



PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES IN KANSAS...

# Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy Newsletter

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## Photo of the Month



Issue: #14

March/2009

Dear KYEA Family and Friends,

Welcome to the March issue of our KYEA E-Newsletter. It's a new year and things are busy around the KYEA office. We have lots of positive news to share this month! Kansas is taking a step in the right direction by considering the passage of a "Disability Awareness and History" bill. KYEA youth have been working non-stop to advocate for this bill. Read the full story below. Also, we have had some staff changes and are gearing up for a whole new year of the KSYLF! These are exciting times, not only in Kansas, but on a national level with many new opportunities and resources available. We bring you all of this and more in this issue of our e-newsletter... just read on...

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings KYEA Supporters -

KYEA staff decided that, for some reason, we should have an Executive Director's letter to begin each newsletter, so here I go at my first one!

When referring to youth with disabilities, the word transition pops up. It is almost as if people think that between the ages of 1 - 25 are the only times in your life that transition occurs. During one of my Partners in Policymaking Graduate Trainings, my view of the word transition was expanded. Did you know that transition never stops? It happens at every age and sometimes every day of your life! I know that KYEA strives to work for youth with disabilities 30 years old and younger, so you might be thinking, why am I talking about the entire lifespan of a person? Well, as a former "youth," I wanted to be an "adult" some day. My thoughts of adulthood were: have a stable job and a stable family life, along with stable dinners of ice cream and soda and stable habits of watching TV. Adulthood does have its stable moments, but I am finding that I am still going through transition at the age of 31!!! All that transition really means is change. Some people are very open to change and others are not too inviting to it. For me, it just kind of depends what mood I am in. One thing is for sure, though... change is inevitable.

The Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy has gone through some major changes within the past couple of years: new staff, staff leaving, new programs, new board members and even a new office location. Whew! It is almost hard to keep up with. Through all of this change, one thing has been constant, you never left our side. It is hard to go through change (transition), but even harder to go through it by yourself. So, I would like to thank you for sticking with us through the rocky times and also helping us to celebrate change during the good times. You truly have proven that "we are family" (using my horrible singing voice). KYEA does a lot of presentations to youth, adults, organizations and schools about transition. If you have heard us, please know that you are not alone in your lifetime of transition.



**ADVOCATE.** KYEA youth, staff, and supporters pose for a picture with Senator Jean Schodorf after giving testimony in support of a "Disability Awareness and History" bill.

### Check out these websites!

[www.kyea.org](http://www.kyea.org)

[www.myspace.com/ksylf](http://www.myspace.com/ksylf)

<http://groups.myspace.com/ksylf>

[going-to-college.org](http://going-to-college.org)

[projecteyetoeye.org](http://projecteyetoeye.org)

[disabilityhistoryweek.org](http://disabilityhistoryweek.org)

[kansasaccessiblesports.com](http://kansasaccessiblesports.com)

### Join Our List

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

*The Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy is made possible by a grant from Kansas Rehabilitation Services and match funds from the Kansas Legislature.*

Whether it is personal or professional change, it will happen. Just know that you are not alone. So when change comes your way, approach it like roller coaster. It will have its highs and lows, but there is an ending to the ride, and, at the end of it, we will be there to celebrate that YOU MADE IT!

Julia Fonseca  
KYEA Executive Director

## KYEA NEWS

### KYEA youth and supporters advocate for a new bill

Kansas is on the verge of taking a large step in the right direction concerning educating youth of all ages about people with disabilities. For the past few months, KYEA has been working with a taskforce of youth to advocate for the passage of a new bill in Kansas that recognizes the last two weeks of January, each year, as Disability History and Awareness Weeks in schools across the state. Senate Bill 162 states that, during these two weeks, K-12 schools will implement a course of instruction that focuses on disability history and disability awareness. The bill works to encourage better treatment of individuals with disabilities, reduce bullying against students with disabilities, increase self-esteem and disability pride, and reaffirm a commitment to full inclusion of people with disabilities.



On Tuesday, February 17, the youth taskforce, as well as KYEA staff and supporters, made their way to the Capitol to advocate for this bill. Andrew Crane (KSYLF Alumni '06) and Christian Roberson (KSYLF Alumni '08), along with Carrie Greenwood (KYEA Program Coordinator) and Anne-Marie Hughey (KYEA Board Member), gave powerful testimony to the Senate Education Committee in support of the bill. The Education Committee then recommended the passage of the bill to the full Senate and the Senate voted 39 - 0 in favor of Senate Bill 162! Last Wednesday, the youth taskforce, with the addition of Thad Smith (KSYLF Alumni '07), along with KYEA staff and supporters, gave testimony to the House Education Committee. The House Committee worked on the bill this week and have proposed an amendment that would allow each school district to choose the time period that disability awareness and history is taught. The bill will now go to conference committee where it will be discussed further.



We would like to thank all of the people who have supported KYEA in this endeavor thus far. A big thank you to Senator Vicki Schmidt for sponsoring the bill and supporting KYEA. Also, to the Senate and House Education Committees for their support of greater acceptance and awareness in schools. Thank you to Anne-Marie Hughey for her support and guidance through this process. We would also like to thank all of the people who were there to support KYEA during testimony including Shannon Jones, Jennifer Schwartz, Dave and Debbie Crane, and Cheryl Roberson. Lastly, thank you to all of you across Kansas who have made phone calls and written letters to legislators in support of this bill.

If you would like to further support KYEA in the passage of Senate Bill 162, please contact us at 866-577-5932 or at [carrieg@kyea.org](mailto:carrieg@kyea.org).

READ THE FULL TEXT OF THE BILL - [www.kslegislature.org](http://www.kslegislature.org)

HEAR PART OF THE STORY ON CAPITOL BUZZ (2-20-09) - [www.stopthefreeze.com](http://www.stopthefreeze.com)

## **KYEA experiences staff changes, hires new employee**

More changes have occurred within the last few months concerning the staff of KYEA. As most of you know, in October of 2007, Julia Fonseca moved up to the position of Executive Director. This left her position of Program Coordinator open. In January of this year, Carrie Greenwood was hired as the new Program Coordinator. Carrie has been with KYEA since its creation in 2005, was a delegate at the first Kansas Youth Leadership Forum in 2001, and has served in various positions with the KSYLF since that very first year. She has had the title of Outreach Coordinator for over three years and will now be coordinating all of the programs within KYEA under her new position. Carrie is excited about having a more direct role with programs within the organization. She states, "I have been with KYEA since the beginning and have seen the impact of all of our programs. I am very honored to work directly with these programs, and with the youth, and help both to be the best that they can be!"



KYEA has also recently hired a new staff member. Adetha Buchheim is now serving in the position of Office Assistant. Adetha has lived in Kansas mostly all of her life, aside from living in Las Vegas for ten years. She has had previous work experience at casinos and in production work, but has most recently been enjoying her work in the office technology field. Adetha recently completed the Business Administrative Technology program at Kaw Area Technical School in Topeka. She is married and enjoys doing crafts, reading, and watching movies in her spare time. Adetha is enjoying her new job at KYEA. She says, "I love it! [I've enjoyed] learning new things, getting to meet some of the youth, and working with and for the other staff."



## **Youth Leadership Forum gears up for an all new year!**

The 2009 Kansas Youth Leadership Forum is right around the corner, and KYEA is busy selecting delegates and recruiting volunteers. This year, we received 35 applications from high school juniors and seniors across the state. KYEA is currently looking through all of the applications and a final list of accepted delegates will be announced this month.

We are currently still recruiting for qualified volunteers to serve as facilitators during the KSYLF week this summer. We need committed, enthusiastic people who are willing to devote a week to this great program. The goal of all facilitators is to empower and support each delegate as they discover inner strengths and abilities as individuals and as members of a group. Do you have the skills and passion to facilitate groups and motivate youth with disabilities? Then consider serving as a volunteer at the 2009 KSYLF! Past volunteers, KSYLF alumni, and new volunteers are encouraged to apply.

Volunteer applicants must fill out our application form, as well as two background checks, and send to the KYEA office. Applications can be obtained by emailing KYEA at [carrieg@kyea.org](mailto:carrieg@kyea.org).

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE KANSAS YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM -  
[www.kyea.org/content/view/37/56](http://www.kyea.org/content/view/37/56)

## **KYEA available to conduct the Disability Heritage Project in local schools, organizations, and companies**

Does your group have a desire, or a need, to learn about disability history and pride? KYEA is currently available to conduct presentations in schools, organizations, community groups, and companies. The Disability Heritage Project presentations focus on the history of the disability movement, as well as disability awareness and an introduction to the concept of disability pride. We have spoken with schools all across the state, as well as various community organizations, and are currently trying to branch out to different groups throughout the state, including school faculty, companies, a variety of organizations, as well as people with and without disabilities. Each presentation is catered to the specific audience.

Do you know of a group who would benefit from this presentation? Then bring the Disability Heritage Project to your area today! To obtain a cost estimate and schedule a presentation, contact Carrie at 785.215.6655 ext. 2 or [carrieg@kyea.org](mailto:carrieg@kyea.org).

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DISABILITY HERITAGE PROJECT - [www.kyea.org/content/view/10/35](http://www.kyea.org/content/view/10/35)

## **Justin Cosco Scholarship Award seeking nominations**

Each year, KYEA selects a recipient of the Justin Cosco Scholarship Award. The award began in 2004, but was renamed in 2007 after the death of an alumni of the first Kansas Youth Leadership Forum, Justin Cosco. This award is given to an alumni who has demonstrated progress toward their goals and growth as a leader. The following are requirements to receive this award (each nominee must meet one or more of these requirements):

- Be a KSYLF Alumni from the years of 2001-2007. (required)
- Have demonstrated leadership skills and accomplishments.
- Be in the process of completing and/or have completed the KSYLF Personal Leadership Plan.
- Have used community resources to pursue leadership goals.
- Be willing to participate in post KSYLF organizations/activities.

Alumni can either nominate themselves or be nominated by someone else. Nominations are due by April 1, 2009. One winner will be chosen and notified by May 1, 2009. The winner receives many benefits including a scholarship to the 2009 Kansas Disability Caucus, a plaque, recognition at the 2009 KSYLF Mentor Luncheon, and more!

LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS AWARD - [www.kyea.org/content/view/152/115](http://www.kyea.org/content/view/152/115)

## **Visit our KSYLF MySpace pages!**

Are you a KSYLF alumni or past volunteer who has a MySpace page? Then connect with other alumni and volunteers by joining our KSYLF MySpace pages! What better way to stay up to date on the latest KYEA happenings, reconnect with old KSYLF friends, and meet alumni from other years. Also, visit the pages to view pictures, hear "KSYLF inspired" music, and view updates. Join today!

VISIT THE KSYLF MYSFACE GROUP PAGE - <http://groups.myspace.com/ksylf>

VISIT THE KSYLF MYSFACE PROFILE PAGE - [www.myspace.com/ksylf](http://www.myspace.com/ksylf)



## **Upcoming Board Meeting Dates**

All KYEA board meetings are open to the public, but attendees do not have voting rights during the meeting.

**Next board meeting:** Saturday, March 21, 2009, 10:00 am - 1:30 pm at the YWCA in Topeka.

# **WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**

## **Brenna Koch- KSYLF Alumni '07**

Brenna Koch, KSYLF Alumni 2007, has fully embraced the college experience and is accomplishing her goals along the way. Brenna is currently a student at Washburn University in Topeka, where she is majoring in Accounting and Business Management, with a minor in Spanish. While at Washburn, she has been working as a desk assistant for the University's Residential Living Office. She is a member of Alpha Lambda Delta, which is the National Honors Society, and Phi Beta Lambda, which is a business leaders' organization. Brenna started the Washburn Collegiate 4-H Club last year and is currently serving her second term as the President of this organization. This was actually one of her goals while attending the KSYLF. Once she completes her college education, Brenna hopes to own her own accounting firm within 15 years after graduation. Congrats Brenna, on all of your accomplishments!



## **Thad Smith- KSYLF Alumni '07**

Thad Smith, KSYLF Alumni 2007, has been waiting for the right opportunity to find a job that he loves. Thad graduated from Seaman High School in 2008. Since then, he has been searching for a job that allows him to help people. Thad recently found a job that does just that. He recently was hired by KYEA to serve as a part-time Office Assistant. Thad will be helping out around the KYEA office and attending events to promote KYEA and its programs. He is very excited about his new job with KYEA. Thad states, "I believe in what KYEA stands for. It is a chance to make a difference." Thad's future goals are to possibly get a degree and eventually find a full-time job. He credits

the Youth Leadership Forum with helping him get where he is today. "YLF really changed my life!" Thad said. Welcome to the team Thad!

*Are you a KSYLF alumni or past volunteer who has a bit of news to share? We are always eager to hear about your accomplishments and updates! Send them to us and we will publish YOU in future issues of our e-newsletter. Give us a call or send us an email... let us know what you have been up to!*

CONTACT KYEA AT [CARRIEG@KYEA.ORG](mailto:CARRIEG@KYEA.ORG) OR 866-577-5932

## **STATE NEWS**

### **Conference in Salina to focus on disability and achieving future goals**

Expectations, achieving goals, changing attitudes... these are just a few of the topics that will be addressed during an upcoming mini-conference in Salina. Independent Connection will be hosting a mini-conference entitled "If you can dream it, THEY will achieve it!" It will be held on Saturday, March 14 from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm at the First Covenant Church in Salina.

This Key to Change Mini-Conference will focus on a variety of topics for youth with disabilities and their parents, including higher education, employment, personal relationships, community involvement, and personal responsibility. The featured keynote speaker will be Kathie Snow, a well-known humorist, author, and parent of a child with a disability. Participants will also hear from a panel of local speakers. Parents, people with disabilities of all ages, educators, and advocates are all encouraged to attend. This conference is free and lunch will be provided.



For further information, contact Independent Connection at 785-827-9383 or [mpenn@occk.com](mailto:mpenn@occk.com).

## **Join a high school job club in Hutchinson!**

If you live near Hutchinson and are a young person with a disability who is trying to get a job, then this is the club for you! Prairie Independent Living Resource Center has begun to host monthly high school job club meetings for youth living in, or near, the Hutchinson area. The job club meets regularly on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 4:00 pm. Meetings are held at the PILR office at 17 S. Main. This job club provides a variety of things:

- Peer to peer support for job seekers with disabilities.
- Free employment workbooks and materials for participants.
- Videos and training to help you succeed.
- A place to exchange job leads, business cards, resumes, ideas, and information.
- Opportunities for encouragement and peer to peer problem solving.
- A place to learn interviewing skills, participate in mock interviews, and build a resume.

For more information, contact Christine Pechstein at 620-663-3989 or 620-663-9920 TDD.

## **Ms. Wheelchair Kansas crowning open to the public**

It's time to select a new Ms. Wheelchair Kansas! This year's crowning ceremony will be held this Sunday, March 15, 2009 from 2:00 - 4:00 pm. The event will be held at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Topeka. It will be open to the public and free of charge. Crowning activities will include platform speech presentations by the contestants, a keynote speech from a local advocate, a wheelchair dance performance from Groovability, farewell from the current titleholder, and crowning of the new Ms. Wheelchair Kansas 2009. This year will be extra special to the KYEA family as Ms. Wheelchair Kansas will be saying goodbye to Amanda Steiner, who is an alumni of the KSYLF class of 2002.

The mission of the MWKS program is to annually select one woman, who is wheelchair mobile, who will successfully advocate, educate, and empower all people on a state level. This is NOT a beauty contest, but rather a competition to select the most articulate, accomplished delegate who will serve as a role model and spokesperson for people with disabilities in Kansas.

Be there to say goodbye to the current titleholder and watch as the new Ms. Wheelchair Kansas is crowned!

LEARN MORE ABOUT MS. WHEELCHAIR KANSAS - [www.mswheelchairkansas.org](http://www.mswheelchairkansas.org)

## **Kansas Women's Leadership Conference held in March**

Are you a woman who considers herself to be a leader? Would you like to meet other women, from all walks of life, who share similar interests in leadership? Then attend the upcoming Kansas Women's Leadership Conference to be held in Hays! This conference will be held on March 27, 2009 to close out the celebration of Women's History Month. It will be held in the newly renovated Fox Pavilion in historic downtown Hays, Kansas.

The Leadership Advantage: Kansas Women's Leadership Conference is a state-wide event coordinated by the faculty, staff, and students of Fort Hays State University. The goal of this conference is to provide a forum for discussion on issues, concepts, and skills regarding leadership development for Kansas women of all ages. The conference is designed to be all-inclusive. All women, of all ages, from all experiences are invited to come learn more about the social interactive process called leadership.

The fee for this conference is \$89. The registration deadline is March 13, 2009. To register, visit the website below or contact Dawne Leiker at 785-628-5592 or [dpleiker@fhsu.edu](mailto:dpleiker@fhsu.edu).

VISIT THE CONFERENCE WEBSITE - [www.kansaswomensleadership.org](http://www.kansaswomensleadership.org)

REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE - [www.kansaswomensleadership.org/reg.html](http://www.kansaswomensleadership.org/reg.html)

## **National ADA Symposium comes to Kansas City this year**

The National ADA Symposium is making its way to Kansas City this year. The Symposium will be held June 8-10, 2009 at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center in Kansas City, MO. This is the nation's #1 Symposium on the ADA and disability-related laws, with presenters from all key federal government agencies. The theme of the 2009 Symposium is "Revitalizing the ADA." The passage of the ADA Amendments Act reaffirmed the American commitment to creating an accessible and inclusive society for people with disabilities and their families. In response, this year's Symposium will be expanded to include several new features:

- Formal plated luncheon with the Keynote Speaker.
- Professional Development Programs for ADA Coordinators and people in the design industry.
- Round table sessions allowing participants to meet with Symposium presenters.
- Formal evening banquet with a jazz quartet.

People with disabilities and their families, service providers and advocates, ADA coordinators, state and local government officials, and employers are all encouraged to attend. The registration cost for this Symposium is \$475 and the registration deadline is April 30, 2009. To register, visit the website below.

READ MORE ABOUT THE NATIONAL ADA SYMPOSIUM - [www.adasymposium.org](http://www.adasymposium.org)  
REGISTER FOR THE SYMPOSIUM - [www.adasymposium.org](http://www.adasymposium.org)

## **Matt Christensen to speak in Hutchinson**

For those people who attended the KSYLF in 2002 and 2008, you might remember hearing from speaker Matt Christensen. If you would like to hear Matt's story again, he will be speaking in Hutchinson in the month of March. Matt will be speaking at the Memorial Hall in Hutchinson on March 23 at 9:30 am. The Memorial Hall is located at 101 S. Walnut.

Matt began his education in Iowa, and was identified as dyslexic in second grade. During his freshman year of high school, Matt's family moved to Overland Park, Kansas. He later graduated from Kansas State University with a degree in secondary education in 1999, and in 2003 received his Masters degree in education from Baker University. He has spoken at numerous conferences across the country, training over 30,000 teachers, parents and students on topics dealing with learning disabilities. Matt continues to share with audiences the story of his struggles and how he used self-advocacy and study strategies to become successful.

For more information, contact Prairie Independent Living Resource Center at 620-663-3989.

## **NATIONAL NEWS**

### **Kids As Self Advocates seeks new advisory board members**

Are you interested in getting involved with the national disability youth movement? Are you between the ages of 12 and 24? Are you interested in learning how to inform youth about their rights, give peer-support, training and to change systems to include youth? If you answered "YES" to these questions, Kids As Self Advocates (KASA) wants YOU! National Kids As Self Advocates currently has positions open on their Advisory Board and Task Force.



**Kids As Self Advocates**

The KASA Advisory Board and Task Force are two very different levels of leadership. The Advisory Board consists of 7-9 youth ages 13-24. The Advisory Board decides how the project will run, how decisions are made, and what work is done. This is the highest level of KASA project leadership. The Task Force has 6-8 youth members from around the country, ages 12-18. The Task Force works with the Advisory Board and staff. They give advice about what information young people with disabilities need to know.

KASA is created by youth with disabilities for youth to educate society about issues concerning youth. KASA believes in self-determination, creating support networks and self-advocacy for all youth with disabilities in our society.

To apply for one of positions above, you must download the application at the website below and turn in by March 13, 2009. For more information, contact Naomi Ortiz at [ortizn@fvkasa.org](mailto:ortizn@fvkasa.org) or 785-273-3398.

VISIT THE KASA WEBSITE - [www.fvkasa.org](http://www.fvkasa.org)

## **Join the National Youth Leadership Network today!**

The National Youth Leadership Network (NYLN) is looking for new members! If you experienced our state's Youth Leadership Forum, then you will enjoy being a part of NYLN. The National Youth Leadership Network is a national non-profit organization run by young people with disabilities. They empower all young people to reach their maximum potential.

NYLN is currently hosting a membership drive through March 2009 to recruit new youth members. The requirements to be a member are:

- Be between 16 and 28 years old
- Have a disability
- Want to share and learn more about leadership and advocacy skills

Members receive the following:

- Two e-mails each month that share opportunities for young people around the country
- Quarterly e-newsletters
- Invitations to participate on national teleconferencas/webcasts
- Links to training materials and resources created by young people, for young people
- Information about other opportunities through the Network

To register as a member, visit the NYLN website. For more information, call 1-866-480-6565 and ask for Betsy or e-mail [bvalnes@tie.net](mailto:bvalnes@tie.net).

VISIT THE NYLN WEBSITE - [www.nyln.org](http://www.nyln.org)

## **Experience a Disability Rights and Leadership Exchange this summer in Costa Rica**

Do you have an interest in spending your summer in Costa Rica? Are you a young person with a disability? Join Mobility International USA as they host a Disability Rights and Leadership Exchange in Costa Rica. If you have an interest in travelling abroad, and would like to learn some leadership at the same time, then this is your opportunity! This Leadership Training will take place on June 26 - July 10, 2009. While in Costa Rica, students will live with a host family, learn Spanish through immersion, and learn about disability rights and leadership.



First time travelers with disabilities who are between 18-24 years old, from cultural minority and low-income backgrounds are encouraged to apply. ASL staff interpreters and materials in alternative formats will be provided.

The deadline to apply is March 20, 2009, so act today! For more information, call 541-343-1284 (tel/tty) or email [apply@miusa.org](mailto:apply@miusa.org).

APPLY FOR THE DISABILITY RIGHTS AND LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE -[www.miusa.org/exchange/costarica09/costarica2009\\_](http://www.miusa.org/exchange/costarica09/costarica2009_)

## **Writing contest announced for youth who are blind**

The National Federation of the Blind Writers' Division is hosting a writing contest for youth who use Braille. This contest will promote Braille literacy and excellence in creative writing. Entries will be judged on creativity and quality of Braille. They are looking for creative writing, in the form of fiction and poetry.

There is no charge for entering this contest. Entries must be submitted in hand embossed Braille, either on a slate and stylus or on a Braille writer. No computer Braille entries will be considered. Submissions must be Brailled by the entrant. Elementary students (K-5) may submit contracted Braille, uncontracted Braille, or an acceptable combination of the two. Students in higher grades will be expected to submit stories or poetry in contracted Braille. The deadline for entries is postmarked by April 1, 2009.

READ MORE ABOUT THIS CONTEST -

[www.nfb-writers-division.org/projects/youth\\_writing\\_contest.shtml](http://www.nfb-writers-division.org/projects/youth_writing_contest.shtml)

## **Contest announced: create a new character with a disability for the "Arthur" television show**



If you are between the ages of 6 and 12, and you would like to create a friend for "Arthur" who has a disability, then read more about this contest. PBS TV show's Arthur is going to be getting another friend with a disability! The show is teaming up with CVS Caremark All Kids Can to invite children ages 6-12 to create this new character. Kids are asked to mail in their entries, with a drawing of their character and a description of what makes them unique. The child with the selected idea, along with their character, will be featured in a live-action segment on the Arthur show. In addition, he or she will receive a visit from Arthur creator and author Marc Brown at the child's school, local library, or PBS member station. This character search is designed to educate children about the importance of inclusion and how children of all abilities can play together. It also encourages parents and children to think about what life is like for someone they know who has a disability.

LEARN MORE OR ENTER YOUR DRAWING IN THE CONTEST - <http://pbskids.org/arthur/allkidscan>

## **AAPD seeks qualified resumes for new administration**

Recently, a new President was selected to lead our country. With a new President comes a new Administration of people to work for him. The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) is committed to helping ensure that the next Administration, whether Democrat or Republican, includes qualified people with disabilities at all levels. In order to ensure this, AAPD is seeking resumes of experienced individuals who are interested in public service and have a demonstrated commitment to disability rights. These individuals will be put into a resume talent bank of candidates for the appointment process.

Those who are interested should send resumes to [jfa@aapd.com](mailto:jfa@aapd.com). AAPD will continue to accept resumes for the resume talent bank until at least March 31, 2009.

## **Online course offered on career planning**

An online course will be offered in March focused on career development, planning, and discovery. This course is being offered by TRN, Inc. and will be taught by Rob Hoffman. An online course offers two weeks' access to online web instruction, interactive exercises and readings, and a Forum discussion board. With this two week training, participants will receive a certificate of 18 service hours and a greater knowledge of career planning.

This course will take place March 17-30, 2009. It will focus on a variety of topics including self-determination, discovery of career goals, building job seeking skills, resume building, and much more.

The online course costs \$149 for a two-week session. Students are accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

SIGN UP FOR THIS CAREER DEVELOPMENT ONLINE COURSE -

<https://trn-store.com/drupal/node/918>

## **Conference to be held on integrated employment**

APSE: The Network on Employment will be holding their annual conference on integrated employment for people with disabilities this summer. This national conference focuses on helping people with disabilities to be fully included in the employment world: to get jobs, to be advocates in the workplace, etc. This year's conference will be held June 30 - July 2, 2009. It will take place at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Milwaukee.

The theme for this conference is "Employment for ALL!" Topics will include achieving success with business, changing public policy, and identifying funding solutions. Other breakout sessions will cover job marketing, self-employment, school to career transition, and more. The conference will also feature keynote speakers, exhibits, an awards banquet, and entertainment.

The early registration deadline for the APSE Conference is May 15, 2009. To register, visit the link below.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE APSE CONFERENCE - [www.apse.org](http://www.apse.org)

REGISTER FOR THIS CONFERENCE - [www.apse.org](http://www.apse.org)

## **Summer law intern positions available at National Disability Rights Network**

Calling all law students! There are two summer intern positions available at the National Disability Rights Network in Washington, D.C. These positions are for full-time students and those who participate will receive a stipend. The chosen legal interns will work directly with seven staff attorneys on cutting edge legal issues related to a wide range of disability rights issues. Typical intern projects have involved research and writing on issues concerning abuse and neglect, disability discrimination, special education, employment and vocational services, and the use of restraint and seclusion in schools. Other projects may include monitoring federal legislation and regulations and analyzing policy proposals.

The qualifications for this position are: 2L currently enrolled in law school with a strong academic background; excellent research and writing skills; and experience or strong interest in disability rights or civil rights issues.

Interested students should submit a resume and cover letter to the attention of David T. Hutt, Senior Staff Attorney, via e-mail at [david.hutt@ndrn.org](mailto:david.hutt@ndrn.org) or via facsimile at 202-408-9520. Interviews will be scheduled on a rolling basis.

## **SCHOLARSHIP**

### **New scholarship for students who have parents with disabilities**

Through the Looking Glass and the National Center for Parents with Disabilities and their Families recently announced new scholarships specifically for high school seniors and college students who have parents with disabilities. There are two different scholarship awards. The eligibility requirements are below:

**High School Seniors** - To be eligible, a student must be a high school graduate (or graduating senior) by Summer 2009, planning to attend college in Fall 2009 and have at least one parent with a disability. Five separate \$1000 awards will be given out in Fall 2009. Individuals may submit only one application per award period.

**College Students** - To be eligible, a student must be currently enrolled in a college or university, be 21 years of age or younger as of March 16, 2009, and have at least one parent with a disability. Five separate \$1000 awards will be given out in Fall 2009. Individuals may submit only one application per award period.

Selection criteria for all scholarships include academic performance, community activities and service, letters of recommendation and an essay describing the experience of growing up with a parent with a disability.

All application materials must be postmarked by Monday, March 16, 2009. To apply, visit the website below. For further information, email [scholarships@lookingglass.org](mailto:scholarships@lookingglass.org).

APPLY FOR THIS SCHOLARSHIP - [www.lookingglass.org/scholarships](http://www.lookingglass.org/scholarships)

# RESOURCES... TAKE A LOOK!

## **VIDEOS ~ Succeeding in College and at Work: Students with Disabilities Tell Their Stories**

Meet Danielle, Alexander, Valeska, and Santara... real students with real stories! The New England ADA Center has videos, viewable over the web, of these four students telling their employment and education success stories. In the videos, these students with disabilities share strategies to successfully stay in school, graduate, and get jobs. They also reveal their struggles with self-reporting their disability and negotiating accommodations in school and at work.

VIEW THE VIDEOS - [http://adaptiveenvironments.org/neada/site/student\\_videos](http://adaptiveenvironments.org/neada/site/student_videos)

## **FACT SHEETS ~ Employment Information for Youth**

The US Office of Disability Employment Policy has released three new fact sheets that provide disability employment information to youth, parents, and employers. These fact sheets share lots of information regarding how youth with disabilities can get jobs and be successful in obtaining employment. Click each link below to read the fact sheet.

*NOTE: You must have Adobe Acrobat Reader to view these files.* Get it here - <http://get.adobe.com/reader>

ESSENTIAL SKILLS TO GETTING A JOB: WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES NEED TO KNOW - [www.dol.gov/odep/documents/essential\\_job\\_skills.pdf](http://www.dol.gov/odep/documents/essential_job_skills.pdf)

SHAPING TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE: INCLUDING TALENTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES - [www.dol.gov/odep/documents/shaping\\_tomorrows\\_workforce.pdf](http://www.dol.gov/odep/documents/shaping_tomorrows_workforce.pdf)

CREATING A PATH TO EMPLOYMENT: TIPS FOR PARENTS WITH CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES - [www.dol.gov/odep/documents/creating\\_path\\_to\\_Employment.pdf](http://www.dol.gov/odep/documents/creating_path_to_Employment.pdf)

## **SPOTLIGHT ON: Disability History Week**

**Disability history and awareness being taught in the schools... this has been a completely unknown concept until recent years. Information about the disability rights movement has not been taught in classrooms across the country, but many states are taking steps to change this fact... including Kansas! KYEA has been working to get a "Disability Awareness and History" bill passed in our state (see related story above). If passed, Kansas will join 11 other states who have passed a similar bill or are working on one.**



**But why is this so important? Why do students with AND without disabilities need to know about the history of the disability community? Read below to learn more about the purpose behind this and the efforts of young people across the nation. Also, be sure to visit some of the websites below to get further educated about the history of the disability rights movement.**

**There are some great changes going on all across the U.S. Be a**

## **The Purpose Behind Disability History Weeks**

According to the National Consortium on Leadership and Disability for Youth, "exposing youth with disabilities to disability history and culture, connecting them to mentors and role models in the disability community, and teaching them about disability public policy all contribute to them making a successful transition to adulthood." Currently, there is a lack of all three of these things in our societies today. This is exactly why states all over the U.S. are implementing Disability History Weeks to further educate students about the disability community and the history behind it.

The Department of Labor recently published a new fact sheet about this movement towards teaching disability history in the schools. They state, "efforts to integrate disability history into schools and communities reflect one of the key components of effective youth leadership development-learning about the history, values, and beliefs of one's society." They also say that these experiences lead to a variety of positive outcomes including decreases in negative behaviors (e.g., alcohol and tobacco use and violence) and increases in positive attitudes and behaviors (e.g., motivation, academic performance, self-esteem, problem-solving, positive health decisions, and interpersonal skills). They also produce increased self-efficacy and the development of skills such as goal-setting, decision-making, and working well with others.

READ THE FULL DEPT. OF LABOR FACT SHEET - [www.dol.gov/odep/documents](http://www.dol.gov/odep/documents)

To read more about the purpose behind the Disability History Weeks, visit the websites below:

NATIONAL CONSORTIUM ON LEADERSHIP AND DISABILITY FOR YOUTH - [www.nclld-youth.info](http://www.nclld-youth.info)

DISABILITY HISTORY WEEK WEBSITE - [www.disabilityhistoryweek.org](http://www.disabilityhistoryweek.org)

## **States Involved in this Movement**

There are currently 11 states that have passed, or are working on, a Disability History Week bill. Some have passed an official bill into law, others have been working hard to advocate for the bill, and still others have just started the process. One thing is for sure, all are dedicated to educating the public about disability history and awareness.

Those states that have already passed a Disability History Week bill or resolution are:

West Virginia-- the very first state to pass a bill like this!

New York

Florida

Idaho

Iowa

North Carolina

Washington

## **Disability History Resources on the Web**

Disability History Museum - [www.disabilitymuseum.org](http://www.disabilitymuseum.org)

Disability Social History Project - [www.disabilityhistory.org](http://www.disabilityhistory.org)

Disability Media Initiative: Sharing Stories of People with Disabilities - <http://dmi-us.blogspot.com>

Parallels In Time: History of Developmental Disabilities - [www.mncdd.org/parallels](http://www.mncdd.org/parallels)

Smithsonian Museum: Disability Rights Movement Virtual Tour -

[www.americanhistory.si.edu/disabilityrights/welcome.html](http://www.americanhistory.si.edu/disabilityrights/welcome.html)

Museum of disAbility History - [www.museumofdisability.org](http://www.museumofdisability.org)

History of Independent Living (by two Kansas advocates) - [www.kacil.org/history.htm](http://www.kacil.org/history.htm)

Disability History and Culture Resources (from Kids As Self Advocates) - [www.fvkasa.org/resources/history.html](http://www.fvkasa.org/resources/history.html)

## **Lesson Plans for Disability History**

Disability Heritage Project (a program of KYEA) -

[www.kyea.org/content/view/10/35](http://www.kyea.org/content/view/10/35)

ADL Curriculum Connections: Lesson Plans and Resources for K-12 Educators - [www.adl.org/education/](http://www.adl.org/education/)

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

**"What seems like only a ripple today... can become the wave of the future!"**

We hope you have enjoyed this new issue of our e-newsletter. We always welcome feedback and ideas from our friends, so please email me anytime at [carrieg@kyea.org](mailto:carrieg@kyea.org). Also, please check our website often for more updates.

As always, thank you for your support of KYEA!

Sincerely,

Carrie Greenwood  
Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy