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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings, DCDT,

I hope everyone is doing well. As I write, we are still digging out from the storm of the century here on the East Coast ... and yes, we are bracing for another one. Reflecting on the last year, I feel a sense of accomplishment for our organization. Fall 2009 brought us new partnerships and a fantastic conference in Savannah, where those partnerships were well represented. The **National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC)** was again onsite to provide a Mid-Year State Institute in conjunction with our conference. The partnership with NSTTAC offered state transition team members an opportunity to discuss state transition plans and to work with our national transition leaders. Our friends from **Vocational Evaluation Career Assessment Professionals (VECAP)** enhanced our strand on assessment through presentations by many of their members. Our organizations also sat down for a roundtable discussion about the differences between assessment in the educational and vocational worlds. The result was the establishment of a community of practice for transition and career assessment. Many DCDT members have signed on to be a part of this group, and I look forward to seeing the outcomes of their work. **Joanne Cashman** from the **IDEA Partnership** delivered a thought-provoking luncheon keynote address. Our collaboration with the IDEA Partnership and the **National Community of Practice on Transition** continues to blossom and have a profound effect on enhancing transition services for students with disabilities. We welcomed our newest partner, **Easter Seals**, to our DCDT family with a preconference, poster session, and closing roundtable session on the topic of accessible transportation.

We are currently finalizing our plans for the CEC Convention and Expo. Our opening

Board meeting will be on Wednesday evening; committee meetings will occur on Thursday and Friday morning. We encourage all members to attend these meetings and become active in these committees. The State Leadership meeting will be held Thursday evening. Our closing Board meeting will be Friday afternoon, with the general business meeting in the early evening, followed by our President's Reception Friday night. I hope to see everyone in Nashville! Please stop by to say hello. You will be able to find more details about DCDT events at the CEC convention on our website (www.dcdt.org) in the coming weeks.



As DCDT continues to move forward in keeping transition at the forefront of national educational agendas, we plan to continue these partnerships. We are currently collaborating with VECAP to provide a collaborative preconference session, *What Vocational Evaluators Need to Know to Collaborate with Special Educators to Improve Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities*, during the **VECAP 2010 National Issues Forum: "Finding Your Career Path Through the Lifecycle."** For more information on this event, or to register, please visit their website (www.vecap.org).

In October, we head to the Northeast for the first time to host a DCDT event in Mystic, Connecticut! Our Connecticut DCDTers are hard at work planning our 2010 conference, and we are currently identifying strands and possible presenters. We will also be continuing our partnership with NSTTAC, as they offer a 2010 Mid-Year Institute prior to our 2010 DCDT conference. VECAP will contribute to the tran-

(continued on next page)

(*President's Message*, continued from page 1)

sition assessment strand and is considering providing a pre-conference. As well, we are in discussions with Easter Seals to enhance our partnership by their presence in Mystic to continue our work towards accessible transportation options. For more information on the 2010 Conference, please continue to check our website. We hope to have the agenda set by the end of April. Details will be posted as they become available. I hope to see everyone in the beautiful northeast in October.

It has certainly been a pleasure serving as your national president the past year. I want to thank our members for their continual, tireless efforts in promoting outstanding transition

practices. Thank you to the Board members for their work and patience as we have begun and continued collaborating with other organizations. Last, thanks to those past presidents who have provided encouragement and advice as we have moved DCDT to new heights.

Sincerely,



Dale Matusевич
DCDT President 2009–2010

DCDT NEEDS YOU!

We encourage you to join and participate in our crucial and very important DCDT committees. Please join us at the CEC convention at the committee meetings that will be held in The Gaylord Opryland Hotel and Convention Center. Please check the DCDT website for days and times or contact committee chairs to become more involved!

Governmental Relations Committee

If you are a member of DCDT and have an interest in or wish to examine policy issues; develop appropriate responses to those issues; and influence local, state, provincial, and federal legislation—especially in the area of career development and transition—this is the committee for you! **To join or seek more information:** email Committee Chair **Donna Martinez** (dmartin336@msn.com).

Research Committee

This committee identifies research problems and issues as they relate to the career development and transition of exceptional individuals and formulates procedures to study and/or promote the resolution of these issues. Recommendations/activities proposed by this committee are submitted to the Board for review and approval. **To join or seek more information:** email Committee Chair **Renee Cameto** (renee.cameto@sri.com).

Human Rights and Cultural Diversity Committee

Members work on promoting activities in the area of human rights and cultural diversity; reviewing activities sponsored by DCDT to ensure that they promote human rights and address issues of cultural diversity; and identifying emerging national and international issues related to human rights and cultural diversity and the impact of these issues on the career development and transition of people with disabilities. **To join or seek more information:** email Committee Chair **Chauncey D. Goff** (Chauncey.Goff@mail.wvu.edu).

Transition and Career Assessment

The national need to provide guidance on the topic of transition and career assessment has resulted in the establishment of a “practice group” this past year. Stakeholders with diverse roles from across the country have indicated a need for a common language among professionals, identifying best practices and providing tips to the field. This practice group is an outgrowth of the National Community of Practice on Transition, sponsored by the IDEA Partnership (www.ideapartnership.org), and VECAP has partnered with DCDT to lead the work of this group. **To join or seek more information:** email DCDT Vocational Evaluation Representative **Stacie Dojonovic** (Stacie_Dojonovic@fcasd.edu).



Think College! Offered at a Discount

Think College! by Meg Grigal and Debra Hart is being offered at a 10% discount by Brookes Publishing Co. To receive your discount, you must reference savings code **DCDT2009** at the Paul H. Brookes website (www.brookespublishing.com).



IDEA PARTNERSHIP AND DCDT: Messages and Tools to Advance Transition

Joann Cashman and Jane Razeghi

For the last few years, DCDT has been a key partner among 55 national organizations that come together over issues that they share. Through the IDEA Partnership at the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), an Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) investment in building collaboration across groups, transition has been brought to national attention. We have learned that many other important issues are connected to transition under IDEA, and we continue to offer new opportunities to build support for our work in states, districts, and buildings. Below, we provide some information and invite you to join DCDT members in learning more through a set of *virtual mentoring* opportunities that will begin this spring.

The Messages

DCDT members know that statutory and regulatory requirements are necessary but not sufficient to ensure effective transition services. Much about successful transition depends on the settings in which transition is implemented, the participation of individuals in general and secondary education, and inter-agency coordination linking youth with adult agencies. DCDT has worked with a wide array of IDEA Partnership organizations to shape a message of transition within a broader agenda that is driving the way decision makers think about education. This broader framework, **P-16/P-20**, is guided by the understanding that working toward college graduation and/or career wage employment begins in preschool. The P-16/P-20 frame offers new opportunities to look at the way we define the transition process in special education and how our history in transition contributes to the broader discussion. Many organizations have committed to advancing this message, but the ones joining to lead this effort include National Association of Secondary Principals (NASSP), National Education Association (NEA), and Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE).

The Tools

DCDT has been active for more than 5 years in the National Community of Practice (CoP) on Transition. One important CoP effort has been to build stakeholder-developed tools that can be used at the state, local, and building levels to promote transition. These tools are developed by individuals representing many roles, including transition coordinators, teachers, principals, family members, and youth. Two important tools are currently available and several more will be available soon. Sample these tools now at the following website (www.ideapartnership.org).

- **The User Guide to the NSTTAC Evidence Base on Transition** includes a PowerPoint Presentation, a Pre-

sender Manual, a stakeholder-developed “plain English” glossary, and more. Choose the NSTTAC Guide from the User Guide menu on the right side of the home page.

- **Dialogue Guides: People Make the Difference** are designed to be used with a document by Mary Morningstar, DCDT Vice-President, University of Kansas. These 11 Dialogue Guides were created by attendees at the National CoP on Transition meeting in May 2009. Access the guides by clicking on *Topical Guides* under the *Dialogue Guide* menu in the right-hand menu on the homepage, then choose *Secondary Transition*. While you are there, check out additional Dialogue Guides that are of interest to you.

Next Steps: How You Can Get Involved!

DCDT and the IDEA Partnership intend to hold virtual mentoring sessions through web meetings and phone consults to help you use the tools effectively and actively shape the development of the P-16/P-20 messages. These sessions will begin in early spring. This is an opportunity for those “doing the work” to have a voice in shaping national policy. Over 80 DCDT members have already registered to become local reps to the IDEA Partnership. We encourage every DCDT member to join them by sending your name, location, and phone in an email (partnership@nasdse.org). Please put DCDT Member in the message line.

Join DCDT in Mystic, CT

for
Transition in the 21st Century

SAVE THE DATE!



October 13–15, 2010
Mystic Marriott Hotel
Mystic, CT

Registration and
program available
in May

For more information, contact:
Dr. Cindi Nixon (cnixon@fmarion.edu)

YOUTH VOICE: Focus on Mental Health and Self-Determination



Rachel Kallem

Just like disability adds a beautiful uniqueness to a person, every student with a disability has his or her own unique transition story. My transition was difficult, and I feel I experienced many unnecessary obstacles merely due to a lack of education regarding mental health disabilities.

I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder when I was 17 years old, a junior in high school, and this diagnosis coincided with a tumultuous period in my life, which without question negatively impacted my high school career and life in general. While my grades did not suffer, *I* did. I felt lost under the label of “bipolar,” and I did not know how my disability really affected me or my ability to learn. I knew what bipolar disorder did on the surface, how it caused attention difficulties in class and my inability to complete homework due to my severe depressive episodes, but I did not know that there were accommodations available that might help me regain some of my academic success.

Since I had always been a bright student and worked very hard to earn and maintain good grades, I think my teachers turned a blind eye to my struggles. I had always been an exemplary student, and I believe everyone thought I could just “get it together” and maintain the status quo. Sadly, the concept of “pulling yourself up by your own bootstraps” was utterly and completely internalized by my school.

I can honestly tell you I am not sure how I graduated high school. I was noncompliant with my medications during my junior and senior years, and in addition, I was battling a severe eating disorder. Not only was I physically wasting away, but also emotionally I was a shell of a human being.

I have to shoulder my share of responsibility, though, which has been a significant part of the healing process. I did not actively seek help or assistance from counselors, teachers, or my parents during the majority of this difficult time. My parents had intervened numerous times when I fainted in class and had manic episodes that left my family reeling, but I never wanted their help. I refused to acknowledge that there was a problem, and I was blind to the fact that there was a solution to my problem. I would only benefit from help when *I* asked for it, a hard lesson to learn for a stubborn teenager.

I think helping students cultivate their own advocacy skills and educating them about their disability is crucial when you help students learn how to help themselves. I was merely diagnosed as bipolar without much explanation of what that meant, not just in general, but to me as an individual. This led to many years of confusion and hurt. I viewed myself as inherently broken and unworthy, and only later under the tutelage of fabulous mentors and my parents did I come to realize that while bipolar was a part of me, there was more to Rachel than a label from the *DSM-IV*. I was taught how to monitor my symptoms and identify my triggers, and I was

empowered through education on how *I* could improve my condition. When I received a diagnosis, I lost control and thus developed a crippling eating disorder, but through education and heightened understanding about mental illness I was able to take charge of my life and my future.

Merely

Rachel Kallem

My battle scars are old prescription bottles,
diagnoses forced upon me time after time,
But now I know who I am, I know where I've been,
this body, this brain, this heart, they are mine.
I am proud, I am strong, I am not my disease, it may
be a part of me, but never my whole,
I am ready to live, I am ready for life, I embrace each
day and accept my soul.
For I finally see where Bipolar Disorder ends,
where I begin, and this has set me free,
I am finally ready to take charge of my life, to take
charge of my future, to take charge of me.
My fate is my own, my sorrows, my joys,
all part of the mosaic that is my being,
I finally realize that I can manage this chaos, and
that very notion is so very freeing.
I wake up each day and am ready for challenges, ready
to struggle, ready to fight,
But I know there is joy, I see all the love, I know
I deserve happiness and things will be alright.
So moving forward I climb, I will have my successes,
I will have my triumphs, I have my free will.
I am proud, I am strong, I am a whole person,
so much more than merely “mentally ill.”

Importance of the Youth Voice

Youth with disabilities are great information resources for everyday transition-related topics. Unfortunately, when conferences hold planning sessions, the youth voice is often overlooked. DCDT encourages presenters to include a youth in their presentation when at all possible. Please contact **DCDT Youth with a Disability Representative Paul Fogle** (paulfogle@gmail.com) to obtain contact information for youth-led organizations on the local, state, and national levels or to brainstorm ways to incorporate the youth voice in your transition initiatives.

EASTER SEALS PARTNERS WITH DCDT ON TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ROUNDTABLE



Easter Seals Project ACTION (ESPA) hosted a 1-day roundtable for youth with disabilities on October 28 in Savannah, Georgia, as a pre-conference to the 15th International DCDT Conference. The goal was to identify solutions and develop a set of actions to remove barriers and address needs related to transportation access for youth with disabilities.

Two panel presentations—one moderated by **Lacy Pittman**, National Council on Disabilities, and the other moderated by **Dr. Judy Shanley**, Department of Education—were held. During the event, youth with disabilities, parents, and the disability and education communities examined the current state of transportation for these youth, considered ways to increase transportation access in communities, and developed a set of specific actions to address those needs.

James E. Williams, Jr., president and chief executive officer of Easter Seals, noted, “For years, education and employment have been viewed as integral to successful transition toward independent living in adulthood. Transportation is literally the link to schools, the work place, and every other destination in community life.”

In response to a question on making transportation options for youth with disabilities a reality, including recommendations for resources and specific actions, participants supplied many suggestions, of which 16 received more than 80% of participants’ votes. They are listed below in rank order:

1. Share information that will help facilitate multisystem passes for youth with disabilities to enable them to use multimodal services.
2. Provide parent education and training in youth transportation options and issues.
3. Build community awareness of the needs and perspectives of people with disabilities.
4. Set standards for high quality, safe, and accessible transportation for these youth.
5. Enhance transition planning and activities that educate students and parents early, beginning in elementary school, regarding transportation choices—especially practical opportunities and resources in the community.
6. Implement travel-training programs for students with disabilities.
7. Enhance regional transportation coordination and collaboration;
8. Share information to assist in promoting multimodal transportation signage and navigational aids and ensure that information on transportation choices is easily available on the Web.
9. Teach students self-advocacy skills.

10. Increase awareness and knowledge among the general public of accessible transportation programs and technical assistance.
11. Develop public/private partnerships for greater funding and resources associated with accessible transportation for youth.
12. Expand consumer choice programs with a people-first view.
13. Create multimodal systems with connections among metropolitan, regional, rural, inter-county, urban, and suburban accessible transportation options.
14. Involve centers for independent living in the youth transition process in local communities.
15. Develop sustainable, person-directed mobility management programs.
16. Work with civic, transportation, and land-use planners to ensure utilization of universal design principles.

As part of the event, ESPA collaborated with **WVSA ARTs Connection (WVSA)** in an experiential learning process to understand how youth with disabilities view transportation. Young artists with disabilities were invited to participate and express their thoughts on the meaning of transportation in their lives through three distinct artworks—a textural painting, a quilt, and a digital photo collage. Older adults from the **Easter Seals Greater Washington Baltimore Region’s Inter-Generational Center** in Silver Spring, Maryland, participated by taking digital photographs of their views on transportation access. The art exhibit, “A View From Within—What Transportation Means to Me,” was showcased at the roundtable, and selected works are being presented to various agencies to increase awareness regarding the importance of transportation resources for youth with disabilities. ESPA is now building on the conference results to develop and implement the top-rated recommendations in partnership with the education and disability communities.



Art piece from the experiential learning process.

PARENT VOICE: Leadership and Youth

Beth Sweeden, *Parent Representative*

At a recent statewide parent leadership training for families of transition-age youth in my state, we showed the short video *I'm Tyler*. Tyler is an active high school student who talks about his experiences in band, martial arts, drama, Boy Scouts, and academics. In fact, the video is part of his Eagle Scout project. Mid-way through the video, he reveals that he also has cerebral palsy, an anxiety disorder, a learning disability, and other health issues. (Watch the video for free at imtyler.org to see how he cleverly accomplishes this plot twist.)

Parents then discussed what affected them most about Tyler's message. Of course, the importance of looking past a disability to the person's abilities and interests was key. But another important point Tyler made was that he connected with lots of supportive people in his community who could help him make his dreams a reality. And most of the people he mentioned—his martial arts sensei, his band instructor (who calls himself an “equal opportunity yeller”), his drama coach, his Scout master, and his math teacher—aren't connected to the world of disability or special education. They are, however, people who saw Tyler's strengths and abilities, and who saw him as a leader.

What are we—as parents, educators, advocates, friends—doing in our own lives to promote leadership opportunities and experiences for our youth with disabilities? In many high schools, “leadership” is reserved for the top echelon performers in academics and sports, but so many leadership opportunities in our communities go untapped, and our students with disabilities could be part of them.

Here are a few ideas to get you started in supporting youth with disabilities as they explore their leadership potential:

- Ask students about their interests and how they currently spend their time. If they like computers, find a way they could help older adults at a senior center or young children at a school or after-school program.
- Obtain a copy of your school's extracurricular offerings and discuss with youth options that might match their interests.
- Encourage youth to volunteer for specific activities in the community: at the Humane Society, in an elementary school, at a hospital, or at a special event like a benefit run or neighborhood festival.
- Invite youth to be part of leadership teams: Student Council, city or county youth boards, your school improvement team.
- Introduce youth to people in the community who could include them in a volunteer capacity at their organization.
- Assume that every student can be a contributor, not just a recipient.

For a more comprehensive list of recommendations for teachers, families, and community members on how to foster youth leadership in students with disabilities, go to this website (<http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/naturalsupports/pdfs/YouthLeadershipTipSheet.pdf>). This leadership guide was developed from interviews with 34 young adult leaders with disabilities in Wisconsin who provided tips, insight, and guidance on how to encourage and strengthen leadership in youth with disabilities.

CHAPTER NEWS: TEXAS

Vickie J Mitchell, *President, Texas DCDT*

The annual **Texas Transition Conference** was held February 15–17, 2010, in Austin. This conference focused on the information needs of transition specialists, vocational coordinators, agencies, and students with disabilities and their families. Nationally known speakers included **Dr. Ed O'Leary** and **Erin Riehle** of Project SEARCH. The Texas DCDT Chapter had a large presence at the conference, including Jeanne Patrick, Region VI Education Service Center, who is a legacy member of the Texas DCDT Chapter and one of the conference founders and planners; the Texas DCDT annual membership meeting; and a membership table in the vendor area to spread the word about the benefits of the organization and recruit new members.

Due to the size of the state, the DCDT board several years ago decided that regional workshops would provide educators with greater accessibility to information. Following the success of the first regional Transition Workshop in October

2009 in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, the board is planning a **second regional workshop** to be held **October 7, 2010, at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls**. In addition to the workshop sessions, participants will have the opportunity to learn about one of the premiere postsecondary education support programs for students with autism, developed by **Dr. Mille Gore**, a professor at MSU and a Texas DCDT board member.

Jeanne Patrick, Education Service Center Region VI Consultant, has announced that she is retiring. Her reputation concerning her expertise in transition and work-based learning is known statewide, and she will be sorely missed. Jeanne will be moving with her husband to their retirement home in the Ozark Mountains of Arkansas. Fortunately, through the use of technology, Jeanne will continue to be as involved as possible.





VOCATIONAL EVALUATION: Perspectives on Considering a Professional Association on Career Assessment



Fran Smith, VECAP President

Many years ago, I began my first career as a vocational evaluator. Since this was a fairly new profession, I was amazed at the richness of resources and information that I could explore on topics such as career assessment, work sample development, job analysis, job placement, interest and aptitude testing, and career development (to name a few). Practitioners were thirsty for professional resources and information that could inform their practice in the delivery of evaluation and assessment services to individuals with disabilities. These individuals often struggled to re-enter the job market, to determine their career abilities, and to navigate the maze of work requirements after a long break from working. Some needed a different assessment experience—one that offered a process that considered multiple ways to determine and demonstrate career potential. As a budding new vocational evaluation and career assessment practitioner, I turned to a professional association that shared a depth of understanding surrounding these issues and a breadth of resources on best practices.

I have a colleague who began her career assessment professional experience in the private sector before moving on to high school. She began by managing construction apprenticeship and craft training programs. She moved on to work with welfare mothers, dislocated workers, and low-income families before assisting high school students with and without disabilities with career development. All of the programs with which she worked required that career assessments be used in the career decision-making and planning process, but not always appropriately. Over the years, with the help of people who were wiser and more experienced, she learned the basic principles of career assessment, such as never basing a decision on one test result and providing hands-on work experience for students and clients who have limited exposure to role models and work. She remarked, “I wish I had discovered the Vocational Evaluation and Career Assessment Professionals (VECAP) at the beginning of my career rather than towards the end” (personal communication, M. Podmostko, February 6, 2010).

VECAP has been supporting the professional interests of career assessment professionals since 2003. As an organization, VECAP strives to keep its members apprised of the latest research and best practices and tools. Its mission is to advance and improve career assessment services that individuals seek and provide. Many of our members are practitioners who “identify, guide, and support the efforts of persons served to develop and realize training, education, and employment plans as they work to attain their goals” (VECAP, 2010). Our members are educators, certified vocational evaluation special-

ists, private practitioners, career development teachers, career assessment providers, transition specialists, and consumers. Many have decades of front-line experience in the fields of vocational evaluation and assessment, have training and education in the field, and have maintained national certifications.

In these digital times, VECAP believes that its web portal serves as one of its most important resources. We have added a number of resources that can assist a practitioner, such as links to recommended online assessment tools, access to a collection of work sample instructional guides and materials, guiding documents on recommended levels of career assessment and functional vocational evaluation, newsletter and journal publications, and links to seminal works in the field. We also offer our members a social network ([VECAP20.ning.com](http://vecap20.ning.com)) where they can discuss tools, strategies, and assistive technologies.

Our premiere bi-annual career assessment conference, the **National Issues Forum (NIF)**, has been held since 1985 and often brings together practitioners from across the world. The NIF includes invited experts and featured speakers, as well as practitioner presentations and papers. This year, we celebrate our **14th NIF**, “Finding Your Career Path Through the Lifecycle,” in Oklahoma City, April 8–11, 2010 (http://vecap.org/index.php?/site/nat_iss_forum). Nationally acclaimed speaker **Brian Kurth** will kick off our event with the opening keynote address. Mr. Kurth is the founder and owner of Vocation-Vacations® (<http://www.vocationvacations.com>). He is described as a “sought-after speaker who can open minds to new career and lifestyle possibilities and how to turn those possibilities into realities” (VECAP, 2010). VECAP views Mr. Kurth’s address as a key message for conference participants in this age of challenging economics and changing career transitions.

The NIF also results in a collection of publications that have been captured as the *National Forum Issues Papers* at 13 forums over the past 25 years. Most of these documents have been bound collections of printed papers, but VECAP is converting them to digital files that will become both a part of our website resources and will be added to the digital repository of the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM). Currently, NCRTM has been adding digital editions of past copies of the VEWA journals—another seminal source of evidence-based practices in the field.

VECAP is committed to expanding its reach and influence as the premiere organization on career assessment and vocational evaluation. Currently, we have active partnerships with the Council for Rehabilitation Education (CORE), the National Career Development Association (NCDA), the Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT), and the Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association
(continued on next page)

(*Vocational Evaluation*, continued from page 7)

(VEWAA). We value our growing partnership with DCDT and look forward to continued opportunities to participate in national conferences in 2010 and 2011. In July, VECAP will again provide a feature session at the NCDA conference on global certification in San Francisco.

National partnerships are important to VECAP and bring opportunities to influence policy and decision-making on best practices in the field. In 1992, we were instrumental in bringing together the collective assessment philosophies and interests of 11 national associations as the Interdisciplinary Council on Vocational Evaluation and Assessment. DCDT was one of those member organizations. These shared voices articulated a national position paper that formalized a set of seven guiding principles and recommended competencies for vocational evaluation and assessment. VECAP promotes these best practices to its members and infuses them into its mission and goals. They have become important principles that have guided practice and the continued articulation of other definitions, such as *functional vocational evaluation*. Recently, the state of Florida began including the VECAP definition of functional vocational evaluation in statewide training (http://www.project10.info/files/STC_12.15.09_1_.ppt#506,96,Florida Education: The Next Generation DRAFT).

We are also working with the IDEA Partnership (<http://www.ideapartnership.org>) as one of 55 organizations seeking

to “promote IDEA’s participatory framework for advancing research and policy to practice.” VECAP is diligently working with members of the DCDT leadership on efforts of the growing *National Community of Practice on Transition and Career Assessment*. VECAP Advocacy Co-Chairs Dr. Pam Leconte and Ashley McFall, President-Elect Marsha Legg, and Communications Chair Joan Kester spearhead these efforts. We are also a supporting member of the National Taskforce on Universal Design for Learning (<http://www.advocacyinstitute.org/UDL/index.shtml>) and have highlighted one of our national position papers on the importance of UDL in vocational evaluation and assessment. Fran Smith also serves as co-moderator of a newly formed IDEA Partnership, National Community of Practice on UDL (<http://www.sharedwork.org>).

While these are challenging times for us all, they are also times of opportunity. We see opportunities in our growing national position, the continued value of vocational evaluation and career assessment, our partnerships with others, and our connections with each of you. Consider becoming a member of this exciting professional association that specializes in improving and expanding the fields of vocational evaluation and career assessment.

Reference

VECAP. (2010). *About us: Mission and goals*. Retrieved February 8, 2010, from http://vecap.org/index.php?/site/aboutus_categories/C77

DCDT SHOWCASE SESSION AT 2010 CEC CONVENTION

Policies, Tools, and Effective Practices for Transition Planning and Services

An overview of current transition policies related to Indicators 13 and 14. Presentation includes tools and strategies for ensuring compliance with policies and evidence-based practices in student planning and development, interagency collaboration, family involvement, and program structures to improve postschool outcomes. Goals are to

1. understand federal transition legislation and policies related to I-13 and I-14,
2. learn about new tools and strategies for use with state and districts to ensure compliance with federal policies, and
3. review current practices that have shown evidence of effectiveness in critical transition areas.

Speakers*: David Test and colleagues, National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center; Charlotte Alverson and colleagues, National Postschool Outcomes Center

*Each speaker will also host a follow-up session to provide more detailed information and training related to this important topic!

2009 PAT SITLINGTON EMERGING RESEARCHER AWARD WINNERS

DCDT bestowed the first Pat Sitlington Emerging Researcher Award during our 2009 international conference in Savannah, Georgia. Before her untimely passing, Patricia Sitlington was a recognized research pioneer and beloved colleague in the field of transition, a DCDT former past-president, and a committed graduate student advisor. This year’s competition featured poster presentations from 14 graduate students from throughout the United States. The winner received a \$250.00 cash award, waiver of the 2011 International Conference fee, and an entry of his or her study brief in the journal *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*.

Congratulations to winner **Song Jo** of Texas A&M University and finalists **Lena Landmark** of Texas A&M University and **Dawn Roe** of the University of North Carolina–Charlotte. The awards committee offers our heartfelt thanks to all the poster session participants for investing their efforts and time in preparing outstanding presentations. We also extend our gratitude to the faculty advisors who encouraged students’ participation, and for the valuable contributions made by many caring members of DCDT in the development of this award and seeing it through to fruition. We could not have done it without you!

Sherylin Fisher, Past-President
Renee Cameto
Vincent Harper