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U-ACCESS

A NEWSLETTER ABOUT DISABILITY ISSUES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT AND DEAN OF STUDENTS

Staff assisting Students with

Disabilities:

Belinda Cortez Vazquez
Assistant Dean of Students for Student Affairs
Administration Bldg., Rm. 222
773-834-9710/
belinda@uchicago.edu

Kimberly Gardiner
Coordinator for Students with Disabilities
Administration Bldg., Rm. 233
773-834-4469/
gardiner@uchicago.edu

Elizabeth Fulmer
Social Service Administration
Assistant Project Coordinator
Administration Bldg., Rm. 235

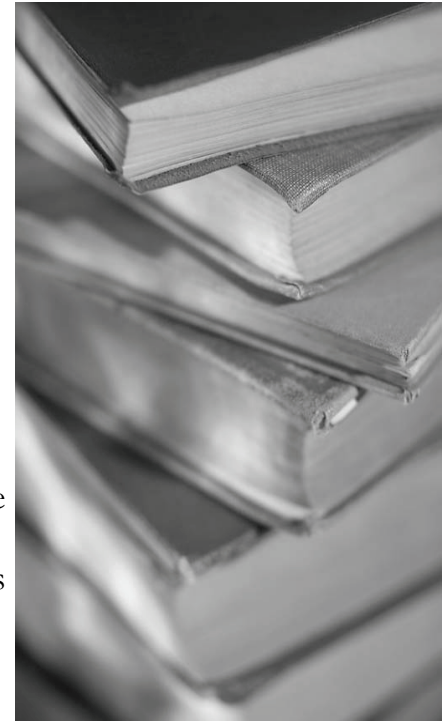
Robin Poole
Social Service Administration
Assistant Project Coordinator
Administration Bldg., Rm. 235

THE OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

Aneesah Ali
Associate Provost and Affirmation Action Officer
Administration Bldg., Rm. 501
773-702-5671/
aali@uchicago.edu

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR LIBRARY SERVICES

The University of Chicago Library supports the needs of students with disabilities in two particular ways. The first is by participating in the Student Disability Accommodation Process. Library staff are then able to coordinate library related support services for an individual student. The second is by actively designing services and facilities that make the library more accessible to students with disabilities. This area has benefited from the work of the Library Accessibility Task Force over the last year. Through this group, the library has created a new webpage highlighting services titled "Library Services for Users with Disabilities." The page can be found at <http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/using/accessibility/>. The page highlights services such as paging/bookstacks assistance, accessible entrances and routes, assistive technologies located in the library, and people to contact for specific questions. The library has implemented changes to the web site for easier navigation for the visually impaired including the addition of a text only library catalog interface. For more information contact Jeffry Archer at jdacher@uchicago.edu (773) 702- 8718.



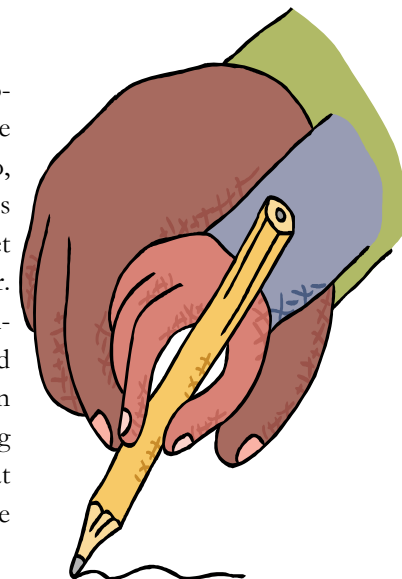
By: Jeffry Archer, Head, Ref. and Business Info. Ctr., Regenstein Library

VISIT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LIBRARY AT

HTTP://WWW1.LIB.UCHICAGO.EDU

Community Service Recognized Student Organization: BEST BUDDIES

Best Buddies is a nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities by providing opportunities for one-to-one friendships and integrated employment. In our chapter here at the University of Chicago, college students are paired in one-to-one friendships with people with intellectual disabilities living in group homes on the South Side. Buddies call each other once per week and meet twice per month—once as a buddy pair, and once at a group event with the entire chapter. As an individual buddy pair, buddies do whatever they are interested in together. For instance, many buddy pairs do things like going out to eat, watching movies, playing board games, and shopping together. Group events for Winter Quarter include an afternoon movie with popcorn and a trip to the Museum of Science and Industry. Upcoming Spring Quarter events will be watching a University of Chicago baseball game and a picnic at Promontory Point. All are welcome! For more information contact Emily Francis, College Buddy Director at efrancis@uchicago.edu.



By: Helen Kendall, Media Chair

Vendor's Corner



Alternative Communication Services, LLC

is a communication company that serves students and faculty with hearing loss at the University of Chicago. Simply we listen to what is said (lecture, service or training session) and either transcribe that into written text or translate it into sign language.

Our service is used by graduate students as well as undergraduates and professors. What is unique about our company is that we are the only source in Illinois who is able to offer all forms of communication. We offer Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) services, which are verbatim realtime voice-to-text services. We also offer Text Interpreting, which is a meaning-for-meaning translation, but not necessarily verbatim. We also offer sign language services, translating the spoken word in to sign.

The goal of ACS is to assist the student or professor in gaining as much information as possible from the course, lecture or training. It has been a pleasure working with the University of Chicago community in the past, and we look forward to the future.

For more information contact Philip Hyssong at phil@acsccaptions.com or (800) 335-0911.

“The goal of ACS is to assist the student or professor in gaining as much information as possible...”
Philip Hyssong,
Managing Partner
of ACS

DISABILITIES? GIFTS?

Though by no means do I flagrantly announce my life as a student with a learning disability – this is not and should not be my defining personal characteristic – I often come to the cross-roads in a relationship with somebody where it only makes sense to fill them in on one of the most influential aspects of my life. That my friends are rather surprised when I tell them about my learning disability is in fact no surprise to me, since I have become a decent actor, a good mask-wearer, a fine spokesperson of the Reluctant. On the one hand, as I said before, my learning disability is not Aaron, just as I am not my learning disability. Nor is he a virus, this learning disability of mine, but rather, if anything, the most profound gift that I could have entered into this world with.

I hate phrases like the one I just wrote. Too often I hear conciliatory phrases and ideas that come from those that wish to comfort those of us with learning disabilities, encouraging us that though we might *feel* different, we in fact are just like every boy and girl that has *difficulties* too. Should our learning disabilities encapsulate our entire being? By no means. Should we pass off our disabilities as a mere trifle in our lives and forget the profound effect that such a disability has on one's life? No. When I see my learning disability as a gift, it is not the gift bestowed by a deified Santa Claus. The gift that all of us with learning disabilities have is that which forces us to think extremely critically about what “getting an education” means in the first place.

Yet thinking of what Education truly means can oftentimes be difficult when, at the University of Chicago, our undergraduates are often pushed to write, think, and research like the graduate students that outnumber us nearly two to one. So my advice to any student with a learning disability would be: speak. If anything, speak. Speak with the intimidating professors that seem more involved with their research than with the well-being of the undergraduate course they lecture. Speak with that professor whose eyes gaze out into eternity when they think about German literature. You really would be surprised how much the Ivory-Tower intellectuals care for their students, especially when one with a learning disability comes along, burning with the curiosity that defines the “Life of the Mind,” and simply wants to ask a question. *By: Aaron Vanides, 2nd year in the College, Germanic and Medieval Studies*

TRANSITION—THERE ARE NO IEP'S IN COLLEGE

The laws affecting college students with disabilities and the process of obtaining assistive technology in college are completely different from the K-12 world. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is not in effect in higher education. Colleges have no legal responsibility to identify students with disabilities or involve parents in decision making. Parents are often surprised to learn that there are no *IEP's in college. Rather, in higher education the relevant law is a civil rights law – it protects people with disabilities from discrimination in admission to college and participation in college activities. The two federal laws that provide this protection are Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (originally passed in 1973, with subsequent reauthorizations), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (passed in 1990). The ADA states: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity." In other words, a disability cannot be grounds for excluding a person from a college, an academic program, a class, a residence hall, or a college activity, if the person is qualified. *By: Amy G. Dell is a professor in the Department of Special Education, Language and Literacy at The College of New Jersey and editor-in-chief of TECH-NJ. *IEP is an Individual Education Plan.*

What should I expect as a University student with a disability: the differences in legislation?

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): This legislation applies to the opportunities that must be available to students enrolled in Kindergarten through 12th Grade. In IDEA, the school maintains responsibility for determining which students need special education. The school must identify students who need help, through testing and observation. Schools are responsible for diagnosing the specific problem students might be having. Public schools are responsible for providing an appropriate education for each student, based on an evaluation and an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

ADA The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 /The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA): This legislation applies to the opportunities that must be available to students choosing to attend an institution of higher education. Under ADA, students pursuing a post-secondary education are responsible for documenting and requesting accommodations for their specific needs. Students are responsible for identifying themselves as students who have a disability. The student must provide the University with appropriate documentation regarding their disability and recommended accommodations. Students are responsible for requesting specific academic adjustments or accommodations according to their documented needs. Eligibility for reasonable accommodations in post-secondary institutions is driven by the federal definition of disability as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits or restricts the conditions, manner, or duration under which an average person in the general population can perform a major life activity, such as walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, or taking care of oneself. In a university setting, students must advocate for their own academic needs.

***What is an IEP?** An IEP identifies the student's specific learning expectations and outlines how the school will address these expectations through appropriate accommodations, program modifications and/or alternative programs as well as specific instructional and assessment strategies.

LOCAL RESOURCES FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

LOCAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

University of Chicago Academic Skills Assessment Program (counseling.uchicago.edu/services/asap). 5737 S. University Ave. (773) 702-9800. A program designed to help you assess your academic problems, find solutions, receive study skills counseling and make connections to other resources.

Cognitive Solutions (www.cognitivesolutionslc.com). 2409 N. Clybourn Ave. (773) 755-1775. This center offers services for adults and children including learning disability remediation, study skills, subject-area mastery through tutoring in math, science, reading, psychotherapy, development of executive functions, and social skills groups.

The Illinois Branch of The International Dyslexia Association (www.interdys.org). This group provides general information about dyslexia and makes referrals to tutors, diagnosticians, and private schools serving individuals with learning disabilities.

LOCAL SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

University Transportation—The SafeRide Program is fully accessible to the disabled, and all drivers are professional with commercial driver's licenses and passenger endorsements. Please contact (773) 702-2022 to arrange your ride.

University of Chicago Student Care Center (scc.uchicago.edu). 860 E. 59th St. Phone: (773) 702-4156. The SSC provides primary medical care for any type of consultation, examination or treatment that a student might need.

Chicago ADAPT Phone: (312) 253-7000. TTY: (312) 253-7002. A group that advocates for the rights of disabled individuals. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of every month at Access Living, 614 W. Roosevelt Rd.

Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago LIFE Center (lifecenter.ric.org). 345 E. Superior Street, 1st Fl. (312) 238-LIFE. The LIFE Center offers a collection of books, videos, magazines and multimedia learning resources that are geared toward people with disabilities and their families. Listings of Chicago area support groups and classes are available at the website.

Access Living Chicago (www.accessliving.org). 614 W. Roosevelt Road. Phone: (312) 253-7000. TTY: (312) 253-7002. Access offers support groups, information and referral, personal assistants and civil rights education.

Chicago Hearing Society (www.chicagohearingssociety.com). 2001 N. Clybourn Ave. Phone: (773) 248-9121. TTY: (773) 248-9174. This organization offers information on events for the deaf community in and around Chicago, a hearing aid bank, information and referral and TTY distribution.

Mayor's Office of Disabilities (gov.cityofchicago.org). The city of Chicago offers many services for individuals with disabilities and provides assistance with housing and personal assistant/homemaker services.

Woodlake Technologies (www.woodlaketechnologies.com). This company is known throughout the world for its leadership in providing assistive technology solutions to people with disabilities.

Disabilityworks (www.disabilityworks.org). 200 E. Randolph St., Ste. 2200. This organization provides the services, information and education that help prepare and match people with disabilities with employment opportunities in Chicago.

Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (www.rfbd.org). Anyone with a documented disability—including a visual impairment, learning disability or other physical disability which makes reading standard print difficult or impossible—is eligible to use RFB&D's audio textbooks but in order to access our library, you need to become a member.

Chicago Lighthouse for People Who are Blind or Visually Impaired (www.thechicagolighthouse.org). 1850 W. Roosevelt Rd. Phone: (312) 666-1331. TDD: (312) 666-8874. The Lighthouse offers clinical, educational, vocational and rehabilitative services for individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

The Talking Book Center—Harold Washington Library. (www.chipublib.org/003cpl/irlbph/cpltb.html). 400 S. State St. The Talking Book Center provides the free loan of recorded and Braille books and magazines, music study scores in Braille and large print.

Pace Bus Paratransit Service—Special door-to-door services are available within Chicago and nearby services. Registration is available to individuals interested in using accessible taxis for reduced rates as well. To apply call (800) 606-1282.

United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Chicago (www.ucpnet.org). This organizations provides referrals to services and support groups.

Anixter Center (www.anixter.org). 6610 N. Clark St. Phone: (773) 973-7900. TTY: (773) 973-2180. Anixter provides resources and programs for individuals with disabilities.

LOCAL SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES

Student Counseling and Resource Service at The University of Chicago (<http://counseling.uchicago.edu>). This is a resource for all U of C students, spouses, domestic partners, and children of individuals who have paid the Student Health Fee and want to talk with a professional about the demands of school, and/or personal and daily life. 5737 S. University Ave., Chicago, IL 60637 (773) 702-9800.