Make your plans now to attend the 11th Oklahoma Transition Institute (OTI), October 3-5! This year’s OTI theme is “Expanding the Possibilities,” with an emphasis on the Employment First philosophy. The OTI has grown incredibly in 11 years, having grown into the state’s premier transition conference and planning institute all rolled into one! You won’t want to miss out.

Our emphasis on Employment First is a priority of many states. Employment First is a national movement based on the premise that ALL citizens, regardless of disability, are capable of integrated employment and community life.

The Oklahoma Transition Council is accepting proposals now and encourages teachers, administrators, vocational counselors, parents, and others to propose an exciting session that incorporates our theme and emphasis.

Download our institute presentation proposal form and email to Larry Hartzell no later than June 30, 2016. Presenters will be notified of their presentation status by July 29. Presenters will attend OTI at no cost.
Embassy Suites by Hilton Norman Project SEARCH Academy

We are excited to have begun the inaugural year of Embassy Suites by Hilton Norman Project SEARCH Academy! Embassy Suites by Hilton Norman, Norman Public Schools, OU National Center for Disability Education and Training, the Department of Rehabilitation Services, and Dale Rogers Training Center have partnered to provide nonpaid internships for students with disabilities ages 18-21. Each student will participate in three 10-week internships in areas including Food & Beverage Outlets, Housekeeping Utility, Laundry Attendant, Maintenance Utility, Culinary Utility, and Banquet Set-Up/Server. Along with nonpaid internships where students are learning transferrable job skills for future employment, students have one hour of classroom time at the end of the day. The classroom curriculum covers such topics as teamwork and communication, interviewing, resume writing, money management, and health. Each student in the program has completed his or her high school credit requirements and EOI requirements. At the completion of the program, the students will be finished with high school. The goal of Project SEARCH is integrated, competitive employment in the community.

Embassy Suites by Hilton Norman has been a wonderful host business. The hospitality industry offers such a wide variety of occupations within one building that the students will leave the program with a wide range of job skills and experience. The students will undoubtedly leave the program with increased self-awareness and growth of confidence. The program offers each student a unique experience during their last year in Norman Public Schools, but what they offer each person involved with the program, from the partners to the employees at Embassy Suites by Hilton Norman, is so much more. They show up to work every day with a ready and positive attitude that impacts all with whom they come in contact. Project SEARCH is a valuable high school transition program that helps to build a bridge between high school and postsecondary employment.

Project SEARCH™ is a business-led collaborative model that provides employment and education opportunities for High School Seniors or Post-secondary Technology Center Students with disabilities through a combination of classroom employability skills instruction, career exploration, and on-the-job training and support.

Project SEARCH™ is a nine-month, non-paid internship program designed to prepare students for entry-level employment. Through partnership, the program takes place in a business setting where total immersion in the workplace facilitates the teaching and learning process through acquisition of competitive work skills.

For more information about Project SEARCH, contact Judi Goldston, State Coordinator, by phone 405.325.0448 or email: jgoldston@ou.edu.
Resources for free accessible digital books

Students with print disabilities such as visual impairment, physical disabilities, or learning disabilities have access to specialized formats through Bookshare and other sources... but how can schools serve students who need accessible materials but don’t qualify as print disabled? This group includes non-English speakers, students with intellectual, emotional, or attentional disabilities, autism, and other impairments who don’t otherwise qualify as print disabled.

Open eBooks is a new resource funded by the federal government that will help to bridge the gap by offering thousands of popular and award-winning books to Title I and military base schools as well as special education programs. Open eBooks are formatted to EPUB3 specifications and can be read in an app which is available for iOS and Android.

Educators can sign up for the Open eBooks service at http://openebooks.net/faq.html and then request codes for each student who needs accessible digital books. Read the EdSurge article with information about the program, including a video announcement from First Lady Michelle Obama at https://www.edsurge.com/news/2016-02-24-the-white-house-and-michelle-obama-release-250m-open-library-app-for-title-i-and-special-education-teachers.

ABLE Tech provides technical assistance and training to help schools acquire Accessible Education Materials. Learn more about Accessible Educational Materials. Contact Kimberly Berry to schedule professional development in your area! Call 1-800-257-1704, or email kim-berly.berry@okstate.edu.

ABLE Tech is Oklahoma’s Assistive Technology Act Program and is a federally funded service program that provides assistance for educators, students, and families to learn more about the possibilities with assistive technology. ABLE Tech provides training to school district personnel through a contract with the Oklahoma State Department of Education. For more information, visit http://okabletech.okstate.edu, email us at abletech@okstate.edu, or call 800-257-1705.

Transition in Action
@ Lawton Public Schools
The week of June 20, 2016 Sooner SUCCESS will be hosting two 2-day training events. The events will be focused on practical techniques that allow parents with disabilities and human service professionals to interact, collaborate, and learn from each other more effectively. Training will be provided by staff from the National Technical Assistance Center for Parents with Disabilities.

Conference highlights will include:
1. Why this matters—legal implications for professionals.
2. How to know when a parent could benefit from support for possible learning challenges.
3. Utilizing adaptive equipment to support infant care.
4. Working with parents that have cognitive disabilities.
5. Effective strategies for supporting parent learning difficulties during home based programs.
6. How to use Person-Centered Tools with families.
7. Mental health implications when an infant is removed from his/her parent.

Sooner SUCCESS encourages parents with disabilities as well as professionals in the fields of: head start, education, early intervention, speech, physical and occupational therapy, child welfare, permanency planning, parent education, independent living support for adults with disabilities, family court and legal services, community resource and referral, behavioral health, and assistive technology to attend.

The training will be held at 2 different locations to reduce travel required in this time of limited budgets. The training will be held in Enid at the Autry Technology Center on June 20th & 21st. It will be repeated in Shawnee at the Gordon Cooper Technology Center on June 23rd & 24th. A certificate of participation will be provided for all participants. Lunch will be on your own each day. Register online for the site of your choice:

Enid - http://supportingpwdenid.eventbrite.com
Shawnee - http://supportingpwdshawnee.eventbrite.com

For more information, contact Lisa Simmons at lisa-simmons@ouhsc.edu

OU has selected 24 new scholars! Congratulations to the following individuals. They will receive fellowships to complete master’s and doctoral degrees.

Transition Scholars:
1. Kim Osmani (doctoral)
2. Shelby Sparkman
3. Zach Merrill
4. Mary Crook
5. Denise Griffin
6. Shawna Harris
7. Tusa Scraper
8. Christina Ulmer
9. Natalie McQueen
10. Malarie Deardorff
11. Margaret Johnson
12. Mindy Lingo
13. Andrea Suk
14. Jinhua (Norma) Ting
15. Dawn Walker
16. Diana Lummus
17. Melissa Madden
18. Caitlin Wittum
19. Lisa Genevie

Transition/ ABA Doctoral Scholars
1. Catherine Blair
2. Heather Eisel
3. Jenny Howard
4. Joshua Pulos
5. Tiffany Biles
Hello everyone! The Sixteenth Annual Tech-Now Competition is just weeks away. We have been working our way through the competition checklist, but we still have a long way to go. Donations for awards and door prizes have been coming in, and we have secured six, one hundred dollar scholarships for our highest achieving seniors.

We expect to have a great turnout for the competition. In addition to many students receiving cash awards and trophies for their top scoring projects, numerous students will receive some fantastic door prizes. This year we have six laptops, and thousands of dollars for cash awards to our students. Thanks to our donations from our fantastic supporters we are again able to provide every Tech-Now student attending the competition a free T-shirt and group picture.

In addition to the annual competition, Tech-Now has partnered with the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services to offer two, week long STEM summer camps! Our goal is to offer camps in the northwest and southeast areas of the state. The camps will teach participants skills like computer aided design, manufacturing techniques, team skills, and multimedia production. The best part is that students will receive a copy of the design and multimedia production software for use on their home computers! This will allow them to continue to develop their technical skills even after the camp has ended!

Below is a copy of our Save The Date card for our annual competition. If you have never attended one of our competitions I hope you will consider joining us for this fantastic event that rewards students for their hard work. If you would like more information about becoming a partnering school just email us at tech-now@hotmail.com and we will get things rolling.

A huge thank you to our partners The Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services, The Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, our school sites, the public/private financial supporters, and all our volunteers. I hope to see you at the competition!

Rick
Oklahoma’s Association on Higher Education and Disability (OK-AHEAD) furthers participation for individuals with disabilities in Oklahoma’s postsecondary education through collaboration, information dissemination, advocacy, professional and policy development, and research.

OK-AHEAD is an affiliate chapter of the National Organization AHEAD, a premiere professional association committed to full participation of persons with disabilities in postsecondary education.

If you are interested in becoming a member, please visit our membership page. If you would like to serve as an officer for the 2016-2017 year, please contact Tabitha Pope at t pope@snu.edu.


May 3 - Medicaid Matters Rally Day, Oklahoma State Capitol, 11:00 a.m.

May 5 - 16th Annual Tech Now Statewide Competition, Norman North High School, Norman

May 7 - Autism Piece Walk, Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark, Oklahoma City, https://piecewalk.org

May 20 - 10th Annual Oklahoma Parents Center Statewide Conference, Oklahoma City - http://oklahomaparentscenter.org/updates/10th-annual-statewide-conference/

June 14-18 - 13th Annual Oklahoma Youth Leadership Forum, Chickasha


June 20 - 21 - Supporting Parents with Disabilities Conference, Enid (see p4 for more info)

June 23 - 24 - Supporting Parents with Disabilities Conference, Shawnee (see p4 for more info)


July 26 - Americans with Disability Act 26th Anniversary, for ideas to celebrate: http://adaanniversary.org/

August 24 - DSACO Self-Advocacy Series, Oklahoma City, http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0544adaa2fa4f0d0-teen

September 1 - Expressions Gallery entries due to jenifer.randle@okdhs.org (see p8 for more info)

September 12 - Transition Times Newsletter deadline for articles (email to jenifer.randle@okdhs.org)

October 3 - 5 - 11th Annual Oklahoma Transition Institute (see p1 for more info)

October 14 - 16 - Oklahoma People First Statewide Conference & Expressions Gallery, Double Tree Hotel, Tulsa
~ REACHING THE GOOD LIFE ~

What this tool does:
Explores a person's good life (hopes, dreams, & aspirations) and where they are likely to succeed.

How it helps:
Helps identify the steps the person could take to move them closer to their good life.

Questions to ask:

- In an ideal world, what would life look for you? What does your good life look like?
- What would you be doing and with whom?
- What excites you to reach your good life? What are your motivations?
- What kinds of relationships do you want in your life?
- Where do you dream of living?
- Where would you like to visit?
- What new things would you like to try?

How to use it:
Take notes on the questions to ask. Ask the individual (and/or best friends) the answers to:

- Where are the places where your hopes and dreams make sense?
- Who are the people who need to be involved and would be interested?
- What resources are needed to get closer to your good life?
- What are the next steps or actions?
- What are we learning?

Notes

Adapted from Community Connecting, NorthStar Services.
Expressions Gallery 2016

Oklahoma has incredible artists with disabilities and it’s time to showcase their masterpieces! The Oklahoma People First Annual Conference is an educational and advocacy event by and for Oklahomans with disabilities. This year, the Expressions Gallery is partnering with the People First Conference.

Artwork may include: painting, drawing, sculpture, pottery, poetry, photography, quilting, etc. (Sorry, no performing arts at this time!).

Submission Instructions:
- Artists may submit up to 5 works of art. The Selection Committee will select no more than 2 from each artist due to space limitations.
- Pictures of your original pieces must be emailed to jenifer.randle@okdhs.gov by September 1, 2016 in the form of a jpg, jpeg, png, gif, pdf or a word file WITH an attached art entry form. Please email Jen for a form.
- All artwork, including sculpture, must not exceed 20 pounds. Unfired clay sculptures will not be accepted.

Display Requirements:
Artists should plan on bringing their artwork to the Oklahoma People First Conference, which is at the Double Tree Hotel, Tulsa, OK between 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. on October 14. Artwork will be displayed during the length of the conference. If you need assistance with getting artwork there, email jenifer.randle@okdhs.org.

Each piece of art must have the artist’s first and last name and the name of the piece on the back.

Artists are responsible for preparing artwork to be placed on an easel. Please remember that a piece of paper cannot stand on an easel. Work should be mounted on foam board or framed. This includes poetry too.

While we will do our very best to protect your works of art, we cannot guarantee against damage or loss. Artists assume risk for damage to or loss of works submitted for presentation.

Questions can be emailed to jenifer.randle@okdhs.org.
DRS will host its first ever STEM camp for 15 students with disabilities between the ages of 14 and 18 in and around the Ada area. This is a partnership between DRS, Think Through Math, Tech-Now, Inc., and Ada Public Schools. Students will participate in math activities during the morning and technology/engineering in the afternoon from June 27-July 1, 2016 at Ada Junior High School. Lunch is provided and there is no cost to participate in this camp. Students register at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DRS-STEM-Ada. DRS will also be hosting a similar camp in Cherokee, Oklahoma July 18-22, 2016. Students register at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DRS-STEM-Cherokee.

DRS, in partnership with the Oklahoma Deaf and Hard of Hearing Transition Coalition, Tulsa Community College (TCC), and the GALT Foundation, is offering a week-long ACT prep/employability skills workshop July 25-29, 2016 at TCC. This workshop is specifically for high school students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and who will be juniors and seniors next school year. There is no cost to attend this workshop and is open for statewide registration. Those who register to attend are signing up for all day, every day that week. Mornings will be ACT prep, and afternoons will be employability skills, such as mock interviews, resume development, and career tours. Students register at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DRS_A3_Summer2016.

For information on any of these programs, please contact Kimberly Osmani, DRS Statewide Transition Coordinator, at kosmani@okdrs.gov or 405-635-2768.
The mission of the Oklahoma Transition Council is to improve transition education, planning, and services that lead to successful post-school outcomes for students with disabilities.

Oklahoma Transition Council Members

Claudia Beckner
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Sherry Colbert
Regina Chace
Lori Chesnut
Rene' Daman
Rick DeRennaux
Doris Erhart
Theresa Flannery
Tony Gibson
Theresa Hamrick
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Jill Harrison
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Judy Pluess
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Julie Smith
Julia Sterr
Marcie Stickney
Kendra Williams-Diehm
Melissa White

Affiliations

Broken Arrow High School
Chickasaw Nation VR
Dale Rogers Training Center
Department of Career and Technology Education
Down Syndrome Association of Central Oklahoma
Lawton Public Schools
Metro Technology Centers, Oklahoma City
Moore Public Schools, Southmoore High School
Norman Public Schools
OK ABLE Tech, Seretean Wellness Ctr, OSU
Oklahoma Autism Network
Oklahoma Child Study Center, Sooner Success
Oklahoma Family Network
Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Developmental Disabilities Services Division
Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services
Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council
Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs
Oklahoma National Alliance on Mental Illness
Oklahoma Rehabilitation Council
Oklahoma State Department of Education, Special Education Services
Owasso Public Schools
OU Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment
Sooner Success
Tech-Now Inc.
University of Oklahoma, College of Education