

# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

This month's topic: *Postsecondary Education and Employment*

## Upcoming Statewide Events

### Save the Date: FREE Youth Transition Conference

**Date:** 1/10/14, 8am-4pm  
**Location:** W.R. Davies Center,  
UW-Eau Claire  
**For More Information:** Tamara  
Biddle at [tammib@wsti.org](mailto:tammib@wsti.org) or  
(608) 745-5489

### Dispute Resolution Options

FREE Training Seminar  
presented by the staff of the  
Wisconsin Special Education  
Mediation System (WSEMS) on  
tips for resolving disputes with  
your child's school before they  
become crises.

**Date:** 1/15/14, 1:30-3pm  
**Location:** CESA 6, Oshkosh

**Date:** 1/22/14, 1:30-3pm  
**Location:** CESA 5, Portage

**For more Information:**  
[http://www.wsems.us/  
workshops/calendar-jan.html](http://www.wsems.us/workshops/calendar-jan.html)

### FREE Parent Transition Night

**Date:** 1/22/14, 5-8pm  
**Location:** CESA 4, West Salem  
Join the Transition Improvement  
Grant (TIG) & Wisconsin  
Statewide Parent Education  
Initiative (WSPEI), in  
collaboration with the Division  
of Vocational Rehabilitation  
(DVR) & Aging Disability  
Resource Center (ADRC) for an  
informational event.

**For More Information:** Brenda  
Swoboda at [brendas@wsti.org](mailto:brendas@wsti.org)  
or (608) 786-4841

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT

### The Old College Try

By *Matthew Zellmer*

Succeeding in school often  
becomes a matter of routine. For  
students with disabilities,  
managing and using  
accommodations is often a vital  
part of that success. The more  
self-reliant a student is, the  
better positioned they will be for  
post-secondary education and/  
or employment. This month's  
story is one of preparation,  
roadblocks and a rebound.

The student and her mom  
prepared for postsecondary  
education by embodying Joyce  
Epstein's second strategy for  
effective family engagement:  
Communication. For more  
information about these strategies:  
go to: <http://tinyurl.com/p2lfmeh>

The young lady has a hearing  
impairment which requires  
Cochlear implants, and it was  
initially a struggle in high school  
to obtain the technology, adjust  
to it in class and properly  
educate the staff on how it

impacted her learning. Her IEP  
team learned and grew together  
and it paid off, as she ended  
high school on the Dean's List.  
She also took advantage of  
advocacy and leadership  
opportunities afforded to her by  
community agencies (as  
recommended in Epstein's sixth  
family engagement strategy,  
Collaborating with the  
Community), so it seemed she  
was as ready for the next level as  
could be.

Still, her college decision  
plagued her. She was  
considering two schools- one  
close to home and one far away.  
Which school was right for her,  
and would the grant money she  
had been promised be ready in  
time?

The decision she made led to a  
long and winding road with  
bumps along the way. Her first  
school proved a good overall  
experience but also a difficult  
adjustment. There was a  
paperwork snafu, which she  
used all of the self-advocacy  
skills she acquired in high school  
to try to resolve. Ultimately, she



decided to return home to pursue  
further education and  
employment opportunities.

She learned some useful lessons  
on her journey, such as to take  
your time in making a college  
decision. When asked what other  
advice she would have for young  
people, not trying to rely on  
please others emerged as a  
theme. She says she is more  
assertive now because she  
knows the path to get where she  
wants to go. Her mind is "free"  
and she knows she is capable of  
whatever she sets her mind to.  
After this long journey, the young  
lady has secured a job she is  
excited about and is awaiting  
acceptance to a local university.  
She is definitely poised to do  
better the second time around.

## RESEARCH TO READ

### Employers' Perceptions of the Benefits of Workplace Accommodations: Reasons to Hire, Retain and Promote People with Disabilities

Hartnett, H. P., Stuart, H., Thurman,  
H., Loy, B., & Batiste, L. C. (2011).  
*Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*,  
34(1), 17-23.

Retrieved 12.13.13 from:  
[http://iospress.metapress.com/  
content/c71182x6jk016586/](http://iospress.metapress.com/content/c71182x6jk016586/)

#### Abstract:

Despite the legal mandates of  
the ADA, people with disabilities

continue to be underrepresented  
in the workforce. While there  
does exist an established body  
of research devoted to the hiring  
of individuals with disabilities,  
information on retaining  
individuals with disabilities in the  
workplace has not been  
reflected as often in the critical  
discourse devoted to disability  
and employment practices. This  
article analyzes data from an  
ongoing study conducted by the  
Job Accommodation Network  
(JAN), a service of ODEP  
(Department of Labor

1004062R), showing that  
employers benefited from  
hiring, retaining, and  
accommodating individuals  
with disabilities. Benefits  
derived by employers include  
the ability to retain quality  
employees, increased company  
profitability, and an avoidance  
of costs associated with hiring  
and training a new employee.

## Upcoming Statewide Events

**Wisconsin Transition Conference**  
Attend the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Wisconsin Transition Conference to hear from state and nationally known speakers, learn about transition-related agencies and businesses, and network with professionals and parents.

**Date:** February 19-21, 2014

**Location:** Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells

**For more information and to register,** visit <https://www.edevents.org/conferences/3/wisconsin-transition-conference/speakers>

**Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (WESP-DHH) 2014 Family Conference**

Registration is now open! Our theme this year is: "Renew, Re-energize, Relax."

**Date:** March 7-9, 2014

**Location:** Olympia Resort and Conference Center, Oconomowoc.

**To register,** please go to: <https://classic.regonline.com/builder/site/?eventid=1325312>

**For more information** regarding the conference schedule, please go to:

<http://www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/wesp/>

**Save the Date! Collaborative Leadership Forum: Preserving Early Childhood (PEC)**

Join us at the 15<sup>th</sup> annual Preserving Early Childhood Collaborative Leadership Forum for inspiration, practical details, networking and more!

**Date:** March 19 & 20, 2014

**Location:** Holiday Inn Hotel & Convention Center, Stevens Point, WI

## RESEARCH TO READ

(Continued from page 1)

In addition to these benefits, providing accommodations in order to retain employees is shown to improve organizational culture and climate, as well as fostering a sense among all employees that employers recognize both the value of the individual worker as a human being, and the inherent social benefits of creating and sustaining an inclusive workplace.

### The Role of Postsecondary Education in the Path from High School to Employment for Youth with Disabilities

Fleming, A. R., & Fairweather, J. S. (2012). *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 55(2), 71-81. Retrieved 12.13.13: <http://edwp.educ.msu.edu/ead/hale-happenings/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Fairweather-Rehabilitation-Counseling-Bulletin-article.pdf>

**Abstract:**

Youth with disabilities lag behind their peers in participating in postsecondary education, which adversely affects employment options and career earnings. Yet little is known about factors affecting participation.

Particularly problematic is the relative importance of disability-related factors—the primary focus of special education and services—and traditional predictors of college going, such as parental education, economic resources, and academic achievement in high school. This study found that for youth with disabilities, the traditional predictors of college going are more important than disability-related factors for enrolling in universities; disability-related factors are slightly more

important for enrolling in postsecondary vocational education. A discussion of implications for service planning and implementation is presented.



## PARENT AGENCY:

disabilityrights WISCONSIN

Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW) was founded in 1977 as the protection and advocacy agency for all citizens in the state of Wisconsin. DRW is part of a national system of federally mandated independent disability agencies, but DRW is completely independent of government in order to be free of any conflicts of interests which would undermine their capacity to advocate on behalf of people with disabilities.

With offices in Madison, Milwaukee and Rice Lake, DRW helps people across Wisconsin gain access to services and opportunities through its advocacy and

legal expertise. The overriding goal is always positive change that will improve the lives of people with disabilities and impact society. DRW supports the right of each person to live in dignity, to work and to attend school in the mainstream of society.

DRW serves consumers while embodying the core values of diversity, dignity, independence, accessibility, inclusion, human rights and liberation. DRW's mission is accomplished when people with disabilities and their families are empowered to exercise and enjoy the full extent of their rights and to pursue the greatest possible

quality of life.

DRW's staff can support and counsel consumers and their families regarding abuse and neglect, long-term care, SSI and Medicare, special education and many other concerns. By providing a wide range of quality services, DRW has forged a solid reputation in communities throughout the state as a go-to resource for people with disabilities.

For more information on the agency and to find the DRW office that serves your area, please visit <http://www.disabilityrightswi.org>

## FEATURED ONLINE RESOURCES POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

**Opening Doors to Postsecondary Education:** Check out the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's newly redesigned resource booklet for students, parents and schools on everything they need to know about preparing for, succeeding, and getting accommodations in college or technical school. Complete with activities and worksheets so students can learn as they go along. Download the complete PDF file: <http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/files/sped/pdf/tranopndrs.pdf>

**Think College:** A project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston, this website is designed especially for families of youth with intellectual disabilities. Get information on specially designed postsecondary programs around the country to find the right one for your child. [www.thinkcollege.net](http://www.thinkcollege.net) spawned other sites like it through many schools, including [UW-Madison](http://www.uw-madison.edu)

**National Center for Secondary Education & Transition:** The National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) coordinates national resources, offers technical assistance, and disseminates information related to secondary education and transition for youth with disabilities in order to create opportunities for youth to achieve successful futures. NCSET is headquartered at the [Institute on Community Integration](http://www.instituteoncommunityintegration.org) in the University of Minnesota's College of Education and Human Development. Visit <http://www.ncset.org/> for a plethora of resources geared toward families and youth.

**Scholarships for Students with Disabilities:** Explore a variety of scholarship options for students with disabilities: <http://www.spinabifidaassociation.org/site/c.evKRI7OXloJ8H/b.8031517/apps/s/content.asp?ct=11766081>

**Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR):** The statewide agency which helps people with disabilities develop Individualized Plans for Employment after high school. Families and youth should begin working with DVR two years prior to graduation to begin to explore job and career opportunities that may be of interest. To find the DVR office nearest you, go to: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/locations/>

**Job Accommodation Network:** This online clearinghouse provides youth, families, employers, and other professionals with a vast array of resources. Visit <http://askjan.org/> for definitions of accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, a searchable database of kinds of accommodations for specific disabilities and fact sheets on how to appropriately ask for them and/or provide them to employees.

**Going to Work Video Series:** Watch six Wisconsin youth with disabilities and their employers share their inspiring stories of successful transitions from school to employment in this five-part video series. Go to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and search "Wisconsin Youth First" to view.

**Employment Network:** An online community for consumers, families and professionals to access employment resources, register for informational workshops, share experiences and collaborate to promote employment for people with disabilities. Newly redesigned under the direction of [InControl Wisconsin](http://www.incontrolwisconsin.org), the Employment Network has many exciting new features. To join go to: [http://employmentnetworkwi.org/?xg\\_source=msg\\_mes\\_network](http://employmentnetworkwi.org/?xg_source=msg_mes_network)

## Upcoming Statewide Events

### Save the Date! Collaborative Leadership Forum: Preserving Early Childhood (PEC)

Join us at the 15th annual Preserving Early Childhood Collaborative Leadership Forum for inspiration, practical details, networking and more!  
**Date:** March 19 & 20, 2014  
**Location:** Holiday Inn Hotel & Convention Center, Stevens Point, WI  
**Who should attend:** Early childhood leaders from schools, child care, Head Start, home visiting and other related programs and services.

### 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Autism Society of Wisconsin Conference

Hear from prestigious speakers, engage in valuable networking and visit the large exhibitor hall.  
**Date:** April 24-26, 2014  
**Location:** Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells  
**For more information and to register:** <http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e8dbvdhv8eafd0ab&llr=tdgpmwkaab>

### Circles of Life Conference

Join us for this family-oriented, diverse conference and receive a wide range of information, network with families and visit the many exhibits  
**Date:** April 24-25, 2014  
**Location:** Marriott West, Madison  
**Registration open soon at:** <http://www.colwisconsin.org/>



## WI FACETS Phone Workshops

**Registration for all phone workshops:** Contact Sandra McFarland at 877-374-0511, smcfarland@wifacets.org or on line at [www.wifacets.org](http://www.wifacets.org)

### Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports

**When:** 1/8/14, 12-1 PM  
**Presenter:** Jennifer Grenke & Marlene Gross-Ackeret, WI PBIS Network

### Introduction to Special Education

**When:** 1/9/14, 12-1pm  
**Presenter:** Matthew Zellmer, WI FACETS

### Introduction to Special Education

**When:** 1/10/14, 12-1pm  
**Presenter:** Don Rosin, WI FACETS

### WI Special Education Mediation System - Dispute Resolution Options

**When:** 1/13/14, 12-1pm  
**Presenter:** TBD

### Due Process: What Parents Need to Know

**When:** 1/15/14, 12-1pm  
**Presenter:** Patricia Williams, DPI

### Introducción a la Educación Especial

**When:** 1/17/14, 12-1 pm  
**Presenter:** Martha Lechuga, WI FACETS

## SUPPORT GROUPS

### Urban & Autism Support Groups

**Where:** WI FACETS Milwaukee office  
**When:** 1/18/14, 11am  
**Topic:** What is Response to Intervention (RTI)?

### Grupo de Autismo

**Where:** WI FACETS Milwaukee office  
**When:** 1/25/14, 10 AM-12 PM  
**Tema:** Respuesta a la intervencion

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER

### Next month's newsletter topic: *The Importance of Engaging Families*

**There are two ways to submit contributions. Use either the online form at <http://bit.ly/WO9a39> or use the attached fillable PDF form for contributing articles, events, and resources.**

**Send the fillable PDF form submissions to [mzellmer@wifacets.org](mailto:mzellmer@wifacets.org)**

*Deadline for submitting contributions to each month's issue is by the 20th of each month at noon. For time sensitive training advertisements, the information should be sent a minimum of two weeks prior to the event date; ideally a month ahead of time.*

*Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to sources of family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles. Family engagement success or impact stories can be written at an individual or family level, classroom level, school building level, district level, county level, CESA level, etc.*

*Your submittal may not be in the final copy of the upcoming month's newsletter if it was in a previous month's email, the event date has passed, the web link doesn't work, or there is already an article in place. Articles and resources will be saved to be used for later newsletters. We reserve the right to edit contributions as needed.*

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*This month's update is provided by Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement.*



**WI FACETS website:** <http://www.wifacets.org>

**DISCLAIMER:** Inclusion of information in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training, and Support (WI FACETS), the Department of Public Instruction, the U.S. Department of Education, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**NOTE:** *If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, please contact:*

**Matthew Zellmer**, WI FACETS SPDG Research Coordinator at 414-374-4645 x203 or [mzellmer@wifacets.org](mailto:mzellmer@wifacets.org).

