



HIREGround

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

Information Relay with Partners

Volume IV, Issue 3, September 2016

Introduction

Welcome to HireGround! Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities produces this newsletter expressly for our Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) professional audience. We hope that these stories, best practices and practical tips will be of value to you as we continue our relationship and work with participants. Our goal is to achieve quality employment, independence and disability determination outcomes through our integrated services, partnerships and innovation.

Do you ever recall something from an earlier HG that you would like to access again? OOD has posted past issues online since January 2014. All are available both in PDF and in text versions at: ood.ohio.gov/About-Us/Media-Center/HireGround-Newsletter.



Disability Community Opportunities and Announcements

New VR Listserv Available: From the National Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision (NRTC) check out this new listserv for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) professionals. It's applicable to both BSVI and BVR staff. The purpose is to provide a forum for communication among VR professionals. To subscribe to the listserv, please email ashelton@colled.msstate.edu.

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Free VR Course and Updated Lesson Plans

CareerConnect has launched a new course called Maintaining Employment and Advancing in Your Career. This self-paced learning provides detailed lessons around maintaining work and moving up the employment ladder. The course includes five modules of 25 lessons. In addition to the new course, CareerConnect continues to offer more than 120 short and creative lesson plans that cover career exploration, money management, social skills, communication and work experience. These materials can be accessed on the CareerConnect website under Lesson Plans for Teachers and Professionals www.afb.org/info/living-with-vision-loss/job-seekers/lesson-plans-for-teachers-and-professionals/123

High-Volume Player and Headphones now Available for National Library Services Patrons

National Library Services (NLS) has developed a high-volume version of the digital talking-book machine for use by patrons who are hearing impaired. The player, which is paired with a headset, has an amplified volume up to 120 dB. It can be issued only by NLS and will bear a warning label. The high-volume feature only works with the set of stereo headphones that NLS provides.

To receive a high-volume player and headset, a patron must provide certification of hearing impairment by a physician or audiologist. Applications can be downloaded from www.loc.gov/nls/pdf/hvp.pdf.

Patrons may submit application with Parts I-III completed to the State Library of Ohio, Talking Book Program, 274 East First Avenue, Columbus, Ohio, 43201. Patrons can also contact the State Library of Ohio Talking Book Program for assistance by phone at 800-686-1531.

2017 Ohio Braille Challenge

Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually

Impaired, along

with the Braille Institute

of America, will host the First Regional

Braille Challenge for Ohio on Friday, March 3,

2017. The Braille Challenge is the only national reading and writing contest in braille for students who are blind and visually impaired. Regionals are open to students of all abilities, giving even emerging braille readers a chance to reach a personal best score. For more information on the event, or how you can get involved as a volunteer, sponsor or participant, contact Deanna Lewis at 888-234-7156 or braillechallenge@clovernook.org

Artist Spotlight: Concha Castaneda

Art has been the most deliberate form of communication for me since I could pick up a crayon. It was, and is, as natural as breathing, and I imagine it has been the same for artists throughout time. My interest and use of recycled materials to make art began as a result of poverty and continues in



spite of it! The question I always ask is, "How can I make something out of nothing," or more precisely, "How can I make something out of something that no one else wants or appreciates?" My deliberate use of recycled, non-traditional materials will hopefully communicate a new purpose and value to these items that would otherwise be destined to fill our landfills.

conchacastaneda.synthasite.com



When the moon is not part of my subject matter, cats become part of the paintings. Both the moon and cats are my constant companions.

Work Keys and ACT Tests and Reasonable Accommodations

By Dr. Barbara Wagner, Adult Division Director, Upper Valley Career Center

All Ohio adult career technical centers use WorkKeys as admissions tests. In Ohio, WorkKeys is also used as an alternative graduation pathway for K-12 and the Adult Diploma Program.

Some accommodations, such as enhanced lighting, special tables or chairs, and testing in a separate room do not require disability documentation. Written documentation is required for all other requests. If you are unsure or have other accommodations questions, call 800-967-5539.

Documentation must be within the last three years and come from the diagnosing professional. The document must establish the credentials of the evaluator, including information about licensure or certification, education and area of specialization. Additionally, it must meet these guidelines:

- States the specific disability as diagnosed;
- Describes the presenting problem(s) and history, including relevant educational and medical history;
- Describes the comprehensive assessments (neuropsychological or psychoeducational evaluations), including evaluation dates used to arrive at the diagnosis;
- For learning disabilities, must provide test results (including subtests) with standard scores and/or percentiles;
- For ADD/ADHD, must include:
 - Evidence of impairment, including presenting problem and diagnostic interview;
 - Evidence that alternative explanations were ruled out;
 - Results from valid, standardized, age-appropriate assessments; and
 - Number of applicable DSM-IV criteria and how they impair the individual;
- For visual, hearing, psychological, emotional or physical disorders, must provide detailed results from complete ocular,

audiologic or other appropriate diagnostic examination;

- Describe the functional limitations or impairment (e.g., adverse effect on learning and academic achievement) resulting from the disability, as supported by the test results; and
- Describe specific recommended accommodations and provide rationale explaining how these address the functional limitations.

Eligible and Ineligible Accommodations:

Sign language interpreters may be used to sign spoken instructions only.

When an examinee is unable to type responses using the keyboard, testing staff may mark responses as the examinee indicates the responses verbally. For business writing, every word must be spelled out by the examinee, including punctuation and capitalization.

The use of a testing aid, translation of test items, or interpretation of test items, other than those provided by ACT, is generally considered an ACT WorkKeys ineligible accommodation. ACT will not issue scores for examinees administered tests using such accommodations.



ACT Testing:

In addition to accommodations listed above, accommodations authorized by the ACT test coordinator for online test may include

extended testing time. If examinees need other accommodations, they must test using paper materials.

Ineligible Accommodations

Examples of ACT WorkKeys-Ineligible accommodations include the following: providing translation or interpretation of test items; using electronic screen readers; allowing the use of dictionaries with word definitions; or allowing the use of manipulatives or arithmetic tables.

To find a test center:

www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/taking-the-test/test-center-locator.html

Also encourage consumers to visit Ohio Means Jobs for practice tests:

jobseeker.ohiomeansjobs.monster.com/

Social Security Spotlight: Disabled Widow(er) Benefits

Under usual circumstances, widow(ers) or divorced widow(ers) may not receive benefits until age 60, and even then, they are reduced benefits. While losing a spouse brings its share of trauma, many people are unaware that if they have a disability, they may be eligible to receive full Social Security widow(er) benefits on the account of their husband or wife at age 50. This applies equally for a widow or widower who is/was caring for the worker's children. Benefits may be payable to their widow, widower or surviving divorced spouse with a disability if the following conditions are met:

- The widow(er) is between ages 50 and 60;
- The condition meets the [definition of disability](#) for adults; and

- The disability started before or within seven years of the deceased spouse's death.

Widows, widowers and surviving divorced spouses cannot apply online for survivors benefits. Instead, they should [contact Social Security immediately](#) at 800-772-1213 to request an appointment. For applicants who are deaf or hard of hearing, they should call the SSA TTY number 800-325-0778.

The application process goes faster if applicants complete an [Adult Disability Report](#) and have it available at the time of their appointment. Social Security uses the same [definition of disability](#) for widows and widowers as it does for workers.

Generally, you cannot get widow's or widower's benefits if you remarry before age 60. But remarriage after age 60 (or age 50 if you are disabled) will not prevent you from getting benefit payments based on your former spouse's work. And at age 62 or older, you may get benefits based on your new spouse's work, if those benefits would be higher.

Best-Practice Spotlight: How CILs Can Tandem with VR Counselors Working with Clients.



Scott Campbell

By Scott Campbell, MSW, LSW; Disability Resource Coordinator / Transition Specialist Southeastern Ohio Center for Independent Living (Lancaster)

Centers for Independent Living (CILs) were created by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. They provide five core services to people with disabilities. These services are advocacy, information and referral, independent living skills, peer support and community transition. CILs strive to provide opportunities that maximize empowerment, inclusion, leadership, independence and full participation in community life for people with disabilities to live independently and be active participants in our society. Additionally, CILs provide advocacy and information regarding employment barriers, as well as any other barriers which may hinder total access to the community.

As counselors, have you considered tapping into the several skills that CILs offer to help people become employment ready? First, self-advocacy is a key skill for many consumers to master. Knowledge of rights under the law affecting people with disabilities is essential for successful employment and for avoiding discrimination. Also key to success in employment is disability self-awareness. This is the ability to know what one's disability is, its impacts and what is needed to accommodate for it. Many CIL consumers leave school without knowing how to self-disclose their disabilities on a job site, something crucial to getting accommodations. Instead, the mistakes start to pile up and poor job performance sets in, things that could have been avoided with the appropriate self-advocacy and accommodations we prepare for at any of our centers. CILs can help people with disabilities understand and practice that process.

You have doubtless seen how independent living skills pave the way towards employment. These include, for example, hygiene, appropriate dress, personal space, communication skills, conflict and problem solving, time management and

knowing/obeying the rules of the workplace. CILs assist consumers in obtaining these skills.

Additionally, did you know that CILs can assist with putting together a resume and completing job applications? This process may include discussion on if and when people should disclose their disability to their employer. Sometimes we visit county OhioMeansJobs centers where consumers are introduced to the resources at the center and how to use those resources to locate employment or enhance employment skills. This may include referral to the OOD counselor housed at some OhioMeansJobs centers. CILs also provide opportunities for building resumes by organizing volunteer opportunities.



If counselors share CIL literature with all BVR/BSVI consumers during intake, this links them with CIL services to tandem from the very beginning. Some CILs offer consumer groups related to employment. OOD counselors can attend those groups and make presentations on best practices. Sometimes consumers come to CILs already having a VR counselor or already working. At that point, the consumer, CIL staff member and VR counselor work as a team to increase employment readiness skills, while the CIL staff member can work with the individual on other aspects of independent living to assure that all the pieces of a happy, healthy and successful life fit into place. If a consumer is not employed or not currently linked with BVR/BSVI, we discuss the reasons behind that to be certain that people have full choice in mapping where their life is going.

In conclusion, remember that CILs can comprise a valuable part of the vocational rehabilitation process. Job skills, self-advocacy skills and independent living skills are all interrelated, making the individual stronger when all three pieces perform their specific function. An employee cannot maintain employment without appropriate independent living skills, such as hygiene and money management. CIL staff can work with OOD consumers to acquire these skills and make your job a lot easier.

There are 12 CILs in the state of Ohio. Find contact information for all of them at www.ohiosilc.org/about/centers-for-independent-living.

Disability Determination Redesign from Ohio Medicaid

Compiled from the Ohio Department of Medicaid website, Ohio Medicaid is simplifying coverage for thousands of Ohioans who must currently spend down a portion of their income each month to be eligible for health care benefits. Beginning August 1, the income limit was raised for these individuals and they will simply be covered:

- People will no longer need to spend down to a more restrictive income limit;
- People will no longer need to apply separately for SSI and Medicaid benefits; and
- Medicaid coverage will be available to more low-income Ohioans.

Everyone impacted by the change will have a pathway to coverage. Most will transition from one type of Medicaid coverage to another. In some cases, individuals with income that exceeds the new, higher Medicaid eligibility limit will be

referred to the Federal Marketplace to obtain subsidized health care coverage.

Ohioans who fall into the following two categories should take particular note: People who are currently using spend down to qualify for Medicaid and receiving long-term care in facility settings or with long-term care waiver services will now need to establish a Qualified Income Trust (QIT). A QIT, sometimes called a Miller Trust, is a special legal arrangement that allows the Ohio Department of Medicaid to not count income that is over \$2,199 per month. This will allow those affected to remain eligible for health care coverage through Medicaid. A vendor, Automated Health Systems, has been engaged to provide assistance to anyone requiring a QIT and may be contacted at 844-265-4722.

Additionally, Ohioans currently using spend down to qualify for Medicaid who are diagnosed with a serious and persistent mental illness may be eligible for the new Specialized Recovery Services (SRS) program. In addition to keeping Medicaid health care coverage, three new services are available:

- Recovery Management-assistance developing a needs-specific plan of care;
- Individualized Placement and Support-Supported Employment-help finding and keeping a job; and
- Peer Recovery Support-support from others with similar life experiences.

As a result of the disability determination redesign, Ohio will join the majority of states in having a modern, single process

for the application and determination of disability benefits.

Additional information may be found on the Ohio Department of Medicaid's website: www.medicaid.ohio.gov/INITIATIVES/DisabilityDeterminationRedesign.aspx

Backpacking OMJ Style

*By Nate Fernandes, OOD
Public Information
Officer*



Ah, the backpack. A multi-use contraption carrying your books in school, your camping provisions up a hiking trail, or your extra clothing and whatever else is needed to get through that day at an amusement park. But what if that backpack could carry your future? Well, now it can!

Of course we're stepping out of science fiction and referring to the virtual backpack found on your consumers' OhioMeansJobs profile. As a brief refresher, this backpack contains all activities performed on the website such as assessments, career profiles and plans, job searches and resumes.

Here's a frequently asked question: "How can VR professionals access this critical information, since OMJ is a privately-used website?" One simple solution is sitting with a consumer and going through the information.

However, OMJ gives two more efficient options. The first is to print the backpack. This will still require the user to be logged in with you. In

order to print, simply look under the Backpack icon in the upper right (above the button for Take the Guided Tour). If all electronic is the preferred method, the other link is called email backpack.

When selecting this link, a user simply enters the email address where the backpack should be sent and hits submit. Look for an email sent from noreply@monster.com titled Your Backpack. The backpack is displayed in an easy-to-read format ... perfect for dropping into AWARE and case noting, by the way.

When opening the backpack email, a summary of what's been completed thus far is shown. The first item displayed after unzipping the backpack is career plans. Next come scores of completed assessments and dates when these were taken. Careers I'm interested in (where one may save up to 10 interests), programs I'm interested in, schools I'm interested in, scholarships and any items added to the persons' OMJ calendar of events are also displayed. Remember to regularly check the OMJ website for events in your area.

The next pocket of the backpack shows any resumes posted in the past 30 days and the corresponding rating. Saved job searches - up to 10, jobs you saved - up to 50, and jobs you've applied to in the last 30 days, are the next categories.

Then come practice interviews. Did you know OMJ can help land the right job with a powerful combination of video tutorials and virtual interview practice? Look for a full featured article on this in an upcoming issue.

Finally, come results of both the budget calculator, giving a target salary needed to maintain a certain lifestyle, and the career profile. See previous editions of this newsletter for information regarding these two sections of OMJ. It is worth noting again that the backpack information is directly sent to the entered email address; ensuring the data is accurate and cannot be changed until the consumer goes into the profile again. No limit is placed on how many times a backpack may be emailed. This will give you, as a counselor, the opportunity to receive updates on consumers' progress through assigned OMJ tasks as they hike down the path towards a successful closure and ultimately, we hope, to a better life down the trail.

Disability Trivia ... We've Come a Long Way!

- 1996** Congress passes legislation eliminating more than 150,000 children with disabilities from the Social Security rolls, as well as individuals who are alcohol or drug dependent.
- 1986** The Employment Opportunities for Disabled Americans Act is passed, allowing recipients of Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance to retain benefits even after they obtain work. The act is intended to remove the disincentives that keep disabled people unemployed.
- 1966** Congress passes Public Law 889-522 authorizing National Library Services to provide talking-book services to all persons who could not read standard print because of a visual or physical disability.

Scholarships

Scholarship Corner: Tips and Upcoming Due Dates

We're listing these (mostly) disability-related financial opportunities by due date on a quarterly basis. We urge you to show these opportunities to families and students who may be eligible.

This article details a number of scholarships available to students with learning and attention issues: www.understood.org/en/family/managing-everyday-challenges/financial-challenges/financial-aid-and-scholarships-for-students-with-learning-and-attention-issues

Check this website periodically for any disability-related scholarships and others available.

www.scholarships.com/financial-aid/college-scholarships/scholarships-by-type/disability-scholarships

Deque (online) University is offering disability scholarships in its assistive technology/computer courses for one year of study. Details here:

dequeuniversity.com/scholarships

Opening in October: National Multiple Sclerosis Society Scholarships for people with M.S. or their children.

www.nationalmssociety.org/Resources-Support/Insurance-and-Financial-Information/Financial-Resources/Scholarship-Program/Scholarship-Program-Information

Deadline Oct. 1: \$10,000 to support graduate student research supporting public understanding of the psychological pain and stigma experienced by adults who live with physical disabilities,

1956 The Social Security Amendments establish disability insurance as part of Social Security. Today, about nine million disabled workers and two million of their dependents receive disability benefits.

1946 The National Mental Health Foundation is founded by conscientious objectors who served as attendants at state mental institutions during World War II. It works to expose the abusive conditions at these facilities and becomes an early impetus in the push for deinstitutionalization.

The first meeting of the President's Committee on National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week is held in Washington, D.C. Its publicity campaigns emphasize the competence of people with disabilities and use movie trailers, billboards, and radio and television ads to convince the public that it's good business to hire the handicapped.

1936 Passage of the Randolph-Sheppard Act establishes a federal program for employing blind vendors at stands in the lobbies of federal office buildings. The Ohio Commission for the Blind was designated as the state's Randolph-Sheppard licensing agency, a function still retained today.

American Psychological Foundation.
www.apa.org/apf/funding/pearsall.aspx

Deadline Oct. 30: \$5,000 scholarships from Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN). Fellows must establish or participate in leadership in an ASAN campus chapter or a disability rights student organization, promote Autistic culture and community, and take steps to improve disability accessibility and inclusion on campus.

Details at
autisticadvocacy.org/2016/07/asan-announces-2017-autistic-scholars-fellowship/

Deadline November 1:

\$1,000 Business Plan Scholarship for Students with Disabilities, any level any disability.

fitsmallbusiness.com/learn-how-to-write-a-business-plan/



Deadline November 30: Auger & Auger Disabled Scholar Awards to any graduating high school student or undergraduate with a disability. www.augerlaw.com/disabled-scholar-award/

Applications opening in November, closing January 2017 for students with disabilities planning to study abroad next summer or fall. Particular focus on Diverse Students. miusa.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=d39e81314218b930d5315426a&id=f21717370c&e=e26e5dba48>



At Your Fingertips: Arts/Entertainment Access

This website allows geographic and time frame searches for movies playing that are captioned.

www.captionfish.com

MoPix – Motion Picture Access lists archived films and lists theaters equipped with the technology and current films that offer audio description.

ncam.wgbh.org/mopix/

Access map is a crowd-sourced tool for sharing reviews on the wheelchair accessibility of businesses and other places. It is available online or via mobile web, as well as Android and iPhone applications. To learn more and start mapping, visit www.axsmap.com.

Enjoy this impactful article full of places and travel tips on top spots for hearing-loss/deaf-friendly vacations.

www.healthyhearing.com/report/52249-Five-great-hearing-friendly-destinations

This website presents ways in which disability services, community fitness and recreation programs, workplace wellness programs, faith communities, disability advocacy organizations and health care providers can help ensure that opportunities to engage in wellness activities are as available to people with disabilities as to anyone else.

click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=93195286&msgid=822990&act=1OQJ&c=654309&destination=https%3A%2F%2Fici.umn.edu%2Fproducts%2Fimpact%2F291%2F

What's an Ohio summer without getting ready for at least one trip to an amusement park or zoo? A helpful fact sheet for people with disabilities is now available! [COMMUNITY INTEGRATION: Amusement Parks, Zoos, and Recreation](#)

[Places](#) focuses on rights of people with disabilities and accessibility options to consider while enjoying the traditions of summer.

See this updated version of the [UniversalDesign.com](#) website. Originated by the team at Universal Designers and Consultants, the site has been entrusted to the RERCUD and the IDEA Center to become a central portal for universal design resources, including articles, links and other new content from the RERCUD and other sources.

click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=93195286&msgid=819879&act=10QJ&c=654309&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.universaldesign.com%2F>

The Department of Justice has published an updated ADA technical assistance document, [ADA Compliance Brief: Restriping Parking Spaces](#) | [PDF](#). You'll see information about features of accessible car and van parking spaces and how many accessible spaces are required under the ADA when parking facilities are restriped. Related, DOJ & Dept. Of Transportation have Issued Joint ADA Technical Assistance on Requirements to Provide Curb Ramps adasoutheast.org/news/articles.php?id=8027

Calendar of Disability Community Events

Now to March 12, 2017, the Kent State University Museum will offer a fresh, design-focused survey of assistive and adaptive devices in its exhibition. (dis)ABLED BEAUTY: The Evolution of Beauty, Disability and Ability in the museum's Stager and Blum Galleries. There also will be a free

reception September 29, from 5 to 7 p.m., including remarks by Kent State's Amy Quillin, Ph.D., Kent State's director of Student Accessibility Services at 6 p.m. Call 330-672-0300 to RSVP.

www.kent.edu/museum/event/disabled-beauty

September 24: Free Assistive Technology (low-vision/blindness) Family Conference, Holiday Inn, Worthington. For details/registration contact Julie: jpashovich@cisamoh.org

October 6-8: American Printing House for the Blind Annual Meeting, Hyatt Regency, downtown Louisville. Registration available www.aph.org, within a few weeks, or contact Field Services Director, Janie Blome, jblome@aph.org, for additional information!

Thanks and So Long

I want to thank each person who wrote or was interviewed for these articles, all of whom voluntarily gave of their time and wisdom. If you have suggestions, a success story or best practice from your work, please email me: Elizabeth L. Sammons, HireGround coordinator at: elizabeth.sammons@ood.ohio.gov.

Interviewees, Artists and Authors

Scott Campbell
Concha Castaneda
Nate Fernandes
Lindsay Blusiewicz, newsletter design
Brigid Krane, logo design
Dr. Barbara Wagner