

STANDING COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY NEWSLETTER

QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER

SUMMER
2011

Letter from the Chair...

**NEWSLETTER
CO-CHAIRS:
SARAH LAUX &
DALE O'NEILL**

As I sit in my office pulling together my thoughts for this inaugural letter from the Chair, there is a faint drizzle of rain outside my window yet the sky is ablaze with the setting sun. I find this such a perfect situation in which to write, as in some ways it symbolizes the end of the 2010-2011 academic year and the impending start of the 2011-2012 academic year. Just as the weather reflects what an amazing time of year it is, this newsletter serves as a reflection of what an amazing time it is to be a part of ACPA and the Standing Committee on Disability (SCD).

Members of the SCD Directorate have been busy since the 2011 Convention. Plans are already in place to submit two proposed institutes for the 2012 convention. The SCD is collaborating with the Deaf Culture Initiative for a proposed institute around disability identify, culture, and inclusion. Matthew Gilsbach, 2012 Convention Access Chair, is taking the lead on behalf of the SCD on this initiative. Additionally, Shammah Bemudez, Co-Coordinator Research Subcommittee, is taking the lead on coordinating a proposed institute around universal design. Those interested in contributing to either institute are encouraged

to reach out to Matthew or Shammah for further information.

Two new members have been added to the Directorate to contribute as co-webmasters. Please help me welcome Darren Gallant and Sean Moundas to the Directorate and thank them for contributing to the SCD. Andrew Beverly, recently back from his honeymoon, will be continuing with the Directorate in his role as Co-Coordinator with Matthew Brislin for Marketing and Outreach.

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Letter from the Chair...

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Additionally, Megan Wetzel has taken over the role of State and International Accessibility Liaison, Michael Kuvalic has joined as Co-Coordinator of the Research subcommittee (formerly scholarship), and Al Souma has joined as the AHEAD Liaison and as a faculty representative. Val Erwin, Jaci Jenkins-Lindberg, Karen Myers, Sarah Laux, and Dale O'Neill have continued on in their Directorate roles. For those of you that want to learn more about the directorate, please visit the SCD website at <http://www2.myacpa.org/scd-home>.

Finally, Katie Stolz, our outgoing Chair is continuing to serve a vital role with the Directorate, contributing

to multiple sub-committees and assisting me in getting up to speed.

There are many new initiatives in formative stages presently. One is a four part series on universal design, written by four current members the SCD representing the perspectives of a disability resource administrator, a faculty member, an individual with a disability, and a student affairs professional. Another is expanding the resource list that is currently available through the SCD Website. A third is surrounding a proposal submitted to the Governing Board regarding increasing access and inclusion of individuals with

disabilities. As these initiatives gain momentum, more information will be shared future newsletters. Just as the rain (which has since stopped) nourishes the plants growing outside my window, this newsletter is but one resource for sharing disability related information for ACPA members. I encourage you to share a copy with your colleagues, and talk to them about the opportunities that the SCD and that ACPA offer. Wishing you all the best for the summer days still to come.

Sincerely,

Melanie Thompson
Chair, ACPA Standing
Committee on Disability

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Syracuse University to Open Disability Cultural Center in Fall 2011

Matthew Sheehan, Syracuse University

Most student affairs practitioners (hopefully) understand what a disability services office does in higher education. Fewer probably know what a disability cultural center is, or understand how it is different from a disability services office. One of the reasons may be the fact that the Disability Cultural Center is the first of its kind – a center that will be led by designated professional staff within student affairs. For those of you who are familiar with Syracuse University's history as a model of inclusive education, it is most appropriate for them to model the way for the realm of student affairs as a whole. As a 2010 graduate of their higher education Masters program, who had some involvement in this process during my second year, it has been incredibly fulfilling. In 2007, the Chancellor's Task Force on Disability made a series

of recommendations which included the establishment of a disability cultural center. From the perspective of disability as a form of diversity and identity, proponents envisioned the center to apply the benefits of other centers such as for women, persons of color, and the LGBT community, as well as respective allies. We know that these locations serve as more than just buildings for students to spend time in as a designated place of personal comfort, or hubs of activity for developing relevant events, programs, resources, and outreach toward their designated culture. They are essential toward improving and enlightening campus climates and environments. In the instance of disability, by making disability part of the vocabulary its stigma can be addressed. When I arrived at Syracuse

University in 2008, I became involved with a student organization called the Beyond Compliance Coordinating Committee, a group of (primarily) graduate students that advocated for disability awareness on campus. By the spring of 2010, my BCCC colleagues and I had presented to members of the Chancellor's Task Force on Disability the rationale on moving forward with the disability cultural center, as well as met with the Vice President of Student Affairs. In collaboration with two faculty members of the Disability Studies program, an agreement was reached to hire a graduate assistant for the 2010-2011 school year to take responsibility for the planning of the cultural center. The graduate assistant developed a formal proposal in January 2011 with the assistance of a newly formed Disability

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Syracuse University to Open Disability Cultural Center in Fall 2011

Matthew Sheehan, Syracuse University

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Cultural Center Advisory Board. Their proposal sought input and feedback across a variety of campus constituents. With the support of the Chancellor, the university approved of the cultural center this spring, including allocating funding for a center director and physical space on campus for the center to utilize.

Since it had been over a year since graduating from Syracuse, I wanted to hear more from the students who were key players in establishing the disability cultural center. One of the e-mail responses that I received, from a member of

the Advisory Board and BCCC, talked about community : “we basically set out to think about the sorts of things that would create community, knowing that this is a huge undertaking...to create a safe space to allow conversations and relationships to form, to build up the disability and disability allied community at Syracuse.” In higher education, we talk about partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs. Student involvement and learning outside of the classroom are also important at numerous colleges and universities. Certainly this news illustrates a campus partnership being initiated,

and presents great potential for students’ co-curricular experiences, but each of these things have developed from said community. Kudos.

For the news release, please visit

<http://insidesu.syr.edu/2011/05/17/disabilities-2/>. The

Syracuse University magazine’s spring 2011 issue contains more information about the history of Syracuse’s inclusion, as well as on the BCCC. It can be accessed at

<http://sumagazine.syr.edu/>.



The Deaf Culture Initiative

Megan Wetzel, Webster University

The Deaf Culture Initiative (DCI) was founded in 2011 as a way to provide a safe zone for sign language users at the ACPA National Convention and any related events. We aim to become a subculture of ACPA and the Standing Committee of Disability. DCI also plans to disseminate useful resources and information about Deaf culture and d/Deaf issues through workshops, webinars, and articles throughout the year.

At the 2011 National Convention in Baltimore, over 12 people participated in the DCI Social Event. Three presentations were related to Deaf culture and d/Deaf issues. We are very

thrilled for this fabulous turnout for our first year!

DCI's next big move is to develop a DCI Institute Proposal for the National Convention in Louisville, KY. The DCI Institute Proposal needs to be made up of at least three programs related to Deaf culture, d/Deaf issues, resources for the d/Deaf, etc. We are searching for people who would be interested in creating this proposal. Please share with us your ideas, experiences, and knowledge about issues and resources out there for the d/Deaf! If you are interested in participating (either developing the proposal or

presenting), please contact or point person for the DCI Institute, Matthew Gilsbach at matthew.gilsbach@uvm.edu.

To subscribe to the Deaf Culture Initiative Listserv, you will need to visit the ACPA Membership e-mail subscription page. When you log into myacpa.org, click on "manage my e-mail subscriptions" under myRECORD section, and subscribe to the Deaf Culture Initiative listserv!"

We look forward to hearing from you! Have a great summer and good luck with the start of the school year!

SCD NEWSLETTER CALENDAR:

FALL ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINE: AUGUST 15, 2011

WINTER ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 15, 2011

SPRING ARTICLE DUE DATE: FEBRUARY 15, 2011

COMMENTS CONCERNING THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY'S NEWSLETTER?

PLEASE CONTACT NEWSLETTER CO-CHAIRS: SARAH LAUX AT SARAH.LAUX@GMAIL.COM OR DALE O'NEILL AT DMONEILL@UNO.EDU

Contributors to the Summer Edition of the Standing Committee on Disability Newsletter:

Melanie Thompson

Chair of the Standing Committee on Disability

Melanie Thompson is the 2011-2013 Chair of the Standing Committee on Disability with ACPA and Director of the Center for Access-Ability Resources at Northern Illinois University. Ms. Thompson's areas of interest include diversity, social justice, universal design, and educational leadership. In addition to ACPA, Ms. Thompson is active involved with AHEAD and NASPA. Questions and comments may be addressed to Melanie at mthompson3@niu.edu.

Matthew Sheehan

Author of Syracuse University to Open Disability Cultural Center in Fall 2011

Matt Sheehan is a postgraduate intern in the Division of Student Affairs at Western New England University, where he collaborates with the university's Student Disability Services office. He has been a member of ACPA since 2009; serving on SCD's Scholarship Subcommittee and is also a member of the Standing Committee for Graduate Students & New Professionals. He can be contacted at msheehan05@gmail.com.

Megan Wetzel

Author of the Deaf Culture Initiative

Megan Wetzel is a Community Director in Housing and Residential Life at Webster University, St Louis. She holds a Masters in College Student Personnel from Bowling Green State University. Megan co-presented about best practices for working with individuals with hearing loss at ACPA 2011 Baltimore. Megan enjoys educating people about abilities and serving as a resource/ally for those with disabilities. She can be contacted at meganwetzel32@webster.edu.