, Philip Rumril, Anne Lee, Jamesetta Logan), and a period of small group discussion. The discussion groups exposed participants to a variety of perspectives, and provided participants with the opportunity to link each presentation with the real world of disability through the development of recommendations for policy, practice and research. A range of recommendations were offered, with most groups highlighting the need to further explore innovative and effective means of supporting individuals with disabilities across secondary school, postsecondary school and employment; the need to support research in the area of Universal Design; and the need to ensure that individuals with disabilities are fully included in the decision-making process around their own supports.

- (3) **Follow-up discussion surrounding next steps and the implementation of new knowledge and skills.** Participants were given the opportunity to continue the discussion around support provision to individuals with disabilities by participating in the post-

outcomes list-serve sponsored by the University of Hawaii. Questions posed by participants on the list-serve included, “How would I transition a student to a college if he is disabled and doesn't have a high school diploma?” “What types of transition planning workshops are done to link high schools with higher education?” and “Why are post-secondary students who are economically disadvantaged or who are minorities underrepresented in disabled services?”

We hope that these Proceedings reflect the rich variety of participants, presentations and



**ROBERT A. STODDEN, PH.D.**

Director  
Center on Disability Studies  
National Center for the Study of Postsecondary  
Educational Supports  
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discussions that emerged from this Institute. Thank you to all who participated! Please look for future Institutes in the areas of self-determination, technology, and service coordination. For more information about this and future Institutes, or about the Post-Outcomes Network of the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, please contact Velina Sugiyama, Administrative Assistant, Center on Disability Studies, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 1776 University Avenue, UA 4-6, Honolulu, HI 96822. Tel. 808-956-5688. Email. [velina@hawaii.edu](mailto:velina@hawaii.edu). Web. <http://www.ncset.hawaii.edu>.



**MEGAN A. JONES, PH.D.**

Assistant Professor and Coordinator  
Post-Outcomes Network  
National Center on Secondary Education and  
Transition  
University of Hawaii at Manoa site

# CAPACITY BUILDING INSTITUTE AGENDA

Feb. 3 – March 3, 2002

Web site posting of readings: Discussions with authors and researchers around issues identified in readings.

## Tuesday, March 5, 2002 - Puna Room

7:00 – 8:00 pm: Pre-Institute Gathering (coffee and dessert provided)

## Wednesday, March 6, 2002 - Iao Needle Room

6:15 – 7:30am: Experiencing the Great Hawaiian Morning – Canoe Paddle (optional)

8:30 – 9:00am: Registration, Continental Breakfast and Introductions

9:00 – 9:15am: David Johnson, “Welcome and Overview of NCSET”

9:15 – 9:30am: Robert Stodden, “Introduction and Synthesis of Institute Theme”

9:30 – 10:00am: Megan Jones, Review of Materials and Agenda

10:00 – 11:00pm: Robert Stodden and Megan Jones, Overview of “Services, Supports and Accommodations” in Secondary Education, Postsecondary Education, & Employment Settings

11:00 – 12:00 Reaction & Discussion

12:00 - 1:00pm: Lunch (provided) Location – Molokei Room

1:00 – 2:00pm: Douglas Fisher, “The Point of Transition: Organizing Supports During Secondary School For Positive Post-School Outcomes”

2:00 – 3:00pm: Reaction and Discussion

3:00-3:30pm: Break

3:30 – 4:30pm: Stan Shaw, “Program Standards for Disability Services in Postsecondary Education”

4:30-5:30pm Reaction and Discussion

5:30pm - on Evening Activities (optional)



**Thursday, March 7, 2002 - Iao Needle Room**

- 6:15 – 8:00am: Experiencing the Great Hawaiian Morning – Diamond Head hike (optional)
- 8:30 – 9:00am: Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 – 9:30am: Overview of Agenda for the Day
- 9:30 – 10:30am: Richard Luecking, “Doing it the Company Way: Employer Perspectives on Workplace Supports”
- 10:30 – 11:30am: Reaction and Discussion
- 11:30 – 12:30pm: Lunch (provided) Location – Molokai Room
- 12:30 – 1:30pm: David Mank, "The Link between Job Design and Employment Outcomes"
- 1:30 – 2:30pm: Reaction and Discussion
- 2:30 – 3:00pm: Break
- 3:00 – 5:00pm: Structured Discussion Groups - Synthesis of Group Discussion  
Location – Iao Needle, Akaka Falls, Hilo, Puna
- 5:00pm – on: Evening Activities (optional)

**Friday, March 7, 2002 - Iao Needle Room**

- 8:30 – 9:00am: Continental Breakfast
- 9:00-10:00am: Phil Rumrill, Richard Radtke, Anne Lee, Jamesetta Logan,  
Reactor Presentations
- 10:00-11:00am: Discussion Group Reactions and Evaluation
- 11:00am: Adjourn

## **PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES**

### **DAVID R. JOHNSON, PH.D.**

Director and Associate Professor  
Institute on Community Integration  
National Center on Secondary Education and  
Transition  
University of Minnesota

### **Welcome and Overview of the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition**

Dr. Johnson is presently Director of the Institute on Community Integration (University Affiliated Program) and associate professor in the Department of Educational Policy and Administration, College of Education of Human Development at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Johnson has more than 25 years of research, technical assistance and dissemination experience with a strong emphasis on secondary education and transition services. Over the years, Dr. Johnson has been the principal investigator and director of several federal and state research, training and demonstration projects in the areas of school-to-work transition, vocational education, interagency collaboration, secondary special education, employment, community living, and others.

Dr. Johnson has directed the National Transition Network and has been a major partner of the National Transition Alliance for Youth with Disabilities. Both projects provide technical assistance, consultation and evaluation support to virtually all 50 states across the nation. His specific research interests include investigations of the post-school outcomes and status of young adults with disabilities, evaluations concerning

access and participation of young adults with disabilities in postsecondary education programs and employment, studies on systems change, cost-benefit analysis, and other policy-related research.

### **ROBERT A. STODDEN, PH.D.**

Director and Professor  
Center on Disability Studies  
National Center for the Study of Postsecondary  
Educational Supports  
University of Hawaii at Manoa

### **Introduction and Synthesis**

Title of Presentation: "Overview of 'Services', 'Supports' and 'Accommodations' in Secondary Education, Postsecondary Education and Employment Settings"

Dr. 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.

**MEGAN A. JONES, PH.D.**

Assistant Professor and Coordinator  
Center on Disability Studies  
University of Hawaii at Manoa

Title of Presentation: “Overview of ‘Services’, ‘Supports’ and ‘Accommodations’ in Secondary Education, Postsecondary Education and Employment Settings”

Dr. Jones is an Assistant Professor with the Center on Disability Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She coordinates the University of Hawaii site of the National Center on Postsecondary Education and Transition (NCSET). This site provides technical assistance, training and information dissemination geared at improving postsecondary outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Dr. Jones has presented at numerous national and international

conferences and workshops in the areas of postsecondary support, technology, and sensory impairment. She has served as a consultant on several state and international projects in the area of severe disability, and has authored papers on the implications of acquired disability and on the application of technology for individuals with vision and hearing loss. Dr. Jones received her doctorate in Special Education from the University of California at Berkeley in 2001.

**DOUGLAS FISHER, PH.D.**

Professor  
School of Teacher Education  
San Diego State University

Title of Presentation: “The Point of Transition: Organizing Supports During Secondary School For Positive Post-School Outcomes”

Dr. Fisher is associate professor of teacher education at San Diego State University. His interests center on quality instruction and support for diverse learners. He is the author of “Inclusive High Schools” and “Inclusive Middle Schools” as well as numerous articles on supporting individuals with disabilities to be fully participating members of their schools and communities.



**STAN F. SHAW, ED.D.**

Professor and Coordinator  
Special Education Program, Department of  
Educational Psychology  
Co-Director, Center on Postsecondary Education  
and Disability  
University of Connecticut

Title of Presentation: “Program Standards for  
Disability Services in Postsecondary Education”

Dr. Shaw is a Professor and Coordinator of the Special Education Program in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Connecticut (UConn). He is also Co-Director of the Center on Postsecondary Education and Disability. His responsibilities with the Center include Co-Principal Investigator for the grant implementing Universal Design for Instruction to improve access to college for students with disabilities, and serving as Coordinator for the UConn’s Annual Postsecondary Learning Disability Training Institute.

Dr. Shaw was Co-Editor of the Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability and is now a member of its Editorial Board. He has recently published articles in Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, Journal of Vocational Special Needs Education, the Journal of Developmental Education, Teacher Education and Special Education and the Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability. His primary areas of interest are professional development for postsecondary disability personnel, services for college students with disabilities, transition, disability policy and law, and teacher education.

**RICHARD G. LUECKING, ED.D.**

President  
TransCen  
Rockville, Maryland

Title of Presentation: “Doing it the Company  
Way: Employer Perspectives on Workplace  
Supports”

Dr. Luecking is President of TransCen, Inc., a position he has held since 1987 when he was charged by the Board of Directors to create linkages between schools, service providing agencies, government, businesses, and families, so that youth with disabilities experience improved post-school outcomes. During his tenure in this position he has written, directed and/or overseen over two dozen federal research and demonstration projects and a nearly equal number of foundation-funded projects that address secondary education issues and school to work transition for youth with disabilities. He was an original consultant in the development of the ‘Bridges From School to Work Program’ of the Marriott Foundation for People with Disabilities, which has since been replicated and established in several national locations with the help of TransCen.

Dr. Luecking has maintained active participation and held leadership positions in numerous local, state and national initiatives, including workforce development boards, school-to-career systems, business/education partnerships, and professional associations. He served in the National School to Work Office of the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor from 1997-99 under a special appointment to

promote the engagement of employers in school to work initiatives. Prior to his term at TransCen, he has held positions in rehabilitation, education and non-profit organization management. He is the author of numerous publications on topics related to career development, school to work transition, business/education partnerships, and the employment of people with disabilities. Dr. Luecking regularly contributes to publications targeting practitioners in education and employment services.

**DAVID M. MANK, PH.D.**

Director

Indiana Institute on Disability and Community  
University of Indiana

Title of Presentation: "The Link between Job Design and Employment Outcomes"

Dr. Mank is the Director of the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community at Indiana University, Indiana's University Center for Excellence on Disabilities. In addition, he is a Full Professor in the School of Education, Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

A prolific writer and researcher, Dr. Mank has an extensive background in the education and employment for persons with disabilities. His interest also includes a focus on the transition of persons with disabilities from school to adult life and community living. Over the past five years, Dr. Mank's work has expanded to encompass not only persons with developmental disabilities, but those with mental illness, physical disabilities, and persons with traumatic brain injuries.

Since 1985, Dr. Mank has maintained responsibility for grant writing and management of more than 20 federally funded projects in which he has been the Principal Investigator, Director or Co-Director. Dr. Mank holds a doctorate in Special Education and Rehabilitation from the University of Oregon, Eugene (1985).

Dr. Mank is a member of the editorial boards of the Journal of the Association for People with Severe Handicaps (JASH), the Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Journal of Disability Policy Studies, Siglo Cero, and a Consulting Editor for the journal on Mental Retardation. He was elected to the Board of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) in 1997, and served as President of that association from 1999-2000. Additionally he is a member of the Board of Directors of the American Association on Mental Retardation and was recently honored by The Arc of the United States receiving the Franklin Smith Award for National Distinguished Service. This award is the highest honor bestowed by the Arc and it recognizes an individual whose contributions have had a nationwide impact of the lives of children and adults with mental retardation and related developmental disabilities.



**ANNOTATED PAPERS AND GROUP DISCUSSION**



**ROBERT A. STODDEN, PH.D. AND  
MEGAN A. JONES, PH.D.**

There are discrepancies in assistance to individuals with disabilities across environments (secondary education, postsecondary education, and employment), both in the laws and in practice. Modes of assistance are defined very differently in the different settings. These discrepancies make transition difficult for people with disabilities.

When individuals with disabilities graduate, they leave a setting that is highly prescriptive and individualized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and enter a setting with vague guidelines and civil rights laws (the ADA and Section 504) that leave employers, service providers, and individuals with disabilities struggling over what is “reasonable” and what entitlement individuals have.

In addition to the discrepancies in assistance, documentation systems are different across settings. The resulting lack of communication between settings and agencies further aggravates the experiences of individuals with disabilities. Adult services often require documentation of disabilities, but do not accept IEP documentation. There is a long waiting list for services for adults. Secondary providers are frustrated because after all their work, students with disabilities will be put on a waiting list.

Some of the issues discussion groups raised, especially participants who were practitioners in the field, were the lack of communication between agencies, the lack of resources, and the unclear roles and responsibilities of different agencies.

## **SERVICES, SUPPORTS AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES: AN ANALYSIS ACROSS SECONDARY EDUCATION, POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

The complete text of this paper is available for review and download at:  
[http://www.ncset.hawaii.edu/publications/pdf/services\\_supports.pdf](http://www.ncset.hawaii.edu/publications/pdf/services_supports.pdf)

### **INTRODUCTION**

There is increasing concern among special educators, individuals with disabilities and their supporters, and others in the field of disability about the poor educational and employment outcomes of youth with disabilities. These poor outcomes exist despite the existence of laws such as the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that are supposedly designed to ensure equal access to and participation in society by individuals with disabilities.

Little attention has been paid to how the kinds and components of support provision to individuals with disabilities, namely the provision of modes of assistance such as services, accommodations and supports, may be impacting the success of these individuals in different environments. There is evidence that these modes of assistance are legislated and applied differently in secondary school, postsecondary school, and employment, which significantly affects an individual’s transition across these three environments. There is a marked difference in the types of assistance that are offered across these environments and the entire process of



accountability and decision-making concerning assistance provision.

The meaning that is attributed to terminology, and the modes of assistance that they signify, appears to shift across secondary school, postsecondary school and employment, due in part to the prescription of the laws that govern these environments. Essentially, the degree to which a law is prescriptive translates into the practical components of assistance provision.

### LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

As students with disabilities transition out of secondary education, there are significant changes in the type of assistance that Federal policy requires and the intent of the laws that govern policy. During secondary education, which falls under the umbrella of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), services and service plans for students with disabilities are based on the individual needs that must be met in order to ensure a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The provision of assistance in secondary school environments under the IDEA is initiated and paid for by the government, and purposed to benefit the individual and improve post-school outcomes. The IDEA is focused on the “services” that must be provided at the secondary school level. The Rehabilitation Act and the ADA focus on the circumstances under which institutions and employers must “accommodate” individuals with disabilities.

### INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)

IDEA focuses on “services” and “related services” for children with disabilities and “supports” for families, teachers and staff. The term “services” is used to cover anything that helps students with disabilities benefit from their special education, enables them to participate in general education, enables them to attain general education standards or prepares them for transition out of secondary education.

IDEA only covers education through secondary school. The services and supports provided via this Act do not extend to postsecondary education or employment. The contrast between the relatively high level of assistance that is provided under IDEA and much lower level of assistance that is provided in postsecondary environments poses many transition issues for individuals with disabilities.

### REHABILITATION ACT

The bulk of the Rehabilitation Act is dedicated to establishing vocational rehabilitation centers, and uses the term “services” to describe the function of these centers. The term “support” is used in this Act more than it is in the IDEA or the ADA. The distinction between “services” and “support” is ambiguous, since “support” is not limited to finances and can be direct to individuals with disabilities as well as indirect.

The term “accommodations” does not appear frequently in the Rehabilitation Act, and not at all in section 504. However, “reasonable accommodations” is used in federal regulations for employment based on section 504 in a manner

consistent with its use in the ADA (45CFR Subtitle A § 84.12). Regulations for employment (45CFR subtitle A, Part 84, Subpart B) define “reasonable accommodations,” such as making facilities accessible, job restructuring, and interpreters, and also defines undue hardship based on the size, budget, and type of operation of the program.

#### AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

As with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the ADA is much more open to interpretation than the IDEA. After secondary school, once an individual identifies his or her disability, the kind of assistance an organization provides is determined by what is “reasonable” and would not impose “undue hardship” on the organization. The term “accommodation” emerges in the ADA, where it was not used in the IDEA or the Rehabilitation Act. In particular, “reasonable accommodation” is the defining point in terms of what institutions “have to” provide and what they “might” provide. The term “services” is also used in the ADA, but mostly in terms of existing public services that need adjustment. Services for individuals with disabilities are required mostly in terms of “auxiliary services” (communication-related), which are defined much more narrowly than are services as defined by the IDEA.

### PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

#### SECONDARY SCHOOL AND TRANSITION

An important aspect of services at the secondary school level is that they involve the addition or substitution of one means of delivering instruction for another (i.e. a sign language interpreter would not normally be

present in the classroom, adaptive physical education is substituted for regular physical education). Accommodations at the secondary school level can be defined as “changes in materials or procedures that provide access to instruction and assessments for students with disabilities”. The focus of special education in elementary and secondary school has historically been to provide a program of services, often focused upon separate settings and content, rather than focusing upon providing different types/ levels of accommodations and supports for youth with disabilities to achieve within regular classroom settings and with the same curriculum content standards as other youth.

Thurlow makes a distinction between “instructional accommodations” and “assessment accommodations.” Instructional accommodations would include changes in materials and curriculum such as alternative assignments and tape recorded versions of printed materials, and changes in methods and strategies such as highlighting key points to remember and presenting material in multiple formats. In the secondary school environment, “support” does not necessarily differ significantly from how one would describe the process of teaching or supporting any child to learn or to transition to adult life.

#### POSTSECONDARY SCHOOL

Services at the postsecondary level tend to be geared for use by categories of students rather than by individual students. “Service” tends to be used by postsecondary institutions to describe the general activities of programs that are designed to assist students with disabilities. The term



“accommodation” is commonly used to describe assistance to students with disabilities at the postsecondary level. It is not uncommon for postsecondary institutions to use the term “reasonable accommodations” to categorize assistance. Many schools appear to be focused upon meeting what is “reasonable” under the law rather than upon what an individual student may need in order to be successful at college.

#### EMPLOYMENT

It is highly unusual for an employer to offer a disability-related “service” to an employee. The provision of a service for an employee with a disability would probably involve contracting with an outside service-provider and is often framed as an accommodation. The desire to keep production costs down provides many employers with an incentive to use a minimalist interpretation of “reasonableness” as a means of defining accommodations for employees with disabilities.

Attempts to balance legal requirements with production costs and employee productivity creates extreme variability in terms of what kinds of accommodations employers will offer employees with disabilities. The use of the word “support” at the employment level, whether it is equated with accommodations or represents other means of assisting an employee with a disability, appears at times to be intentionally vague.

## DISCREPANCIES IN THE PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE ACROSS ENVIRONMENTS

### INTRODUCTION

An exploration of variables surrounding the different types of assistance (services, supports, & accommodations) found as youth with disabilities transition through secondary education to postsecondary education and employment is rarely found in the professional literature. More significant, there seems to be little understanding of the process of assistance provision during these transitions, or of the potential negative impact that is experienced by youth with disabilities as they seek to prepare for and successfully access adult roles of value in their community of choosing.

As youth with disabilities transition from lower education to higher education, they are significantly impacted by movement from the guidance of one federal policy (IDEA) to policy that is much less prescriptive and focused upon participation in normal adult community roles (ADA; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act).

### DISCREPANCIES IN PRINCIPLE: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### INTRODUCTION

The types of participants and the expectations of those who participate in the process of deciding and providing assistance to youth with disabilities in secondary, postsecondary, and employment settings varies widely as youth transition across these environments. This is a result of policy and practice in the sending environment and the



failure to prepare youth with disabilities for the expectations of the receiving environment in the transition. Two considerations are important to youth with disabilities and their supporters, in this discussion:

1. Who participates in and is responsible for the decision making and provision process.
2. The responsibilities, roles, and expectations of those participating. These changing roles have a negative impact upon youth with disabilities.

#### SECONDARY SCHOOL

The selection of participants in the process of determining and providing assistance to youth with disabilities in lower education is specifically detailed in the IDEA, as the parent of a child with a disability (and/or an advocate), a special education administrator responsible for providing programs, and educational and related services personnel providing the program of services.

Many efforts over the past twenty years to teach youth with disabilities “self-determination” skills have been separated from the process where decisions are made and assistance is provided, with little focus upon what is involved in learning increased responsibility and accountability for making decisions about one’s own needs and actions.

#### POSTSECONDARY SCHOOL

Responsibility for the provision of assistance to students with disabilities at the postsecondary level is much less clear and universally applied than at the secondary school level. The Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with

Disabilities Act (ADA) only state that the student must be accommodated “within reason” and that these accommodations should be, again within reason, at the expense of the institution.

However, funding for the provision of assistance to students with disabilities at the postsecondary level is a low priority with most institutions. Additionally, the roles of participants who are involved with the determination and provision of educational assistance during the postsecondary school years are not as clearly defined and are more determined by the intent and advocacy of the youth with a disability.

#### EMPLOYMENT

Employers, i.e. private agencies and institutions, are clearly responsible for providing assistance to their employees. As a result, responsibility for the provision of assistance shifts from the public to the private sector. If it is determined that a company cannot afford specific accommodations or if these accommodations would significantly interfere with the nature of their business, a.k.a. create an “undue burden”, then it may be left to the employee to either (a) fund an accommodation themselves (or seek funding elsewhere), (b) accept an accommodation that does not entirely meet their needs, (c) give up their employment, or (d) become involved in a time consuming and costly appeals process.

Participant roles and responsibilities in the determination and provision of accommodations in employment settings are even less well defined and are even more dependent upon the intent and advocacy of the youth with a disability than in postsecondary settings.



Many persons with disabilities are not prepared for or experienced enough to successfully fulfill the expected roles and responsibilities that are expected of them when seeking and participating in employment settings. There appears to be little opportunity in secondary or postsecondary school to develop these skills and obtain the experience to navigate the employment market. These skills are critical for all youth to participate in employment, yet for persons with disabilities, such skills are even more important given their additional accommodation and related service needs.

#### DISCREPANCIES IN PROVISION: PROCESS AND OUTCOMES

##### INTRODUCTION

The process and basis for determining if and what educational assistance will be provided to youth with disabilities in secondary and postsecondary education and employment settings varies widely. The process for determining educational assistance for children and youth with disabilities in lower education is detailed very specifically in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as the steps educators and parents must follow in the development of an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).

##### SECONDARY SCHOOL

The IEP process, as delineated in IDEA, requires the input of service providers and parents or their advocates into decisions concerning the types and levels of assistance to be received by the child, but does little to model or prepare youth with disabilities for what to expect after leaving

secondary school. However, most youth with disabilities leave the IEP process with a complete lack of awareness or understanding of their own disability and/or the assistance needs they might have in order to successfully function in post-school environments. Further, most youth with disabilities leave the IEP process with few or no advocacy skills, or little understanding of how to advocate for their assistance needs in post-school environments.

The basis for making decisions regarding the provision and type/level of assistance to be offered to a youth during the secondary school years is closely linked to the eligibility determination process under IDEA. Youth with disabilities often have little concern or interest in the basis of their assistance because it is mandated by federal policy that assistance be provided. Of greatest concern is what this process models and teaches youth with disabilities. They are ill-prepared in secondary school for the changes in thinking that they will encounter about why and if assistance is to be provided in post-school environments.

The IEP is one means of measuring accountability to the student and the school in that each year specific goals are developed for each student and the services that are needed in order for the student to meet these goals are outlined. Consideration of outcomes for youth with disabilities at the secondary level often focuses upon immediate rather than long-term goals as a measure for success. The issue of focusing on short-term versus long-term goals boils down to the goals of the individual versus the goals of the school.

## POSTSECONDARY SCHOOL

The universal process for determining educational assistance for youth with disabilities in higher education is undefined, un-mandated, and varies extensively from one program setting to the next. Further, youth with disabilities become the entity or person wholly responsible for initiating, leading, managing, and following through with a process of determining assistance that might be provided by the postsecondary institution.

In postsecondary education settings, the process of determining educational assistance is often impacted by what the institution has available and is able to provide. While there may be fiscal accountability to the State at public postsecondary institutions, institutions often are not held accountable for the achievement of specific goals or the provision of specific services unless through litigation under the ADA. Thus, at the postsecondary level there is little focus upon the long-term goals of the student in the determination of what types of assistance to offer the student with a disability.

## EMPLOYMENT

The universal process of determining assistance for persons with disabilities in employment settings is often dependent upon the motivation of the applicant and the expectations and attitudes of the employer. Further, the discussion of assistance needs must often be initiated by the person with a disability during the process of applying for a position, adding weight to the decision about whether or not to hire the individual.

It is clear that the process for determining assistance for youth with disabilities as they prepare and transition across lower education, postsecondary education and employment settings changes significantly with the passage into and through each environment. Characteristics of this shift include movement from (1) a mandated, individualized, and parent/agency driven planning process to a youth initiated, undefined process without required procedures or mandated outcomes; (2) parent/agency driven responsibility for decision making to youth driven responsibility for initiation, management, and follow-through of the decision making process; and (3) decisions and expectations of a comprehensive program of services (lower education) to decisions about specific and separate accommodations and supports to be implemented in the same post-school settings within which all other persons seek to access and participate.

In the context of employment, the focus of assistance provision tends to be upon enabling the employee to perform the tasks that are necessary in order to complete the requirements of their position.

## SUMMARY

Although policies such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are a positive step towards protecting this right, the application of these laws has not gone far enough toward giving youth with disabilities the same opportunities for postsecondary education and employment that are available to other youth. During secondary school there is a focus upon providing youth with



disabilities with specialized services, often in segregated environments. Students with disabilities are not active participants in this process. Thus, they leave secondary school without advocacy skills, without knowledge of the impact that their disability has upon their learning and the related modes of assistance that can help to mitigate this impact, and without an understanding of how to negotiate the “real world” where institutions are focused upon providing “reasonable accommodations” rather than upon meeting individual needs.

### Discussion Group Recommendations

#### Funding

- Look and think about policy in creative ways that would open up possibilities of funding for support. Policies need to look at how to align it all (resource mapping).

#### Legal Clarification

- Establish uniformity in definitions of terms.

#### Collaboration

- Support and improve relationships between agencies.
- Develop a better understanding of roles and responsibilities between schools and adult systems.

#### Consider long-range plans

- VR needs to have a more long-term vision and plan, including postsecondary education as preparation for employment.
- Secondary providers need to teach their students about their disabilities and support needs.

## **DOUGLAS FISHER, PH.D.**

It is not necessarily the type of disability, but the sophistication of the system that determines inclusion. A sophisticated system works together, with professionals and natural supports, toward creative solutions for individuals with disabilities. Ideas that impressed discussion group participants were the way various stakeholders in Doug Fisher's stories, made decisions together, advocacy engines (creating strategies that pull people in to provide supports), mobilization of peers, and employment outcomes through service coordination and creativity.

### **HIGH SCHOOL INCLUSION + SEAMLESS TRANSITION = DESIRED OUTCOMES: A BRIEF REPORT**

The complete text of this paper is available for review and download at:  
<http://www.ncset.hawaii.edu/institutes/mar2002/papers/>

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Schools are being held accountable not only for the outcomes of typical students, but for those of students with disabilities as well. The expectation is that education should contribute to the preparation that all US citizens need to fully and meaningfully participate in public life. This right is deeply embedded in US law and heritage; it is an inalienable right (Gilhool, 1976). It is the responsibility of public education to help ensure that all American citizens, whatever their disabilities, are afforded an equal opportunity to actively participate in all community activities,

events and opportunities. Outcome-based questions have become a standard for evaluating the effectiveness of education, i.e., "Has the school system done its job in preparing students with disabilities for adult lives, which involve active participation in work, home, educational and social environments?"

Given the access to both inclusive education and a seamless transition, what are employment outcomes for students with significant disabilities? This report compares the outcomes for students with significant disabilities aging out of public school who experienced both inclusive education and a seamless transition with those who did not.

#### **FINDINGS**

The data indicate that students with significant disabilities who experienced inclusive education and a seamless transition entered their adult lives well situated for success. Four of the six students in the target group experienced a seamless transition, meaning that there had been significant coordination between the public school system and the adult service delivery system such that the student did not experience a disruption in services. For example, the school system contracted with direct service personnel (e.g., job developer, job coaches) from the adult service delivery system during the student's final year of public school service (typically when the student was 21 years old) so that the same staff were consistent post-transition.

Similarly, students were scheduled according to their work and non-work activities departing from the traditional school calendar and time frames. For example, one student's employment required



that he work during late afternoons and often on holidays. The integrated work environments and non-work activities were organized during person-centered planning sessions in which the student, his or her family and friends, school personnel, and adult agency staff were all present. Thus, the day after the termination of public school services did not vary greatly from what the student had been experiencing.

None of the comparison group students experienced a seamless transition. These students often visited the adult program or sheltered workshop in the weeks prior to the end of public school services. However, the staffing patterns, environments, and expectations changed dramatically when school-based services ended. For example, on the Tuesday following the completion of school-funded services, these students rode different buses on new routes, met new support staff who often did not know the student's goals, and faced unfamiliar environments in which to work. Most difficult for many of these students was the fact that the adult agency had to "start over with assessments" as they became acquainted with the students.

In terms of employment outcomes two months after leaving school, students who experienced inclusive education and seamless transition fared well. While the actual numbers of students are low, average wages and hours per week worked are consistently higher for the target group of students. These results stand out in stark contrast to the national outcome of employment and/or postsecondary education within the first five years after exiting school, cited earlier.

Interestingly, the types of integrated employment options were similar for the two groups, but students in the comparison group were less likely to access those jobs given that they were placed in sheltered workshops. The sources for the jobs held by students in the target group were more varied and included recommendations by high school peers. In addition, students in the target group were more likely to engage in integrated activities during their non-work hours. These activities included community college and adult school classes, recreation and fitness centers, and community stores and services.

## DISCUSSION

While the sample was small and we encourage a cautious review of the findings, the data suggest that no harm was done and, in fact, the outcomes for the target students in this study were better than the outcomes for other students in the district in both work and non-work activities.

We believe that the results were influenced by two variables. First, over the course of their high school years during which they attended general education classes, the target students developed a number of skills, relationships, and behaviors that may have increased their employability. In addition to the curriculum and content which is beyond the scope of this study, students were expected to arrive on time, engage in social exchanges, and attend to instructions in their high school classes.

In terms of relationships and peer support, students with significant disabilities in general education classes experienced a wide range of friendships. As typical high school students began

their part-time jobs during their junior and senior years, they often informed the special educators of jobs at their place of employment. These job recommendations were invaluable.

Thus, we believe that access to general education classes had a significant impact on the integrated work outcomes experienced by the target students. It is important to note that the comparison students experienced a segregated academic curriculum and a significant number of hours spent in homogeneously-grouped community-based instruction during their high school years (age 14-18), and the vast majority of them transitioned into a sheltered workshop.

The second variable we believe was important was the seamless transition planning that occurred for the target students. As school staff and adult providers talked with one another, worked together, and shared vital student support information, they were able to individualized supports, create workplace accommodations, and implement consistent behavioral support plans. This seamless transition service delivery model provided students and their families with an entire year to evaluate the appropriateness of the adult agency and its services. This arrangement significantly minimized the disruption students typically experience when transitioning from the public school system to the adult provider network.

## **NOTICING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SECONDARY AND POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION: EXTENDING AGRAN, SNOW, AND SWANER'S DISCUSSION**

The complete text of this paper is available for review and download at:

<http://www.ncset.hawaii.edu/institutes/mar2002/papers/>

### **INTRODUCTION**

We were very interested in the survey conducted by Agran, Snow, and Swaner (1999) regarding secondary education teachers' opinions about inclusion and community based instruction (CBI). Special education teachers in this study believed that both inclusive education and CBI were effective and beneficial ways of accessing peers without disabilities and preparing students with disabilities for their adult life. Agran et al. (1999) noted that their findings were inconsistent with the position that CBI and inclusive educational practices were at odds with one another.

Although we agree that inclusion and CBI are each important components of the public education experience, we suggest that these efforts be differentiated by the age of the students. That is, we believe that there are, and should be, differences between the educational opportunities for students aged 14-18 (high school) and those over 18 (postsecondary). The respondents in the Agran et al. (1999) study were not asked to explain their opinions, nor was it certain whether these teachers considered the ages of students when reporting on social interactions and benefits. However, the authors suggested that educational programming be balanced between





inclusive education and CBI regardless of student age.

This prompted us to speculate not only about why teachers answered as they did, but what their experiences had been with both inclusive education and CBI. We believe that students with significant disabilities should be members of age appropriate high school classes and then receive educational and community based services during their postsecondary or “transition” years of 19-22. We would like to extend the discussion about meeting individual student needs in both secondary and postsecondary environments.

### THE SECONDARY SCHOOL YEARS

Before students with disabilities had access to the core curriculum in middle school and high school, CBI was a reasonable educational alternative. Given that students with significant disabilities could not easily access the general education classroom, CBI provided the individualized education plan (IEP) team a way to address functional skills. Today, in many schools and districts, students with and without disabilities have access to a rich and diverse curriculum with appropriate accommodations and modifications, as well as personal and technological supports. Over the past two decades, parents and professionals have learned a great deal about infusing functional skills into natural environments and age-appropriate activities. For example, science classes may not only reinforce basic math skills, but are also ideal for teaching measurement, problem solving and teamwork (i.e., functional skills).

One rationale for the emphasis on inclusive education at the secondary school level includes a knowledge base that students in high school can prepare for their careers and adult life by participating in the full range of activities offered as part of the curriculum and extra-curriculum. For example, district level content and performance standards typically require that all students explore career options, participate in interviews and resume writing, arrive to class on time, complete tasks assigned by a supervisor (teacher), access technology as a tool for learning, and learn to resolve conflict with peers. Obviously, students with disabilities benefit from these expectations as well. There is evidence that people from disabilities are more often dismissed from a job due to poor attendance and lack of social skills than because of their work skills. We believe that high schools provide a wealth of opportunities for the development of interpersonal relationships and effective work habits.

Furthermore, high school classes offer students with disabilities more than preparation for work. They also may gain membership, social relationships, access interesting core curriculum, and increase their literacy. Students without disabilities also benefit socially and academically. Beyond the immediate benefit of inclusive education for students without disabilities, we believe that those who experience inclusion in school will also realize advantages later in life. As the current school-aged population becomes the next generation of neighbors, friends, co-workers, employers, and parents of individuals with disabilities, inclusive education will not be questioned, but rather will be used as a baseline

for examining quality of life issues. Removing students with disabilities from high school classes today not only impacts their postsecondary potential, but also affects the circle of support available for years to come. We will never forget the high school junior who advocated for a peer with a disability in his English class to be hired in a part-time job. Nor will we forget the high school senior who plans to become a pediatrician saying to us, “I will never tell parents to institutionalize their children with disabilities.”

### POSTSECONDARY SCHOOL YEARS

Before natural supports were widely available in colleges or the workplace, students with disabilities rarely accessed postsecondary education or integrated employment. Today, competitive employment, supported living, and lifelong learning are expectations for adults with significant disabilities. School systems are responding to this need by establishing postsecondary (or transition) programs in the community. New postsecondary (or transition) programs are now being created to provide the link from high school to a valued adult life for students with disabilities from age 19 to 22. Many of these programs are located in the community to facilitate job development, job training, and continuing education, which cannot easily occur on the high school campus. Further, students use public transportation to go to work, college or community events; increase access to stores and public services; and adjust to schedules that mirror adult life.

For most of us, postsecondary education and our subsequent career development differed from our high school experience. Most of us physically

left the high school campus, remained with our same age peers, and pursued unique and challenging futures. Unfortunately, for many students with disabilities, there is little or no difference between high school and postsecondary education and career development. Students over the age of 18 often remain on the high school campus, lose access to their nondisabled peers, and continue working on similar educational goals and objectives year after year. Thus, consistent with the expectations for students without disabilities, a distinction must be made between high school (students 14-18 years of age) and postsecondary education (individuals over 18).

Where people with disabilities spend time, with whom they interact, and the activities they choose are key considerations for program development and service delivery options. These choices must reflect the range of experiences that students began exploring in high school and expand to include career, continuing education, and social opportunities alongside their peers without disabilities. As students with disabilities increase the quality and quantity of their participation in these experiences during high school, the more likely they are to have access to the support required for success in postsecondary environments. If, as the study by Agran et al. (1999) suggests, students do benefit from a mix of inclusive education and CBI, then we must say that the primary deciding factor should be age. We are in no way suggesting that 16 year-old students with disabilities should not be supported in work experience classes or after school jobs. The school system should continue to provide





coordination and support, but in natural postsecondary environments.

Thus, we agree with the teachers in the Agran et al. (1999) study, that both inclusive high school experiences and well-coordinated postsecondary experiences are necessary preparation for adult life. However, we maintain that there are differences between inclusive secondary education and integrated postsecondary options that are worth discussion.

### Discussion Group Recommendations

#### Inclusion and natural supports

- Divert some funds to create incentives for natural support participation.

#### Transition to adult life

- Get students 18 and over off the high school campus and into adult life learning environments.

#### Training

- Train general education teachers about general education classroom supports--ongoing professional development on inclusion. Not just to get it going, but to keep it going.

#### On-campus supports

- Utilize peers (tutoring, support, etc.), and provide incentives for participation (verbal approval, credit, etc.). Make such qualities as empathy, empowerment, etc., part of the curriculum (i.e., like peer tutoring programs). Postsecondary institutions also should offer credit for service learning and peer tutoring.

#### Sharing what works

- Create and maintain a website of creative strategies for inclusion and other resources.
- Document what works for individual students: what they do well, what supports are effective, etc.

#### Outcomes of inclusion

- Candid research on the post-school outcomes of inclusion.

**STAN SHAW, PH.D.**

The field of disability services in higher education is still relatively new. Therefore, developing professional standards and service standards is an important step toward ensuring equal access to postsecondary education. Among the important issues for postsecondary education are self-determination and universal design. Students with disabilities who enter a postsecondary institution must know, understand, and advocate for, their support needs and make decisions for themselves that were recently made for them by their IEP. By applying universal design in instruction and technology, faculty can make course material accessible to a variety of learners and reduce transition difficulties for students.

The issues that participants thought were important were universal design, self-determination, faculty collaboration, independent learner strategies, and standards for postsecondary education disability services. Most comments were based on training postsecondary faculty about universal design, self-determination, and disability issues.

### **POSTSECONDARY SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The complete text of this paper is available for review and download at:  
<http://www.ncset.hawaii.edu/institutes/mar2002/papers/>

## **INTRODUCTION**

Over the last several decades, students with disabilities have made significant strides to fulfill their expectation to be fully integrated into adult life. Increasing numbers of students with disabilities have received special education services that have supported their academic development. The implementation of the concepts of mainstreaming, least restrictive environment and inclusion combined with formal transition planning activities foster high school completion and expectation for postsecondary school.

### **CURRENT REALITIES REGARDING POSTSECONDARY SUPPORTS**

Although postsecondary supports for students with disabilities have been more available in recent years, little research has addressed the planning and organization of these services. Many studies have called for a more systematic approach to service provision for students with disabilities. It is difficult to have a well-planned program if personnel are not appropriately trained. There are currently only three or four programs that actually prepare postsecondary disability personnel. It is not surprising that these postsecondary disability professionals provide services based on their diverse personal backgrounds. Schuck and Kroeger (1993) identified this problem, noting that “inconsistent services are a significant problem in higher education programs for students with disabilities”.

Too often the supports and policies that are provided foster dependence that has,

unfortunately, overwhelmed the intention of providing not only a productive and successful postsecondary education, but one that would lead to graduation and employment. The seminal research by Gerber & Reiff regarding successful adults with learning disabilities, identified taking control, self-advocacy and reframing one's disability as keys to success in employment.

## CHANGING THE DISABILITY SUPPORTS PARADIGM

### FOSTERING SELF-DETERMINATION

Given its importance for college students with disabilities, self-determination must be the prime directive for postsecondary disability personnel. Unfortunately, postsecondary personnel have often inadvertently adopted the dependence provoking behaviors typical in many elementary and secondary programs. Research indicates that "practices that promote dependence in students with LD are given more emphasis than strategies that foster independence and self-determination" despite the knowledge and desire of postsecondary personnel to do the opposite.

College students with disabilities must be afforded choices so they can learn to take responsibility for their own lives. Professionals should, therefore, seek to be the facilitator of the process, someone who provides support for the student to learn to navigate the system. The professional should offer information, ask questions, and foster reflection to help the student make choices and achieve personal goals.

Students with disabilities need to have the availability of supports that foster independence, not dependence. As noted above, too often

dependence-provoking supports such as course waivers and substitutions not supported by assessment data and content tutoring that may have helped the student receive passing grades but not necessarily learn---have been provided. It is important to acknowledge, however, that supports and accommodations requested by a student that meet a documented need and which enhance student learning can be productive.

Examples of individualized supports that are consistent with self-determination include activities such as providing students with information, listening as a student verbalizes his/ or her plans, helping a student identify options, and asking questions that help students reflect on and learn from the self-determination process. The ADHD coaching process is an excellent model for encouraging these behaviors.

### STANDARDS FOR DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

The Program Standards indicate essential expectations for all postsecondary institutions in terms of minimum supports that must be available to provide equal access for students with disabilities. There is now a benchmark to use when considering availability of appropriate supports, conducting a program evaluation, considering staff development needs or implementing program development. In addition, consumers now have a clear basis for determining the efficacy of program supports.

These Program Standards represent service components that are fundamental for assuring equal educational access for postsecondary students with disabilities. They are a research-based vehicle for professionals when helping their

institutions provide all the necessary elements to effectively meet the needs of college students with disabilities, and provide consumers with a baseline of what to expect from postsecondary disability services, a format for evaluating potential colleges, and a clear expectation of what may or may not be available (i.e., special classes, preferential treatment).

#### A NEW STANDARD FOR INSTRUCTION

The primary means to assure equal access to instruction for college students with disabilities has been to provide modifications and accommodations. Students correctly note that college faculty need to learn different teaching approaches which would help all students, not just students with disabilities. By adapting the principles of universal design to reflect the instructional practices that have been acknowledged as effective with students with disabilities, a more inclusive paradigm for teaching emerges.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and other legislation has fostered the application of universal design in architecture (i.e., providing curb cuts, ramps, doors that open automatically, elevators, wide doors, accessible bathrooms) so that all people, including those with physical disabilities, can access stores, schools and other facilities. Therefore, just as a student in a wheel chair needs no disability services in such a physically accessible environment, a student with a learning disability may not need disability services in an instructionally accessible environment. Such an environment will obviously foster student self-determination because options are available that allow the student to select personally productive

approaches to learning. It is recommended that disability personnel focus on effective instruction and self-determination for all students rather than just accommodations and modifications for students with disabilities.

#### CONCLUSION

It has been demonstrated that individuals who are self-determined are more successful in achieving their stated goals. If a campus-wide emphasis on fostering self-determination, fulfilling the Program Standards and implementing Universal Design for Instruction were undertaken, the research indicates that it would likely increase achievement and effectiveness across the campus, among staff and faculty as well as among students, both with and without disabilities.

#### Discussion Group Recommendations

##### Universal Design

- Promote policy for universal design.
- Have orientations for new and continuing faculty about universal design and disability issues.
- What are effective instructional strategies and how can they be promoted?

##### Self-determination

- Explore how independent learning strategies can be made available for all students.



## **RICHARD G. LUECKING, ED.D.**

Workforce development personnel need to take advantage of the Organization Development (OD) framework to match employers with employees with disabilities. Staff need to be trained to treat employers as consumers. We need to focus on how we can help employers meet their needs, rather than focusing on our need to place people with disabilities. The balance between selling the person's strengths and selling the advantage of support services is tricky. Discussion participants expressed a concern that individuals with disabilities who focus on presenting their skills may be overlooked for people without disabilities who have the same skills. On the other hand, there is a disadvantage to being connected to services that are seen as serving disadvantaged people (only poor people). It puts a label on them. One discussion participant said, "Where I work, they sell the disability first, like a charity case." A possible solution is to sell the person and his/her skills, then if that's not enough sell the company or services s/he is working with. Other issues discussion participants thought were important were: preparing students early for transition to work, increasing collaboration with Vocational Rehabilitation, and training personnel.

## **DOING IT THE COMPANY WAY: EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVES ON WORKPLACE SUPPORTS**

The complete text of this paper is available for download and review at:  
<http://www.ncset.hawaii.edu/institutes/mar2002/papers/>

### **INTRODUCTION**

This paper examines workplace supports that have proven effective for people with disabilities and relates them to employer perspectives of hiring and accommodating people with disabilities. Employment supports are also examined using an organization development (OD) framework that often influences general human resource management. A review of the literature and two case studies illustrations strongly suggest that employer attitudes toward disability are less significant when making hiring decisions than other factors, notably the identification of workplace supports and interventions that also contribute to improvement of companies' operational and organizational processes. Combining disability employment interventions with OD interventions can facilitate the achievement of a more universally designed workplace. There have been significant advances in the identification and application of accommodations and supports that enable people with all manner of disability to successfully perform in the workplace. These advances include an array of technologies and methodologies, including, but not limited to, assistive devices, alternative and augmentative communication strategies, architectural modifications, telecommuting, re-structured job assignments,

mentors and coaches, flexed -time and other scheduling accommodations, and employee assistance and other employer human resource management programs. These advances, along with legal protections from discrimination available through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), have created an environment in which job seekers with disabilities can better promote their job qualifications and advocate for necessary accommodations.

There are numerous studies and documentation of employment success when specially trained and assigned job coaches are available for people requiring a high level of support. For example, for people with significant disabilities who were successful in their jobs, Unger found that almost all necessary accommodations were available in the employment environment and/or facilitated by disability employment agency staff. People with disabilities continue to experience a host of barriers to employment and careers, as evidenced by: low rates of post school employment for former special education recipients, with high rates of SSI/SSDI dependence for youth and adults with disabilities, and high rates of job failure.

The irony, then, is that in a climate of expanding knowledge of workplace support and accommodation, and therefore theoretically better employment opportunities, unemployment remains a reality for too many people with disabilities who are seeking employment. Keys to making workplaces ready for individual workers with disabilities and to implementing effective

workplace supports might best be found by examining how employers perceive these issues.

### **OD INFLUENCES ON EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT, MANAGEMENT, AND RETENTION**

Ultimately, company- operating strategies, especially the management of employees, are fundamentally linked with company success and profit. Successful companies must get the most out of their employees, and to do so requires devising processes, interventions, and supports that exploit individuals' strengths. In the absence of these processes and supports, any employee is likely to experience difficulty in the workplace.

### **EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVES OF DISABILITY IN THE WORKPLACE**

The review concluded that employers' expressed willingness to hire applicants with disabilities still exceeds their actual hiring, although this gap is narrowing. Employers are often unaware of, or naïve about, the availability of people with disabilities as a supplemental labor pool. When they are aware of disability resources, there often is confusion due to fragmentation of disability-related information or perceptions of not having the experience and resources to adequately support their employment.

Several employers who said that especially in labor-short economic circumstances, the company wants to look at the person and determine the possibilities, that is, match the person to a situation, not merely to a job. Overwhelmingly, people with disabilities and disability employment specialists identified such "soft" factors as employers' understanding attitudes and flexibility



to make accommodations. By contrast, employers pointed to quality service from employment specialists and competence in particular workers as the contributing factors in successful employment.

### NEW DIRECTIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT

Employers often willingly exceed the legal mandates for reasonable accommodation under circumstances when there is available competent assistance to do so. We have also seen that companies prosper when organizational processes are addressed and enhanced as a result of both universally and individually designed workplace supports and accommodations.

### SELF-ADVOCACY FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE SUPPORTS

Reinforcing this notion, Bolles and Brown further suggest that applicants with disabilities should explain how accommodations often add to innovation and productivity for other workers in the company. For example, company units have achieved increased data entry productivity for all of its their workers by adopting computer macros that were originally implemented for to enable someone with a mobility disability to enable faster keyboarding more quickly. These concepts suggest several important directions for advocating for and implementing employment and workplace supports. Disclosure of disability is a personal choice, but with or without specific reference to a disability, a discussion of relevant accommodations or alternative methods for completing work should take place. Employers are already arranging accommodations such as job restructuring, job sharing, and alternative

methods of providing instruction and training to non-disabled workers.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR SECONDARY AND POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS

The ability of education professionals to add value to a company's human resources processes requires:

- Business acumen: the ability to identify “return on investment” for companies who work with the program and hire youth it represents, for example, noting how the company might improve production when implementing various workplace supports;
- Analytical skills: the ability to identify an employer problem and offer a solution, for example, showing how accommodating one worker with a disability might result in adaptation for all employees across the board so they all are more productive;
- Change management: OD is predominantly about change – change in processes, job designs, workplace designs, internal and external outputs, etc., and so, for example, education professionals should be available to help manage any changes that might occur as a result of the implementation of workplace supports;
- Change management: OD is predominantly about change – change in processes, job designs, workplace designs, internal and external outputs, etc., and so, for example, education professionals should be available to help manage any changes that might occur as a result of the implementation of workplace supports;
- Strategic planning: educators might offer to perform organizational assessment and determine what is important along the “service-profit chain,” and how certain aspects are amenable to modification and ultimately the inclusion of a worker who requires supports and accommodations;

- Influencing/persuading: the identification of workplace supports interventions that also contribute to improvement of companies' operational and organizational processes are easier to "sell" to companies than vague and confusing explanations of what is meant by "disability;" and
- Courage: talking to and engaging people outside of their usual comfort zone, and learning to speak in the language of those who do think differently, takes some initial courage on the part of education professionals, but as these contacts occur more often, interacting with employers becomes more comfortable and productive.

## CONCLUSION

Workplace supports are as much an issue of organization development as they are about employer attitude toward disability. When identifying, advocating for, and implementing workplace supports it is constructive to do so within the framework of company organizational processes as much as in the context of individual support requirements. A more universally accessible workplace is often the practical result.

### Discussion Group Recommendations

#### School/work partnerships

- Increased partnership between schools and VR.
- Legislation needs to address the issue of protecting the employer when they bring young people into the workplace. One way to offset that is for school districts to have more insurance.

#### Personnel training

- One-stop offices need to be more cognizant of the supports that people with disabilities need. Services are so minimized.

#### Preparation in high school

- Develop skill portfolios that follow the person from high school to college to work, adding to it as they go along. Empower students to articulate this portfolio.
- Integrate more career development in all aspects of secondary education. We need to get students to identify their strengths and connect it to employer needs.
- Make intake forms at VR compatible with skills portfolios (VR and schools should work together to create them).

#### Collaboration

- Make intake forms at VR compatible with skills portfolios (VR and schools should work together to create them).

#### Employer needs

- Research what kinds of skills, attitudes, and knowledge make a difference in who firms hire.





## DAVID MANK, PH.D.

The factors that influence the outcomes of job development need to be considered. The nature of the disability, typicalness of job situation, living situation, and integration with co-workers need to be taken into consideration when doing job placement for a person with a disability. The level of function impacts opportunity, and group homes are related to less desirable outcomes. The role of co-workers is significant for the success of people with disabilities. Supported employment is no longer just about the individual's skills for a job. All these factors make a difference for success.

Groups discussed how it is important for job development workers to do it right the first time: compromising at the start does not lead to improved outcomes later. Job match at the start is important. Supporting the individual and the environment at the same time is important; for example, diversity training has lead to better outcomes for employees.

### **PATTERNS OF SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES WITH SEVERE DISABILITIES**

The complete text of this paper is available for review and download at:  
<http://www.ncset.hawaii.edu/institutes/mar2002/papers/>

#### ABSTRACT

Increasingly, supported employment is discussed in tandem with the notion of natural supports. "Natural supports," emphasizing the

use of existing supports typically found in the workplace, has become a commonly used strategy for improving economic and integration outcomes valued by people with disabilities, their families, and those who advocate for them. This paper provides an analysis of data collected from 462 people in eight states. This analysis suggests that understanding and incorporating "typical" employment features in workplaces is associated with better wage and integration outcomes. These data are discussed related to potential implications for job development and workplace analyses.

#### INTRODUCTION

For over a decade, supported employment has successfully demonstrated that individuals with severe disabilities are capable of securing typical jobs and working productively within their communities. The term supported employment has become synonymous with integrated jobs in community settings where persons with disabilities have the opportunity to work alongside people without disabilities, and are provided with individualized supports for long term success.

The evolution of supported employment for people with severe disabilities has resulted in improvements in wages and integration in comparison to sheltered and segregated programs. Increasingly, the focus on supported employment as a viable alternative to segregated vocational programs has been coupled with the notion of "natural supports" in the workplace. Natural support is considered a set of strategies that include the support of coworkers and supervisors in helping provide support and assistance that

allow an individual with disabilities to secure and maintain a job. Many supports can be successfully provided using informal supports and “typical” company human resource processes.

Discussion of supports for employee success in companies is not limited to the field of rehabilitation. Articles from business and sociology include studies on corporate culture, company provided supports, and the role of coworkers in supporting each other. Employees with disabilities who have more typical employment features are more likely to earn higher wages and be better integrated; and finally, they report that higher levels of social interaction and wages are associated with more typical employment status even when controlling for level of mental retardation. The purpose of this present study is to investigate the relationship between employment features and employment outcomes for employees with disabilities in individualized or small group supported employment jobs in relation to the concept of natural supports.

## DISCUSSION

This report provides an analysis of relationships between features of employment and employment outcomes for people with disabilities in community jobs. It seems clear from these analyses that people with disabilities who have more typical employment status are more likely to have greater monthly earnings than people with less typical employment status when compared to people without disabilities in the same workplaces.

While Mank, et al. (in press), report that persons with more mild mental retardation tend

to have higher earnings than persons with more severe mental retardation, the positive relationship between typicalness in employment and wages is true even when controlling for level of mental retardation. In addition, people with disabilities in work settings where coworkers received training by supported employment personnel have higher wages and more typical participation in social activities with coworkers without disabilities both at, and away from, work.

People with disabilities working in companies where training is provided about diversity or disability awareness have more typical social participation with coworkers without disabilities.

A somewhat intriguing finding in these data is that persons receiving four or more hours of direct support are likely to have lesser wages, a less typical compensation package, less similarity in work roles to others in the workplace, and less typical orientation and initial training on the job. This finding should be interpreted cautiously.

## IMPLICATIONS

### TYPICAL FEATURES OF EMPLOYMENT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH HIGHER WAGES OUTCOMES

Innovations in employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities have become increasingly integrated and typical when compared to people without disabilities (e.g., from institutions to non-work programs, to workshops, to affirmative industries, to crews and enclaves, to individualized jobs). Generally, employment outcomes have improved along the way. These data show that, even in the context of individualized jobs and small groups of people with disabilities in work settings, those employees



experiencing employment similar to people without disabilities in the same workplaces are more likely to realize higher wages. In addition, Mank, et al. (in press), reported that those with more typical employment status are more likely to have better integration and interaction patterns with coworkers without disabilities.

The point here is that the more typical the features of employment, the more likely wage and integration outcomes will be higher. This means that the typical process should be understood in each workplace and that it appears to be a good idea to follow the typical process while insuring individualized supports and accommodations needed for success.

#### TRAINING OF COWORKERS APPEARS TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH BETTER OUTCOMES

Advocates of natural supports may not be surprised to see that employees with disabilities working in companies where coworkers received training have higher wages and more typical social participation. Involvement of coworkers appears to be important for improving outcomes in supported employment. Unfortunately, these data do not tell us anything about the nature of that training and support to coworkers. This study asked but a single question about providing training and information to coworkers. Future studies are needed which inquire about the content, nature, and scope of training and support provided to company personnel.

#### QUALITY IN EMPLOYMENT IS STILL AN INDIVIDUAL MATTER

While the focus of this report has been about the relationship between typical features of employment and employment outcomes, quality

and satisfaction are individual matters. A person's employment may be unsatisfying, boring, or devalued and still be typical for a given workplace. For people with disabilities, more typical status is, however, associated with better outcomes. Whether it is acceptable employment, remains an individual decision; a decision to be made with family and friends.

Finally, as noted earlier, typical doesn't always mean it is the best for a given person in light of the supports needed for long-term success. However, it seems important that the typical process be understood and utilized to the greatest extent possible, while insuring that individual supports and accommodations are provided in the context of what is typical in the workplace.

#### Discussion Group Recommendations

##### Eligibility

- More consistent definitions of eligibility criteria, disability, services, and performance measures (grounded in common understandings across agencies and in research).

##### Incentives

- Incentives for large corporations to incorporate their own disability programs (education, training, coworker support, diversity and ADA awareness etc.).

##### School inclusion to work inclusion

- Schools should set precedents for workplace inclusion with classroom inclusion.

##### Research on job preparation

- Is there a relationship between how we integrate, socialize and orient classrooms and those atmospheres in the workplace?

##### Research on optimizing employment

- How can we use existing co-workers and natural supports rather than bring in coaches?

What cultural differences exist for supported employment outcomes?

## SUMMARY OF REACTOR PRESENTATIONS



Reactor comments about the Capacity Building Institute and speakers were all positive. Reactors highlighted important points covered, commended their discussion groups for the variety of perspectives included, and expressed excitement about future endeavors in the field of disabilities. They stressed the importance of disseminating research and effective practices, saying that the kind of information presented at this institute should be more readily available elsewhere. They also reminded fellow participants that we still have a lot of work to do.

**Richard Radke**, a professor at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, will soon begin working with disadvantaged people on issues in employment and education, and said that the papers presented came at a good time for him. Dr. Radke emphasized the following recommendations for the field:

1. We need transition between the laws because everything is in a box. The paper presented by Drs. Stodden and Jones presented the problems well, which is really courageous.
2. We need to look at things that do work, as well as the exceptions. Try to learn from them and duplicate successful practices.
3. We're not just looking for employment; we're looking for people to have choice.
4. We need to share our success stories with people. When we are doing our jobs, it's important that we also get it out there. Now we have the Internet to help us let people know when we find the things that work and the exceptions.

**Phillip Rumrill**, an associate professor at Kent State University, said that he was motivated by the

presentations and by all the work we have yet to do. Issues that he thought were important were:

1. Everybody has the right to be a life-long learner. It's an integral part of community living.
2. We all value the importance of work, although we often excuse people from working through lowered expectations. It's really important to keep the sense that most people want to work. The idea of local connectedness, when people get jobs is important.
3. Inclusion is for everybody, and if we are leaving anyone behind, it's not working like we intended it to. Stress support and technology as the great equalizers.
4. None of the philosophies of inclusion or natural supports can be separated from the outcomes we hope to achieve. We have to look at outcomes in a multivariate sense. Real outcomes don't boil down to whether somebody graduates or gets a job. Certainly, in my field of rehabilitation counseling we are justifiably criticized for boiling it down to yes or no (job or not). I think we've got a ways to go to looking at quality of life and inclusion as part of the outcomes we want to achieve.

**Jamie Logan**, a graduate student at the University of Hawaii, highlighted the forces driving changes in the field of employment:

1. An information economy, making critical thinking and analytical skills important for human resources.
2. The global economy, shaping how people with disabilities are perceived, as well as the job opportunities available to them.
3. The aging Baby Boomer generation, widening the population of people with disabilities.
4. Technology, driving the design and engineering

of jobs. Because of the growing influence of technology, the opportunities for universal design are boundless, making settings more accommodating for everyone.

Ms. Logan said she was excited by the research presented by the speakers. She said we can take this back to what we do and drive the changes that will make it a reality in our world.

**Anne Lee**, a law student at the University of Hawaii, shared a poignant, personal perspective that can be represented best in her own words:

“In the past few days I realized how similar your role is to lawyers and judges-- and I say this because you have an incredible amount of power as advocates for children and adults with disabilities, whether it is because you do research and write about people with disabilities, or whether it's because you're helping that person with a disability find a job. Your understanding of that person, and his or her potential, and how you describe that person to an employer or a person who is reading your research can make a big difference. So I wanted to share with you one of the most important things I learned in law school -- which is to be aware of assumptions.

We all have assumptions. You and I deal with it everyday, in terms of how other people see disabled people. But what we don't often acknowledge or understand, is the extent to how assumptions shape the way we see the world. It's important to understand this because when that person with a disability walks in that room -- certain assumptions might pop in your head. And when that person with a disability walks in the room with a teacher or an employer - those assumptions also pops in that person's head -- and based on what they're thinking -- they make their decisions -- should I hire this person? Is this person really capable? So then the question becomes, how can we recognize what those assumptions are? And how can we change those assumptions?

Martha Minow, a law professor at Harvard University wrote a book called *Making all the Difference*. She explains that there are a few common assumptions we tend to make when we look at differences, whether it be race, religion, handicaps, or gender. But I'm just going to talk about one -- that is the tendency to think that our existing social and economic arrangements, that is, the way we learn in the classroom, and the way we work, and the way our laws work -- are natural and neutral. For example, there is a town in Martha's Vineyard, which had a high incidence of recessive deafness. There were a lot of people who were born genetically deaf in the community. But the interesting thing about this town is that a great proportion of the community was able to communicate fluently in sign language -- not just deaf people, but also hearing people-- and these include people who might not have family members who are deaf. Because so many people knew how to communicate in sign language -- deafness was not seen as a disability, but rather, a difference. To the town people, deaf people do not have a handicap --they were just seen as different. Many of these deaf people were well-to-do, and were even politicians, very active in town life.

Say a deaf child from that town decides to transfer to a school here. What would happen to her? Well, first of all she wouldn't be able to communicate with anyone here -- unless they know sign language. Second of all, we could get a sign language interpreter, or maybe CART -- but wait a minute, we have to check to see if it would be a reasonable accommodation. And you know what else, I bet it's too expensive. Yeah, so it's unfair. But hey, you were born with that disability. Don't come to us and complain because we can't give you what you need. We don't give people special treatment just because they have a disability.

Sounds familiar doesn't it? But this is what I want to ask you . . . Does that sound fair to the child who just moved in from Martha's Vineyard, where everyone is able to communicate in sign language? Do you think it seems natural to her





that people think it's a waste of money to hire someone to help her communicate with the rest of the world? We do that for people who cannot speak English, don't we? Well maybe to her, it would not be considered fair and natural.

But for me, I would say yes. It does seem fair. And it does seem natural. That's just the way the world is. But then I learned about this technology-- the microphone and CART and I was actually able to hear what other people were saying. And because I could hear what other people were saying, other people could hear what I have to say. So I felt like a human being; and I felt really, really smart. Then a few months later, I read a Supreme Court case that basically says, we looked at the ADA -- and there are only six real examples of discrimination by the state against people with disabilities. Six? Yes, six. Then I got really really mad. Because they have no idea what it's like to have a disability and yet they can tell everyone, including my classmates and my law professors how irrelevant disability discrimination is. Later on, I realized that the Supreme Court also discriminates against African Americans and women and that power belongs to whomever owns it. And THAT is the natural world we live in. Power. Not ability or disability. But power.

A few people, in making their presentations, have mentioned the Universal standard -- that is the idea of changing the environment so that the person with the disability as well as everyone else can benefit. I like that idea. Because say for instance, something like CART (live action captioning) becomes standard in the courtroom and in the workplace -- and actually it is with some law firms on the mainland -- then it wouldn't seem like a big problem to hire me would it? I would be able to hear everything going on in the room. So what's the problem? Why can't we change that environment right now?

Well, I can't answer that question. I am not a specialist in your field. In fact, I am your client. But I want to ask you whether it's truly impossible to see a "universal standard." And I

sincerely hope you tell me it's not. Because if you tell me that well, it might be a little difficult -- I would tell you - I want to hire a new lawyer. But wait; see, like most people with disabilities, I can't do that. You are my lawyers. You know what the judges are going to think. Help me with my problem. Help me get out of this trap.”

**RESULTS OF ONLINE AND GROUP DISCUSSION**





## VOICES FROM THE FIELD: WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAID DURING THE ONLINE DISCUSSION

### WHO SHOULD GET SUPPORT?

“Are there certain types of disability that are impossible to overcome for college or even employment success, no matter how much support students get?”

“Success has less to do with the individual’s disability than with the sophistication of the support system (school, workplace, college, etc.). Once the capacity is built within the system, people with more significant disabilities can be easily supported.”

“I have a severe disability. A lot of my support has been from my family, in part because often I did not get the support that I needed from school or the community, but I am lucky. A lot of people do not have the support of their families to fall back on.”

### SELF-DETERMINATION

“The thing that scares me about the self-determination movement is that somewhere along the way students may be denied necessary services in the name of promoting independence. How can we guard against that while still fostering independence?”

“We never want to suggest that seeking support or accommodations is ‘bad’. To be an effective professional, however, we have to try to move students toward increasing degrees of control over their own lives.”

“Sometimes asking for help is self-determination, too.’ There appears to me to be a

frequent confusion of the terms self-determination and independence, and hence a confusion about the goals of self-determination in education...Asking for, and accepting, help...are ways in which the disabled and non-disabled alike, every day, get things done efficiently, often enjoying it more because of the human exchange... If students are to have an equal voice in anything that matters to them, they need to learn to ask for help, just as surely as they need to learn when they don’t need help and how to tell that to others.”

“Researchers and workers in disability must walk a fine line in facilitating self-determination so that the individual has ownership of his or her supports and needs. By defining others’ needs, we put ourselves in a patronizing role and send a message that we know better than they what’s best.”

“Students with disabilities who usually let their parents decide for them may be unprepared when they are given the responsibility of determining their accommodation requirements. It is also important to make sure they have all the information necessary and are given opportunities to make their own decisions, even as they are guided through the process by professionals.”

### IMPACT OF AGE ON SUPPORT PROVISION

“I don’t think that it is productive to have 22 year olds hanging around the high school campus — there are many more exciting places that they can be!”

“I think the difference should not be so much a function of whether they are 17, 18, or 19, but of

the individual needs of the student and the goals of his or her IEP. In the same way, supports that students with disabilities may require in postsecondary school would depend more on the progression of the student in the program than on actual age.”

## TRANSITION

“The term ‘transition’ has many meanings to different peoples. People transition from institutions to community living, from job to job, from one provider to another.”

“‘Transition’ should cover three phases: 1) Preparation for the new environment, 2) actual change from old to new, and 3) adjustment to the new environment. A transition from high school to college is not complete before a student is actually settled in college. Perhaps the reason ‘transition’ seems so vague is because we are always in transition.”

## POSTSECONDARY SUPPORTS

“Success in postsecondary educational settings is based more on what students can actually accomplish, because it is not compulsory education, but a privilege that is earned through academic achievement. Postsecondary education is supposed to ‘sift the wheat,’ so to speak, so that when employers hire they know they are getting the cream of the crop.”

“Assistance provision should level the playing field... At the postsecondary level, students’ learning goes far beyond the classroom setting... Rather than a minimalist approach, postsecondary institutions should be focused on facilitating an environment where its students with disabilities

(and all its students) can succeed in a holistic fashion.”

“Employers have expectations that people with a postsecondary degree will have rational thought, skills, perspective, etc. So why, when schools have all sorts of programs and student supports to support students, do so many postsecondary institutions fail to properly support students with disabilities?”

## DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM STANDARDS

“When determining what standards are important for equal access to education, the students themselves should be allowed a voice in the process.”

“These standards are not necessarily THE bottom line in terms of what should be provided, but they are a start and they [do] provide insight into how providers view supports/into how they perceive THEIR capacity to provide supports.”

“What is ‘effective’? That word could mean ‘within budget,’ ‘well evaluated,’ ‘meets legal requirements,’ or even ‘feels good to disability personnel.’ ‘Effective’ needs to include ‘results in student success.’”

## EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

“Many years ago, I heard that the two most common reasons that adults with disabilities lose their jobs included being late and not having social skills for breaks/lunch. That really got me thinking about what happens in secondary schools — in segregated high schools, students don’t have to be on time and they don’t have much opportunity to interact. There you have it!”

“We can’t ignore this entire issue that even if students are given support in secondary school, they enter a very different ‘real world’ of post sec ed and employment where supports are completely different and where a lot more is expected of them in terms of procuring and managing support.”

“Corporate cultures that embrace diversity in all its myriad facets recognize that there is strength in differences. The harsh reality is, however, that not all corporate cultures embrace diversity.”

### GOALS OF SUPPORT PROVISION

“I think the term ‘assistance,’ along with ‘accommodations,’ ‘services,’ and ‘supports,’ means that a situation that was impeding an individual before is, through some mode of assistance, improved... If a student receives accommodations in college but still fails in class only because of the barriers of her disability, was she really assisted? If a deaf employee’s co-workers take sign language classes, but still exclude the deaf employee from office interactions, is he really assisted? Programs or individuals responsible for offering assistance should not just stop at meeting requirements. Their goal should always be the success of those they serve.”

### EMPLOYER ATTITUDES TOWARD APPLICANTS WITH DISABILITIES

“Employer attitudes affect hiring and accommodation decisions in a couple of ways, First, inexperienced employers will make uninformed and perhaps prejudiced decisions. Disability awareness training generally, and information on the attributes of individual job applicants in particular, will often change naive

perceptions held by employers about disability. Second, according to many studies and confirmed in my experience, employers with experience with disability, either at the workplace or in their personal lives, are considerably more likely to hold favorable opinions about applicants with disabilities.”

“From my experience with past employers, they offer training on diversity issues but rarely is disability mentioned or given much time.”

“If the applicant is armed with clear information about how his or her skills can contribute to the employer’s enterprise and is clear on how accommodations will work, then there is a higher likelihood that the applicant will be considered.”

“I view the job search as potentially yielding additional opportunities for individuals within a hiring organization to see accommodations and supports of people with disabilities in action.”

“Fit can be both objective and subjective. The important thing is that it is defined, however nebulously, by the employer. An individual with disabilities should have the required skills and be a ‘fit’ with the employer’s environment.”

### MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT

“Choices, preferences and personalizing job searching and support are very important. Somehow, the ‘system’ seems to make these things more difficult to realize than it should be. Increasing employment for people with disabilities is surely a matter of dealing with system problems.”

“To me, ‘meaningful employment’ means working in a job that fits your skills, talents, goals and purposes, as well as your financial needs. My job to me is meaningful if I am contributing to the greater good of others, if I am using and developing my gifts and skills, and if my future looks bright and secure because of it.”

## **RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON STRUCTURED GROUP DISCUSSION**

As the culmination to two days of discussion, discussion groups were asked to make recommendations for policy, practice and research based on the presentations, reactions and discussions that emerged from the Institute. Five key concepts were drawn from these recommendations and are outlined below.

### **SELF-DETERMINATION**

Because of discrepancies across Federal policies and contextual environments, individuals with disabilities need the skills necessary to advocate for services and to develop and reach their goals. Participants recommended promoting and enhancing self-determination development for individuals with disabilities in secondary, postsecondary, and employment settings. They recommended the use of consumer-centered services, advocacy networks, and improved teaching of strategies for independence. Participants highlighted the need to:

- Revisit the IEP process, thinking of the long-term goals of the student. Include students more in their own Individual Education Plans (IEPs).
- Create a link for students between what they are learning in school and future work.

- Provide students with disabilities, as well as those who support them (personnel, family members, etc.), with the attitudes, skills, and knowledge that they need in order to collaboratively develop and implement self-determined, individualized transition plans.
- Keep in mind the ultimate goals of students’ postsecondary education and career outcomes and take steps that lead toward reaching those goals.
- Offer individuals with disabilities all of the available options for training, jobs, etc., not just those that personnel judge to be appropriate.

### **INCLUSION**

Establishing policies and practices that promote inclusive practices in secondary, postsecondary, and employment settings could improve outcomes for youth with disabilities. Participants recommended the use of universal design; access to the general education curriculum (integrated curriculum, service learning); and seamless transition into postsecondary and employment settings in order to meet this goal. Participants highlighted the need to:

- Establish policies that support universal design, access, participation, and progress in the general education curriculum.
- Adopt formal/informal policy in all schools that teachers teach all students.
- Utilize and encourage natural supports (peer tutoring, mentoring, job coaching, etc.) at all levels. Research outcomes of peer mentorship, adult mentorship, job coaching, etc.; its effect on the mentor as well as on the person with a disability.
- Provide accessible technology for students with disabilities in an inclusive setting where they



can work side-by-side with their peers (e.g., departmental labs).

- Explore how attitudes of students with or without disabilities change over time with inclusion.

### INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

Outcomes for students with disabilities can be improved by establishing clearly defined roles, responsibilities and resource alignment across systems. Participants recognized that there is a need to develop flexible systems that are responsive to individuals rather than to categories of individuals. Participants highlighted the need to:

- Improve resource and systems alignment through promoting policies that support flexible funding and service provision.
- Make policies and the use of the language that is used to describe assistance provision more uniform across Federal statutes and across different agencies (schools, vocational rehabilitation, developmental disabilities organizations, etc.).
- Create win-win situations for both students with disabilities and employers (i.e. consider the employer as a “customer”).
- Employ policy and practices that promote common goals, trust and cooperation between stakeholders.

### INFORMATION SHARING

Applying the information learned in research to policy and practice is continually important. Participants stressed the need to emphasize the strengths of effective practice on both a macro and micro level. Participants highlighted the need to:

- Use the Internet to share information about what works, at all levels. For example, a

website could be used to recognize best practices in supporting employees and to show off companies that have had real success with providing support.

- Provide training and support for co-workers to increase inclusion in work settings.
- Require and provide professional development for disability services personnel, job development professionals, and teachers regarding collaboration, self-determination, universal design, and other disability issues.
- Adopt policies that enhance communication between secondary and postsecondary schools in regards to individuals with disabilities.
- Study what works in different contexts and cultures (i.e., self-determination interventions, etc.).

### UNIVERSAL DESIGN

The need to establish universal design of facilities, technology, instruction, and worksites to create inclusive educational and work environments is becoming increasingly apparent. Participants believed that an emphasis on universal design would create ready access to all people, with or without disabilities. Participants highlighted the need to:

- Create policies that are based on research and that incorporate universal design.
- Provide training to teachers and faculty in order to help them effectively teach students with a wide range of abilities and disabilities.
- Conduct research on effective instructional strategies and technology that employ the principles of universal design.
- Research factors that impact persistence, retention, and performance, and incorporate these factors into universal design.

## SUMMATIVE PARTICIPANT EVALUATION REPORT

2002 Capacity Building Institute  
March 6 – 8, 2002 Honolulu, Hawaii

As part of the evaluation process, participants were asked to rate their experience and offer additional constructive comments for each category. The components of the Institute that participants were asked to rate are given on the left-hand column of the table below. The top column indicates the rating scale (scale of 1-5, 1 being unsatisfactory, 3 being satisfactory, 5 being excellent, n/a being not applicable).

CATEGORIES	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	Avg. 2001	Avg. 2002
<b>REGISTRATION</b>								<b>5</b>
Ease of Registration			2	5	21	6	4	5
Responsiveness to enquiries	1		3	3	21	6	4	5
<b>ONLINE PAPERS AND DISCUSSION</b>								<b>5</b>
Relevance of Papers to my interests			3	7	18	6	4	5
Format/style of papers			2	10	15	7	4	5
Ease of access to papers on line			3	5	18	8	4	5
Relevance of discussion questions to my interests			4	8	14	8	4	4
Ease of access to discussion online		2	4	6	12	10	3	4
<b>PRESENTATIONS</b>								<b>5</b>
Relevance of the presentations to my interests			1	16	14	3	4	4
Presentation styles			1	12	17	4	3	5
<b>REACTIONS</b>								<b>4</b>
Added to my understanding of the issues	1	2	6	7	15	3	N/A	4
<b>DISCUSSION</b>								<b>4</b>
Discussion format		4	1	7	19	3	4	4
Discussion outcome/output		3		12	16	3	4	4
<b>MATERIALS</b>							4	<b>5</b>
Content of binder materials			4	3	24	3	4	5
Style/format of binder materials				6	24	4	4	5
Total Number of Responses								34
Percent of Participants								59%
<b>OVERALL AVERAGE RATING OF INSTITUTE</b>								<b>5</b>



## **REGISTRATION**

### ***Ease of Registration***

- Registration easily accessible and most importantly, with a smile – courteousness and aloha.

## **ONLINE PAPERS AND DISCUSSION**

- Good idea to have online discussion before Institute. Also, having the information was good preparation.
- I was too busy at the time near the conference to read the papers.
- Excellent way to introduce information and topics before event – good use of technology.
- There was not enough time afforded to the discussion – only a week or so. Need to give 2-3 week timeframe.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### ***Relevance of the presentations to my interests***

- All of the topics were well connected & relevant. I liked having a presentation, questions on cards, reactions speakers & then structured questions for the group.
- There are currently no “modes of assistance” or training (employee-sensitivity) on working/servicing adults/students with disabilities. This conference is extremely valuable to lay a solid foundation for future incorporation and implementation of policies/procedures.
- Fabulous presentations. I would recommend limiting the formal presentations to 4, and keeping the CBI to two days.
- The speakers presented their topics well. Their contribution to this conference expanded my knowledge and support in employing and placing disabled individuals in the workforce.
- I wish there had been a stronger 2-year institution perspective.

### ***Presentation styles***

- Handouts of Power-Point presentations of speakers would have made it easier to follow the outline and allowed me to focus more and take less notes.

## **REACTIONS**

### ***Added to my understanding of the issues***

- The institute greatly enhanced my thinking on these topics individually & then across the contexts of high school, postsecondary and employment. It really helped me to think hard about the relationship between policy, practice and research.
- It is interesting to hear different points of view. I would have preferred reactions to be more structured
- Excellent reactors, they were good in summarizing the points and relating presentations to other arenas or other perspectives.
- This part of the session took up time of discussion, which I thought was more important.



- I liked being reminded of the real experience of these issues, and that people with disabilities have so many more perspectives to share from besides their experiences of their disability.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***Discussion format***

- In the discussion format, group leaders need to make sure that all participants are active and no one person dominates. Guiding questions were great to focus discussion.
- Very valuable. Group size and mix was successful.
- Format could be more useful if groups could rotate in order to hear other viewpoints
- I appreciated the opportunity to get to know people at the institute. I am glad we were able to stick with the same discussion group.
- Helped give opportunity for members to get to know each other and feel comfortable speaking up.
- I really enjoyed the various backgrounds of the individuals in my discussion group. Our varied experiences and expertise allowed and encouraged good discussion.
- There was a lot of networking/sharing of people's interest, job and personal experiences. A great time to re-cap what was spoken and a time to voice opinions.

### ***Discussion outcome/output***

- We had just enough time to complete the four questions...sometimes we had to curtail discussions that were at a deep level to move to the next question.

## **MORNING AND EVENING ACTIVITIES**

### ***Comments***

- Thank you! The morning activities allowed me to get to know people outside my discussion group. They also made it easier to concentrate during the day. I felt like I had the chance to experience Hawaii and attend the institute at the same time.

## **MATERIALS**

### ***Content of binder materials***

- Binder materials were *very well organized* and extremely user-friendly. Everything was at our fingertips. I thought all of the materials for both PacRim and the CBI were very creative.
- The binder and contents helped me to gather information beforehand that greatly increased my knowledge of each topic and to be aware of what to expect.
- Information I will take home and use!

### ***Style/format of binder materials***

- Great job!

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

### *What was the highlight of the Institute?*

- Opportunities for participants to share their perspectives in small discussion groups
- The quality speakers, their papers and the follow-up discussion. I like having the guiding questions...they allowed us to integrate information across 3 contexts and the links between policy, practice and research.
- Quality of handout materials.
- Diversity in small group discussions, and the quality of the presenters and papers.
- Meeting so many professionals and learning from so many different perspectives.
- We were able to hear “cutting edge” information/research presented by the researchers and able to ask them questions.
- I enjoyed hearing from the students who have disabilities – their perspectives are vital to research and needs to be heard!
- Opportunity to network, gather info on issues that are relevant in our roles to provide direct service.

### *What would you improve about the Institute?*

- The length of the day – the Institute should formally end at 3:30, with informal discussions outside with group members. 2 speakers per day are sufficient.
- Variety of materials (laptop, color markers, flow chart) for use during group discussions.
- Train facilitators to be inclusive.
- Just to allow us to get to know other participants and their ideas by rotating groups.
- More breaks.
- We need multi-sensory instruction, flip charts, chunking, breaks – internal summaries.
- More people with disabilities speaking about their personal experiences with service providers and how they think different service providers can improve.
- Let everyone introduce themselves in the beginning.
- Allow more time for people to participate in the on-line discussions.

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

- That severity of disability is not the primary predictor of life outcomes.
- Disability is the “last frontier of discrimination”.
- Knowledge of creating an inclusion policy for my agency.
- All groups identified the need for students to be self-determined – we MUST deliver!
- There are resources out there to help improve our program in transition as well as employment for the disabled individual.
- Ways to integrate students into employment.
- The idea of universal design and its application to secondary, postsecondary and employment environments.
- I was struck by the importance of peer support, (or supports for the peers) in all 3 settings.
- The idea of including organizational development in rehab pre-service training.

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

- Being introduced to a small number of participants who share background or interests with me.
- It's a great idea, but I find I have a lot to do before the PacRim and CBI, as well as organizing my own staff's work while I'm gone. Thus, I didn't have time for the online discussion.
- I see more value in post-Institute online discussion. I did not see the value of it in advance of meeting presenters et al, and reading papers.
- Do we really need a password to get on to the discussion page?
- Finding the time to do it! It's a great idea!
- I thought following the chain of postings was rather cumbersome. What if they were all strung together like an email digest?

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

- Career services for college students with disabilities.
- Self-determination across secondary, postsecondary and employment.
- How to work effectively with Voc. Rehab.
- Universal design.
- More on "hidden" disabilities.
- Cross-cultural studies – policy and practice implications for minority persons with disabilities.
- I would like to see a presentation concerning rural communities and cultural diversities.
- More papers on employment outcomes/self-employment.

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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