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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Colleagues,

It is a great honor to be serving as the president of DCDT for the 2014–2015 term! I am looking forward to working with you and to continuing the exciting

work that has been accomplished over the past several years to improve post-school outcomes for students with disabilities.

I would like to begin by thanking **Stacie Dojonovic**, DCDT's immediate past-president, for all of her work as president and for her support, guidance, and advice as I move into my new role. In addition, please join me in thanking **Audrey Trainor**, who was DCDT's immediate past-president last year. Audrey served DCDT in various leadership roles for over a decade, and we are deeply appreciative of her many significant contributions.

I would like to welcome several new members to the DCDT board. **Darlene Unger** will be moving from the treasurer position into the role of vice-president. **Deanne Unruh** will join us as the treasurer. **John McNaught** (Southeast Region) and **Mary Pearson** (Southwest Region) will be serving as regional representatives. **Karrie Shogren** joins us as the Research Committee chair, and **Tiana Povenmire-Kirk** and **Laurie Kahn** as the Cultural Diversity co-chairs. I would also like to thank all of the other continuing board members, committee chairs, and committee members for their hard work and dedication to DCDT. Please know that there are numer-

ous ways to get involved, and the organization relies on its members to advance our mission! Please feel free to contact me if you would like to work on a committee or become active in the leadership of the division. If you are in a state that does not have an active subdivision, please reach out to the appropriate regional representative (see the DCDT website www.dcdt.org). Several new subdivisions became active during the past four years, and we are always looking to expand our work into other states.

We are looking forward to the upcoming **2014 International Conference: "Transition Rocks!"** in Cleveland, Ohio, from **November 6th through the 8th**. An impressive number of proposals were submitted, and in addition to traditional presentations, this year's conference will also feature poster sessions. The local area committee and DCDT's very own "conference queen," **Cindi Nixon**, are hard at work planning what promises to be a don't miss event. Registration and hotel information are available now on the DCDT website, so please be sure to register early. I hope to meet many of you in Cleveland.

If you have any ideas or comments about DCDT that you would like to share, or if you would like to become more involved, I encourage you to contact me via email. Best wishes for a wonderful year, and thank you for all of your work that improves transition outcomes for students!

Joe Madaus
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NEWS FROM **nsttac**

Thirty-nine states had interdisciplinary teams participate in the Capacity Building Institute in May 2014, which was co-hosted by NSTTAC, the National Post-School Outcomes Center, the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities, and the IDEA Partnership's Community of Practice on Transition. Participants who completed an evaluation strongly indicated an increase in knowledge of evidence-based practices and capacity-building strategies in both transition planning and school completion. They also indicated satisfaction with the structure of the institute, which alternates traditional content sessions with facilitated team planning sessions.

The mid-year one-day "Check and Connect" Cadre Meeting with state teams will be held on Wednesday, November 5, in Cleveland, Ohio—at the same location as DCDT's conference. Registration is free (but separate from DCDT's). Go to the NSTTAC website (www.nsttac.org) and check under "What's New" to register.

Resources on NSTTAC's Website:

Many readers may be familiar with the resources accessed from the home page of NSTTAC's website (www.nsttac.org), such as toolkits on transition assessment or evaluation and the links to reports and resources under "What's New." Readers may also quickly access the Practice Descriptions and Lesson Plan Starters at the Evidence Based Practices tab or the Indicator 13 Checklists and various training materials at the Indicator 13 tab. But there is so much more! Check out the wealth of Internet resources on various topics and interactive websites for youth and families engaged in transition planning at the Products and Resources tab and the Students and Families tab. Additionally, readers may be interested in the annotated bibliographies on specific topics at the Products and Resources tab. As always, let NSTTAC know what you think about the available resources. If you are interested in these and other resource updates from NSTTAC (and don't receive weekly e-blasts or monthly newsletters), e-mail nsttacmail@uncc.edu to sign up for the listserv.



RECOGNIZING EXCEPTIONAL SCHOLARSHIP IN THE TRANSITION FIELD



Eric Carter

Research Committee Chair

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Research has long played a prominent role in spurring, informing, and evaluating efforts to improve the transition experiences and outcomes of young people with disabilities and their families. In fact, establishing a deep and compelling knowledge base in our field depends in large part on the availability of rigorous, relevant research. We need strong scholarship that equips practitioners, policy makers, advocates, and other individuals with clear guidance on how best to enable young people with disabilities to live well during school and throughout adulthood. Likewise, we also need researchers who are willing to invest in sustained and thoughtful ways to answer the myriad questions facing our field.

DCDT members collectively have an impressive track record of carrying out important research focused on critical issues in the lives of people with disabilities and their families. The special issue (36:1) of our flagship journal, *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals*, highlights just some of these numerous contributions (see cde.sagepub.com/content/36/1.toc). The scholarly legacy of this Division is already quite strong and still growing.

As a Research Committee, one of our goals is to encourage rigorous research that makes a real difference in the lives of young people with disabilities and their families. One avenue through which we do this is by recognizing annually the contributions of a scholar who has contributed substantively to the field of transition through a body of compelling research. Nominations are now being accepted for the **2014 Patricia L. Sitlington Research in Transition Award**. Pat Sitlington was a past-president of DCDT who placed high value on the role of research in shaping policy and practice. Her own scholarship had a deep impact on what we know about what works in secondary education and transition. You can read more about Pat and her commitment to our field at this webpage (<http://cde.sagepub.com/content/32/2/67.full.pdf>)

Please consider nominating a stellar scholar in our field for this award. Nominations should include contact information for the nominee, a letter addressing the nature and significance of the nominee's research contributions, and the nominee's résumé or CV. The deadline is **September 15, 2014**. More information about the nomination process can be found at this webpage (<http://www.dcdt.org/2014/07/call-for-2014-dcdt-awards-nominations>). Past recipients of the award include Michael Bullis, David Test, Debra Neubert, and Michael Wehmeyer.

As always, the Research Committee welcomes your input, ideas, and involvement as it carries out its work. For more information, contact me.

REGIONAL & STATE SUBDIVISION NEWS

Northwest Region

Dawn Rowe

NW Regional Representative

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Idaho DCDT is gearing up for 7 regional joint trainings. The **trainings to be held in September**—“**Results Driven Accountability: Evidence-Based Predictors for Improving Outcomes for Students with Disabilities**”—are a collaborative effort of the Idaho Department of Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities. In addition, Idaho is holding a **transition institute November 17–18** in Boise, co-hosted by NSTTAC, the Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation, the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities, and Idaho Parents Unlimited. The institute will focus on Results Driven Accountability, Guideposts for Success, and the Family Guideposts for Success. Featured will be Jonathan Mooney, Curtis Richards, and Christine Pilgrim.

DCDT members in **Oregon** continue to do great things with youth with disabilities across the state as highlighted through the **Youth Transition Program’s Outstanding YTP stories** (<http://www.ytporegon.org/content/outstanding-ytp-student-stories>). The site includes excellent examples of evidence-based predictors (e.g., interagency collaboration, paid work experience) in practice and the impact on student outcomes. In addition, Oregon is gearing up for the 2015 DCDT conference to be held in Portland.

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I would like to do a shout out to all states in the Northwest Region: If something cool is happening regarding transition in your state, let us know so we can highlight you in the newsletter!

Northeast Region

Stelios Gragoudas

NE Regional Representative

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Hello from the Northeast division. The Institute for Community Inclusion, MASS-CEC, and **MASS-DCDT** are sponsoring a **statewide transition conference, “Transition Matters,”** on **October 29, 2014**, in Marlboro. The keynote speaker will be the amazing Mary Morningstar from the University of Kansas. Session topics will

include transition assessment, youth leadership, and competitive integrated employment. Registration is open (<http://www.youth-move.org/conference>).

In other news, **Michigan DCDT** has become an active chapter. They have an executive board wanting and needing dedicated members to participate in various roles and responsibilities. Two of their goals in the next year are to increase membership and create a website that is filled with relevant tools and resources. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact **Adam Danapilis** (adanapilis@kresa.org).

Southeast Region

Catherine Fowler

SE Regional Representative

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South Carolina (SC-DCDT) has partnered with the Transition Alliance of SC (TASC), the state interagency transition team, to initiate an effort to build capacity for improving transition programming in local communities. The groups are working with local interagency teams using the

PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope) model as an organizational strategic planning tool. On May 2, 2014, 20 local interagency teams met, and utilizing the expertise of Dr. Sharon deFur (DCDT past president) and the PATH planning tool, developed strategic plans for improving their local transition programs. Throughout the 2014–2015 school year, the 20 teams will be supported by the Alliance in implementing the plans.

SC-DCDT and TASC will host the **Statewide Transition Conference on November 17 and 18, 2014**, in Charleston. Mary Morningstar (DCDT past president) will be the keynote speaker and primary trainer. The conference will include local team planning time, group training, and breakout sessions, and it will focus on teaming and interagency collaboration for improving transition outcomes. For additional information, contact **Joy Ivester** (joy.ivester@uscmed.sc.edu).

This summer **Virginia DCDT** partnered with several other professional organizations to sponsor a one-day professional event. In the morning, participants learned about Virginia’s Community College Placement Tests. The remainder of the day focused on how we can prepare students for manufacturing jobs in the future. The event was held at Thomas Nelson Community College in Hampton.

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PARENTS' VOICE:

Transition Planning: What Parents Should Know



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A young man graduates from a mid-size high school in the northern part of the state. Most of his peers have plans to go on to college or get a job and move out of their parents' home. Just as his friends make plans to move into the adult world, so does he. The difference is that he spent most of his school years receiving special education services for a learning disability as well as physical therapy to improve range of motion in his arm and hand. He was pulled from content area classes to a resource room every day. Did he miss too much? Was he as prepared to move into the college scene as his friends were? In his freshman year of college, this young man struggled and could not continue his educational journey because he did not have the preparation he needed to be successful. Students with disabilities may miss critical instruction in academic content and learning skills due to time spent in special education classes.

Another young man in a small rural school graduates with his peers even though he has been given the option to stay at the high school until he is 21. He, too, received special education support and services under IDEA for his traumatic brain injury. He and his family believe it is time for him to move into the adult world. He does not want to stay in high school for another 2 years. To date, this young man has not held a job for more than a month since he graduated in 2005. He lives with his family because he does not have the skills to live on his own. He receives a Social Security check each month, but he could lose it if he works too many hours.

A third young man also graduates with his peers, but he opts to come back to school until he is 21—or at least until he feels more prepared to move into the adult world. This case is different; the young man does not come back to the high school for more of the same. He joins an 18-to-21 postsecondary transition program held on a local college campus and in the community but still supported by the school district. This young man is learning independent living skills in a real house setting, taking a college course, and working part time at a local department store that features brand name items for those who love the great outdoors. He is working on the skills he needs to be independent and will decide if and when he is ready for college. He is being given the opportunity to continue his learning but in an environment that is realistic and meaningful.

What are the dreams you have for your young adults? What are the dreams they have for their own future once they graduate? The answer to these two questions is the guiding force behind a good transition plan. How can we as parents help prepare our young adults to transition successfully into the adult world? Transition planning is where it begins.

A student-centered activity, transition planning requires a collaborative effort, with responsibilities shared by the student, parents, secondary personnel, and team members who work to help achieve the student's dreams for the future. Parents, who know their children better than any other member, are an essential part of this team and should be informed about transition planning long before it is legally required so they may support their student through the process.

Below are some questions parents can answer to help prepare for transition planning (see Note 1):

- ✓ What does the young person want to do with his or her life? What are his or her dreams, aspirations, or goals?
- ✓ What programs, services, accommodations, or modifications does the young person want or need?
- ✓ What kinds of accommodations will students need when they go on to higher education or employment?
- ✓ What community-based training opportunities does the school provide? Parents and their child should decide how much to participate in those activities.
- ✓ When will the young person graduate? What kind of diploma option is the best choice?

Student participation, along with support from other team members, is also central to transition planning and decision-making. This includes asking the student to identify preferences and interests and to attend meetings on transition planning. Success in postsecondary educational settings depends on the student's level of motivation, independence, self-direction, self-advocacy, and academic abilities developed in high school. Student involvement in transition activities should also be initiated early on in the school career. To contribute to successful transition planning, the student should:

- ✓ Understand his or her disability, including its effect on learning and work;
- ✓ Establish realistic goals;
- ✓ Present a positive self-image by stressing strengths while understanding the influence of the disability;
- ✓ Know how, when, and where to discuss and request needed accommodations;
- ✓ Develop personal qualities, such as realistic self-assessment, willingness to take risks, and ability to sustain efforts (see Note 2).

Positively and effectively done by a team dedicated to brainstorming ways to make dreams come true, transition planning can help young adults move into postsecondary education, employment, and community living. While it may not look exactly as the young adult or parent had envisioned, with

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GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE:

Key Provisions in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)



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On July 22nd, 2014, President Obama signed into law the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), formerly known as the Workforce Investment Act.

In a recent update for its membership, CEC noted four key provisions affecting individuals with disabilities (“4 Key Provisions to Know in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, July 16, 2014”):

1. WIOA places a significant emphasis on competitive employment for persons with disabilities. Youth with disabilities ages 24 and younger can no longer be hired for less than \$7.25 per hour without having met certain conditions. Specifically, the new law requires the provision of counseling services to include information on alternatives to employment at sub-minimum wage.
2. Pre-employment services are expanded by the law and include the following: job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling regarding postsecondary education program options, self-advocacy, and workplace readiness training. Also, states are again required to set aside 15% of vocational rehabilitation funding to ensure the aforementioned services are provided to individuals with disabilities.
3. Transition services are specifically addressed through the requirement that state vocational education agencies work with school personnel. That is, IDEA services must now be coordinated with pre-employment services for persons with disabilities. This is intended to strengthen the transition to work for young people with disabilities.
4. One Stop career centers are also affected by the new law. Specifically, the law notes that persons with disabilities are part of the population of individuals who experience barriers to employment. Also worth noting is the mandate to create an advisory committee to address strategies that boost competitive integrated employment options for person with disabilities. WIOA will take effect on July 1, 2015.

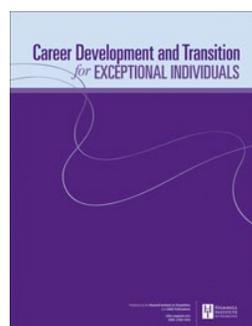
DCDT STUDENT UPDATE



Adam R. Lawlor, Student Representative
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I am pleased to share that the first DCDT Graduate Student Social was held at the CEC 2014 Convention and was a resounding success. Approximately 15 student members and many DCDT board members attended what proved to be an enjoyable evening. Student members had a good time speaking with DCDT board members about research and career aspirations over drinks. It was also fun to talk and network with other graduate students interested in transition who are from other institutions. Thank you to all attendees for making the first DCDT Graduate Social a success!

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The next edition of our amazing DCDT journal, *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals* (37:3) is due out in December. Here is a sneak peak at the table of contents. Watch for it and consider submitting your work to CDTEI today.

- **Best Practices in Transition to Adult Life for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities** (Clare K. Papay & Linda M. Bambara)
- **Identifying Transition Teacher Competencies Through Literature Review and Surveys of Experts and Practitioners** (Robert L. Morgan, Catherine A. Callow-Heusser, Erin L. Horrocks, Audrey N. Hoffmann, & Scott Kupferman)
- **The Impact of IDEA Indicator 13 Compliance on Postsecondary Outcomes** (Amy S. Gaumer Erickson, Patricia M. Noonan, Jennifer A. Brussow, & Barb J. Gilpin)
- **An Analysis of State Data Collection Protocols for Measuring Postschool Outcomes for Students with Disabilities** (Paul J. Gerber, Cecilia G. Batalo, & Serra T. De Arment)
- **Exploring Essential Characteristics of Self-Determination for Diverse Students Using Data from NLTS2** (Karrie A. Shogren, William Kennedy, Chantelle Dowsett, Mauricio Garnier Villarreal, & Todd D. Little)
- **A National Survey of Transition Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students** (Pamela Luft).

The 18th DCDT International Conference “Transition Rocks”

Please join us for the 18th annual DCDT International Conference, “Transition Rocks,” in **Cleveland, Ohio**, from **November 6 to 8, 2014**. Over the last 18 years, the International DCDT Conference has brought together secondary transition stakeholders from across the country to network and focus on research-based strategies to support youth with disabilities as they transition from school into post-school life.

The conference will be held at the **Renaissance Cleveland Hotel** located at 24 Public Square, Cleveland, OH 44113. **Call for reservations (1-216-696-5600)** and make sure to say you are with DCDT. We obtained a fantastic room rate at \$159/night, so book your room right away! You may also obtain your room by pasting the following link into your web browser’s URL address box (<http://tinyurl.com/DCDT2014>).



The conference kicks off on **Wednesday, November 5, 2014**, with two exciting preconference options:

1. Melinda Baird will present a full-day workshop on **Legal Issues in Transition, Secondary Education, and Behavior**. Spend the day learning about landmark cases that will help guide educators to provide legally sound, quality educational services to students with disabilities.

OR

2. **Profiles of Progress: Increasing Employment Outcomes of Students Through Postsecondary Education.** This full-day preconference will provide information on the current state of postsecondary programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, both nationally and in Ohio.

To see the full agenda go to the DCDT website (www.dcdt.org).

The next two and half days of the conference include **transition strands** such as **transition assessment, cultural diversity, postsecondary education and employment, family involvement, and community partnerships**. A draft agenda with full session descriptions is available at the DCDT website. Our keynote speakers—**Melinda Jacobs, Esq.**, and **Sondra Williams** (profiled in this newsletter)—are sure to engage and motivate you.

TO REGISTER for the conference, please to go to the DCDT website or use the following direct link: <http://www.cvent.com/d/h4qp1h/4W>

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION RATES END OCTOBER 6, 2014, so register today for the best rate!

*Any questions about conference events, contact our conference planner, **Cynthia Nixon**, via email (cnixon@fmarion.edu).*

The 18th DCDT International Conference

Keynote Speakers



Melinda Jacobs, Esq.
Keynote Address

Melinda Jacobs is an attorney in private practice who has worked in the field of special education law since 1985. Since 1996, she has exclusively represented school systems in special education matters pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and related laws. Ms. Jacobs formerly served as an attorney in the Office of Special Education Programs for the Tennessee Department of Education and as associate publisher for Education and Disability Publications for LRP Publications. In addition to her frequent national, state, and local presentations, Melinda has authored several publications and articles on special education law, and she has written and produced a series of audio- and videotapes on implementation of laws governing the provision of special education and related services. Ms. Jacobs is a member of the Special Education School Attorneys Advisory Council, and serves as chairperson of the LRP National Institute on Legal Issues of Educating Students with Disabilities. Her “down to earth,” practical presentation style, combining humor and song, makes legal information accessible and understandable for educators, parents, and other professionals in the field.

Sondra Williams
Luncheon Keynote Speaker



Sondra Williams is a parent of four children with an Asperger’s syndrome diagnosis. She is a poet, author, and speaker/presenter. Ms. Williams is a member of the AIG, the Autistic Global Initiative Group, under the Autism Research Institute in San Diego, California. As an advocate for changes in regards to disability, Ms. Williams focuses on developmental disabilities. She was appointed by the governor of Ohio to serve on the Ohio Autism Task Force, and she served as a board member for the Autism Society of Ohio and for the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence. She was also appointed as a parent advocate trainee under LEND at Ohio State University.

Ms. Williams has been significantly affected by autism as a child and as an adult. Through her experiences, she has gained enough skills to now be considered a higher functioning person with autism. As a young teen, she lived in institutional settings, where she was over-medicated and often restrained. She has had a variety of life experiences that allows her audience to get a sense of the impact of a poor quality of care for individuals with autism based on the poor understanding of autism from her generation.

Parents’ Voice, continued from page 4

appropriate community supports all dreams are possible. In Idaho, we have created the “Moving On Binder” as a tool for successful transition planning. This binder is available online and easily accessible to schools and families. I will be showcasing it at the DCDT conference in Cleveland this November. Please join me at the conference; I would love to hear from you at the Family Involvement meeting (see your program guide for session and meeting times). See you there!

Notes

1. The full **Transition Parent Brief**, *Parents Tips for Transition Planning*, can be accessed online (<http://www.pacer.org/publications/pdfs/ALL14.pdf>). It offers great suggestions for both parents and students. PACER Center is a parent-training and information center for families of children with disabilities. Parents can find publications and resources to help make the best decisions for their youth in transition.
2. Additional suggestions can be obtained from the full article (<http://www.idonline.org/article/7756>).

Regional & State News, continued from page 3

Southwest Region

Lori Y. Peterson
SW Regional Representative
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The Southwest region is pleased to announce the incoming DCDT Southwest Regional Representative, **Dr. Mary Pearson**. Dr. Pearson is an assistant professor at the University of Central Arkansas. Her professional areas of specialization include transition and working with individuals with severe disabilities. To contact Dr. Pearson regarding your state subdivision management or interest in revitalizing or starting a DCDT state subdivision in the Southwest region, please email (mpearson@uca.edu) or call (501-450-5452).

CALL FOR 2014 DCDT AWARDS NOMINATIONS: Would you like to honor an outstanding contributor to our field?

DCDT is accepting nominations for awards given to people who have made outstanding contributions in the field of secondary education and transition for students with disabilities. Each candidate must be a member in good standing of DCDT at the time of nomination. **Deadline for nominations is September 15, 2014.** The awards will be given out at the 2014 DCDT International Conference in Cleveland, Ohio.

To nominate someone for a DCDT award, please submit a letter of nomination. **Nominations and self-nominations can be e-mailed to: Stacie Dojonovic (stacie_dojonovic@fcsd.edu).** Any questions about the nomination process can also be emailed to Stacie.

Rookie Teacher of the Year Award – Honors a secondary teacher who has completed the first year of teaching (2013–2014) and would thus be in his or her second year during 2014–2015. It will be awarded to an educator who has demonstrated outstanding, innovative, and committed services to the career education and transition of secondary students with disabilities.

Marc Gold Innovative Practices in Transition Award – Presented to an individual who or organization that has demonstrated innovation in transition services. The award is named after Marc Gold, whose innovative “Try Another Way” approach opened the door to employment for many students with significant disabilities.

Iva Dean Cook Teacher of the Year Award – A practitioner honor given to an educator who has demonstrated outstanding commitment and service to the career education and transition of students with disabilities. The

award is named in recognition of Iva Dean Cook, a DCDT founding member, past president, and pioneer in teacher preparation in transition.

Employer of the Year Award – Presented to an employer or business that has shown remarkable commitment to promoting or providing employment opportunities for students with disabilities.

Oliver P. Kolstoe Award – Given to an individual who has made a significant contributions to the field of career development and transition through means other than direct classroom instruction (which is recognized by the Iva Dean Cook Teacher of the Year Award). The award is named in recognition of Oliver P. Kolstoe, a DCDT founding member and past president whose early research and publications significantly shaped the field of transition.

Donn Brolin Award for State/Province Leadership and Services – Awarded to an individual who has provided significant leadership and service in transition to a state or province. Donn Brolin was a founding member and the first president of DCDT and as author of the Life Centered Career Education curriculum was influential in the career development and early transition movement.

Patricia L. Sitlington Research in Transition Award – Presented to an individual who has contributed to more positive outcomes for transition-age youth and to the field of transition through a body of research in transition. The award is named in honor of Patricia Sitlington, a DCDT past-president who contributed significantly to knowledge in the field through research.

DCDT Student Update, continued from page 5

Now that the April social was a success, the DCDT Student Representative and DCDT Research Committee are looking for ways to expand opportunities for graduate students at the DCDT 2014 Conference in Cleveland. We are currently planning the following events and programs for the conference:

- A DCDT Graduate Student Social to be held on Friday, November 7, at 5:30 pm
- A DCDT graduate student–DCDT faculty mentorship program

Please keep an eye out for emails about these events.

In addition to these two events, conference sessions specifically geared toward early career scholars will be offered, including the following:

- ***How to do research and get published: Tips from the experts***
Presenters: Trainor, Test, Carter, Martin, Storey, and Wehmeyer
- ***Developing a research agenda: Strategies for early career scholars***
Presenters: Trainor, Papay, Test, Madaus, and Ju

I am looking forward to seeing and talking with many of you in November at the DCDT 2014 Conference!

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING THIS SUMMER?

Jane Razeghi, DCDT Executive Director

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CEC Leadership Institute

During July 23–25, the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) in Arlington, Virginia, hosted the annual CEC Summer Leadership Institute to which all officers of all divisions were invited. CEC

provided training and insights for all the state units and divisions (recruiting and retaining members, updating the divisions' websites, etc.) and presented information on how to better meet the needs of our members as well as the development of the CEC strategic plan, their membership campaign, and other important information.

The opening session was a joint meeting of CEC state unit and division representatives, a "first," as these two groups typically meet separately. This meeting was very well received, and most attendees expressed a hope that it will be continued and possibly expanded, allowing more opportunities for candid discussion of the issues facing CEC. We were welcomed by **CEC Past President Christy Chambers** and **CEC President Robin Brewer**. Our own DCDT past president (2003–2004), former CEC treasurer, and the new CEC president-elect, **Jim Heiden**, presented the CEC's fiscal health, budget, and future financial plans. CEC is recovering from several losses (such as low attendance at the past CEC national conference). Jim presented a realistic financial plan for CEC's future that seems possible to achieve. Despite what could have been interpreted as potentially "bad" news, the proposed plan left everyone feeling confident that success was doable.

CEC's new executive director, **Alex Graham**, reviewed notes relevant to the development of the new Board's strategic plan-in-development and presented the "Ten Top Recommendations" gleaned from a variety of CEC stakeholders. Although new to CEC, Dr. Graham strives for transparency regarding CEC concerns and appears to be very interested in hearing what the division and state units have to say.

I want to thank **Dale Matusевич** (DCDT past president and our formal representative to the CEC Program Advisory Committee [PAC]). He took a personal day to come in for the all-day PAC meetings and, as always, knew how to negotiate for the number of DCDT session slots for our division. Attending this meeting is extremely important for DCDT because it finalizes our program sessions at the national CEC convention in April. Dale has represented us for at least the

last 5 years, and we have come to depend on his availability and commitment.

The CEC Leadership Institute provided many resources and more information than I can possibly report here. It's a valuable experience for all division leadership members. I strongly urge all officers and committee chairs to attend.

Interdivisional Caucus Meeting

The Interdivisional Caucus (IDC) was founded in the late 1970s to bring together CEC divisions with common areas of concern; it consists of representatives appointed from each CEC division. At that time in CEC history, the various divisions were just beginning to attempt to communicate with each other. Although the *IDC Guidelines* were updated in 1994, much has changed in the past 20 years. In addition to a meeting at the beginning of the April CEC Convention week, the IDC also meets at the end of the Leadership Institute. Among a number of business items, the IDC Chair, **Bill Bogdan**, asked for volunteers to review the *IDC Guidelines* and suggest appropriate revisions. The DCDT executive director volunteered to assist in that task with the hope of moving IDC more officially toward becoming a CEC body that provides formal recommendations from the divisions to CEC as part of a mutually collaborative effort.

CEC Representative Assembly (RA)

The RA consists of representatives from state chapters and divisions (like DCDT), and it meets annually at the CEC convention. This meeting is where representatives discuss any issues with each other and with CEC. Our assumption was that the DCDT RAs' recommendations would be shared with both the Board of Directors and CEC staff. However, we learned this past spring that during the RA meeting, reps were only allowed *one minute* during a 10-minute period to present an issue regarding their state or division. No time was allotted for discussion of shared issues.

This presents a real challenge regarding sharing critical information. Our two DCDT RA representatives are **Judy Shanley** and **Ron Tamaura**, who were asked by DCDT to present the Board's concern regarding the elimination of the CEC Knowledge and Skills Subcommittee. Judy and Ron persevered and were able to present DCDT's concern. DCDT sincerely thanks both of them for sitting through hours of reports during the 2014 April RA meeting and all the time they have had to commit to being our reps. Regardless, it appears that the CEC Knowledge and Skills Subcommittee is to be eliminated despite its democratic representation of each and every division.