



## Inside This Issue

Message from the President . . . 1

Human Rights Committee Update . . . . . 2

Membership Committee Update . . . . . 2

Regional & Chapter News . . . . . 3

16th DCDT International Conference . . . 4

Parent Voice . . . 5

News from NSTTAC . . . . 6

Sharing Resources & Expanding Networks . . . . 7

15th National Forum on Issues in Vocational Assessment . . . 7

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



It is an honor to be your 2011–2012 DCDT President. I would like to welcome all new and long-time members to an exciting year for DCDT. I'd like to thank the two past presidents—Dale Matusevich and Dalun Zhang—who provided tremendous support to me during my time learning the ropes. As many of us long-timers know, since its inception more than 35 years ago, DCDT has maintained a national presence as a dynamic organization promoting effective policies and practices in transition. Because of our diverse membership, from national researchers and policymakers to front-line practitioners, our organization has been able to touch the lives of students and families. For these reasons, DCDT has maintained a record of commitment and enthusiasm for fostering innovation. Our goals for this year will help continue our standards of achievement and our impact.

We hope all of you will be attending the **16th International DCDT Conference, "Taking the Future by the Horns" on October 13–15, 2011, in Kansas City, Missouri.** More than 100 presentations and poster sessions will cover a wide range of topics, research, and resources; a day is also set aside for hands-on and practical workshops for practitioners.

We will continue to strengthen our partnerships with the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center, which will be collaborating with DCDT during their October 12th Mid-Year Check and Connect Transition Planning Institute in Kansas City. Our col-

laboration with the IDEA Partnership's National Community of Practice on Transition supports a Young Adult Representative who has leadership experiences. This partnership allows DCDT to have at the table the voice of youth with disabilities when we set policies and new directions. Currently, we are looking for a young adult to serve in this capacity, so please forward any nominations for this position to me! Our long-standing relationship with the Vocational Evaluation and Career Assessment Professionals (VECAP) Association is at a critical juncture for both organizations. Finding ways to promote effective and student-centered vocational and transition assessment processes is an important job for both organizations. We look forward to deepening this relationship over the next several years. Finally, our newest partnership with Easter Seals Project Action helps promote accessible community transportation for all.

DCDT committees and issue groups are always looking for members to help out, so if you are interested in joining a DCDT one, please check the website ([www.dcdt.org](http://www.dcdt.org)) and contact a committee chair or representative. Our next Regional Workshop will be in Denver, Colorado, in October 2012, so keep it in mind. These smaller regional workshops are an outstanding way to learn and continue to expand your skills and knowledge.

In closing, I would like to extend DCDT's appreciation to our outgoing appointed and elected board members, including **Beth Swedeen**, Parent Representative; **Paul Fogle**, Youth Representative; **Stacie Dojonovic**, Transition Assessment/Vocational Evaluation representa-

(Continued on page 4)

## HUMAN RIGHTS & CULTURAL DIVERSITY COMMITTEE UPDATE



**Chauncey Goff, Chair**

Last year's DCDT conference proved very fruitful for the Human Rights & Cultural Diversity (HRCO) Committee. We held our first strand, which was marked by extraordinary attendance and participation. We seek to build upon this budding success and ask that you join us as we explore diversity and multicultural approaches to transition. At this year's 2011 DCDT conference, the committee will conduct its second strand, *Diversity and Multicultural Approaches to Transition*, which highlights practices for "successfully" transitioning students considered *diverse*. The HRCO believes this strand to be of the utmost importance, because when we examine the important postsecondary outcomes associated with these students, we find extremes regarding the important quality-of-life domains of employment, home life, postsecondary enrollment, community involvement, and personal and social relationships. The strand offers approaches you might use to better address the transi-

tioning of students considered diverse. I invite all conference participants to attend this strand, and I call for your action in addressing concerns plaguing the transition success of these students.

I also invite you to attend the HRCO committee meeting, where we will focus on three important items:

1. increasing DCDT and HRCO membership, including compiling a list of HRCO members;
2. developing a workgroup to aggregate literature's best practices and evidence-based practices for transitioning students considered diverse; and
3. creating a workgroup to update the HRCO webpage to be more user-friendly and informative.

Together, I believe these endeavors will provide a more accessible HRCO and enable the committee to better achieve its purpose. If you would like more information about the HRCO meeting, please email me ([Chauncey.Goff@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Chauncey.Goff@mail.wvu.edu)).

## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE



**Audrey Trainor, Chair**

Have you ever wondered how to start a state subdivision of DCDT? Are you a subdivision leader who needs to file for the member rebates but you do not know where to start? Look no further! The Membership Committee of DCDT is happy to announce the publication of our manual for use by regional representatives and state subdivision leaders. The document covers all the essential procedures and provides necessary forms and information for organizing state subdivisions, and it's available in PDF format on the DCDT website ([www.dcdt.org](http://www.dcdt.org)) in the Members Only section. A special thanks to the

regional representatives who participated in creating the manual: **Stel Gragoudas, Lori Peterson, Sally Smith, Jamie VanDyke, and Katherine Wittig**. Don't forget: We are always looking for feedback, so email suggestions and changes to me ([aatrainor@wisc.edu](mailto:aatrainor@wisc.edu)).

Next on the agenda for the Membership Committee is a member survey. All DCDT members will receive an email invitation, most likely through our eBlast communications, inviting you to take a survey. Our working theme this year is "It's Your DCDT!" so when you respond, highlight what you like about our organization, note what you'd like to see changed, and offer suggestions for a member-friendly professional network. Our goal is to have this survey up and running by January 2012.

## REGIONAL & CHAPTER NEWS

### Southwest Region

**Texas DCDT** board meetings have moved into the 21st century through the magic of VOIP conference calling. Because the Lone Star state is so geographically large, board members and committee chairs may be several hundred miles apart. With VOIP conference calling, everyone can be together without getting into a plane or car. Speaking of the size of our state, TX DCDT now has regional representatives to reach every corner, connecting members and Executive Board members in a more cohesive unit.

Several TX DCDT officers and regional representatives presented papers and workshops at the **Texas Transition Conference**, held in Austin on February 7, 8, and 9. TX DCDT was also visible with a booth at the conference, where we unveiled our new display board for the first time. The conference also afforded us face-to-face time for an Executive Board meeting and our annual General Membership meeting, during which **Distinguished Service Awards** were given to **Vickie Mitchell**, past president and **Dalun Zhang**, current national DCDT past president and a founding member of TX DCDT. Members are looking forward to providing continued leadership at state conferences, to the development of a TX DCDT website, and to increasing our membership.

### Southeast Region

**Florida DCDT** hosted its statewide **Visions Conference** in May 2011 with nearly 300 participants. Keynote addresses were provided by **Paula Kohler** from NSTTAC and **Chad Murphy-Price**, a youth advocate and public speaker. The conference strand on postsecondary transition programs for youth with intellectual disabilities was a highlight this year and included presentations by **Margo Izzo** from the Nisonger Center at The Ohio State University and **Amy Dwyre** from TransCen, Inc.

The summer months have been busy ones for transition professionals in **Virginia**. The annual **VA DCDT Summer Institute** was held July 28 and 29 in Richmond. With close to 50 participants, the Institute again provided an important opportunity for transition professionals to network in a small, intimate setting, sharing the best of what's new and exciting in transition services and practices and re-energizing for the upcoming school year. This year's theme, "Transition in ACTION—Leveraging Resources for Maximum Impact," was supported through sessions such as ones focused on supporting individuals with ASD at work, accessing and enhancing the use of Medicaid waivers and Social Security work incentives, and expand-

ing partnerships with career and technical education. The Institute closed with the session, "Life Through Tori's Asperger Eyes," an extremely powerful and effective presentation by a young adult with ASD who is a strong youth leader in the state. Visit our website ([www.vadcdt.org](http://www.vadcdt.org)), the "Hot Happenings" section, to see photos and session presentations.

Past VA DCDT President **John McNaught** presented an August 12th professional development program, "Innovations in Self-Determination." This VA DCDT-sponsored program was well attended and served as an outreach opportunity, drawing participants new to DCDT.

Upcoming events in Virginia include the **Fall 2011 Youth Summit**, to be held in Charlottesville on **November 6–8**, which will be sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education's **I'm Determined** project in conjunction with the **Partnership for People with Disabilities**. For more information, visit the former's website ([www.imdetermined.org](http://www.imdetermined.org)). The **Virginia Transition Forum**, an annual event drawing close to 1,000 participants each year, will be held **March 12–14, 2012**, in Roanoke. For more information, visit the forum website ([www.virginiatransitionforum.org](http://www.virginiatransitionforum.org)).

**North Carolina** will be hosting a **Fall Statewide Meeting** on September 30, 2011, in Sanford at the North Carolina Cooperative Extension/Ruby McSwain Center on 2420 Tramway Rd. At this meeting we will be presenting postsecondary options for students with intellectual disabilities in the state. We will also keep all of our transition professionals updated with information from our Department of Instruction. Our **NC DCDT Spring Conference** is set for **May 2–4, 2012**, at the Embassy Suites in Greensboro.

**South Carolina DCDT** will host its **state conference** at Myrtle Beach, beginning **November 14, 2011**. Chapter officers plan to convene a Strategic Planning session for the transition coordinators in the state during the conference. The session will be a facilitated discussion intended to solidify implementation of compliance procedures and evidence-based practices across the state.

### Northwest Region

The **Colorado Chapter** is pleased to announce that it will host the **Regional DCDT Conference** on **October 25 and 26, 2012**. Our theme will be "Transition – Reaching New Altitudes!" Mark those calendars now! We are in the beginning stages of preparation for the event,  
(Continued on next page)

(Regional and Chapter News, continued from page 3)

so keep your eyes open for more details and information that will be available at the International Conference October 13–15 in Kansas City. In addition to hosting the regional conference, Colorado DCDT continues to maintain membership numbers with the addition of three new members at the State Transition Leadership Institute in Colorado Springs. To ensure that our local DCDT newsletter is published at least twice per year, the board recently elected a Newsletter Chairperson to oversee the creation and distribution of the newsletter, which will continue to highlight activities and resources related to transition. Colorado DCDT is looking forward to all of the exciting events that will take place in the upcoming year! For more information, please contact **Jennifer Sedaghat** ([jennifer.sedaghat@weldre4.k12.co.us](mailto:jennifer.sedaghat@weldre4.k12.co.us)).

**Missouri and Kansas chapters** of DCDT are excited to be co-hosting the 2011 DCDT Conference in Kansas City in October! Hope to see you there!

## Northeast Region

The Northeast region has been very active this last couple of month. **Massachusetts** is working on getting its chapter up and running. They had a well-attended planning meeting in the spring and will soon be official. Anyone who is interested in joining should contact Stelios [“Stel”] Gragoudas ([Stelios.gragoudas@umb.edu](mailto:Stelios.gragoudas@umb.edu)). The **Wisconsin-Illinois subdivision** hosted a transition forum this past spring, with educators and adult service providers throughout the state attending. The **Connecticut chapter** is busy expanding its membership and collaborating with other professional organizations such as CTCEC. The **Pennsylvania chapter** has been presenting at local and state conferences. Some of the topics included the role of school counselors in transition and résumé building. Finally, the **New York chapter** is collaborating with NYCEC on its state conference and is also working on effective strategies to disseminate transition-related information to schools and other professionals.

(President’s Message, continued from page 1)

tive; and **Dale Matusевич**, Past President. I give a warm welcome to our new incoming Board members. **Stacie Dojonovic** was recently elected to our Executive Board as the Vice-President. Stacie is a transition coordinator in the Fox Chapel Area High School in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. **Ryan Kellems** will serve as our Webmaster. Ryan is employed at the University of Oregon at the National Post-school Outcomes Center. **Judy Imperatore** will be serving as

the new Transition Assessment/Vocational Evaluation Representative. She has been working as a vocational evaluator and transition consultant in New England. **Michelle Doty**, who has been appointed to serve as the Parent Representative, is from Idaho and works for Lewis and Clark State College. We are very excited about these new board members and believe all will help move DCDT in exciting directions!

Sincerely,  
**Mary Morningstar**  
*DCDT President 2011–2012*



## Don't Miss the 16th DCDT International Conference

in **Kansas City, Missouri**, on **October 13–15** at the **Westin Crown Center**. In addition to meeting leaders in the area of transition, you will be able to

network with fellow educators and discover new evidence-based strategies and materials to improve the outcomes of your students. **Jonathan Mooney** and **Ako Kambon** promise to inspire us as the keynote speakers. Take time to come the day before to participate in the preconference workshops with **Dr. Michael Wehmeyer**, **Dr. Gary Clark**, and **Dr. Amy Gaumer Erickson**.

Conference and preconference workshop registration information is available at the DCDT website ([www.dcdt.org](http://www.dcdt.org)) or by vis-

iting <http://www.acteva.com/booking.cfm?bevoid=217229>. The direct number for hotel reservations is **1-816-283-4983**.

And ... Don't forget to save time for relaxation and enjoyment by signing up for **great conference excursions** in Kansas City. Tour the city and take in the American Jazz Museum and Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, plus dine at the Gates Bar-B-Que Restaurant or take in a show at the American Heartland Theatre.

**Hurry!** The conference will be here before you know it!

Go to our website now:

<http://www.dcdt.org/>

## PARENT VOICE



**Beth Sweeden**, *Parent Representative*

I am writing this article a day before my 18-year-old daughter with developmental disabilities launches her “community-based transition experience” through our local high school. This past June, Cara celebrated the completion of four successful and inclusive years in a large, urban, comprehensive high school in which she was extremely active in a wide range of general education classes, extracurricular clubs, volunteer experiences, and more. She was elected to prom court by her peers and cheered at all the games as manager of the girls’ basketball team.

Four years ago, as she walked alone into that huge building, I couldn’t imagine how successful she would be or how many great relationships she would form. Likewise, as she walked across the stage at graduation in June, it was hard to imagine what the community-based portion of her transition experience would look like. Less than three months later, we have a better idea of how she will spend her time and what types of experiences she both needs and wants to have in preparation for adulthood.

In part, that is because Cara, our family, and her team are constantly using elements of person-centered planning (<http://www.inclusive-solutions.com/pcplanning.asp>) to identify strengths and interests so we can better connect her to opportunities that will move her toward her goals. For instance, during last year’s IEP meeting, she identified these goals:

- ▶ expanding her small jewelry business
- ▶ exploring her interest working with children
- ▶ pursuing her love of art
- ▶ meeting more people and making more friends

Her school team encouraged her to take several business classes and a team-building gym class, and to continue to take art classes as part of her course of study. Knowing that the yearbook was art-focused and the staff operated as a tightly knit group, I asked if working on it was a possibility. The teacher agreed to a one-semester trial and expanded it for the year when she saw that other students in the class welcomed and supported Cara’s participation. Tools Like **PATH** (<http://www.inclusion.com/path.html>) and **MAPS** (<http://www.inclusion.com/maps.html>) can help families and school team members ask the right questions to uncover student strengths and interests, as well as identify the resources and supports that will allow students to pursue their transition goals.

Increasingly, both our family and Cara’s team have focused on our existing relationships and connections in the community to identify both individualized and useful transition experiences. For instance, her first formal volunteer experiences at ages 14 and 15 were summer stints in a preschool where a

teacher was a friend of mine and at a local day camp where Cara herself had been a camper starting at age 6. Knowing staff people at these locations made it easier to ask for a short-term volunteer experience, and because Cara was familiar with both, her comfort level and engagement were higher.

Think of your own first jobs as a teen—chances are they came from a family or friend connection. So why do we so rarely ask families and students whom they know and what they have already been involved in when lining up community experiences and developing jobs? So far this fall, Cara will volunteer five places: greeting at the zoo and helping kids with art projects at the children’s museum, both of which were familiar and beloved places to her when she was a preschooler; doing clerical work in a friend’s small business; working as a mother’s helper with a friend who has a young child with a disability; and doing office work at her former middle school (which she loved so much that she will always count middle school as the best years of her life!). After this year, she will, we hope, have developed both the skills and references as a basis from which she can seriously explore paid employment.

Increasingly, especially in times of high unemployment, the value of networking and using relationships to locate jobs is recognized as critical in all sectors of the economy, not just for students with disabilities. One of the most exciting transition efforts in which I have been involved focuses precisely on that development of relationships and networks. I have been part of several projects that use community conversations or World Cafes ([theworldcafe.com](http://theworldcafe.com)) that allow either schools or parent groups to address a disability-related challenge (increasing youth employment, summer recreation options, or school inclusion) and also identify resources and connections that often go untapped because they are not directly connected to the disability community.

In one of the most memorable conversations I attended, the town’s mayor actually offered to hire several students during the conversation. The evening resulted in three students with disabilities gaining summer employment through this connection.

In other conversations, participants have developed the framework for an inclusive summer recreation program, identified potential new employers for students in transition, and formed partnerships with local Chambers of Commerce and other business groups.



**Cara Sweeden poses before the prom with her mom (r) and sister, Amelia (l).**

(Continued on page 6)

## NEWS FROM **nsttac**

The National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC) has recently updated its website ([www.nsttac.org](http://www.nsttac.org)); please visit it. In late spring, NSTTAC posted a **reorganization of its evidence-based practice materials**. The practice descriptions, developed from quality intervention research, are now organized by the practice (the intervention) and the skill taught (what was measured). Restructuring these resources means there are now 63 evidence-based practice descriptions for practitioners and other professionals to use as they design instruction and identify transition services for youth. These resources and updates to the always growing *Super Table of Predictors of In- and Post-School Success* are located at the Evidence-Based Practices tab on the website. In addition, for topics associated with national secondary education initiatives, NSTTAC has developed four introductory documents regarding these initiatives' impact on secondary students with disabilities. NSTTAC pulled from various sources to synthesize "101" documents into the following:

- *College and Career Ready Standards and Secondary Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities*
- *High School Redesign and Secondary Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities*
- *Tiered Interventions and Secondary Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities*
- *Universal Design for Learning and Secondary Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities*

These documents are an initial effort to organize the conversation on these topics for NSTTAC's audience. The documents are located under "What's New" on the homepage. We welcome the feedback of DCDT members and other persons on their utility and ideas for future iterations of these products. Please contact **David Test** ([dwtest@uncc.edu](mailto:dwtest@uncc.edu)) or **Catherine Fowler** ([chfowler@uncc.edu](mailto:chfowler@uncc.edu)) if you have questions or comments.

Also under "What's New" is a new *Transition Team Leader Sustainability Toolkit* developed to assist state and local transition planning team leaders in effectively building teams and implementing their yearly transition team plans. Many transition teams are faced with high rates of turnover, and new team leaders frequently must start over as documents and team history are lost. The Toolkit is a collaborative effort to assist in sustaining team efforts. Please contact **Paula Kohler** ([paula.kohler@wmich.edu](mailto:paula.kohler@wmich.edu)) for questions and comments regarding this new Toolkit. Related to the issue of staff turnover, NSTTAC has also developed "Just In Time" resources for

what a new administrator and new teacher should know when entering the field of secondary transition. These lists of milestones and related resources were based on DCDT's Transition Specialist Competencies, as well as CEC's competencies for special education administrators. The *Just in Time: What State Agency Secondary Special Education Administrators Need to Know* and the *Just in Time: What Secondary Special Education Teachers Need to Know* are organized in a timeline format with competencies and related resources. These are also located under "What's New."

NSTTAC and the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities and the National Post-School Outcomes Center will be meeting with state teams on October 12, 2011, in Kansas City, in conjunction with the DCDT Conference. These are two separate events, so plan to register separately from DCDT's conference registration if you wish to participate in the **Mid-Year Check and Connect Cadre Meeting with State Teams**.




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(Parent Voice, continued from page 5)

One of the beauties of this community organizing tool—aside from the fact that a conversation costs virtually nothing and can yield incredible impacts—is that it can be used to address almost any challenge. My daughter's high school PTA has used it twice: once to gather community input on how the school can be a better neighbor and community resource, and another time to invite input from under-represented families about how well they felt the school was educating their sons and daughters.

Resulting from observations and documentation of multiple conversations, a new guide on how to conduct a community conversation has been created. *Launching Inclusive Efforts Through Community Conversations: A Practical Guide for Families, Services Providers, and Communities* is available through the University of Wisconsin–Madison's Waisman Center (<http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/naturalsupports/resources.php>).

Reading through the stories and examples can give school staff members, educational leaders, families, and other providers ideas on how all of us working together can harness the collective resources, relationships, opportunities, and experiences that can maximize real-world transition experiences for youth with disabilities. Here's to a great school year for all of us!

## SHARING RESOURCES AND EXPANDING NETWORKS



**Ashley McFall and Crystal Evans,**  
*VECAP Advocacy Co-Chairs*

The Vocational Evaluation and Career Assessment Professionals Association (VECAP) and DCDT have committed to continued collaboration in the field of career and transition assessment. Through this partnership and our work in the field, we understand the time constraints that practitioners face and the challenges they encounter when trying to expand their professional network and sift through the vast number of available resources and tools. VECAP is dedicated to advancing and improving the fields of vocational evaluation and career assessment and representing the needs of the professionals who provide those services.

To better support individuals interested in vocational evaluation and transition assessment, VECAP has embarked on several initiatives to improve communication and the sharing of resources. One such initiative is the **VECAP 3rd Thursday Educational Series**, a teleconference professional development opportunity offered every third Thursday of the month, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. EST. Registration, along with CRC and CVE credits, are offered at \$15 for VECAP members and \$20 for non-members. Information on upcoming sessions follows. For more on the Educational Series, contact Shawn Zimmerman ([shawn.zimmerman@drs.virginia.gov](mailto:shawn.zimmerman@drs.virginia.gov)) or check the VECAP website ([www.vecap.org](http://www.vecap.org)) for details on registration.

### Upcoming Sessions

**October 20** *Assess for Success: Part 1*, Pam Leconte EdD, CVE, Assistant Research Professor, George Washington University

**November 17** *Assess for Success: Part 2*, Pam Leconte EdD, CVE, Assistant Research Professor, George Washington University

**December 15** *PVE 2.0 (Professional Vocational Evaluator)*, John W. Lui, PhD, CRC, PVE, and Karen L. Pell, PhD, CVE

As another way to connect, VECAP would also like to share information on our March 2012 **15th National Issues Forum: Let's Create Something Together! Best Practices, Tools and Techniques for a Collaborative Assessment Process**. This conference is a great way to meet with like-minded professionals, expand your network, and exchange and learn best practices and techniques in vocational assessment and evaluation. Information on the Forum and Call for Presentations is provided in the box below. Check the VECAP website for more details.

Our Board would love to hear from you. Please visit our website for more information on our organization and membership. Also, stop by and visit with **VECAP President Marsha Legg** at our booth at the upcoming 2011 DCDT Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. We're excited to network!

### The 15th National Forum on Issues in Vocational Assessment

**Let's Create Something Together!**  
**Best Practices, Tools and Techniques for a Collaborative Assessment Process**

Pre-Conference: March 29, 2012

Conference: March 30–April 1, 2012

Hilton Hotel in San Bernardino, California

#### CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

Deadline: **October 31, 2011**

Go to [www.vecap.org](http://www.vecap.org) and select the "Proposal Submission Instructions & Application" link