

A PUBLICATION
OF THE
AAIDD
STUDENT AND
EARLY CAREER
PROFESSIONAL
SPECIAL
INTEREST
GROUP
(SECP SIG)

AAIDD Student and Early Career Professional Newsletter

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1

OCTOBER, 2012

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

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Good Times with SECP SIG	1
IDD Research in Spain	2-3
Thank you to Brookes Publishing	3
So, you want to write a book?	4-5
SECP SIG Luncheon	6-7
Special Needs Education in Japan	8-9
IASSID World Congress 2012	10
Vanderbilt funding opportunity	11
Connect with AAIDD online	11
Publication Information	12
Join AAIDD	12

This newsletter focuses on connecting and sharing information with students, young professionals, and their mentors 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 activities of the SECP SIG.

If you are interested in joining our SIG on Students and Early Career Professionals, you may sign up online when you join or renew your membership in AAIDD, or you may contact Jason Epstein jepstein@aaidd.org for more information. We look forward to hearing from you!



Good Times with SECP SIG

At the 136th AAIDD Annual Meeting in Charlotte, NC, the Students and Early Career Professional (SECP) Special Interest Group was ready to have a good time! In addition to learning about best policies and practice and getting abreast of the latest research findings, the SECPs gathered and informally networked at the wildly popular SECP Happy Hour.

SECP members and other interested conference attendees flooded the Mortimer's Cafe and Pub in downtown Charlotte on Tuesday night. Attendees enjoyed drinks, appetizers, and exchanged business cards as they navigated the tight space. Conversation was lively as chicken wings were eaten and connections were made.

"Personally, I was very surprised and pleased with the attendance at this year's

happy hour event!", SECP's Co-Chair Melissa DiSipio said. "It seems to have grown into a well-desired, anticipated event giving students, young professionals, and AAIDD mentors a chance to interact and network in a more casual atmosphere. We are grateful for **Brookes Publishing's** continued support of this event."

SECP leadership agrees that next year's event will be even bigger and better (with a larger venue)! We look forward to seeing you all at the 137th Annual Meeting in Pittsburgh, PA!



Research in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: An experience from Spain

by Patricia Navas

Over the last years, research has moved toward a more comprehensive understanding of intellectual and developmental disabilities. This understanding has led to a significant increase of assessment instruments in the field, stressing measures such as the Support Intensity Scale (Thompson, Bryant, Campbell, Craig, Hughes, Rotholz et al., 2004). However, during my doctoral studies in Psychology, I realized that in educational and clinical settings, the assessment process of ID has always been a problematic issue for teachers and psychologists. In most cases, this fact leads to an excessive reliance on standardized intelligence measures (Greenspan, 2012) in order to make eligibility decisions. In fact, the measurement of intellectual functioning has sometimes played an exclusive role in the assessment of ID. Consequently, the familiar categories of profound, severe, moderate, and mild intellectual disabilities have become a way to understand and react to the reality of having this condition.

Taking into account this situation, the research institute where I am currently working (Institute on Community Integration, INICO, located in Salamanca, Spain) started to develop the forthcoming AAIDD Diagnostic Adaptive Behavior Scale (DABS) in the Spanish context. The

DABS is focused on identifying significant limitations in adaptive behavior for a diagnosis of ID, assessing those domains of adaptive behavior (i.e., practical, conceptual, and social skills) that have resulted from factor analysis work, and including relevant items related to the concepts of gullibility, vulnerability, and social cognition, which are critical to identify mild intellectual disabilities. Item Response Theory (IRT) has been used through its development to reliably measure individual levels of performance across the continuum of adaptive skills. Also, due to the fact that adaptive behavior increases in complexity with age and then plateaus (Luckasson et al., 2002; Schalock et al., 2010), items are being calibrated, according to IRT models, for different age groups. An instrument with such characteristics would be very helpful in Spain, where there are no measures focused on diagnosis. In fact, the Inventory for Client and Agency Planning, ICAP (Bruininks, Hill, Weatherman, & Woodcock, 1986) is the only measure that clinicians currently have in order to assess adaptive behavior, and their aim is not diagnosis, but rather services planning and program evaluation.

Considering this situation, as a doctoral student, I focused my doctoral

(Continued on page 3)

IDD Research in Spain, cont'd

dissertation on the translation and adaptation of the DABS to the Spanish context.

Following the guidelines proposed by the International Test Commission (Hambleton & Bollwark, 1991), we developed the first version of the DABS in Spanish, which was applied to more than 1,000 children with and without intellectual disabilities. Only 32 children of 500 (all of them already diagnosed with having ID) had an adaptive behavior assessment. So, *How can clinical psychologist avoid false negatives or false positives when diagnosing? Are we sure that our children are receiving all the supports they need when just their IQ is considered?*

This leads us to emphasize the importance of using a multidimensional perspective when diagnosing, leaving behind systems that only include intelligence measures. The adoption of new approaches to the study of intellectual disability has highlighted the

need for multidimensional classification systems based on the particular needs and circumstances of each individual. Although achieving a consensus on diagnostic instruments to be used in daily practice is not easy, it is essential to ensure the existence of instrument validity and reliability for the assessment process (Schalock et al., 2010). The development of the DABS in our context constitutes the first real effort to develop an instrument exclusively focused on the diagnosis of significant limitations in adaptive behavior. The implications of using a diagnostic measure like the DABS are profound given the consideration that it would be used for determining specific programs or service eligibility criteria.

Feel free to contact me for more information:
patricianavas@usal.es

THANK YOU!

The AAIDD Student and Early Career Professional Special Interest Group wants to extend its thanks to **Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.** For the past three years, Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. has sponsored the AAIDD Student and Early Career Professional Special Interest Group Happy Hour at the AAIDD Annual Meeting, including at the most recent meeting in Charlotte, NC. By sponsoring the Happy

Hour, which is held at local bar or restaurant near the conference hotel, Brookes has created a unique opportunity for students and early career professionals to gather together, network, and develop lasting and meaningful relationships. Further, by inviting AAIDD Guides, leaders, and members that support students and early career issues, members of the SECP SIG have the chance to get to know leaders in the field in an informal, comfortable atmosphere. The support from Brookes has also created the opportunity for SECP SIG members to get to know editors at Brookes and to learn more about publishing with Brookes and the resources that Brookes offers for professionals in the field. This year approximately 75 students, early career professionals, and AAIDD leaders attended the Happy Hour and benefited from Brookes support. The Happy Hour provides a great opportunity for AAIDD, the SECP SIG, and Brookes to build relationships and support the next generation of leaders in the field. **THANKS BROOKES!**



BROOKES
PUBLISHING CO.
www.brookespublishing.com

So, you want to publish a book? Advice from a Senior Editor at Brookes Publishing

By Rebecca Lazo, Senior Acquisitions Editor

There are so many things to consider when thinking about writing a book—basic premise, audience, format and price, manuscript development and writing, picking the right publisher—it can be hard to figure out where to begin. Each of these questions is critically important, and there are still others that come later in the process, but it is best to focus on the basics first. What is the topic you want to write on? Why is your book needed? What problem does it solve? These questions may seem obvious, but identifying what book you want to write is an important first step in the process.

Probably the second most important step is identifying the market for your book. Who do you think will read your book and

what will they get from it? What are their other options, or what competition exists? No matter the type of book, whether scholarly reference, practical resource, or otherwise, there are likely similar publications already available, so it is important to research these other books. This way, you can decide what yours will do differently to stand out from the crowd, and it can also give you an idea of which publishers would most likely serve the topic and audience you have in mind.

At this point, you can start really putting pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard) to write the proposal for your book that you will send to your potential publisher. A rationale for the book—a paragraph or two describing why you're writing this book, what

purpose it will serve, and how the end user will benefit from it—is a great way to start your book proposal. Then, consider whether you will write this book alone or invite others to contribute. Develop an outline of the chapters (noting those that might be written by someone other than yourself), keeping your

(Continued on page 5)



So you want to publish a book?, cont'd



target market in mind, and add descriptions of each chapter so that your publisher understands the vision for your work. Be sure to include references to tables or figures you know you want to use, list any handouts or forms that will be included, and mention a few of the critical sources you will cite.

One last thing to consider before submitting your proposal is the timing. Review your schedule, keeping in mind professional responsibilities, personal obligations, holidays, and so forth and then determine how much time you will realistically need to write the manuscript. It may work best to actually build time into your regular schedule for research and writing. Make appointments with yourself to write one chapter every few weeks. It seems

most people need an average of about 12 months to write a 300–400 page manuscript. Also consider what time of year your book should publish. Is it a textbook that needs to be available for review and adoption by college professors? Is it a practical resource for teachers that needs to be out in time for the school year? Is there an event for which the book should be available? These are important things to mention to the publisher, particularly if you will be doing a training or conference presentation.

There will likely be other pieces of information a publisher will ask, like what format would be most appropriate for your book, whether there is any price sensitivity with the intended market, and if you have any notable connections to people or groups who might help promote your book. Once you've submitted your proposal, it is just the beginning of an exciting exchange between you and a book editor to determine the right fit and strategy for your book. Best of luck!

BROOKES
PUBLISHING CO.
www.brookespublishing.com

AAIDD SECP SIG Luncheon: “Living the Professional Life with Personal Style”

By Melissa A. DiSipio

During this year’s annual AAIDD Meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina, students and early career professionals were once again treated to a free luncheon sponsored by **The MENTOR Network**. The Student and Early Career Professional (SECP) Special Interest Group (SIG) is very grateful that **The MENTOR Network** recognizes the importance of supporting young professionals in this field. This event gives the SECP SIG a chance to come together with AAIDD administration, Board Members and past presidents to discuss and learn about various topics in the field of intellectual disabilities. It is also a time for members to get to know each other better and network among themselves. The Student and Early Career Scholarships were presented to *Hyojeong Seo* and *Ashley Woodman* at the beginning of the luncheon. The speakers for this year’s annual conference SECP luncheon were Lynda Bersani and Katie McDonald.

Lynda Brown Bersani currently serves as the Special Education Coordinator for Greater Albany Public Schools in Albany, Oregon. Lynda has worked with and for people with disabilities in a variety of roles related to community service development, including as a Research Associate for Human Services Research Institute, Associate Director of the Office for People with Disabilities of the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon, and provider of direct home-based supports to folks living in the international communities of the International L’Arche Federation in France, Canada, Syracuse, and Oregon. She is the wife of the late Hank Bersani Jr., Past AAIDD President.

Katherine (Katie) McDonald, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Public Health, Food Studies and Nutrition in the Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics and a Faculty Fellow at the Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse



(Continued on page 7)



From left: Melissa DiSipio, Katie McDonald, Lynda Bersani, and Judith Gross

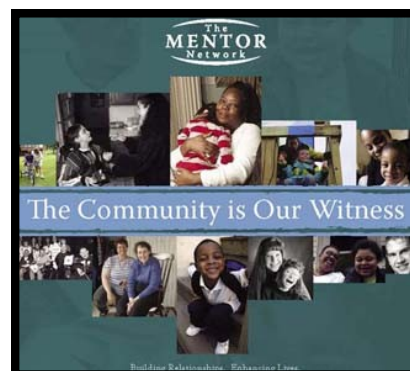
(Continued from page 6)

University. She received her B.S. with Distinction in Human Development and Family Studies with a minor in French from Cornell University and her Ph.D. in Community and Prevention Research Psychology from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Dr. McDonald's current work focuses on the respectful inclusion of adults with developmental disabilities in research and participatory approaches to addressing disparities in health, community participation, and work. Katie was the recipient of this year's AAIDD Early Career Award, nominated by Hank Bersani, Jr. who was a mentor to her.

The title of Lynda and Katie's presentation was "*Living the Professional Life with Personal Style.*" They used this opportunity to share the great work of the late Hank Bersani Jr. to inform the audience of the important values and lessons learned. They both shared photos and stories from the various important aspects of Hank's career and his relationship to AAIDD and other associations. Hank worked closely with many self-advocacy groups driven by the need for inclusion, equality, and education. Both speakers noted the importance of family, friends and fun in Hank's

life. He enjoyed celebrating the little things, found strength in advocacy, and relished mentoring others. His writings are an invaluable resource.

The presentation ended with a slide show of pictures that covered the span of Hank's career including individuals he supported, worked with and helped in the community. There was also a collection of his publications and favorite resources available for view. Many people left the luncheon feeling inspired by his work and teachings. Lynda and Katie did a nice job summarizing the important lessons learned through examples of his career. It was clear that Hank was a valued friend, family member, colleague, mentor and advocate who will be greatly missed.



Special Needs Education for Children with Intellectual Disabilities in Japan

By Akina Noguchi

You may have no clue what special education in Japan looks like. As a “returnee” (label for someone who grew up outside of Japan), and a young professional on this field, I feel like I have this mission to tell you what we have been working on regarding special education for children with intellectual disabilities. Interestingly, our definition of intellectual disability aligns with the definition of AAIDD’s definition, and our national curriculum standards for children with intellectual disabilities were influenced by U.S., especially by AAIDD’s concept of adaptive behavior.

In Japan, the first special class for students with intellectual disabilities was established in 1890. National curriculum standards were adopted in 1947, and special curriculum for students with intellectual disabilities was established in 1964. In 1979, attending school became compulsory for all children with disabilities.

As Figure 1 shows, students with intellectual disabilities are to be in a special needs class or special school, which is thought to be the best environment and the most appropriate place to educate students with intellectual disabilities. Only exception is made when a student’s parents or student him/herself wishes to attend regular class. They are allowed to attend regular class only when schools can make appropriate modifications according to the student’s specific needs (called approved entrant).

Curriculum framework for students with disabilities is shown in Figure 2 (page 9). Curriculum is selected according to where student is receiving instruction, and type of disability he/she has. In regular class, regular education curriculum, which consists of academic subjects, moral education, special activities, and integrated study, is utilized. Students who are receiving instruction in a resource room, and for students

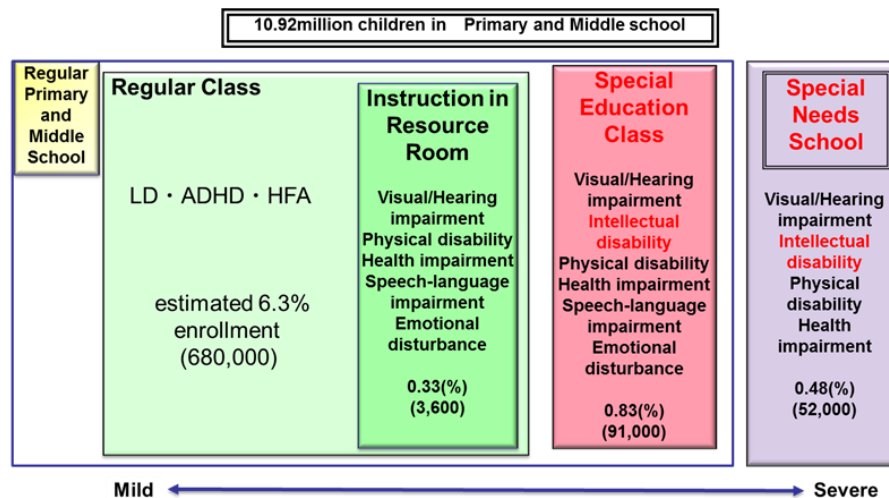


Figure 1. Special Needs Education in Japan

Special Education in Japan, cont'd

(Continued from page 8)

in a special class, “Jiritsu-Katsudo” is added to the regular education curriculum. “Jiritsu-Katsudo” provides each child with the particular knowledge, skills, attitude, behavior, and practices they need to acquire so that they can cope with difficulties they face in school and everyday life.

In the special curriculum for students with intellectual disabilities (circled below), flexible modifications to the academics are made. These are functional academics, which are organized so that the knowledge and skills

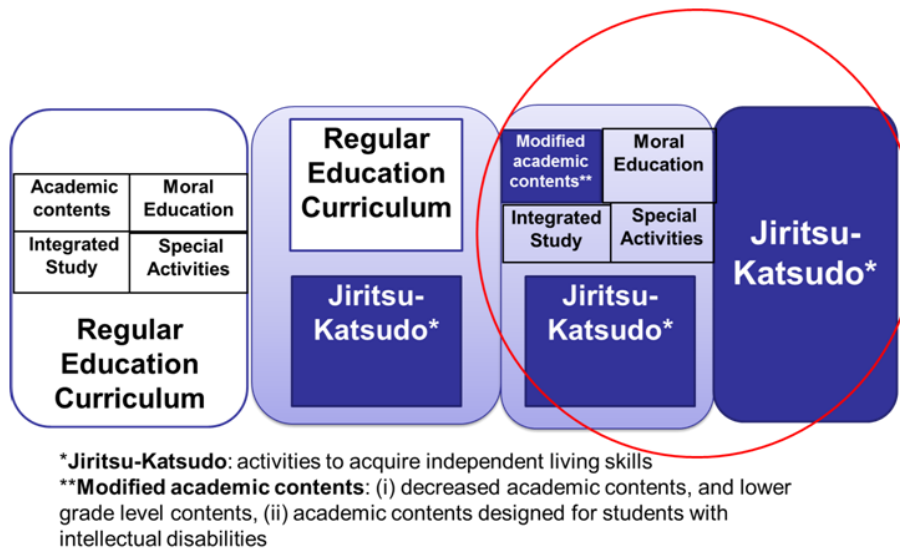


Figure 2. School Curricula in Japan

children learn in schools can easily be utilized in daily living situations. These contents can be taught through (a) daily living studies, (b) unit studies, (c) studies of play skills, and (d) vocational studies. I should mention that these contents for children with intellectual disabilities were developed from recognizing the importance of adaptive behavior skills.

Although importance of adaptive behavior and functional life skills are recognized and incorporated into the curriculum for children with intellectual disabilities, we still do have many problems to solve. For instance, functional life skills versus the academic skills have been continuing arguments among the professionals and teachers in this area. Some schools focus more on the academic skills and some schools focus more on the functional life skills, which leads to inconsistency in the field. Another problem we have is that we do not have accountability systems for this population; the ways we evaluate and measure the outcomes of these children differs depending on schools and teachers. An evidence-based approach is rarely utilized, unlike in the U.S.

Learning from the U.S.’s accountability system and alternative measures taken for children with significant cognitive disabilities, which I have been working on for the past 5 years, can be important to solving these problems. As a young professional working on this field, I am eager to learn more about evidence-based approaches and accountability systems for this population.

Questions are welcome at any time! akinaln831@gmail.com

International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disabilities World Congress – 2012

By Rose Nevill

Confercation: (noun) the process of attending an academic conference in a desirable location that also serves as a lovely vacation spot. And has excellent seafood.

The International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disabilities (IASSID) met this July in Halifax, Nova Scotia for its 14th World Congress. The conference consisted of 6 days of oral and poster presentations on cutting-edge research occurring in the disability field, as was so communicated by the conference's highly-appropriate slogan, "A World of Potential." Conference days consisted of four presentation blocks with at least 10 concurrent sessions occurring during each period. The topics covered in these sessions were rich, ranging from quality of life enhancement to psychopharmacological treatment options and mindfulness therapy in individuals with autism. Outside of the conference, the city of Halifax offered conference attendees a wonderful setting for nightlife and social events, ranging from excellent seafood to live music and street performances. Halifax is a traditional coastal



city which still today demonstrates its strong influences from Canadian, Celtic, and Scottish backgrounds. One of the highlights of the conference was the traditional Kitchen Party attended by all delegates, which consisted of an evening of lobster dinner, Celtic music, and the



opportunity to see your favorite research idols do the Irish jig. AAIDD was strongly represented at the conference, hosting an AAIDD member reception on the second night that was well-attended. Representatives from over 30 countries, including the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, Spain, and Japan, were present, which provided an excellent opportunity to learn about disability research around the world. Some conclusions from the conference were that more research is needed on the status of disability in underdeveloped countries and that the increased research on quality of life and advocacy offers a promising outlook for the future of the IDD field.

Funding Opportunity for Students Interested in Special Education at Vanderbilt University

The Department of Special Education at Vanderbilt University announces funding for doctoral students wanting to focus on students with severe intellectual disability, autism, and multiple disabilities. Our leadership training grant provides full tuition, generous monthly stipends, health insurance, and professional travel. Our goal is 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. Our

doctoral students receive exceptional training, strong mentorship, and unique research opportunities. Graduates of our doctoral program obtain faculty positions at leading universities and colleges across the country and are making a real difference in the field. Early application is strongly encouraged. For more information, contact Erik Carter at erik.carter@vanderbilt.edu.



VANDERBILT
UNIVERSITY

Connect with AAIDD online!



- [Check out AAIDD on LinkedIn!](#) LinkedIn has the world's largest professional network on the internet with 161 million members. Joining our LinkedIn group is a great way to connect with professionals in the field you may not come into contact with otherwise.



- [Check out AAIDD on YouTube!](#) You will find a wide variety of videos on topics ranging from the justice system and intellectual disability to special education best practices to classification and intellectual disability.



- [Check out AAIDD on Twitter!](#) Twitter is a great way to stay connected to AAIDD. We regularly post information about upcoming events and publications in addition to keeping you updated on the latest in national disability news.



- [Check out AAIDD on Pinterest!](#) One of the newer social media platforms, Pinterest provides a space for users to organize and share images. We are continually building up content on our pinboards so you can share our images with others and spread the word about AAIDD news, events, and resources.



- [Like us on Facebook](#) to connect with AAIDD and network with other disability professionals.



Knowledge | Support | Empowerment

A Publication of the AAIDD Student and Early Career Professional SIG

Newsletter Editors

Britt Butler, Butler.591@osu.edu

Judith Gross, JGross@ku.edu

May Newsletter Contributors

Kelly Bohlander, *SECP SIG Happy Hour*

Patricia Navas, *IDD Research in Spain*

Loui Lord Nelson & Karrie Shogren, *Brookes*

Rebecca Lazzo, *Writing a book proposal*

Melissa DiSipio, *SECP SIG Luncheon*

Akina Noguchi, *Special Education in Japan*

Rose Nevill, *IASSID World Congress*

About SECP SIG

The goal of the AAIDD Student and Early Career Professionals Special Interest Group (SECP SIG) 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 SIG has a number of initiatives and meets via teleconference once per month to provide 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 or Judith Gross at jgross@ku.edu if you would like to learn more about becoming involved in this active committee.

Archived issues of SECP Newsletter available at :
http://www.aaid.org/content_366.cfm?navID=115

Please visit our website at:
http://www.aaid.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.aaid.org/content_120.cfm

