

THE COUNCIL
FOR
EXCEPTIONAL
CHILDREN

VIRGINIA
DIVISION ON
CAREER
DEVELOPMENT
AND
TRANSITION

Transition Voice



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A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mac McArthur-Fox

With the end of the school year in sight and summer just around the corner, it's a great time of year to revisit the work of VADCDT – your professional organization! We've had a busy fall and spring, and we're looking ahead to some exciting upcoming events.

Across the year, we've worked together to accomplish all the goals set for the year (see our site, www.vadcdt.org, for a list of our current goals). We've increased our **membership** substantially in the past year, and I'd like to offer a personal welcome to all the new members; we look forward to getting to know you as we work together to improve transition outcomes for youth with disabilities in Virginia. In partnership with the Virginia Department of Education, we sponsored a well-attended **pre-conference session** at the Transition Forum presented by Dr. Dawn Rowe, Project Coordinator for the National Post-School Outcomes Center. The **social** event co-sponsored each year with VACTE-SND (the Virginia Association for

Career and Technical Education, Special Needs Division) at the Transition Forum was an especially strong event this year, providing a vital opportunity for networking among a diverse group of Virginia's transition professionals. Another celebration this year has been the opportunity to support Matt Shapiro, who is serving as the national **DCDT board Youth/Young Adult Representative**. As a Youth Leader with the Virginia Department of Education's *I'm Determined* project, Matt is committed to ensuring a strong youth voice in DCDT, and we are happy to provide financial support for his participation at board meetings.

Looking ahead, we have two incredible professional development opportunities already scheduled for this summer and the fall of 2013. First, look for more information in this issue about our **2012 Summer Institute**. We'll be back at the Roslyn Center in Richmond again this year, with slightly later dates this summer – Wednesday, August 1st and Thursday,

August 2nd. Make plans now to join us as we celebrate the theme, "We Make the Difference!" In the months ahead, you'll be seeing a lot more information about the **2013 International DCDT Conference** to be held in Williamsburg October 23-26, 2013. Hosting the international conference again here in Virginia is an extremely exciting opportunity, and we'll need your help! We'll be letting you know about committee membership needs – a fun way to get more involved with VADCDT.

At the Summer Institute, Marianne Moore will be taking over as VADCDT President, and we look forward to the vision and energy she will bring to the role. I've very much enjoyed the opportunity to serve as president over the past year and work alongside the members of the Executive Board. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you, and I'll look forward to continuing to share with you in support of Virginia's youth with disabilities.

Tori's Journey with Self-determination

Tori Saylor

There is one simple explanation for why self-determination is so important, and that is, it can change your life! I'm sure that everybody can think back to a time in their life when they made a decision and reacted to a situation in a way that made them feel proud of themselves. What power it can give their self-esteem to reflect back on their decision and know that they did the right thing no matter how difficult it was. They overcame the challenge!

I can say, from experience, that this is the type of positive feeling that gets one through the challenges of life. There are numerous aspects of self-determination, including decision making, goal-setting, and self-advocacy to name just a few. These are the type of characteristics that one desperately tries to obtain in life but that do not always come natural to some, me included. My story is one that successfully shows how the power of self-determination can impact one's life. In order to fully understand how much this has impacted my life you have to realize how my life was before I was introduced into living a life of self-determination.

As we all know, life is filled with countless challenges, but when the difficulties of living with a disability are added in life can become unbearable. My entire life I had always known that I was different. I was convinced there had to be something wrong with me since I had such a hard time doing things that came natural to everyone else around me. At the age of 19 these challenges started to make sense when I was diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome (AS). As some can imagine, the first 19 years of my life were very difficult and filled with anger, miscommunication, and emptiness. As a person living with AS, I have often described it as feeling like a human living in an alien world. I constantly had the sensation of not being able to breathe fully because the stress that consumed me made my body feel

as if it was filled with thick wet cement that was holding me down.

Before I was diagnosed with AS I truly was a victim of my disability. It had taken grasp and was completely controlling my life. Having a proper diagnosis gave me the ability to start learning the reasons why I was having such difficulties with life that my peers were not. After my diagnosis, my life changed in many ways. My life's transformation to self-determination did not happen instantly however. That day when I was sitting in the doctor's office and he told me, in a matter of fact tone, that I had an incurable disability was devastating. Although I had always known that I was different, I had always had the hope that once the doctors figured out what was wrong with me I would be able to take a pill or have a surgery and become normal.

My mother, however, was desperate for me to realize that having a disability did not have to be a negative thing. One day she said to me, "Tori, it's not a disability; it's a different ABILity". At that moment, I realized that I had a choice to make. It was a fact that I would have to live with AS forever but it was my choice to make it a negative aspect of my life or a positive.

At the age of 20 I attended the first Virginia Department of Education I'm Determined Project Youth Summit. This is where I initially learned about self-determination. After adopting some of the characteristics of it, I slowly started to morph into the person that I had always known that I could be. My story, however, is not over yet because living a self-determined lifestyle is a constant cycle of learning, processing, and growing. Over the past six years I have been fortunate enough to witness the I'm Determined Project and self-determination lifestyle have a positive impact on many others lives as well. Whether one has a disability or not, self-determination can, and has, changed lives.

MEMBERSHIP Sally Chappel

We currently have 112 members. That is an increase of 15 members since last fall. Great job folks! Just a reminder to please renew your membership. You can do this on-line at <http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Membership>. Also, invite a colleague to join. We want to continue to be the strongest and largest state chapters in the nation.

Remember, you can always direct colleagues to our website if they would like more information:

www.vadcdt.org

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ben Bowman

For Reporting Period Ending
May 18, 2012:
Expenses: \$2083.65
Income: \$1134.55
Ending Balance: \$15149.80

ELECTIONS FOR 2012-2013

At this time of year, the Virginia division of DCDT holds its annual elections for open offices. The officers to be elected this year are Vice-President and Secretary. The Vice-President serves a three-year term, the first year as Vice-President, the second year as President, and the third year as Past-President. The Secretary serves a two-year term. Both terms of office will begin on July 1, 2012.

Vote On-Line by June 22, 2012

1. Go to www.vadcdt.org
2. On the home page, click the link for online voting
3. Select the person you would like to vote for
4. Press submit

The following nominees have agreed to run for their respective offices. Please follow the directions to complete an online ballot.

Secretary (Term of Office: 2012 – 2014)

Catherine Burzio

Ms. Burzio established Viable Vocations in 2011 to provide Education and Transition consulting service for students, families, schools and organizations. As the former Transition Coordinator for PEATCs NEXT STEPS Transition project, she helped to establish a nationally recognized program funded by the U.S. Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). She is a former Transition Specialist for a local school division. Catherine was appointed by former Virginia governor Tim Kaine to serve on the Virginia State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind and Vision Impaired, ending in 2011 and she currently serves on the Alumni Board of Directors for Shenandoah University, The Chromosome 18 Registry & Research Society Executive Board as the Vice President for Member Relations and VECAP (Vocational Evaluation and Career Assessment Professionals) as the Communications Chair.

Through her work in Transition, Catherine has established national

working relationships with the IDEA Partnership Community of Practice on Transition and the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC). Through these partnerships, Catherine has worked with several states and territories, including Wisconsin, Delaware, Pennsylvania, California, the Virgin Islands, Florida and the Bureau of India Education to provide technical assistance regarding transitioning youth and their families. Catherine received her master's degree in Transition Special Education - Collaborative Vocational Evaluation Training from The George Washington University in Washington, DC. Her areas of interest include Families in Transition, Social Capital and Ethics and Technology.

Using both personal and professional experience, Catherine encourages collaborative partnerships between families, students, educators and service providers, leading to more effective transition outcomes for youth. She is the grateful mom of Ashton, Pauline, JB and August.

Vice-President (Term of Office: 2012-2013. This candidate will assume the office of President for 2013-2014 and Past President 2014-2015)

Lisa Holland

Ms. Holland currently works as the Supervisor of Special Education for Montgomery County Public Schools. The majority of her duties relate to the supervision of middle, high school and postsecondary programs for students with disabilities. Previously, Lisa worked for the Virginia Department of Education Training and Technical Assistance Center at Radford University where she was the state coordinator for I'm Determined project. Ms. Holland's twenty-eight years of teaching experience have occurred in both public k-12 schools and at the college level. Her areas of interests and consulting include secondary transition, inclusive education, and assistive technology. She has presented at numerous national conventions including Council of Exceptional Children, National Community of Practice, and the CEC Division on Career Development and Transition. Lisa has served as the co-chair of The Virginia Transition Forum for the past four years. Before becoming co-chair, she worked with the Forum planning team as a committee co-chair for six years.

YOUTH DCDT UPDATE

Matthew Shapiro

Recently, as the new youth and young adult representative on the national Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) board I got to experience my first meeting as a member. The current board members welcomed me with open arms. I sat in on full board meetings as well as a few committee meetings. As the new young adult rep I have several goals that I hope to achieve. The first has already begun as at the next meeting in October DCDT will be hosting the first-ever youth strand at its national conference. As a part of this strand DCDT will be bringing in 25 to 30 Denver area youth to participate in breakout sessions targeted to them. Some of the sessions include: improving self-determination skills and preparing for college. There'll be other strands targeted at youth as well. Some of my additional goals include starting a youth and young adult committee, creating youth resources to post on the DCDT website, and just improving the youth presence on the DCDT overall. It is the board's hope that the youth component will become a yearly fixture at all DCDT meetings. The first few months in the position have indeed been crazy ones, but I look forward to where I can take the position of the youth and young adult rep position in the next few months. My greatest excitement is to see a great push for youth involvement in and around the DCDT board. I believe this new initiative by the board will give youth another avenue to learn about self advocacy and become leaders of the future. It is another personal goal of mine to take the skills that I learned while a member on the national level and apply them here in Virginia. I hope I can be a great representative for the state and look forward to what the future holds as I continue to serve on the DCDT board.

VDOE CORNER

Marianne Moore

Change is one of the things we expect in education. One of the biggest changes is we will all have a new Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction. Mr. Cox has been at the Department more than 30 years. Most of you reading this cannot remember a different person leading special education at the Virginia Department of Education. On May 21 Mr. John Eisenberg was selected to take this position. Beginning July 1, 2012 there will be a new name on the corner office.

Most of you are aware of the Diploma Bill. You can read Senate Bill 489, House Bill 1061 on the Bill Tracking website at www.lis.virginia.gov. There are no details other than sometime in the future the Modified Standard Diploma will be phased out and students will work for either an Advanced Studies Diploma, a Standard Diploma, or a Special Diploma. The Standard Diploma will require more emphasis on career readiness. The best way to stay informed is to read the Superintendent's Memos which come out every Friday and can be found on the VDOE website.

Throughout the summer and into fall, there will be several professional development opportunities for teachers, youth and parents. Eric Carter will be in Richmond on June 7 and in Roanoke September 19. Through a grant from VDOE, the VCU-RRTC is offering webcasts and online classes on several topics. It is still not too late to sign up for webcasts and online classes through the VCU-RRTC. Look for a webcast on cultural competence later this summer. Youth and parents will hold a Self-determination Summit in Harrisonburg in June and some youth will also participate in a leadership summit at the University of Richmond, also in June. The VCU-ACE produces an electronic newsletter. The May Newsletter highlighted information on the new online course for paraprofessionals and the Summer Webcast Series. The link to the newsletter is <http://www.vcuautismcenter.org/news/print.cfm?id=28>

Another good website to visit often is TTAC Online. This website is packed with information on learning opportunities and valuable resources such as ESS+ lessons. The ESS+ State Directed Project worked in collaboration with the VDOE Office of Instruction to incorporate differentiation into the Enhanced Scope and Sequence lesson plans posted on the VDOE website. The 2009 Mathematics standards were the first to incorporate the differentiation and are now available in a searchable database. English and science will be the next to be posted in the coming months.

Hopefully there will be more details to share about assessments, diplomas, and professional development opportunities at the Summer Institute 2012 in Roslyn, Virginia.

MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!

VADCDT Summer
Institute

WE MAKE THE
DIFFERENCE!

Aug 1-2, 2012
Roslyn Center
Richmond, VA

To Register:
www.vadcdt.org

CONFERENCES AND PROGRAM EVENTS

Joan Lovegren-O'Brien
Sandra Wingler-Jones

WE Make the Difference!
Summer Institute Wednesday,
August 1 – Thursday, August 2,
2012
<http://www.vadcdt.org/>

Come celebrate you at the 2012 VA DCDT Summer Institute! This year the sessions will focus on

community and school collaboration, youth stories, Virginia's Employment First Initiative, how a rehabilitative engineer connects the classroom to "on-the-job" training, plus other great information. We will also have a special presentation of our annual VADCDT awards for an employer, practitioner and a state leader. The Summer Institute is guaranteed to once again be the best mini-conference on transition in the state.

Please register by July 13. You can find registration material on our

website: <http://www.vadcdt.org/>. For any questions about the conference, please contact Joan Lovegren-O'Brien, Program Co-Chair at jlovegrenobr@vcu.edu.

If you have any suggestions for future programs or events, please contact:
Sandra-Wingler-Jones, Program Co-Chair @ swingler-jones@mcpsweb.org

See you in August!

Academic & Career Exploration: Individualized Techniques

ACE-IT in College

Renee Z. Bullano Katherine M. Wittig

VCU-RRTC

ACE-IT in College is an inclusive, on-campus college experience for students, ages 18-26, with intellectual disabilities (ID), autism or traumatic brain injury (TBI). This federally funded demonstration project represents collaboration between the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) and the Partnership for People with Disabilities in the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) School of Education.

The desired outcomes of ACE-IT in College are an established credential certificate and competitive employment in a non-traditional field for college students with ID, autism or (TBI) through the use of college academic and career supports. This is achieved through a 30 month on-campus program that provides student participants with a series of credit or non-credit academic courses selected from the VCU course catalog.

Young adults participating in ACE-IT in College are also provided with:

- person centered planning to guide academic advisement and course selection that are incorporated into the students' Academic and Career Plans;
- academic supports provided by Education Coaches and the use of universal design for learning strategies;
- career exploration and preparation including business mentors, short-term internships in the community as well as on-campus and other career exploration activities;
- social networking and soft skill development through social activities on campus;
- financial literacy to assist students in managing their resources and
- job placement and training activities through the VCU Career Center and support from the ACE-IT staff.

During the 2011-12 academic year three students matriculated at VCU, attending classes and working on campus. The students participated in various on-campus activities and learned to navigate the campus. Their successes with coursework, employment and campus life attest to the value of programs such as ACE-IT in College.

For more information on ACE-IT in College please contact: Dana Yarbrough at 804-828-0352 dvyarbrough@vcu.edu or Liz Getzel at 804-827-0748 lgetzel@vcu.edu

Why Employment First: The Effectiveness of Supported Employment in Recovery for people with Behavioral Health Diagnoses

Adam Sass

As service delivery becomes even more consumer driven we are finding that people receiving services want to try employment. In a recent study over 90% of students in school transition programs expected that they would be working in the future. As the federal government focuses on more cost effective ways to provide services in the community integrated community based employment is emerging as a preferred service. The Centers for Medicaid and Medicare (CMS) recently published guidance document ([CIB-04-26-12.pdf](#).) which explains how states can offer integrated employment for people with all forms of disabilities under current regulations.

Supported Employment is one of 6 “evidence-based practices” that were identified by a national panel of experts convened in 1998 to evaluate services for people with severe mental illness. An evidence-based practice must meet several criteria. First, the practice is well defined with explicit program principles that have been operationally defined. Second, the practice has been studied in a number of rigorous research studies, including randomized controlled trials, and the findings consistently show that the practice is effective in achieving valued consumer outcomes. Third, the practice has been replicated by different groups in different settings with similar results. The national panel concluded that supported employment currently is the only evidence-based practice in the area of vocational rehabilitation.

Robert E. Drake, MD PhD, the Andrew Thomson Professor of Psychiatry, Professor of Community & Family Medicine and the Director, Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Center Mental Health Services Research says;

“nothing that I have studied has the same kind of impact on people that employment does. That is you know medication, case management, and psychotherapies, things like that. Tend to produce a small impact on people's overall adjustment. But, the differences are often striking and dramatic with employment. Nothing we do helps people turn their lives around the way having a real job does. I have come to think that it's because people who have a chronic mental illness tend to get sort of demoralized by the illness and the system of care and how society treats them. And, having a real job puts them back on the track of feeling like they are pursuing you know sort of normal adult roles. And you see them feeling better about themselves and developing self-confidence and developing motivation for managing their mental illness, developing, you know, confidence for being integrated in their community rather than segregated in mental health settings.”

Supported Employment for people with Behavioral Health follows a basic set of principles which are vital for successful outcomes;

- ❑ Eligibility is based on consumer choice. No one is excluded who wants to participate.
- ❑ Supported employment is integrated with treatment. Full-time employment specialists coordinate plans with the treatment team, e.g., case manager, therapist, psychiatrist, etc.
- ❑ Competitive employment is the goal. The focus is community jobs anyone can apply for that pay at least minimum wage, including part-time and full-time jobs.
- ❑ Job search starts soon after a consumer expresses interest in working. There are no requirements for completing extensive pre-employment assessment and training, or intermediate work experiences (like prevocational work units, transitional employment, or sheltered workshops).
- ❑ Follow-along supports are continuous. Individualized supports to maintain employment continue as long as consumers want the assistance.
- ❑ Consumer preferences are important. Choices and decisions about work and support are individualized based on the person's preferences, strengths, and experiences.

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services has undertaken the task of transforming Virginia into an Employment First State. Employment First is a national movement and trend which promotes integrated community based employment as the first service option for people receiving day services. The Governor had offered his support of Employment First and the General Assembly has recently approved a Joint Resolution #127 which supports Employment principles. The department has developed a board policy which states:

“It is the policy of the Board that in the development and implementation of policies and procedures and the delivery of services, the Department and CSBs shall ensure that community-based individual supported employment in integrated work settings is presented as the first and priority service option among available day service options offered by case managers and support coordinators to individuals receiving mental health, developmental, or substance abuse day support or employment services and shall expand access to integrated, community-based employment opportunities for individuals with mental health or substance use disorders, intellectual disability, or co-occurring disabilities.”

If you would like more information about Virginia’s Employment First initiative, or want to become part of the initiative, please contact Adam Sass at adam.sass@dbhds.virginia.gov . Together, we can increase the number of people who want to work, working in integrated community based employment.

VA DCDT Executive Board Members

President:	Mac McArthur-Fox	Membership Chair:	Sally Chappel
Vice President:	Marianne Moore	Program Co-Chairs:	Joan Lovegren-O'Brien
Past President:	John McNaught		Sandra Wingler-Jones
Secretary:	Faith Hottle	Scholarship Chair:	Judy Averill
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		Web Lead:	Joan Lovegren-O'Brien
		Newsletter Lead:	Bridget Parker
		Legislative Lead:	Mary Young

Ad Hoc / DRS Rep:	Jim Hall	VACTE~SND Liaison:	Kari LaBell
Ad Hoc / Parent Rep:	Vacant	Student Rep:	Vacant