

FYI Newsletter February 7, 2011

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Upcoming

Vocational Rehabilitation Leadership Academy Features New Webinar Series: Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRCs), staff, and employment specialist providers will have the opportunity to participate in four new webinars being offered by the VR Leadership Academy from February through April. Upcoming topics and dates are:

Communication
Tuesday, February 8

Customer Service
Thursday, March 3

Problem Solving and Strategic Thinking
Wednesday, March 30

Leadership and Change Management
Wednesday, April 20

All webinars are from 2:00-3:00 p.m. However, each webinar is also archived with a complete recording of the webinar as well as all materials used during the presentation. VR participants can participate live in the webinars via Adobe Connect and do not need to register. [Click](#) to see archived webinar presentations or for more information on the VR Leadership Academy. The webinar series and the VR Leadership Academy are facilitated by the Institute's Center on Community Living and Careers and funded by Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services. For more information on the webinars contact Jodi Isaacs at joisaacs@indiana.edu. The VR Leadership Academy provides online professional development and skills training to VRCs, VRS personnel, and others interested in the field of disability services.

ADA Webinar on Transportation Issues: If you are interested in transportation issues and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), plan to participate in an upcoming free webinar offered by the ADA National Network and Easter Seals Project ACTION. The February session is the fifth of seven webinars on Transportation and the ADA. Each session will focus on one of the seven Topic Guides on ADA Transportation, a series of technical assistance publications released by DREDF earlier this year.

Origin to Destination Service in ADA Paratransit will be held on Tuesday, February 8, 2011 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. (Eastern). Presenters will address the Department of Transportation (DOT) guidance on the ADA obligation for transit agencies when paratransit riders need assistance beyond the curb, due to their disabilities.

The presenters will cover operational policies and practices for implementing the DOT guidance, and provide examples of when door-to-door service may or may not be required. They will also address how transit agencies can determine when assistance is necessary, assess obstacles to providing assistance, and ensure vehicle operators have information about needed assistance. The webinar is free but [registration](#) is required to participate.

Trainings Scheduled for Benefits Information Specialists: Indiana's Benefits Information Network liaisons are certified professionals who specialize in helping people with disabilities and their families understand benefits eligibility, work incentives, and other supports. Currently, there are 192 BIN liaisons, most of whom serve Vocational Rehabilitation Services' customers from disability service provider organizations around the state. The Indiana Institute's Center on Community Living and Careers is offering several Basic- and Advanced-level BIN trainings throughout the year in various locations around the state. [Click](#) to download the 2011 Indiana BIN Liaison Training brochure. The Benefits Information Network is funded by Indiana Medicaid Infrastructure Grant CFDA #93.768. For more information on the Benefits Information Network, contact Larry Schaaf at lschaaf@indiana.edu or call the Center on Community Living and Careers at (812) 855-6508; TTY: 812-855-9396.

STAR Autism Support Training: Back by popular demand! The Institute's Indiana Resource Center for Autism will host a two-day workshop with a focus on research and outcomes associated with the STAR Autism Curriculum and Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) instructional strategies (discrete trial training, pivotal response training, and teaching functional routines).

Participants attending this May 5-6, 2011 workshop will:

- Understand developmental curriculum content appropriate for children with autism;
- Learn curriculum-based assessment techniques for baseline and program monitoring;
- Use applied behavior analysis lesson plans;
- Teach children with autism using the discrete trial training method;
- Learn pivotal response training and the research; and
- Understand the critical skills students with autism need to learn.

This event will be held at the Central Indiana Educational Service Center in Indianapolis. Registration fee is \$300.00 per person. Certificates of Attendance and CEUs will be available. Content questions? Contact Kim Davis at (812) 855-6508 or e-mail davisk@indiana.edu. For registration information, contact Donna Beasley at (812) 855-6508 or e-mail dbeasley@indiana.edu. [Click](#) to download a conference brochure.

Across the Courtyard

Young People with Disabilities Discover Project SEARCH, Indiana's New Path to Employment: Matthew McCaslin had a good year in 2010, and so far, 2011 looks good too. As a mailroom associate at Pitney Bowes' Indiana Government Center Office in Indianapolis, McCaslin is working 40 hours a week at \$9.50 an hour and receiving health insurance and other benefits. He understands that in a time of recession and layoffs, many people his age could not find work last year. McCaslin, however, is a 2009 graduate of [Project SEARCH Indiana](#)—the source of his good fortune.

"Project SEARCH really helped me to get a job and learn skills," says McCaslin. "I learned a lot about working hard in Project SEARCH."

The Indiana Government Center is one of several Project SEARCH sites around the state facilitated by the [Center on Community Living and Careers](#) (CCLC) of Indiana University's Indiana Institute on Disability and Community. Project SEARCH Indiana sites provide high school students and young adults who have significant disabilities with employment-focused classroom instruction as well as on-the-job training and internship experiences. Armed with their newfound knowledge and skills, many Project SEARCH grads are better equipped to compete in the job market and obtain meaningful employment.

Based on a model created by Cincinnati Children's Hospital in 1996, Project SEARCH Indiana is heading into its third year of implementation and growth. Initial results from the program's pilot phase are encouraging. There are currently eight Project SEARCH Indiana sites training interns who are in their last year of high school at a partnering school corporation and a ninth site for young adults no longer affiliated with a school.

Of the 68 students who have successfully completed the program so far, 34 have been employed by their Project SEARCH Indiana host site or a similar employer. On average, these employees work 27.3 hours and are paid \$236 per week.

"Although 34 people hired may not seem like a big number, it's really a good, solid start for the program. When you look around the country, it's still not uncommon to see people with disabilities receiving sub-minimum wage or unemployed and living in poverty," says Project SEARCH Indiana coordinator Margaret Gilbride of the Center on

Community Living and Careers.

All Project SEARCH candidates must be eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services; applicants to the young adult program have already finished high school, while high school applicants are in their last year of school and are not expected to graduate with a general diploma.

Each Project SEARCH Indiana site combines the know-how and resources of several community partners as well as oversight and management from the Center on Community Living and Careers and Indiana's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Community partners include a local school system, an employer, and an agency that provides employment and support services to people with disabilities. In addition to Pitney Bowes and the Indiana Government Center, Matthew McCaslin's Project SEARCH partners include Avon Community School Corporation, Metropolitan School District of Wayne County, and Sycamore Services.

Companies selected as Project SEARCH Indiana partners must be large, stable employers dedicated to the process and willing to work collaboratively with area schools and agencies.

Gilbride notes that, in accordance with Project SEARCH guidelines, there will continue to be a careful, deliberate effort to choose partners for the project. "There's definitely a learning curve for everyone involved," she says, "but the rewards for most employers make the commitment worthwhile."

Doug Beebe, executive director of Hook Rehabilitation Center of the Community Health Network in Indianapolis, agrees. "Project SEARCH," he says, "helped the company address stereotypes head on."

"I think it has opened a new pipeline for some excellent and dedicated employees for us. To be able to watch the growth of the students as they transition from being a class of students in our hospital to a group of valued co-workers has been an amazing experience."

For more information on Project SEARCH, contact Margaret Gilbride, Project SEARCH Indiana coordinator, at 855-6508 or e-mail mgilbrid@indiana.edu.

Project SEARCH Indiana is partly funded by the Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Indiana Medicaid Infrastructure Grant, CFDA # 93.768. Project SEARCH Indiana reflects standards and procedures from National Project Search, Cincinnati Children's Hospital.

Challenges, Opportunities of Aging in Place: Editor's Note: This Op-Ed was written by Phil Stafford, Director of the Institute's Center for Aging and Community. It is reprinted with permission from the Indianapolis Star. The Op-Ed first appeared on January 28, 2011 and focuses on the significance of the changing demographics of age.

As Dr. Ellen Miller points out in her article on this page, we can wait no longer to begin serious planning to meet the needs and aspirations of the baby boom generation. The boom has sounded. Every day sees the entry of 10,000 individuals to the ranks of the 65-plus in the United States.

Doubtless, many are already tired of the explosion of articles, reports and books on the baby boom and what it means for the nation. Some would argue, with economist Peter Peterson, that the demographic changes threaten the very fabric of our society, bringing about a bleak "Gray Dawn." Others, such as author Marc Freedman, see the growing population of older adults as a vast, untapped treasure of talent and human capital, a golden opportunity, if we act wisely.

None would argue, however, that the changes will have no impact on the status quo. Rather than wait to see what happens, why not plan for both the challenges and the opportunities ahead of us?

As for challenges, the reality is: We age. Our physical reserve capacity diminishes, our risk for disability increases. Large numbers of us will develop Alzheimer's. Many of us will develop age-related hearing and vision losses. Of course, many boomers hold out hope they can stave off disability and "square the curve" -- avoid a long decline and stay robust till a "quick ending."

More power to them. Indeed, the fitness and nutrition craze, along with remarkable new medicines to control blood pressure and lower cholesterol, will enable many to enjoy more years of health than previous generations. Ironically, this puts a greater number of people at risk for Alzheimer's and, combined with the sheer absolute numbers of those who don't maintain health, will still challenge the systems of health and supportive services.

Moreover, adults with developmental disabilities, happily, are living longer than ever before. As much of the public cost associated with health care for the elderly is directed toward institutions (both hospitals and long-term care facilities), we must bend the arc of support in Indiana toward home and community-based care.

This is to say that aging is not simply a personal challenge or a medical problem to be solved by experts, but a community challenge.

Many communities throughout Indiana have begun to think creatively and collectively about what makes a good place to grow up and grow old. When describing their vision of a "community for a lifetime," residents talk about walkable environments and mixed-use zoning. They envision new forms of habitation such as shared housing, accessory units, downtown senior housing and elder cottages. They are innovating forms of association such as cooperatives providing supportive services through volunteer time-banks built upon inter-generational relationships.

Municipal leaders seek local economies that don't spin out young people and families, losing both the privileges and benefits of reciprocal exchanges between the elders of the family and community.

There will never be a pill for old age. The destiny of both the young and the old will be determined by our ability to create sustainable, livable cities and towns.

Current thinking, reflected in the new federal partnership established among the departments of Housing and Urban Development and Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency suggests that planning for sustainable communities will cut across the traditional lines we've drawn when making housing, transportation and land-use decisions.

Moreover, to meet the need for creative solutions, planning must become more participative.

To understand and sustain the heart and soul of Hoosier cities and towns, residents of all ages and abilities must be engaged in the process. Yes, Indiana's future may be gray. And gray is good.

In Bloomington

Educational Symposium on Traumatic Brain Injury and Substance Abuse: The Bloomington Brain Injury Local Support Network is hosting its first of four 2011 Educational Symposia on Wednesday February 16th. The topic is TBI and Substance Use: Why Community Health Professionals Need to Ask "What if There's Brain Injury?" The Symposium will be held in the Bloomington Hospital's Wegmiller Auditorium from 7:00 to 8:30 a.m. and is free and open to all interested parties. No registration required.

Library Corner

New Items: The following new materials may be borrowed by Indiana residents from the Center for Disability Information and Referral at the Institute. To check out materials, contact the library at 1-800-437-7924, send e-mail to cedir@indiana.edu, or visit us at 2853 East Tenth Street in Bloomington.

Coombs, N. (2010). Making online teaching accessible: Inclusive course design for students with disabilities. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Emerson, J., & Babbie, P. (2010). The dyscalculia assessment. New York: Continuum International Pub. Group.

Goldstein, S., & Reynolds, C. R. (2011). Handbook of neurodevelopmental and genetic disorders in children. New York: Guilford Press.

Henry, K. A. (2010). How do I teach this kid to read? Teaching literacy skills to young children with autism, from phonics to fluency. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.

- See more at: <http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/index.php?pageld=40&newsId=289&newsType=2#sthash.YGkIB271.dpuf>