Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Employment Policy for Persons with Disabilities

July 27, 2007
10 am to 12 pm
Cornell University Government Affairs Office Hall of States, Room 333
444 North Capitol Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001

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College Bound: Policy Recommendations for Improving Long-Term Employment Outcomes by Advancing Higher Education for Students with Disabilities

A Public Policy Forum

This project is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. Grant Number: H133B040013
The Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Employment Policy for Persons with Disabilities is hosting a series of policy forums to explore policy alternatives to promote employment of individuals with disabilities. This forum will focus on experts in higher education policy and students with disabilities will share their research and suggestions for future policy directions that will increase higher education participation and improve long-term employment outcomes for adults with significant disabilities. After the expert panelists present their data and recommendations, two current college students with disabilities will react to the presentations from their personal perspectives as active college students interning on Capitol Hill this summer as part of the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation/AAPD Congressional Internship Program.

Speakers

Jane West, Ph.D., American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

George Jesien, Ph.D., Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)

Robert Weathers, Ph.D., Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

Stacey Millbern, Student at Methodist University, Mitsubishi America Electric Foundation/AAPD Congressional Intern

Arisa Nakamori, Student at UC Davis, Mitsubishi America Electric Foundation/AAPD Congressional Intern

Andrew Imparato, President/CEO, American Association of People with Disabilities, Facilitator

Funding Agency

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Upcoming Policy Forums

Friday, September 7, 2007

Social Security Demonstrations: Reports on New Approaches

Speakers & Moderators to be determined

Location - Hall of States

Friday, November 9, 2007

Disability System Changes in the UK in Return-to-Work--A Report on the Current System and Recent Changes with Discussion of Implications for U.S. Systems

Speakers & Moderators to be determined

Location - Hall of States

For more information contact:

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Biographies

Research, Inc. to evaluate programs designed to improve employment outcomes and promote independence among persons with disabilities, including: the Social Security Ticket to Work program, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Demonstration to Maintain Independence and Employment (DMIE), and the CMS Medicaid Buy-in program.

Prior to joining Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. in 2006, Dr. Weathers was a Senior Researcher at the Cornell University Employment and Disability Institute from 2004 to 2006 and was an Economist at the Social Security Administration from 1999 to 2004. He received his Ph.D. from Syracuse University in 1999.

Jane West, Ph.D., joined the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) in February 2006. She directs the department of government and external relations, including communications and public affairs, federal education policy, membership development, and AACTE’s relations with its state chapters. West brings over 30 years of education and public policy experience to the organization as a former teacher, education administrator, PTA officer, researcher, and university faculty member. As a founder and principal of Washington Partners, LLC, West provided government relations services to a range of national education organizations. She has served as an independent consultant to numerous non-profits, written and published articles on education policy issues, and edited two books. She supervised student teachers at the University of Maryland and taught graduate courses on disability law and policy as an adjunct faculty member at John Hopkins University and at the University of San Francisco.

Dr. West has worked extensively with government agencies, having conducted policy studies on education, health care, social services, employment, and civil rights issues. For six years she consulted with the Social Security Administration on developing employment incentives for people with disabilities. One product of that work was the enactment of the Ticket to Work and the Work Incentive Improvement Act of 2000. West has also consulted with the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, the Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs and its Office of Post Secondary Education, the Department of Labor, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the National Council on Disability. Further, she has been a peer reviewer for the Department of Education and the Pew Charitable Trusts.

Dr. West received her BA from the University of California at Santa Barbara, her MA from Columbia University and her Ph.D. from the University of Maryland.

West serves on the Alumni Board for the College of Education at the University of Maryland. She chairs the Partnership Development Board of the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund and serves on the Mitsubishi Electric America Advisory Board. She was formerly a board member of the Committee for Education Funding, a national coalition of more than 100 education organizations.

Agenda

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Facilitator

Andrew Imparato, American Association of People with Disabilities

Welcome & Introduction

Susanne Bruyere, Cornell University - Employment and Disability Insitute

Panel

Jane West, Ph.D., American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
George Jesien, Ph.D., Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Robert Weathers, Ph.D., Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

Reactions

Stacey Millbern, Student at Methodist University, Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation/AAPD Congressional Intern
Arisa Nakamori, Student at UC Davis, Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation/AAPD Congressional Intern
**Biographies**

**George Jesien, Ph.D.**, has had over 30 years of experience in the disability field in various capacities including school psychologist, project manager, course faculty, and director of state and federally funded programs for children with special needs and their families. He has worked in educational agencies, Head Start, university settings and a foundation. Currently he is executive director of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) which represents national networks of University Centers conducting research, professional development and service for and with people with disabilities and their families. Previous positions include serving as the executive director of the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation, director of the Early Intervention Program at the Waisman Center, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and executive director of the Portage Early Intervention Project.

Dr. Jesien was awarded a Joseph P Kennedy, Jr. Foundation Public Policy Fellowship to work with the US Senate Subcommittee on Disability Policy. He has served as the president of the National and State Divisions for Early Childhood of the International Council for Exceptional Children and received outstanding service awards at the state and national levels. He has had extensive international experience working on program development and personnel preparation in the United Arab Emirates, Kazakhstan, Peru and other South American countries and in England, China, and India for agencies such as the Soros Foundation, UNICEF, and the World Bank. Dr. Jesien received his bachelor’s degree from Le Moyne College in English and Philosophy and his masters and doctorate degrees from the University of Wisconsin in Madison in school psychology and human development.

**Andrew Imparato**, is the first full-time President and Chief Executive Officer of the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), a national nonprofit membership organization for the political and economic empowerment of all people with disabilities based in Washington, DC. With more than 100,000 members, AAPD is the largest cross-disability membership organization in the U.S.

In September 2005, Imparato was honored by the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce (“Jaycees”) as one of “Ten Outstanding Young Americans” who are selected annually for their contributions to American society. In 2006, Imparato was honored by U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta for his efforts to promote universal accessible transportation and by US Secretary of Health and Human Services Mike Leavitt for his leadership at AAPD.

Prior to joining AAPD, Imparato was general counsel and director of policy for the National Council on Disability, an attorney advisor with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, counsel to the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Disability Policy, and a staff attorney/Skadden Fellow with the Disability Law Center in Boston, Massachusetts.

In 2004, Imparato was appointed by Maryland Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., to the Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council, an independent policy body working to maximize the ability of Marylanders with disabilities to live independently. In 2003, Imparato was appointed by Senators Daschle and Kennedy to serve as a Panel Member of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Advisory Panel to the Social Security Administration. Imparato was also elected in 2003 to serve on the Executive Committee of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the nation’s oldest, largest and most diverse coalition dedicated to promoting civil and human rights for all people.

Imparato, whose perspective is informed by his own experience with bipolar disorder, is frequently called upon to write, speak or provide testimony about disability issues. His essay on the U.S. Supreme Court’s rulings relating to disability rights appears in The Rehnquist Court: Judicial Activism on the Right (H. Schwartz, ed., Hill and Wang, 2002). He is an advisor on corporate social responsibility, consumer, disability market and accessibility issues for Verizon, Time Warner, AT&T, Microsoft, IBM, SAP, and other leading businesses.

Imparato graduated with distinction from Stanford Law School and is a summa cum laude graduate of Yale College. He lives in Baltimore with his wife and two sons, ages 13 and 8.

**Stacey Millbern**, is a junior at Methodist University in North Carolina majoring in political science with a minor in legal studies. She is very active with the National Youth Leadership Network, currently serving as its vice-president, and founder of the North Carolina Youth Leadership Network; she is also a member of the North Carolina Statewide Independent Living Council appointed by the Governor. Stacey is very passionate about disability rights and hopes to follow in the footsteps of activists and policymakers before her. Stacey is interning with Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA).

**Arisa Nakamori**, is a rising junior at the University of California at Davis, where she is a double major in international relations and east asian studies. Arisa is a coach assistant for beginners in Kendo. Born in the U.S., Arisa’s parents sent her to Japan in early childhood to learn and become familiar with the Japanese language and culture. Her experiences helped her to appreciate the value of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). She hopes to pursue graduate studies and eventually work in the international arena, helping other countries to develop disability rights legislation. Arisa will spend her junior year studying abroad in Japan. She is interning with the House Committee on Science and Technology, which is chaired by Representative Bart Gordon (D-TN).

**Robert Weathers, Ph.D.**, is a Senior Researcher at Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. Over the past 10 years, he has worked on several projects that examine programs and policies designed to improve the employment and economic well being of persons with disabilities. He is currently working on two projects for the Cornell Employment and Disability Institute Employment Policy Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (EP-RRTC). The first project develops and uses a longitudinal database to examine how investments in post-secondary education for youth with profound hearing impairments affect their long-term employment outcomes and time spent on the disability transfer programs. The second uses a national database to examine how the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) changed the prevalence and type of employer accommodations offered to persons with disabilities. Dr. Weathers is also working with others at Mathematica Policy...