



Network Partner Updates

Arizona Special Education Graduation Requirements: The Facts

*Renaldo Fowler, Senior Staff Advocate
Arizona Center for Disability Law*



The confusion over graduation requirements puts students receiving special education services at risk for forced early graduation. Since September 2010, the Center started receiving calls and complaints from parents regarding forced early graduation of students receiving special education services. Some school districts and charter schools told parents that a new law requires their children to graduate within four years or once they obtained their required credits, even if they have not received their transition services. Both Federal law (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA) and Arizona law require school districts and charter schools to provide a free appropriate public education to eligible special needs students between the ages of three and 21. Once the student turns 16, the IEP must include transition services which will help the student prepare for adult life. Some special education students will have IEPs that enable them to graduate in four years; others will have IEPs that allow them more time to complete high school. It is the responsibility of the IEP team to determine the manner in which transition services are to be provided.

Are there any new laws? There are no new laws requiring students who are entitled to special education services to graduate in four years. Where did this incorrect information come from? The incorrect information given out by some schools was based on confusion over a document written by the Arizona Department of Education about graduation and transition services entitled "Arizona Graduation Requirements and the Provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education for Students with Disabilities." The Center has expressed our concerns about this publication to Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction John Huppenthal. ADE has since **removed** the document from its website, pending further review, and has sent a memorandum to all Arizona school districts and charter schools clarifying that they must comply with Federal and state law. In addition, to help alleviate any confusion to families, Superintendent Huppenthal has asked each school district and charter school to notify families of high school age students with disabilities of the school district's and charter school obligation to comply with federal and state law.

What should a parent do if they have been told or have received notice from the district or the charter school that their child must graduate?

- Contact your district immediately and request an IEP meeting in writing.
- Ask the IEP team to decide that your child needs more than four years of high school to receive all of the services in his/her IEP.
- Make sure that any IEP team members who can make this happen, come to the meeting.

If you are not happy with the results of the IEP meeting, you can:

- Ask the school for written notice of its decision to graduate your child even though she has not received all of the services in her IEP;
- Contact the ACDL at (602) 274-6287 or (800) 927-2260 between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays or Fridays to speak with our staff; or
- File a complaint with the Arizona Department of Education. You can also ask for mediation. Go to <http://www.ade.state.az.us/ess/dispute> or call (602) 542-3084.

ACDL Hires Four New Employees

Arizona Center for Disability Law

ACDL would like you to meet four great new additions to our agency. Each individual brings a unique talent to the organization.



(Top Left to Right) Jennifer Alewelt, Sarah Kader, (Bottom Left to Right) Annie Goldsand, Donna Powers

Jennifer Alewelt joins ACDL as Staff Attorney for the Protection and Advocacy of Individuals with Mental Illness grant program. Jennifer graduated from California Western School of Law in San Diego after completing her Masters in Business Administration with University of Phoenix. Jennifer is a native Arizonan and Arizona State University graduate, excited to be back in Phoenix making a difference in the Arizona community.

Annie Goldsand works on the Short Term Assistance Team (STAT) providing information and technical assistance to our callers. Her main task is to provide information and resources so individuals are better able to understand their rights and advocacy abilities. Along with those duties, she is working with our PAIMI attorney on investigations in behavioral health facilities. Before joining Arizona Center for Disability Law, Annie completed her Masters in Health Management and Policy from Arizona State University. While completing her degree, she worked for the AARP Foundation in Washington D.C. where she became even more passionate about the world of policymaking. She is especially enthusiastic about health care and health care reform, especially as it impacts people with disabilities.

Sarah Kader joins ACDL as Staff Attorney in the Protection and Advocacy for People with Developmental Disabilities (PADD) program, specializing in health care cases. Sarah graduated from Syracuse University College of Law after serving as a Student Attorney in their Disability Rights Clinic for a year. Following graduation, Sarah worked at the Arizona Justice Project and volunteered at Community Legal Services in Phoenix. Sarah is also a graduate of the University of Arizona where she received her Bachelor of Arts. Sarah grew up in Tempe and is very committed to helping secure the rights of people with disabilities in Arizona. She is thrilled to be working at ACDL to further its mission of maximizing independence and achieving equality for people with disabilities.

Donna Powers joined the Phoenix ACDL office in August 2010 as a member of the Short Term Advocacy Team. As a STAT member, Donna is on the frontlines of ACDL work, assisting persons with disabilities by providing rights information and conducting outreach. Most recently, Donna served as a Program Coordinator with the Arizona Statewide Independent Living Council where she worked in the area of transportation, public policy advocacy, emergency management planning, and outreach. Donna also provided technical assistance to the Centers for Independent Living across Arizona. Prior to SILC, Donna was the Director of Living in Motion, LIFE, Inc in Tempe, and a Transportation Coordinator for The Community Forum and Easter Seals Arizona. In these organizations, she managed transportation contracts and researched and developed programs for accessible transportation. She also provided transit trip planning assistance and resource referral for transportation and social services. Donna has a B.A. in Communications from Arizona State University where she graduated Magna Cum Laude. She also is a graduate of the Generation Next Non-Profit Leadership Academy at the ASU Lodestar Foundation.

The Disability Experience: IHD Staff & Program Highlight

John McDermott, Project Coordinator

Institute for Human Development, Arizona University Center on Disabilities
Northern Arizona University



As an Institute for Human Development's Project Specialist for the Disability Experience, Ted Garland (photo to left) has come full circle. Circa 1976, Ted graced the hallways as an 18 month old in the Infant Stimulation Program. In 2007, thirty-one years later, Ted reacquainted himself to IHD as a national service AmeriCorps member. Ted stated, "I love working here. The people are so darn supportive. I believe in what IHD is doing in advancing an all-age, cross-disabilities program that enhances disabilities throughout the lifespan. IHD helped me in the 70's and now I am giving back to the institute that helped me in my development. There is no place that I would rather work than here".

Ted is a hot-button issues type of guy with CSPAN and ESPN queued in his TV as favorites. With his fingers on the pulse of the political world and his passion for the Arizona sports culture in check, Ted currently participates in presentations for the Disability Experience. He speaks of the Disability Experience as an "ever evolving process towards a more inclusive Arizona". He reminds people that in order to make inclusion permanent, "we have to practice it every day. That is the essence of the Disability Experience". In sharing one last thought, Ted expands the role of the Disability Experience and says, "Disability is a global matter. Imagine what a world of difference it would make if we had people with disabilities contributing. Think about it."

The goal of the **Disability Experience** project is to engage the community (e.g., school groups, business and government organizations, non-profits) in conversation on how the general public can truly welcome and include people of all abilities into the life of the community. The project has also developed a web-based module that is currently available to university faculty for infusion into any course.

We schedule presentations during which people with disabilities lead open, and sometimes frank discussions about the disability experience and the supports that everyone needs, including people without disabilities, to lead a fulfilling life. The Disability Experience team utilizes Power Point slides to guide discussion topics that include perception of disability, person-first language, disability etiquette, discrimination, and career opportunities in the disability field (if participants are high school students). The team concludes the discussion by asking participants to share examples of things they can do in their own lives to promote greater understanding and acceptance of people with disabilities in all aspects of life in our communities. Please contact Lynne Corbin (Lynne.Corbin@nau.edu) or Kathy Mahosky (Katherine.Mahosky@nau.edu) for more information.

IHD Faculty Awarded NAU SBS Teaching Innovation Award

Institute for Human Development, Arizona University Center on Disabilities
Northern Arizona University

On April 29th, 2011, co-instructors for the Introduction to Disability Studies (DIS201) course, Katherine Mahosky and Matthew Wangeman, received the NAU College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Teaching Innovation Award for their efforts in the introductory class for the disability minor offered by the Institute for Human Development. The "dynamic duo", throughout the course of a semester, team up to facilitate a change in students' attitudes when interacting and working with people with disabilities. Changing one able-bodied person's mind at a time, Katherine and Matthew look forward to a full class in the Autumn of 2011. For more information on the Minor in Disability Studies offered at IHD: <http://www4.nau.edu/ihd/MinorinDisabilityStudies.asp>.



What's New with the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council?

Larry Clausen, Executive Director

Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council

Governor Appoints New Council Chair



Will Humble, Director of the Arizona Department of Health Services and the parent of a child with developmental disabilities, was appointed as the Chairperson to the Council in January 2011. The appointment followed the departure of Steve Tully who had served as Chairperson since September 2009 when Governor Janice K. Brewer created the new Council by Executive Order. Mr. Humble has no difficulties in expressing his enthusiasm for his new role, recognizing the strong core of Council members with combined expertise and experience in working in developmental disabilities community. He noted that the entire Council is committed to supporting persons with developmental disabilities in seeking inclusion in all facets of community life. Mr. Humble's experience in public policy and parenting will be key to leading the Council to success.

Native American Disability Law Center Leads Accessible Housing Project

In collaboration with the Council and the Navajo Housing Authority (NHA), the Native American Disability Law Center has embarked in a project in northern Arizona to make NHA programs and services easier to access when sought by persons with developmental disabilities and their families. The project is seeking to streamline housing application processes and establish tracking systems so that the NHA is able collect data on the number of consumers who have developmental disabilities. The end result of the project will be to increase the number of persons with developmental disabilities able to obtain NHA assistance in finding appropriate housing that fits individual need. The Native American Disability Law Center will be producing a manual for consumers entitled "A Guide to Housing Supports and Services for Navajo and Hopi People with Disabilities."



New Legal Options Manual to be Available this Summer

The Council in a shared effort with the Arizona Center for Disability Law and the Native American Disability Law Center is close to printing and distributing a new Legal Options Manual that will be available at no cost to consumers this summer. Thanks to the diligent efforts of both law centers involved in the project, numerous legal issues affecting persons with developmental disabilities and their families, have been researched and developed into a highly useable format. In addition to distributing printed and electronic copies of the Manual, the Arizona Center for Disability Law will be conducting a series of training workshops within the State this summer to orient and familiarize consumers on how to utilize the information. "Legal Options to Guardianship" trainings will be held in Parker on July 13th, Yuma on July 21st, Winslow on July 27th and Safford on August 3rd. For more information on the trainings, please visit the Arizona Center for Disability Law website (www.azdisabilitylaw.org).

Visit our website at www.azgovernor.gov/DDPC



DD Network Collaborations

2011 Border Conference on Disability – Success!

Duke Duncan, MD
Border Initiative Coordinator
Sonoran UCEDD
University of Arizona



The second Border Conference on Disability was held at the Quality Inn in Nogales, Arizona on Friday March 4, 2011. This year the Sonoran UCEDD held joint sponsorship with the Arizona DD Network Arizona, Department of Economic Security Division of Developmental Disabilities, and the Southeastern Arizona Area Health Education Center (SEAHEC). Following opening welcomes by Arturo Garino, Mayor of Nogales, Tim Sikkema, District Program Manager of DDD/DES, Gail Emrick, Executive Director of SEAHEC, and Leslie Cohen, Director of Sonoran UCEDD, the participants split into four groups for the mini-courses that continued throughout the day.

The mini-courses were:

- The Learned Art of Support Giving to Individuals with DD with presentations by Deni DuRoy-Cunningham, Shireen Greeney, Sharon Adela Hendrickson-Pfeiffer, and Marina Coppola
- Relationships, Boundaries, and Safety Issues for People with DD with presentations by Deborah Stadler, Gregory Stewart, and James Leonard
- Aging and Wellness of Individuals with Disabilities with presentations by Rosemary Browne, Mary Marian, Carol Howe, Lynne Tomasa, Clayton Guffey, and Jodi Lindstrom
- Positive Behavior Management Strategies presented by Dr. Fernando Armendariz (photo below of Dr. Armendariz' session)



(article continues on next page)

Wheelchair Enterprise Taking Off!



As you may recall, the First Border Conference on Disability was held in Nogales, Sonora in October of 2008. A goal of that Conference was not just to learn from the day and network a bit with others of like mind but most importantly, to leave something behind. That something would be a shop that would construct durable all-terrain customized wheel chairs. It was to be a “social business”, a not-for-profit enterprise. The chairs would be sold at cost with subsidies for those unable to pay the full price. In May of this year, the shop was opened and the first chairs have been made. They are beautiful of solid construction, perfect welding, soft seating, large flexible rubber front wheels to negotiate the rough uneven sidewalks and dirt roads without tipping or getting stuck, and either blue or red paint that has been fired into the frame so chipping is not a problem. Rotary International has been instrumental in making this a sustainable business. The Centro de Capacitacion Industrial #118CE is donating space and utilities. Desarrollo Integral de la Familia (DIF) is helping with identifying individuals in need and with ensuring that the chairs are customized made to fit the person. Four chairs have been made and sold thus far – the dream has been realized!

(continuation of 2011 Border Conference on Disability article)

The mini-course on behavior management was broadcasted to three distant sites (Cochise College in Douglas, the Regional Center for Border Health in Somerton, and Desarrollo Integral de la Familia (DIF) in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico) via tele-conferencing under the capable direction of the BioMedical Department from the Arizona Health Sciences Center. The total attendance at all four sites was over 300. The breakdown of participants exceeded the expectation of the conference planners. Ten who attended have a disability, 76 were family members who live with an individual with a disability, 36 were care providers, and 175 were professionals, either teachers or therapist who work with individuals with disabilities.

With a rare exception, the participants were either highly satisfied or satisfied with the knowledge or skills gained by attending the session they chose. Even though some of the mini-courses had fewer participants than we had hoped for, those that did attend were engaged and were highly satisfied with the knowledge gained, the speakers' presentations, and the written materials provided in the sessions. All felt that their expectations had been met. What attendees liked most about the conference was that "topics were extremely relevant;" they liked "how the information was presented;" they enjoyed the speakers and their "use of practical examples;" and the "variety of the participants." Some participants also suggested topics for future conferences.

For those of you who attended, thank you! We hope you found the day worthwhile and gained some new and useful information.

To learn more about the conference, presentations and materials, please visit the Border Conference on Disability webpage: <http://sonoranucedd.fcm.arizona.edu/2011BC>.



ACDL & IHD Takes Restraint and Seclusion Training to Western Arizona

*Renaldo Fowler, Senior Staff Advocate
Arizona Center for Disability Law*



Arizona Center for Disability Law and Institute for Human Development continued its collaborative statewide training efforts on the issue of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools, by focusing on three communities in Western Arizona. The trainings were held in Yuma, Parker and Kingman, with a total of 155 participants. The training in Parker was held on the Colorado River Indian Nation, with members from other western Arizona Native American Nations in attendance. The training was divided into two sessions. The morning session was presented by Staff from the Center and focused on legal issues regarding restraint and seclusion in schools. The afternoon session was presented by Dr. Dan Davidson from IHD and provided information on the use of positive supports to prevent restraint and seclusion.

The number of participants and the diversity of the audience, from family members, to school personal and representatives from the mental health community, reflect the importance of this topic.

In addition to our training efforts, the Center has been involved in individual case work and has conducted investigations on behalf of students that have been subject to restraint and seclusion in schools.

Recently, the Center developed an expansive self-advocacy guide titled "**What to do if your Child is Restrained, Secluded, Bullied, Harassed, Abused or Neglected at School.**" This document is designed to provide families with various self advocacy options to address these issues. For a copy of this document, please visit our website at www.azdisabilitylaw.org or contact the Center at 602-274-6287.

Arizona Community Living NOW: An Educational Housing Program

Lynne Tomasa, PhD
Sonoran UCEDD
University of Arizona

Finding appropriate and accessible community-based housing is an important part of an individual's transition to adulthood and future planning. The Sonoran University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) with grant support from the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council implemented the AZ Community Living NOW housing program. This educational program was designed to provide information about a broad range of topics that would enable individuals with developmental disabilities, their family, and service providers to explore different options for community living; consider where and with whom individuals with disabilities want to live; identify the supports necessary to promote independence; and engage in appropriate financial and legal plans for their future. Six educational trainings occurred from January to May 2011 that addressed the following topics and content:

1. Community Services and Supports: What We Have and What We Need

- Residential services and housing options, behavioral health housing, public housing

2. Transitions: My Chosen Life and What it Means to Me

- Concept of meaningful day, transition to independent living, future planning, new service paradigm

3. Making Informed Choices in Rental and Home Ownership

- Home ownership, renting an apartment, home modification for accessibility

4. Shared Living: Important Discussion about Daily Life

- Concept of shared living, supported living and individualized supports, creative approaches

5. Special Needs Planning: Guardianship and Living Trusts

- Guardianship, conservatorship, special needs trusts

6. Creating Real Homes for People with Disabilities

- Housing cooperatives, important relationships and partnerships, caregiver's perspective on creating "real homes" for family members with a disability

Each of the trainings was two hours in length and the Sonoran UCEDD staff, community leaders, and family caregivers presented the content areas. The trainings were "live" through interactive video (taped video recording with audience participation) and simultaneously viewed at sites in Cochise, Coconino, Maricopa, Pima, and Yuma County. The videos, searchable written transcripts, presentation materials, and additional resources remain available at the AZ Community Living NOW website.

The Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council has generously provided additional grant monies to support the development of a manual and web-based module that will guide and challenge individuals with disabilities and their families to think creatively about community-based living options. These resources will be available in 2012.

For more information about the AZ Community Living NOW trainings and Year 2 activities or to share housing relating resources, please contact the Grant Manager:

Lynne Tomasa

Phone: (520) 626-7823

Email: ltomasa@email.arizona.edu

Web: <http://arizonacommunitylivingnow.org>



ARIZONA
COMMUNITY
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EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAM



DD Network Staff Spotlight

Each DD Network Newsletter will highlight a staff member from one of the partnering agencies to recognize their hard work and dedication in exemplifying the mission of the Network to work collectively and collaboratively to foster the independence, advocacy and community integration of individuals with developmental disabilities.

This edition spotlights Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council Vice Chair, Karla Phillips.



Karla Phillips

Fighting for quality education in Arizona is a job that Ms. Phillips is proud to do. Serving as Governor Brewer's Education Policy Advisor, Ms. Phillips is a strong advocate for education and families and advises the Governor on both K-12 and higher education issues.

In her current role she has helped the Governor's Office in the crafting of a statewide education reform plan and sits on the Oversight Committee for the Getting AHEAD higher education reform initiative. Ms. Phillips is also the Vice-Chair of the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, and as the parent of a special needs child, is personally aware of the issues facing families.

Prior to her appointment to the Brewer Administration, Ms. Phillips served as Director of State Government Relations for Arizona State University. In that role she served as the university representative at legislative hearings and stakeholder meetings, advised university officials on issues impacting the university, developed strategies to advance major legislative initiatives, and helped to coordinate legislative activities with the Arizona Board of Regents as well as Northern Arizona University and the University of Arizona.

Ms. Phillips worked for seven years as a senior policy advisor for the Arizona House of Representatives. She advised the Speaker and other elected officials on issues relating to K-12 and higher education policy and finance, minority issues, welfare and child welfare issues. She was also responsible for researching, drafting, summarizing and advancing major legislative initiatives.

Ms. Phillips received her Bachelor of Arts degree in East Asian Studies from Indiana University. She also received her Master's in Public Administration from Arizona State University. Ms. Phillips resides in Phoenix and is the proud mother of a 7 year old son and a 3 year old daughter.

DDNN

The **DDNN** is the newsletter of the [Arizona Developmental Disabilities Network](#) and developed by the DD Network Outreach Committee. Our purpose is to keep the community and our partners updated on Network agencies' projects, activities and collaborations as well as to provide a portal for local disability-related news. We hope you find **DDNN** useful and informative.

To request any issue in an alternative format, please send an email to ucedd@email.arizona.edu with **DDNN** and **your name** in the subject line or call (520) 626-2207.

To submit comments or news items, please email the Editor, Jacy Bell, at ucedd@email.arizona.edu.

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DDNN eNewsletter at <http://sonoranucedd.fcm.arizona.edu/ddnn>