

# NC PSE Alliance

North Carolina Postsecondary Education Alliance:  
QUARTERLY MEETING SUMMARY

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## Next PSE Alliance Meeting

Wed. April 18

1:00– 4:00 pm

Western  
Carolina U  
Cullowhee,  
NC

## The first NC PSE Capacity-Building Summit: March 23

Participants at the first PSE Capacity-Building Summit will gather at Wake Tech to lay groundwork for creating inclusive postsecondary education (PSE) programs for students with intellectual disabilities. Attendees include transition coordinators, educators, agency representatives and others interested in steps to strengthen or start an option on a community college or university campus. Representatives from the eight existing NC PSE options will present on panels and be on hand to answer questions. Representatives of systems-level supports will attend, too.

Funding was secured from two sources. Karen Yerby, Associate Director for Student Assessment and Placement for NC Community College System, received a College Access Challenge Grant. Planning funds from ThinkCollege at the Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass-Boston were awarded to the Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities; PSEA Cofacilitators, Deb Zuver, Director of Self-Advocacy Initiatives and Donna Carlson Yerby, Assistant Director, Services and Education Section Head collaborate on the project.

Karen Yerby reported, "We hope to apply for more funds for next year to expand the scale of the summit. The hope is that future events can include more family participants and other interested attendees. Right now the target audience is transition coordinators." Capacity is 150; funding allows registration to be kept to \$25. Keynote speaker, Tom Sannicandro, state representative from Massachusetts, supported innovative legislation to maintain postsecondary education options for students with I/DD. [See bio on Page 2.]

The PSEA members provided input for the Summit format and will present workshops on topics and considerations related to implementing a PSE. Members will also provide one-to-one consultation at tables.



### P.O.W.E.R. for NC

Postsecondary Options with  
Expanding Resources

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## PSE Capacity-Building Summit, continued from page 1

David Westling, director, University Participant at WCU commented on the need for participants to have “concrete steps to take when they get back to work.” A survey will provide guidelines and feedback about the need for resources and identify those who can provide such resources. Donna Yerby discussed activities planned post-Summit, “We intend to contact the participants to follow up and see what kind of progress they've made.” PSEA members provided additional input for Summit planning:

- ◆ Provide a place to identify what supports participants need;
- ◆ Offer a menu of options; needs assessment;
- ◆ PSEA members can provide support as content experts in a given area;
- ◆ Include input from UNC Charlotte, as growing leaders in policy-making for post-secondary transitions
- ◆ Encourage perception of the current climate including how receptive are colleagues/supervisors to the idea of PSE efforts?
- ◆ Group people by region to build networks and share resources;
- ◆ Encourage attendees to consider vision /next-steps for a program they would like to establish;
- ◆ Provide common template for easy comparison of PSE options. Be sure to include the geographic region for people who will look at it that way.

## Tom Sannicandro—Summit Keynote Inspires

**Tom Sannicandro** chairs the Joint Committee on Higher Education in the Massachusetts Legislature and has served as a State Representative in the Massachusetts House of Representatives since 2005. As the former Vice Chair of the Committee for Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities, he was the chief sponsor of the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Program, which educates students with significant intellectual disabilities in the Massachusetts State College System in inclusive settings alongside their typically developing peers.

Rep. Sannicandro authored the Transition Age Bill and the Observation Bill, both of which became law. He Co-Chairs the Special Education Caucus, served on the Ashland School Committee for five years, and is currently on the Board of Directors of the MA Down Syndrome Congress.

His law practice focuses on special education and legal issues that surround transition to adulthood for people with ID and their families. He has a law degree from Suffolk University, and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Harvard University.

## Updates: PSE Developments

**Megan Kovac's** role as education coach for LEND Self-Advocate position at the CIDD, UNC continues; she assisted trainee **Kerry Hagner** to create a video tour of CIDD, describing what she does as a self-advocate trainee. Kerry was unable to attend the PSEA meeting as she was in Washington, DC advocating for a Eunice Kennedy Shriver project as a Global Ambassador with Special Olympics. She sends her regrets. **Donna Yerby** noted that applications for next year's trainee position were available and due March 12. Donna also announced that the CIDD PSE transition clinic has seen increasing numbers of students. **Dana Hanson-Baldauf** reported that evaluation results from the fall PSEA meeting indicated a high level of satisfaction. **Tammy Day** visited the PSEA meeting from Vanderbilt University where she directs the PSE option. She is interested in learning about the PSE Alliance in NC so that she might create a stronger task force in Tennessee; the task force has been in effect for 7 years. Tammy has invited Deb Zuver and Donna Yerby to consult with the task force and provide a training at their spring meeting. **Pat Keul** described Project Search and noted that recent partnerships with Durham Public Schools and Durham Regional Hospital have created employment opportunities. **Melanie Schwantes** from Appalachian State reports success "for the first year of our program. Interested applicants will be visiting this year for an overnight visit."

## Beyond Academics at UNC-Greensboro

**Yasmine White** is Executive Director of Voices Together, an educational model that is music-based. All staff are music therapists. The team currently partners with Beyond Academics as they work with additional school districts beyond the current 6 districts. Information is on the Voices Together website. **Joan Johnson**, Beyond Academics Executive Director, reports that BA students have gone through Voices Together.

This year Beyond Academics has added 17 freshman. "We have certificate coursework as part of the curriculum, but access degree-track courses depending on student interest and department willingness to coordinate. This year's freshmen are accessing more regular courses than previously." By the Admissions deadline, 57 applications had been received.

**Terri Shelton**, UNC-G Vice-Chancellor, added that she has been in contact with a regional consortium on PSE, the Southeast Consortium. Terri said it's a way to network and learn from what others are doing in PSE. "Where two or more of us gather, there's a conversation."

## In Other Member News...

- ◆ The PSEA welcomes *Antavia Cherry* who replaces *April Root* at Central Piedmont CC; April is now Associate Director.
- ◆ *John Buck* joins us from Southern Wake Academy. All students have an IEP; he is interested in transition options.
- ◆ *Seb Prohn* is faculty liaison at WCU. "I'm the homework guy" supporting students to move beyond support from assigned mentors to their classmates.
- ◆ *Cate Weir*, TPSID Coordinator at Think College is a "recent transplant" to NC.
- ◆ *Ellen Russell*, with The Arc of NC, is in the process of putting together a self-advocacy curriculum with particular regard to governance in non-profit groups.
- ◆ *Richard Tedescucci* heads up Region 4 Positive Behavior Intervention Supports on State DPI Transition Leadership Team.
- ◆ *Monica Isbell*, president of NC AHEAD created a new partnership with Elon U. Career College at Alamance CC moves from a 16-week to a year-long format.

## PSE Vision for UNC System

The UNC General Administration is very receptive to knowing more about PSE. They have requested a proposal for systems-level change. Input from NC PSEA Alliance members includes:

- ◆ What's our end goal? What would it mean for UNC if we, as a state-wide system, had support for PSE?
- ◆ PSE philosophy and core values are in line with the existing UNC mission statement, particularly with respect to diversity.
- ◆ Consider an overarching system for all programs. If UNC applies to be a comprehensive inclusive program, it is eligible for federal dollars. Other colleges can use the model to streamline application process.
- ◆ It's important to find common threads/indicators to cut across all different programs. Solution: look at the federal requirements, at ThinkCollege models and standards, and at DPI options for dual enrollment.
- ◆ Demonstrate (to Rep. Insko and higher ed admin.) that PSE is value-added experiences enriching the university
- ◆ Must educate public, teachers, professionals, students.
- ◆ Consistency exists in data for PSE, employment, independent living, quality of life.
- ◆ Perception can be a challenge; PSEA should be a supportive and guiding body; PSEA can align with a liaison, meet on regular basis, analyze the policy and data.

**NEXT NC PSE ALLIANCE MEETING: Take a trip to the mountains!**

Remember to



SAVE THE DATE

Western Carolina University

Cullowhee, NC

**Wednesday, April 18, 2012** 1pm—4pm

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