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Thank You!

On behalf of all of our Students for Disability Advocacy members, we would like to thank you for your interest, support, and attendance at our first-ever disabilities studies conference.

Sincerely,

SDA Officers

Jonathan Duvall, Jessica Kurs-Lasky, Nathan Hogaboom, Kelly Beck



THE DISABILITY EXPERIENCE: STATE OF RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND THE ARTS

October 31 & November 1, 2013
William Pitt Union
University of Pittsburgh



Keynote Speaker: Kathleen Martinez
Assistant Secretary of Labor for the
Office of Disability Employment Policy

Presentations
Discussing:

Assistive Technology

Community Inclusion

Disability Narrative

Education

Employment

English & Fine Arts

Health & Wellness

Policy & Law

STUDENTS FOR DISABILITY ADVOCACY

About Us

Purpose

The purpose of the Students for Disability Advocacy (SDA) organization is to be a support group for University of Pittsburgh students with disabilities, to advocate for change, and to educate so that the University of Pittsburgh is a more diverse, inclusive and accessible community for all students, with special emphasis on students with disabilities, in academic, clinical, community, social, and research settings.

Another purpose of this group is to promote cohesion between incoming students, current students, and alumni of Pitt with disabilities by creating an optimal venue to exchange knowledge and wisdom related to disability while fostering academic and social interaction among its members. SDA will serve the larger values of the University of Pittsburgh by promoting an inclusive and diverse community of scholars.

Description

Students with disabilities are a minority group at the University of Pittsburgh that lacks a representative student organization and a voice to advocate for their need to experience an educational opportunity equal to those students without disabilities. SDA will fill that need and strive to make the experience of going to school at the University of Pittsburgh as receptive as possible for students with disabilities as well as those without disabilities.

JOIN OUR GROUP!



Students for Disability Advocacy



@SDAPitt

STUDENTS FOR DISABILITY ADVOCACY

Faculty Advisors

Katherine D. Seelman, PhD

Katherine (Kate) D. Seelman is adviser to the Students for Disability Advocacy and Associate Dean for Disability Programs and Professor, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. She is an editor and author for the first major disability handbook, the *Handbook of Disability Studies*. Dr. Seelman served as Director of the U.S. National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research under President Clinton and was one of two Americans who served on the 9-member international editorial board guiding the development of the WHO/World Bank's first World Report on Disability, and a section author. She is widely published and the recipient of many awards.

Ashli Molinero, DSc

Ashli Molinero is co-adviser to the Students for Disability Advocacy and Assistant Professor, Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology. Her interests include the individual and social experience of disability, disability narrative, and the use of social media as a method for knowledge translation.

STUDENTS FOR DISABILITY ADVOCACY

Officers

Business Manager: Nathan Hogaboom

Nathan Hogaboom is a doctoral student in the Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology at the University of Pittsburgh. In 2010, he received his Bachelors of Science degree in Kinesiology from Pennsylvania State University. Nathan's current research interests include using ultrasound and blood-based biomarkers to measure shoulder tendon dysfunction in people with Spinal Cord Injuries. The goal of his research is to improve our knowledge of mechanisms behind development of shoulder pain and pathology in manual wheelchair users. Ultimately, this knowledge will be used to advance current rehabilitation approaches and potentially improve the lives of manual wheelchair users. After graduation, Nathan hopes to further his professional experience by obtaining a post-doctoral fellowship studying tendon mechanobiology.

Secretary: Kelly Beck

Kelly Beck is a master's student in Rehabilitation Counseling and is currently conducting outcome research on the benefits of Mindfulness-Based Skills groups. She graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a Bachelors of Arts in English degree in 2008. She is currently a Pittsburgh Schweitzer Fellow and a board member of the Rehabilitation Counseling Student Group, Institute for Healthcare Improvement, and the SHRS Student Advisory Board. Kelly hopes to highlight the negative effects that unaccessible environments have on people with disabilities and develop effective interventions for managing these challenges.

CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

Panel Schedule Overview

Thursday, October 31		Friday, November 1	
Time	Topic	Time	Topic
9:00-11:35 am	Assistive Technology	8:30-9:30 am	English & Fine Arts
1:00-2:00 pm	Policy & Employment	9:45-10:45 am	Disability Narrative
2:15-3:55 pm	Health & Wellness	11:00-11:40 am	Community Inclusion
4:10-5:10 pm	Education	12:10-1:30 pm	Student-Faculty Roundtable

Keynote Speaker: Kathleen Martinez

*Assistant Secretary of Labor for the Office of
Disability Employment Policy*

Thursday, October 31, 12:00 pm

Each presentation will be interpreted for the deaf and hard of hearing using sign language interpreters and CART reporters. Basic personal assistance services will be provided for attendees of the conference. Conference materials and downloadable program files will be provided through accessible media formats on our SDA website. Please see the volunteers at the registration table for any questions or assistance regarding these services.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
KATHLEEN MARTINEZ**

Thursday, October 31, 12:00 pm

Kathleen Martinez was nominated by President Barack Obama to be the third Assistant Secretary for Disability Employment Policy and was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on June 25, 2009. As head of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), Ms. Martinez advises the Secretary of Labor and works with all DOL agencies to lead a comprehensive and coordinated national policy regarding the employment of people with disabilities.



Blind since birth, Ms. Martinez comes to ODEP with a background as an internationally recognized disability rights leader specializing in employment, asset building, independent living, international development, diversity and gender issues. She was appointed Executive Director of the World Institute on Disability (WID), based in Oakland, California, in 2005. Ms. Martinez directed Proyecto Visión, WID's National Technical Assistance Center to increase employment opportunities for Latinos with disabilities in the United States, and Access to Assets, an asset-building project to help reduce poverty among people with disabilities. At WID, she also led the team that produced the acclaimed international webzine DisabilityWorld in English and Spanish.

In 2007, she was appointed a member of the board of the U.S. Institute of Peace, a Congressionally-created agency dedicated to research and projects in conflict management. In 2005, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice appointed her as one of eight public members of the newly-established State Department advisory committee on disability and foreign policy.

In 2002, she was appointed by President Bush as one of 15 members of the National Council on Disability, an independent federal agency advising the President and Congress on disability policy.

**STUDENTS FOR DISABILITY
ADVOCACY**

Officers

President: Jonathan Duvall

Jonathan Duvall is a doctoral student in Rehabilitation Sciences and is currently conducting research on wheelchair vibrations that will lead to the development of a standard to limit sidewalk roughness. He graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a Bachelors of Science in Mechanical Engineering in 2010 and a Master's in Rehabilitation Science and Technology in 2013. In 2007, he sustained a spinal cord injury while sledding and uses a power wheelchair for mobility.

Vice President: Jessica Kurs-Lasky

Jess Kurs-Lasky is a senior undergraduate student in the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, double majoring in Sociology and English Writing (Poetry Track), and will be receiving a certificate in The Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality from the University of Pittsburgh. She also is a student employee and works for Pitt Online (as of Spring 2012). She is currently Vice President of the Students for Disability Advocacy and an active member in the Active Minds chapter at Pitt. Jess hopes to make more of a presence for those with "hidden"/"invisible" disabilities, such as herself, and hopefully begin to destigmatize such disabilities (as well as disabilities of all kinds).

PANEL DESCRIPTIONS

Health & Wellness

Due to advances in medicine and technology, more individuals are living longer with their disabilities. As a result, our understanding of “health and wellness” and the constructs surrounding these concepts are rapidly evolving. Topics of this panel are likely to include (but are not limited to) disparities in healthcare and emergency response; effects of activities and participation on mental and physical health; nutrition and exercise; and the relationship between psychosocial and physical wellbeing.

Faculty Respondent - Robert Weyant, DMD, DrPH

- Associate Dean – Dental Public Health and Community Outreach
- Professor and Chair – Department of Dental Public Health, School of Dental Medicine, University of Pittsburgh
- Email: rjw1@pitt.edu

Faculty-Student Roundtable

The faculty-student roundtable is very important to this conference because it brings students with disabilities together with faculty and administrators to address key needs of students with disabilities in higher education and what can be done to meet those needs. The roundtable will include the following faculty and students:

Faculty:

- Ellen Sue Ansell, Ph.D. Co-Chair Faculty Senate Anti-Discrimination Policy Committee, Assistant Professor of Instruction and Learning
- Kathleen Ryan, Ph.D. Assistant Dean for Medical Education
- Alberta M. Sbragia, Ph.D. Vice Provost for Graduate Studies, Professor of Political Science
- Lynnett Van Slyke, M.S., M.Ed., CRC, Director Disability Resources and Services

Students:

- Elizabeth Dunn, Department of Sports Medicine and Nutrition, School of Health and Rehabilitation Science
- Alexandra Corral Edmonds, Department of Communication, Dietrich School of Arts & Science
- Matt Hannan, Student Veteran Association
- Brian Lupish, School of General Studies
- Lisa Ripper, Masters of Public Health Candidate, Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health

Roundtable Chair - Paula Davis, MA

- Senior Vice Chancellor for Health Sciences Diversity
- University of Pittsburgh
- Email: pkd100@pitt.edu

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Thursday, October 31, 2013

Time	Event Description
8:00 am	Complimentary Breakfast
8:30 am	Introductions Dr. Kate Seelman, SDA Faculty Advisor Jonathan Duvall, SDA President
9:00 am	Assistive Technology Panel Rory Cooper, Faculty Respondent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Improving health information access for the visually impaired: An application of spoken web technology” Sunny Lin • “A tailored smart reminder to facilitate powered wheelchair users using powered seating functions for independent health management” Yu-Kuang Wu • “Improving communication skills and collaboration using robot and speech generating devices for children with verbal difficulties” Younghyun Chung • “The accessibility needs of patients with dexterity impairments to use mhealth apps on smartphones” Daihua Xie Yu
10:00 am	Break
10:15 am	Assistive Technology Panel 2 Rory Cooper, Faculty Respondent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “EuTalk™: A virtual therapist and speech assistant for people with communication disabilities” Erh-Hsuan Wang • “Remote evaluation of AAC use: A case study” Sarah Holmes • “Biofeedback and cognitive rehabilitation as a novel in-vivo intervention delivery model for increasing self-regulatory ability in adults with traumatic brain injury” Ashlee McKeon
11:35 am	Lunch
12:00 pm	Keynote Speaker: Kathleen Martinez

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Thursday, October 31, 2013

Time	Event Description
1:00 pm	<p>Employment & Policy Panel Kate Seelman, Faculty Respondent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Policy as employment barriers for young people with disabilities” Jonathan Duvall • “Amending the Pittsburgh city code to create a more inclusive Pittsburgh” Sara Fernandez • “Unemployment and underemployment on the autism spectrum” Abigail Salisbury
2:00 pm	Break
2:15 pm	<p>Health & Wellness Panel Bob Weyant, Faculty Respondent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Mindfulness attention skills group: A retrospective analysis for young adults with cognitive disabilities” Kelly Beck • “Theoretical and experiential perspectives on nutrition in the disability experience by students from the Nutrition and Dietetics programs at the University of Pittsburgh” Laura Maydek et al. • “Evaluation of sports participation on psychosocial outcomes in individuals with disabilities” Matt Hannan • “Oral health online tutorial for children with special needs” James Lin
3:35 pm	Break
3:50 pm	<p>Education Panel Mary Goldberg, Faculty Respondent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Training parents and staff to use a social-communication intervention with children with autism: A focus on treatment fidelity” Johanna Taylor et al. • “Combat-related posttraumatic stress disorder: The battle to return to civilian life” Kristen Brant et al. • “Heroes in the classroom: Addressing the needs of today’s student veterans with disabilities” Anne Barry
4:50 pm	<p>Closing Remarks Students for Disability Advocacy</p>

PANEL DESCRIPTIONS

Employment, Policy & Law

With proper accommodations and resources, individuals with disabilities have the potential to work alongside their peers at all levels. Legislation such as the Social Security Act, Rehabilitation Act, and Americans with Disability Act (ADA) support state and local programs and agencies that are charged with ensuring individuals with disabilities have the resources and tools they need to succeed vocationally. However, persons with disabilities still have a lower employment rate and higher rate of poverty than individuals without disabilities. Panelists will address key issues including but not limited to transition, income support, advocacy, access, and vocational services leading to successful gainful employment.

Faculty Respondent - Kate Seelman, PhD

- Professor and Associate Dean for Disability Programs – Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Pittsburgh
- Senior Policy Advisor National Science Foundation Quality of Life Technology Engineering Center
- Email: kds31@pitt.edu

English & Fine Arts

English and Fine Arts generate, explore and examine theories and representations of human experience. The fields of English and Fine Arts provide an important intellectual and aesthetic space for thinking about disability as a key facet of human identity and culture. The study of literature and art can shed light on the disability experience and on attitudes toward those with disabilities, given that these expressions come out of the social and cultural contexts in which they are produced. By looking critically at the ways disability as a concept and persons with disabilities have been represented in literature and art, scholars are able to more fully theorize and historicize the intersections of disability with cultural areas such as race, sexuality, and religion that coalesce into the human experience.

Faculty Respondent - Ellen Smith, PhD, MFA

- Lecturer – Department of English
- Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, University of Pittsburgh
- Email: ems9@pitt.edu

PANEL DESCRIPTIONS

Disability Narrative

The fundamental premise of Disability Studies is that disability is a culturally-fabricated narrative of disability identity. Narrative is a basic tool in the study of the disability experience. Narratives analyze and tell stories, often about oppression and exclusion. Social scientists use narratives as an analytic content to which to apply theories such as stigma. Clinicians use it as a qualitative tool to identify the nuances of the disabled patient's experience, involving the body, function, and context, which are important for diagnosis, treatment, and recovery. Researchers and scholars in the humanities provide and analyze narrative to discern meaning, representation, and other concepts.

Faculty Respondent - Sam Pittman, MFA

- Visiting Lecturer – Department of English
- Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, University of Pittsburgh
- Email: sep44@pitt.edu

Education

With proper assistive technology and resources, most students with disabilities can learn alongside their peers and today are doing so at all levels at unparalleled rates. Legislation like IDEA – the federal law that governs how states and public agencies meet the educational needs of children with disabilities – support programs like those on the University of Pittsburgh's campus, while local disability support agencies ensure students have the resources and tools they need to succeed. However, persons with disabilities still have lower graduation and employment rates, and prevalence in certain fields like science and technology. Panelists will address key issues surrounding disability including but not limited to transition, access, and inclusion across the educational pipeline (K-12, community college/ undergraduate, and graduate).

Faculty Respondent - Mary Goldberg, MEd

- Lead Education and Outreach Coordinator – Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology & Human Engineering Research Laboratories, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Pittsburgh
- Email: mrh35@pitt.edu

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Friday, November 1, 2013

Time	Event Description
8:00 am	Complimentary Breakfast
8:30 am	English & Fine Arts Panel Ellen Smith, Faculty Respondent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The dislocation and textual performance of disability in medieval texts” Cate Willits • “From art to advocacy: The accessible icon project” Leah Serao et al.
9:10 am	Break
9:25 am	Disability Narrative Panel Sam Pittman, Faculty Respondent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Severity and reality of being gluten-free” Dhanu Thiyagarajan • “Disclosing an invisible disability: My experience with OCD, a narrative” Jessica Kurs-Lasky • “Student athletes with disabilities” Daniel McCoy
10:25 am	Break
10:40 am	Community Inclusion Panel Lucy Spruill, Faculty Respondent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Evacuation plans of fulltime wheelchair users with spinal cord injuries” Nathan Hogaboom • “Making a CHANGE” Josie Badger
11:20 am	Lunch
12:00 pm	Faculty-Student Roundtable Paula Davis, Roundtable Chair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please see faculty-student roundtable participant list located on page 12
1:30 pm	Conference Closing Remarks Dr. Kate Seelman and Jonathan Duvall
2:00 pm	Conference Conclusion

CONFERENCE INFORMATION

General Information

The mission of this first-ever disability studies conference at the University of Pittsburgh is to bring together a wide spectrum of faculty, students, and other individuals - especially those from the University and its communities - whose interests capture the experience of disability and who wish to advance disability-related fields and further their integration into the curricula and in community life.

Conference Goals

- Invite students to present their field-specific disability-related research from across the curricula of science, art and the humanities to an interdisciplinary audience.
- Promote discourse across disability-related fields in order to integrate disability studies into the curricula.
- Provide networking opportunities by encouraging and enabling attendees to establish connections with individuals of varying fields.
- Create dialogue between students and faculty about issues and experiences students with disabilities have and to identify mechanisms for resolution of problems.

The purpose of the conference is to highlight the arts, scholarship and research concerning the disability experience. The conference will focus on panel presentations by students with faculty respondents. A variety of topics will be covered from undergraduate and graduate students with and without disabilities at the University of Pittsburgh and around the country. Panel presentations will draw from a variety of areas and disciplines such as: Assistive Technology across disability, Health & Wellness (disparities), Community Inclusion (Sociology, Social Work), Employment, Policy and Law, the Arts, Education, and English. A faculty-student round-table discussion is the final event of the conference with discourse concerning relationships between faculty and students with disabilities.

PANEL DESCRIPTIONS

Assistive Technology

People with disabilities use assistive technology to be independent, participate in their communities, and perform tasks to a higher degree than they could without assistive technology. Panelists will address issues related to the development and use of assistive technology. The topics will focus on new and emerging issues around the developments, innovations, policies, access, and use of assistive technology.

Faculty Respondent - Rory Cooper, PhD

- Distinguished Professor – Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Pittsburgh
- Center Director – Center of Excellence for Wheelchair Related Technology
- VA Rehabilitation Research & Development Center, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Chair – FISA & Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Email: rcooper@pitt.edu

Community Inclusion

When implemented, community inclusion enables integration of and equal opportunity for people with disabilities into their environments and communities. Significant efforts have been made over the past few decades to better conceptualize and discuss inclusion of people with disabilities into their communities, in terms of the quality and quantity of participation. Topics for this panel are likely to include (but are not limited to) self-determination, inclusion, empowerment, and self-advocacy. Key issues should address the importance of community inclusion for all people, especially people with disabilities, and the impact community inclusion research can have on disability studies.

Faculty Respondent - Lucy Spruill, MSW

- Adjunct Professor – Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology
- School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Pittsburgh
- Director of Public Policy and Community Relations - CLASS
- Email: lspruill@pitt.edu