National Events

Ready by 21 National Meeting
March 29-31
Baltimore, MD
See the website for more details.

2016 Southeast Postsecondary Education Alliance Capacity Building Institute
April 4 & 5, 2016
Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA
Registration website: Click here to register.

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
Annual Convention and Expo
April 13 - 16
St. Louis, MO
See the website for more details.

Council of State administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) Spring Conference
April 18 - 20
Grand Hyatt, Bethesda, MD
Visit the website for more information.

Update from NTACT

NTACT Webinar Series

NTACT’s Webinar Series in 2016 will continue to address five areas: (a) rigorous academic preparation; (b) career-related curricula; (c) quality secondary transition planning and services; (d) strategies to reduce dropout and increase graduation for students with disabilities; and (e) data-driven decision making. Each one will be hosted by NTACT on the second Thursday of the month from 2:00 - 3:00 PM (Eastern). The March webinar information is below:

Peer-pairing to Support Academic Content Acquisition

March 10, 2016, 2:00 – 3:00 PM
Presenters: Sharon Vaughn and Colleen Reutebuch, The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk, University of Texas at Austin

Ask the Expert Series

What’s Ask the Expert?
The opportunity to see an expert present on a topic and ask questions and discuss the topic for 2 weeks afterward.

How do I participate?
There are 2 parts to an Ask the Expert.
1. Watch the live presentation OR watch the recording after the event
2. For the 2 weeks after each event below, you can Ask the Expert questions and participate in an online discussion about the topic.

The recorded presentation and discussion are at www.transitioncoalition.org

Register for these upcoming Ask the Expert live events!
State Conferences and Institutes

Oregon Association for Vocational Special Needs Personnel Conference (OAVSNP)
February 18 – 19, 2016
Hood River, Oregon

Texas Transition Conference
February 18-19, 2016
Dallas, TX
See the website for more details.

Alabama Transition Conference
March 7 & 8
Auburn, AL
See the website for more details and for registration information.

North Carolina Division on Career Development and Transition Conference (NC DCDT)
April 20 - 22
Greensboro, NC
See the website for more details.

Pennsylvania Community on Secondary Transition Conference
July 22 – 24
Penn State Conference Center, State College, PA

Peer Assisted Strategies and Students with High Support Needs
Presenter: Erik Carter, Vanderbilt University
March 10, 2016, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM ET
Online discussion March 10 – March 24
Register Here

Risky Business: Risk Factors for Dropping Out & the NTACT Risk Calculator
Presenter: Matthew Klare, NTACT
April 21, 2016, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET
Online discussion April 21 – May 5
Register Here

www.TransitionTA.org is adding resources weekly these days!
Please see new Annotated Bibliographies and Quick Guides in the Effective Practices section of the website under Additional Resources. You can also find Toolkits for hosting a Transition Fair and a Transition Institute in the Transition Services section of the website under Additional Resources. We’re continuing to improve the organization of the website and we welcome your feedback as we grow!

NTACT is preparing to host its Capacity Building Institute

A Capacity Building Institute for interdisciplinary teams from states will be hosted 2:00 PM Tuesday, May 3rd and end at 4:00 PM on Thursday, May 5 in Charlotte, NC. Registration is open!

This institute is intended for individuals to attend as members of a state’s strategic planning team. State leaders in secondary transition from education and vocational rehabilitation and other interested stakeholders participate in facilitated team planning, alternated with content sessions to develop knowledge. Team member may include representatives from state education agencies; state vocational rehabilitation agencies; parent centers; state departments of disability, mental health, juvenile justice, or labor; universities; community colleges; employers; local education agencies or schools; local VR offices; local service providers; as well as youth and family members. Team sizes range from 3 – 10 individuals.
Participants are expected to gain knowledge and skills – specific to program structures for implementing effective practices and building capacity through data based decision making, developing quality professional development, policy analysis, and technical assistance systems. Team members will participate in facilitated state team planning to target improved transition services, high school completion rates, and improved postsecondary outcomes for youth with disabilities.

NTACT partners with other organizations, federally funded centers, universities, States, and local practitioners to provide the content for the Institute. A draft agenda will continue to be updated at www.TransitionTA.org under Events.

**Featured National Center or Organizational Partner:**

This month we’d like to call attention to a set of new partners. NTACT will be communicating regularly and collaborating with several Training and Technical Assistance Centers funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). Websites and resources from the centers will be developing soon and we will keep you abreast of those developments.

Each TAC focuses its efforts on a specific set of topics designed to provide universal, targeted, and intensive technical assistance (TA). The partnering TA centers include the following:

- Job–Driven Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center (JDVRTAC)
- National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT)
- Rehabilitation Training and Technical Assistance Center for Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance (PEQATAC)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center – Targeted Communities (VRTAC–TC)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Youth with Disabilities (VRTAC–Y)
- Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC)

More information from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services regarding the funding of these centers is available here.

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**Legal Corner**

**DOL Issues WIOA Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Proposed Rule**

The U.S. Department of Labor’s Civil Rights Center (CRC) has announced publication of a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to update the federal regulations for Section 188 WIOA Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Regulations (29 CFR Part 38). Section 188 of WIOA prohibits the exclusion of an individual from participation in, denial of the benefits of, discrimination in, or denial of employment in the administration of or in connection with, any programs and activities funded or otherwise financially assisted in whole or in part under Title I of WIOA because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and for beneficiaries only, citizenship status, or participation in a program or activity that receives financial assistance under Title I of WIOA. These proposed regulations would update the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity regulations consistent with current law and address its application to current workforce development and workplace practices and issues. Public comments on the proposed regulations must be received on or before March 28, 2016.
The Job-Driven Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center (JDVRTAC), funded in 2014, is intended to address the Presidential Memorandum on job-driven activities, which directed the Departments of Labor, Education, and Commerce to revise and direct Department resources toward implementation of job-driven activities. The JDVRTAC topics nevertheless fit quite well with the emphasis on employer engagement and competitive integrated employment found in WIOA, making this center a key center in supporting WIOA implementation.

The Center is to provide universal, targeted, and intensive TA in four topic areas related to the President’s job-driven agenda, including:

- Use of labor market and occupational information by VR counselors and VR consumers for purposes of career planning and IPE development;
- Consultation with employers around individual needs of persons with disabilities in the workplace (services directed to help employers work with individuals with disabilities in the workplace at the individual level, including employer engagement...accommodations, assistive technology, etc.);
- Building relationships with employers (by system level of employer engagement, employer account systems, VR business representatives, CSAVR’s TAP and Net, etc.)
- Services to providers of customized training, which is training designed specifically to meet the needs of particular employers...in order to increase the participation of individuals with disabilities in these customized training programs, which often are linked to direct hires after completion.

The Center is in its second year of operation. The Center has developed tool kits for each of the topic areas for which it is responsible, and these tool kits can be found on the Explore VR website (www.explorevr.org/toolkits). The Center presented two webinars in December 2015 on job-driven activities, is developing presentations on job-driven topics for four states, and will be implementing one or more communities of practice this year. The Center began recruiting State VR agencies interested in receiving intensive TA on job-driven topics in July 2015 and is implementing intensive TA agreements in eleven State VR agencies.
These agencies are:

- Delaware Division of VR
- Illinois Division of Rehabilitation Services
- Massachusetts Commission for the blind
- Nebraska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation
- New Jersey Commission for the blind
- New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- North Dakota Division of Rehabilitation
- Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services
- Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Washington Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

### School Completion

*From “Absent” to “Present”: Disciplinary Practices that Keep Students in School* is a recent publication of the American Youth Policy Forum that discusses restorative justice practices, a tiered approach, to reduce school suspensions and to increase school completion.

### College and Career Readiness

The American Youth Policy Forum has a 3-part blog series designed to help first-generation college-students succeed. Click the link to access: [Part 1: Advising Strategies for Supporting First-Generation College Students: The Role of Traditional Counseling](#).

Check out the College & Career Readiness & Success Center’s Professional Learning Modules (PLMs), a collection of customizable “train-the-trainer” resources designed to walk participants through a process for implementing college and career ready initiatives. Materials include:

- A facilitator’s guide that provides facilitation tips and script for trainers.
- A meeting agenda with recommended time allotments
- A PowerPoint slide presentation
- Professional learning activity handouts

The College & Career Readiness & Success Center website also includes the Ready for Success blog designed to share lessons from national organizations who work to build career pathways with support from state leadership.
The chart provides ratings on the quality of studies on commercially available academic intervention programs. These interventions can be used as part of a data-based individualization program for educating students with disabilities who require intensive intervention due to persistent learning problems. Additional information on how to implement the programs can be found on the chart as well.

The National Center on Intensive Intervention publishes this tools chart to assist educators and families in becoming informed consumers who can select intervention programs that best meet their individual needs. Please note that the Center does not endorse or recommend the interventions included in the chart.

View the Academic Intervention Tools Chart.

The Think College National Coordinating Center reports that a growing number of colleges offer transition programs for students with intellectual disabilities. A recent report from the center indicates that these opportunities are helping more individuals achieve their goals for higher education and paid employment. The report indicates that more than 75 percent of students in the fourth year of a postsecondary program are working a paid job or internship, or participating in other career development activities.

**Vocational Rehabilitation**

As noted in our Featured Center Partner section, the JD VR TAC has developed Toolkits for working with employers on Business Engagement, Customized Training, Employer Supports, and Labor Market Information. Check them out at: ExploreVR.

**Professional Development Opportunities**

University of Kansas offers an online Master’s in Secondary Special Ed & Transition. The program helps educators prepare secondary special education students and young adults with disabilities who are making the transition to adult life.

See the KU website for more information about this innovative program.

**Scholarships Available to Obtain Special Education Master’s and Doctoral Degrees from the University of Oklahoma**

The University of Oklahoma offers three exciting Scholarship opportunities for those interested in Secondary Transition and/or Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). When applying to the OU graduate program, please indicate the specific scholarship opportunity in which you are interested in the first line of your personal statement.

- Transition Education Scholars Master’s Degree Program
- Transition ABA Scholars Master’s Degree Program
- Sooner Scholars Doctoral Degree Program

For each year of financial support, Scholars must work two years with students with disabilities as special educators, transition specialists, behavior analysts, or college professors.
Resources for Researchers

For VR data sets or to request a customized analysis of your VR data, visit the Data Lab at www.explorevr.org, hosted by the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

For data regarding the performance of Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities view the Think College Annual Report.

For an annotated bibliography of articles published from secondary analyses of the National Longitudinal Transition Study – 2 data set, please go to NTACT’s website.

Applications are due March 1st. To complete the on-line application, go to the OU website. For application assistance contact the Department of Educational Psychology’s Graduate Program Officer at 405-325-4525 or email edpsych@ou.edu.

Degree Questions. Contact Kendra Williams-Diehm, Ph.D., klwd@ou.edu, (405) 325-5848; Jim Martin, Ph.D., jemartin@ou.edu, (405) 325-8951; or Amber McConnell, Ph.D., ambermcc@ou.edu, (405) 325-8951

Webinars

In addition to NTACT’s webinar series indicated above, Seattle University’s Center for Change in Transition Services is hosting a professional webinar training series as part of Open Doors’ Multicultural Parent Information and Training Center Project funded by Rehabilitation Service Administration (RSA):

Monthly Trainings on Working More Effectively with Diverse Youth & Families in Transition
All webinars start at 3:15 p.m. PST
Webinars are free and open to the public.

Working with an Interpreter – February 17th
Adult Service Eligibility for Immigrant & Refugee Students – March 16th
Working Model – Cultural Brokering & Collaborative Partnerships – April 20th
Culturally Responsive Person Centered Planning – May 18th
Register for each webinar at http://www.seattleu.edu/CCTS/.

EWS 101 Webinar: Introduction to the 5 Core Components of Early Warning Systems

Date: February 25, 2016
Time: 10:00 - 11:00 AM PST
Who should attend: School and district staff interested in learning the basics of EWS

Click the link to register.
Contact Us!
Email us at ntactmail@uncc.edu.
Call us at 704-687-8606.
Follow us on Facebook and Twitter.
Pin us, as well!

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