Allison Zoller and Linda Varblow presented information on their non-profit organization, Persever8, a company focused on providing adults with autism education and exposure to employment opportunities within the technology field.

Persever8’s mission is to not only provide employment skill building, but also independent living skills. This holistic approach is what makes Persever8 a unique organization.

Persever8 officially launches September 2016. The first class will include 10-12 adults with autism. Fully funded tuition will be awarded for these students. The program will last eight months and include Python Program Language education, life skills training, and workforce training.

Raleigh-based company, SAS, has partnered to provide internships for Persever8 students. Upon successful completion of internships, students will be offered a company position at SAS.

Persever8 has been an affiliate of UNC’s CIDD for nearly a year. They look to create additional relationships within the Triangle technology sector.

For more information please visit: www.persever8.org

During the previous two PSEA meetings, we took a portion of the time to gather and collaborate in groups about key PSE issues. Groups had been divided by topics: Community College Changes, Family Involvement, and Employment. At the spring meeting we further discussed these issues as one large group rather than separating into smaller discussions. Many issues overlap and are shared by the three original topics. Specific action items discussed include:

- Community Colleges to become more involved in informing the IEP process to increase awareness of PSE as an option.
- Provide the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) NC Division for Career Development and Transition (DCDT) access to PSE information and resources to benefit transition coordinators, special education teachers, and others.
- Create, develop, and disseminate family-friendly resources, as needed, such as program brochures for prospective students.
- KEY ACTION ITEM: Expand and redesign PSEA website for ‘go-to’ NCPSE resources and information. Include decision-tree process of available programs and transition kits for teachers. Focus on employment resources specifically for students with autism and IDD.

Donna and Deb will begin to prioritize next steps for Action Items this summer.
**Member Updates**

**Sarah Teel** with Scholars with Diverse Abilities (SDAP) at Appalachian State reported that TPSID-funded transition and life skills coordinators have been hired. Two students will graduate at the end of this semester—one student is planning to achieve their Associate’s Degree.

**Stephanie Antkowski** of the ARC reported Guilford County has been awarded a ‘Say Yes’ program. All students will be able to attend college with tuition paid. Initially, OCS and students with IDD were excluded but have since been included in the scholarship program.

**Barbara Leach** of the UNC School of Social Work’s Family Support Program reported on Rethinking Guardianship, a project funded by the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities. A website is currently being developed to distribute more information. The project seeks self-advocate and family advisory committee members. The next meeting is May 19 in Chapel Hill. For information leach@email.unc.edu. FSP also promotes PSE and employment opportunities for transition-age students.

**Bryan Dooley** reported continued progress towards implementing NC Senate Bill 753; a law that requires disability awareness and history curricula be taught in public schools during the month of October. Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools is one of the few to implement this curriculum. **Daya Patton** doubled WSFCS Transition Fair participation.

**Kathy Martinez** of Cape Fear CC announced a new pathway of study for students in the ABE Essentials program focused on hospitality and tourism.

**Cindy Hayes** of Elizabeth City’s PACE program at the College of the Albemarle announced that two students have been accepted and will be attending the culinary arts program.

**Representative Verla Insko** expressed her support of new PSE opportunities. She mentioned the importance of providing input and reviewing how the Innovations Waiver addresses the needs of those it is designed to serve.

**Sharon Jackson** of Cleveland Schools said that Connexions at Cleveland CC expanded to 3 classes, including a very successful child care class.

**Cate Weir** of Think College at UMass-Boston reported that new federal funding has been approved in 2015 for Transition and Post-Secondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID). Across the U.S., 25 grantees at 52 campuses have been awarded funding. Appalachian State is the current recipient in North Carolina.

Former TPSID grantees are currently helping to mentor new programs. Additionally, Think College assists and mentors programs without TPSID funding that provide PSE access for students with IDD.

For more information please visit: www.ThinkCollege.net or email thinkcollegeTA@gmail.com
Joan Johnson of Beyond Academics and UNCG announced that their largest graduating class ever (14) will be awarded certificates for their completion in the Integrative Community Studies (ICS) program of study. These students will also participate in the General Commencement on May 6.

CIDD’s LEND trainees and fellows recently presented their year-long projects. PSEA members presented: Kenneth Kelty, Inclusion Across the Lifespan; McCafferty Kenmon, A Coaching Approach-Education Coaching as a Support Offered to Advocacy Trainees in an Inclusive LEND Course; and Paul Offen, Inclusive Leadership: “Best for Everyone.”

Mandy Earnest announced that the College of the Albemarle in Mateo is expecting their first graduating class. PACE has to shift their program focus to include hospitality and tourism industry in the Outer Banks. Two students have already begun working at local hotels. Finally, local high school students are invited to shadow the program and college classes currently offered.

Adela Van Name reported that Project Achieve for Transitioning High School Students (PATHSS) is completing its second year of the pilot program that is located on campus at UNC at Chapel Hill. PATHSS offers employment experience and training and is graduating the first two students.

Kenneth Kelty, leadership trainee in advocacy at the Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities (CIDD) UNC, gave presentations at East Chapel Hill High School’s Equity Summit and at UNCG’s Beyond Academics. Kenneth is named to the list of “68 People with Autism to Know” (http://kerrymagro.com/68-people-with-autism-to-know-for-autism-awareness-month).

Paul Offen, leadership advocacy trainee and McCafferty Kenmon, leadership advocacy fellow, represented the CIDD at Autism Society of NC Annual Conference. For the first time, a forum and meeting was offered the evening before the conference to support and encourage self-advocate participation in ASNC.

David Ingram with the NC Div MH/DD/SAS reports that the advisory committee for House Session Law: 2015-241 Educational Opportunities for Students with Disabilities met. The committee is cochaired by Claudia Horn, Senior Director of Employment Services, Division of Vocational Rehab Services and Terri Shelton, Vice-Chancellor of Research and Economic Development, UNCG.

Donna Yerby and Kenneth Kelty of CIDD, UNC reported this year’s SE PSEA conference in Atlanta a success with 9 out of 10 states represented, totaling 180 attendees. Key issues discussed were accreditation standards, capacity building, advocacy, and innovative PSE funding strategies.

Deb Childress reports that 3C Institute is funded by National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research to develop online software to help students with ID prepare for the workforce. Participants are needed to try modules! Receive a $30 gift card. Contact: childress@3cisd.com
No summer PSEA meeting...BUT:

SAVE THE DATE!
Fall NC PSEA
Quarterly Meeting
Tuesday, September 13
Noon—3pm
CIDD Conference Room
A light lunch will be provided

Featured Guest
::
Susanna Miller-Raines
PSE Consortium Statewide Coordinator
Georgia Inclusive Post Secondary Education Consortium
Center for Leadership in Disability
Georgia State University

We are excited to announce that Susanna Miller-Raines will join us in September and share progress from our Alliance counterparts in Georgia!
Susanna has inspired new PSE programs and coordinated a strategic approach to funding that resulted in new PSE opportunities across Georgia. She will review ideas and recommendations that will be helpful as NC moves forward.

Questions or comments?
Contact Deb Zuver

deborah.zuver@cidd.unc.edu

Our Website is Under Construction

Our new website will provide an updated collection of NC-PSEA resources as well as a section for program highlights. If your program has updated information or announcements, please contact Adam DePrimo or Deb Zuver.

adam.deprimo@med.unc.edu - deborah.zuver@cidd.unc.edu