

STANDING COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY NEWSLETTER

ACPA – College Student Educators

QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2011
EDITION

Letter from the Chair...

Hello SCD,

I am pleased to congratulate Melanie Thompson as our newly-elected Chair for SCD! Melanie brings to the standing committee a wealth of experience of providing disability services and has extensive knowledge surrounding topics of accessibility on campus. During our open business meeting at the convention, I will officially step down, and Melanie will move into the Chair role for the upcoming two years.

Plans for the upcoming 2011 Annual Convention in Baltimore are progressing. We have exciting news that the *Allies for Inclusion: The Ability Exhibit*, which was developed at Saint Louis University, is now a confirmed part of this year's convention. We continue to work with individuals coordinating space use in order to finalize details for this SCD-hosted exhibit. Also in the works is a handout for interviewers and interviewees participating in C3 this year's career placement services. A document will soon be available to inform ACPA members of proper disability-related etiquette during the interview process. Another helpful convention resource regarding accessibility is located at

<http://convention.myacpa.org/program/access.php> and discusses ways that convention presenters can be more inclusive for all audience members. At the convention, our SCD award winners will be recognized. Congratulations to Tom Hanley from McKendree University who was awarded the SCD *Disability Ally Award*, Katie Dyke from Hagerstown Community College who was awarded the *Disability Service Provider Award*, Judy Kolar at DePaul University who was awarded the *Disability Specialist Award*, and Holly Pearson from Iowa State University who was awarded the *Disability Leadership Award*. Thank you to all who took the time to nominate a colleague in the field or to be part of the selection process, which was coordinated by much hard work on the part of Val Erwin. Also, regarding awards, Dale O'Neill will be representing SCD as part of the awards selection committee on the Paul Hart Fund Scholarship Selection Committee, given out by the Standing Committee for LGBT Awareness.

We look forward to seeing SCD members, both old and new, at the open business meeting next month in Baltimore. This year our open business meeting will take place on Tuesday,

NEWSLETTER
CO-CHAIRS:
SARAH LAUX
AND DALE
O'NEILL

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Letter from the Chair...

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March 29, 2:30-5:00 p.m. in the Hilton Baltimore-Holiday 2 room. Attending this meeting is an excellent way to learn more about SCD and how to get involved, in addition to networking with other SCD colleagues. Please also mark on your calendar the SCD reception, which will take place 8:00-9:30 p.m. in the Hilton Baltimore - Holiday 3 room, also on Tuesday, March 29. ACPA is hoping for record attendance

at this annual convention so please remember to encourage friends, students, and colleagues to register and plan on attending. We look forward to seeing you next month and to working together as a standing committee to —Be more in B'More!”

Sincerely,

Katie Stolz

Chair of the Standing Committee on Disability

Disability Microaggressions in Higher Education

Danielle P. Ryan and Alyse M. Scura, Teachers College, Columbia University

Over the past decade, there has been an explosion of literature in the psychology field that focuses on the detrimental impact of aversive racism (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000) and its expression through racial microaggressions (Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007; Sue, Capodilupo, et al., 2007; Sue, 2010). It is now clear that every marginalized group in the United States is the target of a specific form of microaggressions that send denigrating messages and

maintain the group's position of disempowerment (Sue, 2010). People with disabilities, who make up the largest minority group in the United States (Olkin, 2002), experience covert expressions of discrimination through disability microaggressions (Keller & Galgay, 2010).

Sue, Capodilupo, et al. (2007) defined racial microaggressions as “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate

hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group” (p. 272). Microaggressions in educational settings are particularly harmful because they can affect the recruitment, retention, and promotion of students (Sue, 2010, p. 235). Although it is illegal to overtly discriminate against people on the basis of their disability (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990), the prejudices and stereotypes about people with disabilities have not improved

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(Bruyère, 2000). To combat disability microaggressions in institutions of higher learning, professionals must become aware of the prevalence and detrimental impact of disability microaggressions.

Disability Microaggressions

With the legal mandate to provide equal access to education, there has been an increase in enrollment of students with disabilities in institutions of higher learning (Rao, 2004). Similarly, programs to provide accommodations for these students have grown. Although the legal requirement to provide accommodations provides students with hypothetical access to equitable education, fulfilling legal obligations is not enough to ensure that students with disabilities are able to be a part of a supportive learning environment that encourages them to succeed. Students with disabilities view post-secondary education as a pathway to independence and a greater

quality of life through obtaining better employment and earning a higher annual income (Wilson, Getzel, & Brown, 2000). In addition, a recent study carried out in the United Kingdom highlights the importance of a higher educational level because it cushions the psychological impact of disability (Mandemakers & Mondon, 2010). Thus, it is crucial that students with disabilities have the opportunity to flourish in educational settings that will foster the development of future disability rights leaders.

Despite the legal requirements of providing access and the fact that more students with disabilities are enrolling in colleges and universities nationwide, it is questionable as to whether improvements in service delivery have improved the underlying campus climate (Wilson, et al., 2000). How is a hostile learning environment created and maintained? Inequities in education are not the result of overt discrimination;

inequities result from the unintentional, subtle, and invisible microaggressions that disadvantage marginalized groups (Sue, 2010, p. 17). Disability microaggressions in higher education may appear in several forms, including: on an interactional level between the faculty and/or staff and students, in the curriculum, and in the environment (Sue, 2010, p. 240). For instance, in her research on clinical psychology training programs throughout the United States, Olkin (2002) noted that there are very few courses concerning the experiences of people with disabilities (p. 130). Students with disabilities may experience this omission as a microaggression at the institutional level of ableism, which is delivered via the curriculum. Omitting the disability community from multicultural studies sends the message that people with disabilities are an invisible population and unworthy of

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academic study. As a result students with disabilities may be discouraged from attending these programs or they may be discouraged from choosing dissertation topics studying the experiences of people with disabilities (Olkin, 2002).

Environmentally, students with physical disabilities may experience microaggressions when they have trouble accessing parts of the campus due to stairs or narrow doors. They most likely have to use separate back entrances to buildings (Olkin, 1999). Another possible environmental microaggression may be the scarcity of professors and administrators with disabilities, which sends the message that people with disabilities are not welcome or may not rise to high levels within the college or university (Sue, 2010, p. 26). Furthermore, students with disabilities may be precluded from spontaneously attending campus events because

of the need to arrange for interpreters or other accommodations ahead of time. The messages that students may receive from these environmental microaggressions are that people with disabilities are a burden to the school and are not worth the time, money, and effort for integration (Keller & Galgay, 2010).

On an interpersonal level, the power dynamics of United States culture play out in all interpersonal interactions, so it is likely that many educators and administrators in positions of power send unintentional ableist messages to students with disabilities through microaggressions. It is imperative that educators and administrators understand how ableism impacts their own worldview. Faculty and administrators must realize that ableist biases purport that it is ~~etter~~ to walk than roll, speak than sign, read print than read

Braille, [and] spell independently than use a spell-check" (Hehir, 2002, p. 3). No one in the United States is immune from receiving these messages. Professionals working with students with disabilities must become aware of their own assumptions and biases toward students with disabilities. In an institution of higher education, faculty attitudes toward students with disabilities contribute greatly to the success of these students (Rao, 2004). In fact, biases expressed by professors that go unacknowledged may be more damaging than those expressed by peers because the professor is in a position of power to define reality (Sue, Capodilupo, Nadal, & Torino, 2008). Educators and administrators who are not aware of the dominant culture's negative attitudes toward people with disabilities may be unintentionally creating a hostile learning environment for

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students with disabilities.

Specific Domains of Microaggressions

Keller and Galgay (2010) found evidence for eight types of microaggressions that people with disabilities experience. Of these eight microaggressions, the five that follow are especially applicable to interpersonal interactions in institutions of higher education.

Denial of Identity

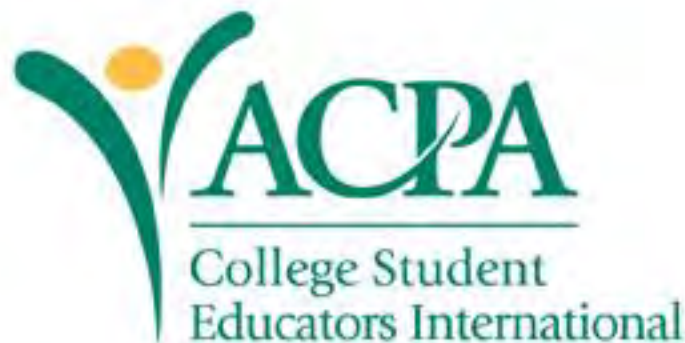
This microaggression occurs in two forms. The first—the denial of personal identity—occurs when a professor acknowledges a student's disability but disregards another salient aspect of his or her identity (Keller & Galgay, 2010). For

instance, repeatedly asking a Latina student with a physical impairment about her experience with her disability (while disregarding her individual attributes and other cultural identities) is sending the message that the only salient aspect of her identity is her disability. On the other hand, a teacher may deny the complete identity of a student by underemphasizing or invalidating the disability experience. For instance, a professor may claim to treat a student with a learning disability the same as other students in the classroom, but the professor is thereby ignoring the student's disability and minimizing the impact it has on the student's involvement in the classroom. Keller and Galgay

(2010) refer to this kind of denial of identity as the denial of disability experience. Like educators, professionals in disability services offices may also minimize or overemphasize the impact of a student's disability on his or her identity. Administrators who are sensitive to the impact of an individual's disability and also respect the student's complete identity are likely to create a welcoming atmosphere for students with disabilities.

Denial of Privacy

People with disabilities must regularly deal with the lack of respect for privacy in regards to their disability. For students with visible disabilities, it is common for strangers to inquire about the nature of their



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disability. Olkin (1999) describes a common scene: —get to the checkout counter at the grocery store. The clerk, seeing me on crutches, asks, “What did you do to yourself?” (p. 80). Students with invisible disabilities also experience a denial of privacy through the expectation of self-disclosure. Many times students do not want to disclose their disability to professors for fear of discrimination (Rocco, 2001). Educators must respect students’ privacy and allow a student to disclose the nature of his or her disability only if he or she is comfortable in doing so.

Even the environmental setup of a college campus can force a student to disclose information involuntarily about his or her disability. A female focus group participant described her need to use the elevator to enter the school’s health services (Keller, Galgay, Ryan, Scura, & Pili, 2010a). To access the elevator, she was expected to explain why she needed the elevator to the staff. A male

student within the same focus group described his frustration over —“constantly having to disclose” his disability status to different individuals within the same school:

[My physical and medical disabilities were] mentioned in several components of my admission packet. And then I got to school and [my fieldwork placement] was Street Homeless Outreach, which involved [...] a lot of climbing and it’s very uneven. It’s hard—I’m pretty good at walking, but it was a lot of walking. It was miles and miles. And I brought this up to somebody, and they said, —“Oh, you didn’t let us know.”

Both students in these examples expressed distress and embarrassment at being repeatedly forced to disclose their disabilities. While disclosure is crucial to allow students with disabilities to obtain necessary accommodations,

administrators would do well to understand the psychological toll that the frequent denial of privacy has on students with disabilities.

Patronization

Another expression of a disability microaggression in the classroom would be a teacher professing great admiration for how a student has —“overcome” his or her disability. Keller and Galgay (2010) refer to this type of microaggression as —“patronization.” The following excerpt depicts the cognitive and emotional reactions of an individual who constantly receives these expressions of false admiration:

I HATE [it] when people tell me how well I’ve overcome my disability. To me, it’s suggesting that I am separate from my body. But my body is

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Danielle P. Ryan and Alyse M. Scura, Teachers College, Columbia University

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me and I am my body. This includes my disability. It is part of who I am and a part of what makes my body beautiful and a part of what makes me a beautiful person. My disability CANNOT be separated from who I am. I cannot overcome my own body. (Shain, 2002, as cited in Campbell, 2008, p. 159)

Keller, Galgay, Ryan, Scura, and Pili (2010b) conducted another focus group in which several participants who were deaf and/or hard of hearing described experiences of patronization. One member spoke about a frequent interaction in which she tells a hearing person that she cannot hear. The hearing person will then use over-the-top gestures to ask if she uses sign language. When she responds affirmatively they often say, “Oh, that’s so wonderful! How amazing!” As she explained, “They think that deaf people are so great just because they’re out there in the world walking around” (Keller et al., 2010b). This woman experienced being told it is wonderful to be able

to communicate as a put-down. It sends the message that nondisabled people admire people with disabilities for carrying out the daily tasks of living because people with disabilities should be pitied. Microaggressive interactions that patronize students with disabilities can make students feel unwelcome in institutions of higher learning. In addition to helping students with disabilities access accommodations and educational resources, disability services administrators must also work to create a more inclusive and accepting campus environment for the students they serve.

Spread Effect

Microaggressions labeled “spread effect” are the result of an individual assuming a student’s disability impacts functioning beyond the realm of the disability (Keller & Galgay, 2010). For instance, an educator may ascribe lower intelligence to a person who is hard of hearing or ascribe superior hearing ability to a student who is blind. One woman described experiences of being ascribed both higher and lower intelligence on the basis of her hearing status:

People have their perceptions of me, depending upon their own exposure/backgrounds. Some people think I’m not very smart or that I can’t do things.... You know, sometimes they think, “Oh, you’re very intelligent. You have a great language.” So it just depends on where I am. (Keller et al., 2010b)

The message of the spread effect microaggression is that having a disability must impact all areas of functioning and that a person with a disability must be abnormal in every aspect of his or her life.

Second Class Citizenship

A microaggression labeled “second class citizenship” occurs when the rights of people with disabilities for equal access are determined as unreasonable, unjustified, and bothersome (Keller &

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Galgay, 2010). The following comment comes from a woman talking about a local magazine that lists upcoming events:

Sometimes they advertise that if you want to go and you need an interpreter, please get in touch with this site and give us a week's notice.... And I think that's nice of them to provide that kind of access. But then I have to let them know a week in advance. Why can't I just decide, last minute, to go? Wake up one morning and say, "By, I feel like doing something special or how about going to a museum?" But I can't because I

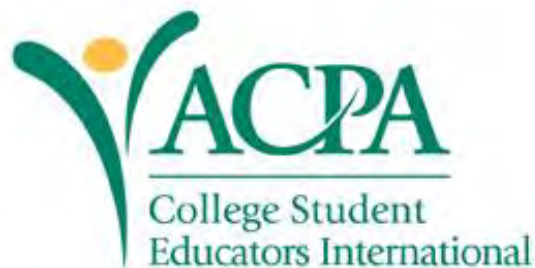
have to reserve the interpreter a week in advance. (Keller et al., 2010b)

Another student spoke about an interaction he had with a disability services office when he asked for a different type of accommodation:

I wanted to see the English. The exact English because I began to feel like I was missing out on information when it went through a translation into ASL [American Sign Language]. And their attitude was that I had been asking for too much!...And so, I was told, "You know, there are limits. Your experiences in life are necessarily going to be limited." And really

point-blank said because I was deaf, I was limited. (Keller et al., 2010b)

Both of these participants expressed frustration and distress over the limits others placed on their access to entertainment and education. By being prevented from spontaneously attending an event and deemed undeserving of an accommodation, these individuals felt like second-class citizens. These microaggressions send the message that people with disabilities are a nuisance, are a burden to society, and should be satisfied with whatever accommodations they are given. These examples provide insight into how disability services and student affairs offices can make



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improvements in how they help students with disabilities. For instance, administrators could make it easier for students to spontaneously attend school-sponsored events by always including the necessary accommodations.

Conclusion

It is not enough for an institution of higher learning to offer accommodations for its students with disabilities. These accommodations may provide

students with access to education, but the microaggressions students with disabilities face on a regular basis serve to deny these students an educational experience that is equal to their nondisabled peers. Just as racial microaggressions can instigate difficult dialogues on race (Sue & Constantine, 2007), disability microaggressions can prompt difficult dialogues on biases toward students with disabilities in the classroom. Working toward an inclusive campus environment will increase contact between students

with and without disabilities, which may improve the attitudes of the nondisabled toward people with disabilities (Barr & Bracchitta, 2008). Institutions of higher learning can play an important role not only in empowering students with disabilities, but also in educating nondisabled individuals and creating an inclusive society.

Ally Corner

Training Wheels Off!

Tom Hanley, McKendree University

I recently met with a group of students inquiring about inclusion and accessibility on our campus for a group presentation they are giving for their speech class. The students were directed to me by a colleague on campus who read about the Disability Ally Award I received from ACPA and felt I would be a good resource for the students. I had a great meeting with the students and, afterwards, I reflected on how everything has changed since I became an advocate for inclusion and developing welcome learning environments.

My interest in this work began when I enrolled in a Masters in Higher Education Administration program. I had the good fortune to be assigned to a new faculty member at Saint Louis University, Dr. Karen Myers, an extraordinary instructor and advisor. Through her enthusiasm for disability services, I began my advocacy and now several years later I find that perhaps it is time to demonstrate my own enthusiasm to promote inclusive, welcoming environments.

While working and taking graduate courses

Training Wheels Off!

Tom Hanley, McKendree University

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at SLU, it had been relatively easy to engage inclusion and to talk the talk, but now employed at a new position at another university, I am separated from the supportive environment to which I have become accustomed. And while my new colleagues and peers are very supportive of inclusion, I realize what surely everyone comes to realize at one time or another; a time to put theory to action.

Meeting with the students brought home for me once again the reason why I became involved with inclusion advocacy. It is not just about informing others about this important topic but also, and most importantly, to encourage

students to broaden their perspectives, to incorporate inclusion into the mainstream of their daily lives. When demonstrating Universal Instructional Design with faculty, there is a concerted effort to underscore the need to minimize the need for a student advocate for disability; fostering effective and accessible syllabi, offering opportunities for students to demonstrate proficiency based on their learning style and ability, etc. The same holds true for students. It becomes, at least in my mind, equally important to impress on students the value of inclusion, allowing inclusion to be a normal and everyday occurrence.

Deaf Culture Initiative Launched at Convention 2011

Alice A. Mitchell

At this year's convention and beyond, we'll be working to further build a d/Deaf subculture within ACPA. Part of that work will be a face-to-face meeting and chat among those ACPA members who sign (ASL, PSE, and other forms of signing). Fifteen ACPA members (!) have already identified themselves as those who use sign language. These members are d/Deaf, have family members or friends who are deaf, work at a college or university with a large d/Deaf population, or for some other reason have learned to use sign language in a relaxed, conversational way.

This group will be meeting in person for the first time at this year's convention. Come join us at the informal meeting before convention opening! On **Sunday, March 27 we'll be at the Hilton Baltimore, Chase room at 4:30 PM**. We'll meet there briefly, then go somewhere nearby to get a snack of some sort before the convention opening at 6 PM.

Want to be included or know someone who may wish to have more information? Contact Alice Mitchell (foundina chair. SCD) at amitch@umd.edu.

2011 ACPA National Convention

Baltimore, Maryland

SCD Meetings

ASSIGNED TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Saturday, March 26

Standing Committee on Disability Directorate I Meeting
Building/Room: Hilton Baltimore - Peale BC
Date/Time: 3/26/11 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Sunday, March 27

Standing Committee on Disability Directorate II Meeting
Building/Room: Hilton Baltimore - Key 12
Date/Time: 3/27/11 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM

Monday, March 28- None Announced

Tuesday, March 29

Standing Committee on Disability Open Business Meeting
Building/Room: Hilton Baltimore - Holiday 2
Date/Time: 3/29/11 2:30 PM - 5:00 PM

Standing Committee on Disability Reception
Building/Room: Hilton Baltimore - Holiday 3
Date/Time: 3/29/11 8:00 PM - 9:30 PM

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be more
confident
in baltimore.

2011 ACPA National Convention

Baltimore, Maryland

SCD Sponsored & Co-Sponsored Programs

SCD Sponsored Programs

*Click on the program titles for more information

Monday, March 28

"A Spectrum of Knowing: Understanding Autism Now"

Submitted by: Harper and Harper-Rogers

Time: 9:00am – 10:00am

Location: Baltimore Convention Center 319

"Project Access: International Disability Culture"

Submitted by: Rigler and Harms

Time: 10:30am – 11:30am

Location: Baltimore Convention Center 337

"Involving students in cross-cultural programming"

Submitted by: Beverly and Ayers

Time: 4:30pm – 5:30pm

Location: Hilton Baltimore – Key 9

Tuesday, March 29

"A Disability Identity Development Model: College Students with Disabilities"

Submitted by: Myers, Laux, and Murdock

Time: 9:00am – 10:00am

Location: Hilton Baltimore - Key 5

SCD Co-Sponsored Programs

*Click on the program titles for more information

Monday, March 28

Co-sponsored with the Commission for Social Justice Educators:

"The Impact of Hearing Privilege on College Campuses"

Submitted by: Beverly, Place, and Jones

Time: 3:30pm – 4:30pm

Location: Baltimore Convention Center 342

Tuesday, March 29

Co-sponsored with the Commission for Global Dimensions of Student Development:

"Achieving Orite (Equity): Comparing US and New Zealand Disability Services"

Submitted by: Luna-Hammer, Volbrecht, and Brown

Time: 10:30am – 11:30am

Location: Baltimore Convention Center 342

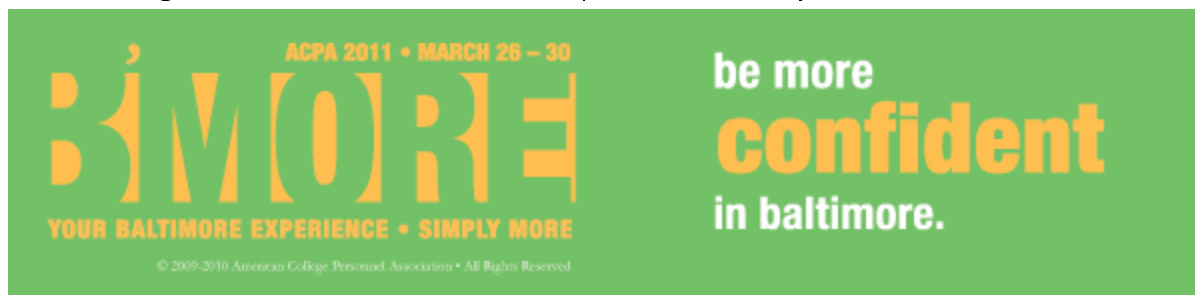


2011 ACPA National Convention

Baltimore, Maryland

Additional Must-See Disability-Related Programs

Program Title	Date/Time	Location
*Click on the program titles for more information		
Trading Spaces: Universal Design and Higher Education	Monday, 3/28, 9:00am	Baltimore Convention Center - 314
Keeping Parents in the Picture	Monday, 3/28, 9:00am	Baltimore Convention Center - 328
Neurodiversity as a multicultural competency for clinicians and student-affairs professionals.	Monday, 3/28, 10:30am	Baltimore Convention Center - 315
Conduct Issues for Students With Disabilities: Current Practices — Emerging Issues	Monday, 3/28, 12:00pm	Baltimore Convention Center - 347
State/International Division Sponsored Program: Students with Asperger's Syndrome: Supporting Them Inside and Outside the Walls of Residence Halls	Tuesday, 3/29, 10:30am	Baltimore Convention Center - 320
Mentoring Students with Disabilities: Results from a Mentorship Program	Tuesday, 3/29, 12:00pm	Baltimore Convention Center - 319
Student Affairs Professionals Successful Support of Students with Asperger's Syndrome	Tuesday, 3/29, 12:00pm	Baltimore Convention Center - 322
Remote Text Services – Serving Students with Hearing Loss	Tuesday, 3/29, 3:00pm	Baltimore Convention Center - 328
Wheelchair Athletes: Power Soccer and the Collegiate Experience	Wednesday, 3/30, 10:00am	Baltimore Convention Center - 316
Educating Students with Psychiatric Disabilities: Needed Practitioner Skills and Competencies	Wednesday, 3/30, 10:00am	Baltimore Convention Center - 341
Successful Transitions for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders	Wednesday, 3/30, 10:00am	Hilton Baltimore – Key 4
Unspoken Identity: Best Practices for Working with Individuals with Hearing Loss	Wednesday, 3/30, 10:00am	Hilton Baltimore – Key 5



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

Danielle P. Ryan and Alyse M. Scura

Authors of Disability Microaggressions in Higher Education

Danielle P. Ryan, is a Master's of Education candidate in Mental Health Counseling at Teachers College, Columbia University. She will be presenting further information on the microaggressive experiences of people with disabilities at the 2011 AHEAD Conference and the 2011 Diversity In Research and Practice conference at Teachers College, Columbia University. She can be contacted at dpr2101@columbia.edu.

Alyse M. Scura, is an EdM candidate in Mental Health Counseling at Teachers College, Columbia University. She is a current employee of YAI National Institute for People with Disabilities in the Levittown, NY residence, and is a Mental Health Counseling intern at FECS, PROS Possibilities program, in Copaque, NY. She will be presenting at the 2011 AHEAD Conference and the 2011 Diversity In Research and Practice conference at Teacher's College, Columbia University. She can be contacted at ams2289@columbia.edu.

Tom Hanley

Author of Training Wheels Off!

Tom Hanley, Assistant Registrar at McKendree University, is a disability advocate and ally. He is the most recent recipient of the SCD *Disability Ally Award*.

Alice A. Mitchell

Author of Deaf Culture Initiative Launched at Convention 2011

Alice Mitchell has held student affairs positions since 1978 and joined the University of Maryland College Park staff in 2005 where she currently directs the Testing Office. As an ACPA member since 1980, Alice has held numerous elected and appointed leadership positions in ACPA including Founding Chair of the ACPA Standing Committee for Disability.

SCD NEWSLETTER

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SPRING NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION: FEBRUARY 2012

**Submission deadlines for the 2011-2012
SCD Newsletters will be announced
after the Convention.**

**QUESTIONS 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**