

Center for Persons with Disabilities

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NewsFlash

Law Institute Addresses Special Education Issues

The Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) Center/Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (MPRRC) hosted the Nebraska Institute on Special Education Law and Practice November 8-9 in Omaha, Nebraska, with approximately 400 participants attending. Topics included discipline, related services, the implementation of Part B and C Regulations, behavior plans, IEP issues, and developing case law surrounding the many issues districts face in implementing special education programs.

TAESE/MPRRC currently operates 20 projects through the CPD, serving numerous states across the nation with technical assistance relating to education.

CPD BY THE NUMBERS

During fiscal year 2007, CPD funding totaled almost \$12.4 million, with over 80 percent of funding generated from external sources. For every state dollar received in FY 2007, the CPD generated five additional dollars.

Young Advocates Making A Difference in Utah

As part of the Utah Integrated Services project operated through the Center for Persons with Disabilities, the Young Adult Advisory Committee (YAC) is



YAC members Brandi Dodd and Andrea Thomas (front) pose at a recent conference in Washington DC with Utah Integrated Services staff members Jeff Sheen, J.C. Vazquez, and Al Romeo

lending new perspectives to professionals, parents, and service providers. The YAC assists in the development of curricula, works with local community partners, and serves as liaisons to multiple workgroups across Utah. Comprised of a diverse group of ten individuals with disabilities, committee members are outspoken advocates on disability issues and provide important insights to Medical Home team members.

During the past year, YAC members have focused on transition issues, particularly transitioning from pediatric to adult care. They have worked with pediatricians, parents, nursing staff and others who comprise Medical Home teams. A panel presentation offered by YAC members to Utah physicians has been made into a DVD and addresses issues encountered by individuals with disabilities. In addition, two YAC members recently presented at the National Association of University Centers on Disabilities conference in Washington DC.

"We need to stop and think, 'Whose life is this, anyway?'" said Brandi Dodds, YAC member. "Whose life is this that we are making decisions about? What does this person want and need? People with disabilities have dreams, they do have goals, they do have things they want to do.... This is the person who has to deal with the disability more than anyone and they need to have control of where their life is going and what is going to become of their life."

Most of the YAC members will also be involved in a new three-year CPD project entitled "Becoming Leaders for Tomorrow (BLT)". Funded through the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, the project is designed to provide materials and opportunities to help youth and young adults with disabilities as they transition into adulthood. Some of the opportunities that the BLT Project will provide will include training on leadership, advocacy, and transition issues. After completing training, a small group of participants will then become trainers and mentors for other youth and young adults. Other opportunities include development of print and website materials.

More information about transition issues, as well as education issues and information about providing a Medical Home is available at www.medhomeportal.org.

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