

A PUBLICATION  
OF THE AAIDD  
AD HOC  
STUDENT AND  
EARLY CAREER  
PROFESSIONAL  
COMMITTEE  
(SECPC)

# AAIDD Student and Early Career Professional Newsletter

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JANUARY, 2011

## SPECIAL POINTS OF IN- TEREST:

- The Guide Program Highlight (pg. 2)
- Upcoming AAIDD/ANCOR Webinar (pg. 6)

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## Here is the Latest Issue of the AAIDD Student and Early Career Professional Newsletter!

This newsletter focuses on connecting and sharing information with students and young professionals in the field of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). We hope you find this newsletter to be a useful resource. We invite you to get involved in the many ongoing

activities of SECPC committee.

Please contact Committee Co-Chairs Melissa DiSipio at [MDiSipio@pmhcc.org](mailto:MDiSipio@pmhcc.org) or Judith Gross at [jgross@ku.edu](mailto:jgross@ku.edu) if you have any questions or are interested in joining this active committee. We look forward to hearing from you!



## AAIDD 2011 Annual Conference

The AAIDD 135<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, *Inclusive Communities: Pathways to Realizing the Vision*, will be held June 6-9<sup>th</sup> in St. Paul, Minnesota. The Meeting will be held at the Crowne Plaza St. Paul Riverfront. May 16<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for reservations at the AAIDD group discount rate. Go to the [AAIDD website](#) for more information.

### Student and Early Career Professional Reception

AAIDD will be hosting a welcome reception for students and early career professionals on Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>. The specific location and time will be posted on the Early Career Professionals page of the AAIDD website soon!

### Student Scholarship

The Student and Early Career Professionals Committee is pleased to continue our student scholarship competition for

AAIDD's Annual Meeting June 6-9, 2011 in the Twin Cities, Minnesota. During the regular Call for Papers, students were encouraged to submit their work. If the paper is accepted for presentation, and the student has applied for a scholarship on the Call for Papers form, the student's work will be considered by an internal committee. A scholarship of \$600 and free registration to the Annual Meeting will be provided to the winners.

An AAIDD membership is not required to apply for the scholarship. Masters, Doctoral, and Post-Doctoral students are encouraged to submit a paper. Please look for further announcements and updates about the annual meeting and social events at [www.AAIDD.org](http://www.AAIDD.org) on the Early Career Professionals page.

Good luck and we hope to see you in the Twin Cities, Minnesota June 6-9, 2011.

## The Guide Program—Match Highlight



**Dr. Erik Carter** is an assistant professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His interests include education, transition, community inclusion, and religion and spirituality. He is a guide for the AAIDD Guide Program.



**Cameron Neece** is a doctoral student at UCLA. Her interests include education, psychology, and transition. She is a mentee in the Guide program.

### 1) What led you to want to become a Guide or request a Guide?

**Erik:** When I was a doctoral student—and then as a new assistant professor—I was fortunate to have mentors who were generous in sharing with me their time, advice, support, and encouragement. As I navigated the academic job search for the first time, considered various career paths, and began to launch my own research, having the ear of someone who was a little further along in the field was an incredible asset. Having now accrued a bit of experience in the field myself, I have been eager to share some of what I have learned with others who are in the midst of launching their own careers.

**Camie:** I requested a guide as I started going through the job application process. I needed some advice on the job search and application process. I knew that Dr. Carter had been in the job market somewhat recently so I requested him directly.

### 2) What have been the benefits of your match?

**Erik:** I have enjoyed getting to know Camie, learning about the ways in which she hopes to impact the lives of people with disabilities and their families, and celebrating some of her early successes along the way. It is encouraging to be able to contribute—even in a small way—to helping an emerging scholar find their niche and thrive within our field.

**Camie:** The benefits of my match are numerous.

Some of the things I have found most beneficial are having someone to give me feedback about my career plans, help me sort out my feelings about what I want to do in the future, and getting a lot of encouragement and support along the way. Additionally, Dr. Carter has given me a lot of invaluable practical advice about preparing application documents, reviewing what to ask in interviews, and negotiating job offers.

### 3) Why might you encourage others to participate in the Guide program?

**Erik:** Serving as a Guide offers a tangible and meaningful way to invest in the next generation of scholars entering our field. Ensuring that early career professionals have the supports they need to flourish and to do well with the work that matters most is important to the future of our field. This is a small investment with big returns.

**Camie:** Having the Dr. Carter's advice and support through my job application process has truly been essential in this process. I honestly do not believe I would have been as successful as I have been in searching for a job had I not had his guidance. I also believe that through this mentorship relationship I will continue to get great advice and guidance as I continue through my career. The Guide program is a free and easy way to get the support and advice that we so often seek and truly need as graduate students.

For more information on how to join The Guide Program, go to AAIDD at [http://www.aaid.org/content\\_369.cfm?navID=120](http://www.aaid.org/content_369.cfm?navID=120).

## Post-Doctoral Training in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research

There is an emerging need for the qualified researchers in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities. To help serve this need, **The University of Wisconsin-Madison** has established a coordinated training program for postdoctoral fellows, which provides broad understanding and experience in appropriate skills. **The University of Wisconsin-Madison** is an acknowledged world leader in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities because of its outstanding faculty groups.

The program is located at the **Waisman Center**, which is one of 15 federally funded research centers on intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Training Program has a faculty of 15 who come from seven academic departments on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus.

The Post-Doctoral Training Program in Developmental Disabilities Research is recruiting for two two-year post-doctoral fellowships available beginning between May 1 and September 1, 2011. The program provides multidisciplinary training in behavioral and bio-behavioral research on the social, affective, and communicative development of persons with developmental disabilities and the functioning of their families. The goal of the program is to assist post-doctoral fellows with developing an independent line of research on developmental disabilities. Post-doctoral fellows conduct independent and collaborative research projects with the guidance of program faculty and attend program seminars specially designed to foster their scholarly and professional development. Post-doctoral fellows completing the program thus far have gone on to tenure-line faculty positions at major research universities and institutions, including Boston University, Brandeis University, Cincinnati Children's Hospital, Harvard University, Ohio State University, Pennsylvania State University, Portland State University, University of Georgia, University of Minnesota, University of New Mexico, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Vanderbilt University and Washington University-St. Louis.

Applicants should have a Ph.D. in a discipline related to human behavior or social policy, such as human development and family studies, communicative disorders, educational psychology, population health sciences, psychology, social work, or sociology.

The University of Wisconsin is an equal opportunity employer and women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Unfortunately, eligibility for this position is restricted by federal guidelines to US citizens and permanent residents.

The review of applications will begin immediately and continue until all positions are filled. To ensure full consideration, **please submit all materials by February 15, 2011.**

Information on the application process can be found at <http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/postdoc.html>.

Please send applications to:

Leonard Abbeduto, PhD,  
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1500 Highland Ave.  
Madison, WI 53705  
Phone: 608/263-1737  
E-mail: [abbeduto@waisman.wisc.edu](mailto:abbeduto@waisman.wisc.edu)

**Good luck on your application!**



## November 2010 Teleconference Summary

The topic of the November 18<sup>th</sup> webinar was Fellowship Opportunities for Early and Mid-Career Professionals. The webinar was facilitated by Shea Tanis. **Joe Caldwell, Ph.D.**, and **Ann Riordan, M.S.**, provided information on their individual fellowship experiences.

Shea Tanis began the webinar by providing an overview of AAIDD's Early and Mid-Career Fellowship Opportunities document. The document provides details about available fellowships, including location, application deadline, and specific information about the fellowships. Fellowship opportunities are organized by area of focus. Some areas of focus include: public policy, science and technology, social justice, education research, and international research. The document can be accessed via AUCD's website, or by visiting the Students and Early Career Professionals page through AAIDD. Ms. Tanis noted that many of the fellowships listed on the document have members who have been part of AAIDD or AUCD. She encouraged potential fellowship applicants to visit the trainee section of AUCD, or the Students and Early Career Professionals section of AAIDD, to talk to someone who can put you in contact with these individuals.

Dr. Joe Caldwell presented second on his fellowship experiences. Dr. Caldwell has received the following three fellowships: the AUCD Disability Policy Fellowship, the Mary E. Switzer Fellowship, and the Kennedy Public Policy Fellowship. These fellowships enabled Dr. Caldwell to work on policy issues in Washington, D.C., conduct research on the self-advocacy movement, and work under Senator Dodd on issues such as health care reform. Dr. Caldwell emphasized that his fellowship experiences have helped define his career path. Each fellowship provided networking and mentoring opportunities, allowed him to explore new ideas, provided opportunities for critical reflection on his career, and provided him with practical leadership skills. To

conclude his presentation, Dr. Caldwell gave the following advice to potential fellowship applicants:

- Use AAIDD's Early and Mid-Career Fellowship Opportunities document to see what is available.
- Think creatively. Use your disability experience to explore fellowships that may not be disability related.
- Prepare for the competitive application process by talking to previous fellows and utilizing mentors to provide recommendations.
- Stay resilient and continue applying if you don't immediately receive a fellowship.

Ann Riordan presented third on her experience as a Fulbright Fellow. Ms. Riordan conducted her Fulbright Fellowship in Mongolia from 2007 to 2008. She was motivated to apply for this fellowship based on her prior experience in the Peace Corps, and her desire to understand how different cultures perceive disability. Ms. Riordan stated the Fulbright Fellowship is an opportunity to gain in-depth research experience in another country. While in Mongolia, Ms. Riordan conducted qualitative research to uncover Mongolian perceptions of disability in the classroom. The fellowship allowed her to complete her master's thesis, consult on various other disability related projects, and present her research at international conferences. Since the fellowship, Ms. Riordan stated that she has had numerous employment opportunities, has experienced personal and professional growth, and has obtained hands-on research experience. She concluded by encouraging anyone interested in applying for a fellowship to search beyond disability related fellowships, as there are opportunities that can be modified to focus on disability related issues.

Dr. Caldwell and Ms. Riordan are open to discussing their fellowship experiences with anyone who may be interested. Please contact Jula He ([Jula@aaidd.org](mailto:Jula@aaidd.org)) to obtain their contact information.



## About ANCOR, The American Network of Community Options and Resources

ANCOR, The American Network of Community Options and Resources, is the nation's foremost nonprofit association representing community supports and service organizations that serve people with disabilities and their families.

ANCOR member organizations represent a broad spectrum of supports and services, including residential, in-home supports and services, employment supports, and respite for families. ANCOR members emphasize person-centered planning, offer choices and full community participation, and encourage personal growth and development that meets the interests, needs and aspirations of the people they serve.

In supporting quality outcomes for people with disabilities, ANCOR offers access to model practices and innovation, including a broad network of idea and solution-sharing connections. ANCOR also offers a nationally recognized performance excellence benchmarking program that compiles the only national benchmarking data on key quality markers for supports and services delivery.

ANCOR is a community of community service providers and many other key stakeholders. As such, they're focused on informing, educating, and networking with providers to safeguard, develop, grow, and extend their organizational capacity to

support the choices of the people with disabilities. ANCOR is proud of being the place for solutions to the most challenging problems facing our field, and leading the industry in adopting technologies and methodologies that advance and enhance supports and services.

ANCOR is recognized as the national leader on addressing the direct support workforce crisis facing our nation. ANCOR's National Advocacy Campaign has been advocating for the past ten years for better training and professional development, and increased wages and benefits for direct support professionals. In partnership with the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals and the U.S. Department of Labor, Education and Training Administration, ANCOR recently developed national apprenticeship guidelines for use nationwide to advance the profession of direct support. To learn more about the campaign, visit [www.youneedtoknowme.org](http://www.youneedtoknowme.org).

As a founding member of the Alliance for Full Participation, ANCOR and its fourteen national partners, demonstrate their collective commitment to increasing competitive employ for people with cognitive disabilities.

In celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year, ANCOR worked with the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution to host a celebration featuring over 70 self-portraits by people with disabilities.

Displayed adjacent to portraits and the artwork of renowned American artists, this display shed a respectful spotlight on the self-expressions of an oftentimes ignored and stigmatized population and on the servant leaders who envisioned a bright and meaningful future for them, turning that vision into a reality. Most important, these astonishing self-portraits honored the way an entire generation of newly empowered people with disabilities see



**ANCOR continued ...**

themselves. According to Edgar Degas, “Art is not what you see, but what you make others see.” And perhaps that’s the most important point of all. By encouraging and rewarding self-expression for those whose canvases remained vacant and unexplored for too long, ANCOR member organizations have showcased, as never before, how artful, mindful and willful living belongs to us all.

If life is truly a huge canvas, then it’s up to each of us to continue to express ourselves through the facilitation of lives of meaning and consequence for people with disabilities. ANCOR is anxious to work in partnership with you, as aspiring students and early career professionals, to create an even better and brighter future for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Let’s challenge ourselves to pick up our paint brushes and paint our canvass with bold and confident colors, persuading the world to see the beauty and promise that resides within each individual.

Let’s get to work!



Artist Laura Levy with her self-portrait  
Photo by ThirdEyePhotography

## Upcoming AAIDD/ANCOR Webinar

**Presenter: Mary Lou Bourne, Support Development Associates**  
**March 3, 2011 at 2:00-3:00 PM Eastern**

Collaboration is a term that is widely used, but minimally understood in today’s work world. In human service delivery systems, relationships are the key to how we accomplish our work. Focused effort is needed to understand how relationships develop, how we contribute to the effectiveness of our relationships, and what we can do differently to strengthen them. This webinar will focus on core concepts:

- identification of the key relationships in our work life, both internal and external to our employer,
- evaluating the presence and absence of respect and trust in these relationships,
- understanding our own contributions to the

- respect and trust that exists, and how the strength of these relationships impacts the lives of the people we support.

The webinar will use an interactive approach in which participants will learn and practice skills together. Participants will experience an exercise they can use within their work life, with colleagues and team members, to strengthen and expand their capacity to establish truly collaborative relationships.

To register for this webinar, go to:

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/284391954>

## An International Perspective

By Emily Wallace, OTD

As an occupational therapy doctoral student at Washington University in St. Louis, I was recently given the opportunity to complete my clinical apprenticeship at a living and day facility for people with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities in Assisi, Italy. I first heard of the opportunity one year ago while writing my practice model on international perspectives of treatment for this population. Looking back, I knew that completing my apprenticeship abroad would give me the chance to expand my clinical skills in a culturally significant way; however, I was unaware of the impact the experience would have on my life, both professionally and personally.

For three months, I spent my days working for Istituto Serafico di Assisi, a facility nestled at the foot of Assisi under the shadows of the basilica of St. Francis. Originally dedicated to the education and social integration of children with visual and hearing disabilities, Serafico has grown into a dynamic rehabilitation facility for children and adults with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities. Under the supervision of the resident occupational therapist, I immediately went to work on various projects and clinical treatments throughout Serafico's organization. After several days of adjusting to the time difference, language barrier, and vast quantities of pasta, I began to experience something that language could not confine.

I started to notice the relationships the residents had with the staff at Serafico and how those cherished connections facilitated the residents' functional goals. In school, we are taught about the importance of client-centered practice and building rapport with our clients, but it wasn't until I spent time within the walls of Serafico that I truly grasped the significance of those principles. As I worked with the residents on their occupational goals in the days that followed, I started to build my own relationships, connecting with them in a personal and exceptional way. These relationships not only touched me personally, but they have also taught me how powerful and motivational they can be in the clinical setting.

During my three months in Italy, my eyes were also opened to the impact of culture on the approach of treatment provided to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Through the exciting opportunity of exchanging different ideas and methods with the rehabilitation team at Serafico, I learned how culture does not divide us as professionals, but rather connects us to make our service stronger. The cultural sensitivity that I was able to cultivate during my time in Italy will forever inform my practice and approach when working with people with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities.

## Doctoral Leadership Training Grant Opportunity



VANDERBILT  
UNIVERSITY

The Department of Special Education at Vanderbilt University is the recipient of leadership training grants from the Office of Special Education Programs in the Department of Education. These grants provide doctoral students with tuition, monthly stipends, health insurance, and professional travel. This particular program aims to increase the number of well-qualified higher education faculty who have the skills and knowledge to improve research, teacher training, and educational outcomes for high-need students identified with severe disabilities or autism in grades K-12, including secondary transition.

Program goals include:

- Hands-on experiences in high-need schools via

internships supervised by Vanderbilt faculty mentors and in collaboration with school personnel;

- Collaboration with experts in autism, intellectual disabilities, severe disabilities, and research methodology through internships with the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center;
- Rotating internships and seminars that address competency-building across research, teaching, and service experiences;
- Coursework in research methods and content areas to build skills to complete doctoral program milestones in a timely fashion.

Applications are due March 15th. For more information, contact Carolyn Hughes at [carolyn.hughes@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:carolyn.hughes@vanderbilt.edu).



Knowledge | Support | Empowerment

## A Publication of the AAIDD Ad Hoc Student and Early Career Professional Committee (SECPC)

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Meghan Burke and Luchara Sayles-Wallace, *Guide Program Match Highlight*

Ali Samadi, *Post-Doctoral Training Highlight*

Chesley Giertz, *November 2010 Teleconference Summary*

Emily Wallace, *An International Perspective*

Renee Pietrangelo, *About ANCOR, The American Network of Community Options and Resources*

Archived issues of SECPC Newsletter available at :

[http://www.aaidd.org/content\\_366.cfm?navID=115](http://www.aaidd.org/content_366.cfm?navID=115)

### About SECPC

The goal of the AAIDD Ad Hoc Student and Early Career Professionals Committee (SECPC) is to develop and implement strategies that foster the involvement and representation of students, recent graduates, and professionals in the early stages of their careers within AAIDD. The committee is working on a number of initiatives and meets via teleconference once per month to provide one another with updates on committee initiatives and to share ideas. We are always interested in including more students and new members in our activities. Please contact Melissa DiSipio at [MDiSipio@pmhcc.org](mailto:MDiSipio@pmhcc.org) or Judith Gross at [jgross@ku.edu](mailto:jgross@ku.edu) if you would like to learn more about becoming involved in this active committee.

Please visit our website at:

[http://www.aaidd.org/content\\_297.cfm?navID=86](http://www.aaidd.org/content_297.cfm?navID=86)

## Not yet an AAIDD member.... Join Today!

AAIDD offers a number of membership options with a variety of benefits depending on the level you choose. Below we will highlight three types of membership that may be affordable for students and early career professionals

AAIDD offers an International Electronic membership for members residing outside of the U.S. or Canada for \$50, which offers electronic access to both *AJIDD* and *IDD* journals. Members at this level cannot hold office or vote in AAIDD

elections.

AAIDD offers a Basic membership for \$75, which offers electronic access to *AJIDD* or *IDD* journals. Basic members are eligible to hold office and vote in AAIDD elections.

AAIDD also offers a Classic membership for \$125, which offers electronic access to both *AJIDD* and *IDD* journals. Classic members are eligible to hold office and vote in AAIDD elections.

In addition to the aforementioned benefits, members at all three levels have access to members-only web forums, delivery of electronic newsletters, and are entitled to member discounts for meeting registration, book store purchases, and job postings.

For more information on the various membership categories and to join AAIDD visit :

[http://www.aaidd.org/content\\_120.cfm](http://www.aaidd.org/content_120.cfm)