

We are proud to present news of interest for Montana families of children with disabilities and special health care needs, and for the professionals and educators who serve them; however, it does not constitute an endorsement.

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Billings Associate Board planning Kids at Heart Gala, May 13

The event will be at the Sheraton in Billings Friday May 13th and will feature the band – *the Midlife Chryslers*. This band consists of Billings’ area doctors who participate in 4 or 5 performances a year for local nonprofits. The Committee is excited about their involvement and is looking forward to the Gala. In addition to the band’s performance, the event will include heavy hors d’oeuvres, a silent auction, a live auction, featuring auctioneer Bill Holt, and much more. For information on sponsorships or tickets, call PLUK’s office at 406 255-0540 or 800 222-7585.

Benefit Concert for PLUK—May 20, Kalispell



**Celebrate the Power and the Legend
 of America's First Journey West with
 ROB QUIST
 and
 JACK GLADSTONE**
 In Their Highly-Acclaimed New Multi-Media Production
ODYSSEY WEST



**An Original Musical and Visual Narrative
 Commemorating the Bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition**

Flathead Valley PLUK presents:

Rob Quist & the Great Northern Band with Jack Gladstone in concert, presenting their collaborated production of the Lewis & Clark Expedition May 20th at 7pm at the Kalispell Christian Center.

Rob Quist and Jack Gladstone, two of (the West’s most celebrated entertainers and songwriters, have united in an unforgettable new show, *Odyssey West*, commemorating Lewis and Clark’s epic journey West.

Gladstone and Quist literally bring the West to life with the rich historical content of their original songs and narratives presented with dramatic live footage as well as haunting photographic and artistic images of the Old and New West.

Celebrate Our Heritage while supporting local children and adults with disabilities. Proceeds also benefit Special Friends Advocacy. Ticket purchases call 406/756-6159.

<http://www.robquist.com/promopage.htm>

Region V CSPD Bus Registration for Montana CEC

Bus to CEC: Region V CSPD is sponsoring a bus to Montana CEC Conference in Billings. The bus will leave Missoula on April 12 and return on Friday, April 15th. Cost per person is \$40. **Please contact Nancy Marks at admin@cspd.net if you would like a copy of the Bus Registration Form; the registration deadline is April 1st.** Please don’t delay to register if you’d like to ride it’s a great opportunity for networking and saving mileage costs!

Press Release: NATIVE AMERICAN BRAIN INJURY CONFERENCE April 26-27

Plans are well underway for presenting a successful Fourth Annual Native American Brain Injury Conference to be held on April 26-27, 2005 at the Mansfield Health Education Center (2900 12th Avenue North) in Billings, MT. Ian Elliot of the MT Center on Disabilities (MCD) at MSU-Billings and Nell Eby of the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) Senior and Long Term Care Division serve as Co-facilitators of this exceptional two-day event. “All those who attend will be given the opportunity to experience a wide range of remarkable workshop presentations by some of the country’s leading speakers in areas of empowerment, substance abuse and brain injury,” says Elliot. “Much of the Montana population still does not realize we are second in the nation in per capita incidence of brain injury! We are called to take active and positive steps in reducing the number of injuries to our fellow Montanans through greater public

awareness, prevention activities and treatment education." This significant regional conference has as its' theme, "Wakefulness – Exploring the impact of substance abuse on the Montana Native American Population."

Co-Sponsored by the DPHHS Senior and Long Term Care Division and MCD in collaboration with the Brain Injury Association of Montana, Mansfield Health Education Center, registration to this Fourth Annual Native American Brain Injury Conference features workshops, informational booths, two continental breakfasts and a luncheon, admission to a family-oriented, "Rebuilding The Circle" Concert by Singer/Songwriter Jack Gladstone of the Blackfeet Nation on Tuesday evening, as well as opening ceremonies by the Northern Cheyenne Drum Group from Lame Deer, Montana. Montana Congressman Denny Rehberg is also lending his support of this conference. Though the conference is especially suited to Native American persons with brain injuries and/or substance abuse issues, their family members, associates, tribal leaders, law enforcement personnel, crisis center personnel, educators and other professional care providers, all members of the public are welcome to attend and actively participate. Continuing Education Credits are available for Clinical Social Workers, Professional Counselors, Licensed Addiction Counselors, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and POST Council Members.

Opening ceremonies featuring the Northern Cheyenne Drum Group from Lame Deer, Montana kick off the conference on Tuesday morning, April 26th at 8:00 AM following a 7:00 AM registration and continental breakfast. Additional conference activities that day end with a Jack Gladstone concert. On Wednesday, April 27th activities begin with another continental breakfast service at 7:30 AM, followed by a full round of presentations that end at noon.

This year's conference speakers on Tuesday, April 26th include Dr. Terry Tafoya, PhD of the Taos Pueblo and Warm Springs Nations, who is a clinical psychologist and traditional storyteller. The titles of his two presentations are, "Unasking the Question...and Other Tactics of Change," and "You Didn't Say What I Saw You Say." Dr. Tafoya uses American Indian ritual and ceremony in his work as a Family Therapist at the Interpersonal Psychotherapy Clinic, part of the University of Washington's School of Medicine in Seattle. Geoffrey Lauer serves as National Director of Affiliate Relations for the Brain Injury Association of America, and the title of his presentation is, "Did I Mention It Had Teeth?" Other Tuesday presentations include, "10 Things I Learned About Native Americans While Looking Up Something Else" featuring Walter Fleming, PhD, who serves as Director of Native American Studies at MSU-Bozeman, "10 Things I've Learned While Working With Indian Nations" featuring nationally known leadership presenter, Fred Cowie, PhD, and "Support Group Startup on Indian Reservations" by Stacy Rye, Executive Director of the Brain Injury Association of Montana.

Tuesday evening's conference activity ends with the Jack Gladstone family concert which includes Gladstone's exceptional acoustic music and messages of empowerment backed by a multi-media presentation of memorable historical and contemporary visual images. Though conference attendees are given an admission ticket as part of their registration packet, all remaining General Admission tickets for the 200+ seat, Mansfield Health Education Center will be sold to the general public at the door. General Admission will be \$10 for Adults and \$7 for Students/Senior Citizens/MSU-Billings staff. Ticket sales that evening will begin at 6:30 PM outside the auditorium door. Call the MCD for advance reservations.

Wednesday, April 27th presentations include, "Wellbriety – the Native American Way" by Don Coyhis, Director of White Bison, Inc. centered in Colorado, Springs, CO, and "Substance Abuse and Brain Injuries" by Diana Roy, BA, LAC. A member of the Mohican Nation, Coyhis is the Founder and President of a prominent American Indian non-profit organization that is dedicated to developing culturally relevant treatment, prevention and recovery materials to support Wellbriety. Diana Roy is a Native American who grew up on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation in Eastern Montana. She is now the current Program Director of The Family Recovery Home in Williston, ND, and is well-known for her presentations covering topics of Family, Addiction, Codependency and Counseling. The April 26th and 27th conference ends at noon on Wednesday with a talk by Sandra Hare of S-Hare Solutions entitled, "Coping with Caring: A Guide to Burnout and Compassion Fatigue." Hare is not only a trained actress and singer, but her diverse background includes professional experience as a business owner, shopping center leasing/marketing agent, corporate manager and non-profit consultant.

The Fourth Annual Native American Brain Injury Conference is funded in part by a Montana Traumatic Brain Injury Implementation Grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration to the Montana DPHHS Senior & Long Term Care Division. Affordable early registration fees for the April 26th & 27th Conference are \$55 for Individuals, \$65 for Professionals and \$95 for a family of 3. A limited number of conference booths are available for \$95 each, which includes complimentary conference registration. After April 12th, 2005, an additional \$10.00 fee will apply. A limited number of scholarships (conference registration fee waiver and Tuesday evening's complimentary lodging) are available for TBI Thrivers and family members in need of financial assistance. The deadline to apply for a scholarship is also April 12, 2005. Online registration is available at www.msubillings.edu/mcdregister and registration can be either mailed to the Montana Center on Disabilities or made by phone. For additional information, concert ticket reservations or registration details, please call Jeanie Monahan at the Montana Center on Disabilities at 406-657-2312 or toll free at 1-888-866-3822.

Resource for Psychological Services in Missoula

One resource for low income children who are not eligible for CHIPS or Medicaid is the Clinical Psychology Center.

The CPC is operated by the Department of Psychology at The University of Montana and provides confidential assessment and psychotherapeutic services for children, adolescents, adults, couples and families. The CPC is a free-standing clinic, staffed by graduate students, that serves as the primary location for clinical training. All services are provided under the direct supervision of licensed clinical psychologists. The Clinic facilities include private counseling rooms, observation rooms, group therapy rooms, and seminar rooms.

Visit <http://www2.umt.edu/psych/clinical/cpc.html> for more information.

Legislative Update

Legislative Update #10:

1. Appropriations. The Legislature will be on Easter recess until Tuesday, the 29th. As mentioned earlier, HB-2 (Witt) has passed out of the House and now will be considered by the Senate. The legislative process appears to be speeding up. It now looks like a very full day beginning early on Tuesday. Until recently, their Finance & Claims Committee was not scheduled to begin debating HB-2 until Thursday, the 31st. The schedule now indicates they will begin their review of it starting 8 a.m., Wednesday, the 30th, section-by-section. They still have it scheduled on their calendar through April 1st. They're under pressure to make additional cuts to the "big bill", as it's about \$4 million over the spending cap, and there is some sizeable sentiment that human services (Section B) didn't take enough cuts on the House floor. Note: please urge members of Finance & Claims (notably Sens. Cobb, Cooney – the Chair – Lind, Tester – also, President of the Senate – and Weinberg) not to touch any of the general fund or tobacco tax (I-149) increases maintained on the House side.

The House also starts a full day Tuesday, with Appropriations starting also at 8 a.m., Tuesday, then floor action beginning at 10:00. The committees and the full House have lots of work to get caught up on, especially those dealing with funding. Tuesday is the transmittal day for all other appropriations bills.

Note that HB 745 (Matthews) the important supplement appropriations bill providing special funding through June 30th, the end of this biennium, did pass 2nd Reading in the House last week, but will still face 3rd Reading action on Tuesday. It still contains some \$2 million for Medicaid match in this year.

2. Other Legislation. Much attention in the coming days will be on the school financing issue, but notably this week on tax proposals. Saturday, April 2nd, is the transmittal deadline between either chamber for revenue bills (these include income increases, gambling, business, oil and gas taxes, a property tax rebate, etc.). I observed an interesting exchange on the Senate floor last Thursday, when a small, obscure bill, HB 63 (Villa) was altered by a 90-page amended offered by Senate Democrats adding \$80 million for school funding. It was prompted by the apparent House gridlock on this issue. Republicans finally yielded with the assurance the amended bill will be reviewed by Finance & Claims (this Tuesday).

Here is the most recent update of other bills we've been following:

HB 127 (Mendenhall) – passed Senate 3rd reading and has been signed by the Governor. This revises the definition of seriously developmentally disabled and was a legislative priority of the Systems Advocacy .

HB 197 (Jayne) – making it a felony for anyone convicted of abusing, neglecting or exploiting an older adult or person with a developmental disability, at the request of DPHHS. We've not tracked this one previously and it may have serious implications. Even DDP wasn't aware of it until quite recently. It sailed through the House, amended in the Senate (excluding the felony charge for incidents concerning consumer-to-consumer), and awaits House concurrence.

HB 215 (Caferro) – completes a name change to the state DD council, and has been signed by the Governor.

HB 336 (Lange) – appropriates \$287,000 over the biennium to provide services to youth with developmental disabilities who have graduated, until they reach age 19. It passed House Appropriations last week, 2nd Reading on the floor, and 3rd Reading also on Tuesday.

HB 438 (Buzzas) – This bill would establish Braille literacy for blind or visually impaired children throughout Montana schools. It passed Appropriations and 2nd Reading last week, and also awaits 3rd Reading Tuesday.

HB 513 (Raser) – this will extend state tax credits to citizens who donate to developmental disabilities programs. It still awaits consideration by Senate Taxation this week.

HB 550 (Windy Boy) – Appropriates \$100,000 over the biennium for the leadership forum for youth with disabilities. Having already passed the House, it was heard in Senate Finance & Claims and awaits executive action.

HB 687 (Mendenhall) – This is an important companion to the I-149 tobacco tax initiative, as it makes provision to track tobacco sales, and compliments the actions of the sub-committee that funded six auditors for tax collection. It finally passed Appropriations and House 2nd Reading last week. It also awaits 3rd Reading Tuesday.

HB738 (Kaufmann) – Will establish an advisory commission to study all provider rates and services provided by DPHHS. Rep. Kaufmann has agreed it can also be another means to track progress and impact of the Medicaid provider rate redesign. After significant amendments, it passed 3rd Reading in the Senate on the 23rd and was returned to the House for concurrence on the amendments, though the changes will require an updated fiscal note.

These have significant implications for the future of service provision by DPHHS. This body is now expected to: review existing reimbursement rates paid to all providers, and must consider level of financial risk taken by provider in giving services, the complexity of the provider's services, the "capital investment" made by the provider, the "administrative overhead" necessary for conducting business, among others. Note below the following language changes concerning the composition of the commission:

The commission membership must include a maximum of 15 individuals representing providers, consumers of provider services, and family members of consumers and ~~must include a representative of the office of the legislative fiscal analyst and the governor's office on budget and program planning, legislators, and employees of the department.~~ IS AS FOLLOWS:

- (A) AT LEAST THREE PROVIDERS;
 - (B) AT LEAST THREE OF A COMBINATION OF CONSUMERS OF PROVIDER SERVICES AND FAMILY MEMBERS OF CONSUMERS;
 - (C) TWO EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT;
 - (D) ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE FISCAL DIVISION;
 - (E) ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE ON BUDGET AND PROGRAM PLANNING;
 - (F) ONE MEMBER OF EACH OF THE TWO MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES;
- AND
- (G) ONE MEMBER OF EACH OF THE TWO MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES OF THE SENATE.

SB 41 (Keenan) – Establishing "funding principles" for Medicaid; it's one of several the Senator offered as part of a larger Medicaid redesign. It still awaits executive action in House Human Services, possibly this coming week.

SB 93 (Cobb) – Requires DPHHS to report monthly to the Legislative Finance Committee updating Medicaid cost estimates. It passed the Senate in January, has awaited House Appropriations scheduling since mid-February, and now will be heard Wednesday, the 30th.

SB 110 (Cobb) – While little known, this bill provides more authority for Medicaid waiver demonstrations, among other things (such as the HIFA waiver). It is arguably the most potentially significant piece of the Medicaid redesign legislation. Passed the Senate on 2nd Reading last week, it's scheduled for 3rd Reading on Tuesday.

SB 127 (Keenan) – Another of the Medicaid redesign bills, this focuses on restructuring home & community-based waiver services. It was approved by Houses Human Services as amended, it awaits House floor action.

SB 146 (McGee) – Based on a lawsuit, this bill intends to redesign – and fund – Montana's public defender system, which could be a good thing for people with disabilities on limited incomes. Passed Senate as amended, it's now referred to House Judiciary.

SB 189 (Cocchiarella) – Would clarify conditions for workers compensation evaluation. Had no real difficulty in either chamber. It was transmitted to the Governor for signature last week.

SB 150 (Keenan) – Establishes cost-sharing for community-based Medicaid services. Bill faced considerable opposition in House committee, especially from advocates of children's DD services and their families. No Human Services Committee action, as yet.

SB 153 (Cobb) – Establishes performance measures for DPHHS. It passed House Human Services but awaits floor action.

SB 428 (Stapleton) – Establishes the 211 emergency human services system statewide. The bill passed Finance & Claims and 2nd Reading on voice vote. 3rd Reading set for Tuesday.

SB 433 (Lind) – Creates a Medicaid pilot project for 50 developmentally disabled individuals, providing retention of unspent funds in their annual cost plan for future services, as well as a portion to the DDP "risk pool". It is still awaiting House Human Services executive action

SB 485 (Ellingson) – This bill establishes for citizens a "next-of-kin" registry, for purposes of hospital or long-term care facility visitation and disposition of one's remains upon death, and be housed in the Attorney General's Office. It received a storm hearing the 23rd in House Judiciary with lots of questions and concerns by committee members, though no opponents. No action, as yet.

SB 500 (Cobb) – Revises state election laws to facilitate voting accessibility for people with disabilities. It was heard the 22nd in the House State Administration and awaits committee action.

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"Riding the Bus with My Sister" to air on TV May 1

Rachel Simon's book *Riding the Bus with My Sister* has been made into a Hallmark Hall of Fame television movie. The film will air May 1 on CBS stations around the country.

April 19, 2005: Reasonable Accommodation: Best Practices for an Interactive Process audio conference

Speaker: Bart Bartlett, County of Orange, Santa Ana, California

Beth Loy, Ph.D., Human Factors Consultant with the Job Accommodation Network

Kendra Duckworth, Human Factors Consultant for the Job Accommodation Network

The cost for the session is \$25 for nonprofits and \$40 for other entities for each location, regardless of the number of participants at each location (multiple people can attend at one location for the same flat fee). There is no charge for participants who come to the following locations: Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission in Columbus, OH, and Southeastern Ohio Center for Independent Living (SOCIL) in Lancaster, OH.

Sessions are 90 minutes in length and delivered via audio conference. Participants are in a "listen-only" mode until the question and answer period. The sessions are offered real-time captioned on the Internet, and a transcript is developed and posted to the Internet following the session. In addition, a digital recording of the session is archived on the Great Lakes ADA Center web site at <http://adagreatlakes.org/PnServices/AudioConferencing/Archives/>

If you are unable to access this site, please email us at adaohio@aol.com, and we will assist you further.

Important Tax Code Changes Clarified by SchwabLearning Article

(Courtesy of Monday Morning in Washington, D.C.)

SchwabLearning.org has published an article that summarizes significant tax benefits that can be taken by parent of children and youth with disabilities. "Year 2004 Tax Benefits for Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities" contains relevant advice for families of children with all types of disabilities on issues such as medical expenses deductions, health savings accounts, and much more.

Read the full article at <http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.asp?r=969>.

Publication Series from the National Center for Children in Poverty Focuses on Social Security and Children

The National Center for Children in Poverty has released a series of publications describing the role of social security in protecting children. A policy brief titled "Whose Security: What Social Security Means to Children and Families" provides a description of the social security program, how social security affects children and families, the effects of social security on child poverty, and what's at stake for children and families in the current social security debate. The brief is available at http://nccp.org/pub_wsw05a.html or <http://nccp.org/media/wsw05a-text.pdf>. A companion fact sheet is also available at http://nccp.org/pub_wsw05b.html or <http://nccp.org/media/wsw05b-text.pdf>

The final publication in the series, titled "Children, Social Security, and Private Accounts: 10 Questions for Policymakers," presents basic facts about children and social security and questions about private accounts. It is available at http://nccp.org/pub_wsw05c.html or <http://nccp.org/media/wsw05c-text.pdf>

Training/Workshops/Meetings/Conferences in Montana::

TOOLS FOR INDEPENDENCE Teleconference, April 5 & 6, Missoula, Kalispell & Billings

Sponsored by Region V CSPD and PLUK

Title: Technology is Not a Solution, It's a Tool

Date: April 5, 2005, 1:00-4:00 PM

Where: Teleconference originating from Billings broadcasting to Missoula & Kalispell

Description: Session 1. This half-day seminar focuses on a simple common-sense approach to determine successful strategies and technology that will work for students at home, in school and at work.

Title: Technology for Reading and Writing

Date: April 6, 2005, 1:00-4:00 PM

Where: Teleconference originating from Billings broadcasting to Missoula & Kalispell

Description: Session 2: Technology Solutions for Reading and Writing Difficulties: This session will demonstrate many of the technologies that are available today for use with students who have reading and/or writing difficulties due to learning disabilities, motor difficulties, visual or cognitive impairments. These will include: scanning/reading systems, video magnification, screen reading and typing aids, voice input, electronic keyboards, and more.

Presenter: Roger Holt, rholt@pluk.org: Roger has worked as the director of technology programs for PLUK, serving families statewide, for 15 years. He presents nationally, focusing on technology and disabilities and the realm of Assistive Technology. He's recognized nationwide as a creative and talented professional in the field and is a RESNA Certified Assistive Technology Practitioner.

Locations:

- MISSOULA: Blackfoot Telephone, 1221 N Russell
- KALISPELL: Byte Savy, 309 S Main
- Billings: PLUK Office, 516 N 32nd St

Contact: Nancy Marks, Region V CSPD Coordinator, 728-2400 ext 1088, admin@cspd.net

To Register: Go to <http://www.cspd.net> and register. No Registration FEE for these workshops

Credit: OPI Renewal Credit - 3 hours per session, Early Childhood - 3 hours per session

Audience: General educators, administrators, technology support personnel, special educators, paraeducators, parents, OT, PT, speech language pathologists, and anyone interested in the range of technology options that are available.

Bullying: What We Know and What We Can Do, April 14, Miles City Community College

Presenter: Marlene Snyder, Ph.D

Marlene is an independent consultant, international conference speaker, curricula writer, and workshop presenter for educational, child welfare, juvenile justice, and parent education agencies. She is one of five Master Trainers for the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. She trains trainers that work with school administrators, teachers, support staff, law enforcement officers and parents to implement the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. In addition, she regularly consults on issues involving juvenile crime and violence prevention in rural communities with professionals in the juvenile justice system.

Session Description: Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional and that involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take many forms, such as hitting, kicking, threatening others, teasing, name-calling, excluding from a group, or sending mean notes or emails. A child who is being bullied has a hard time defending himself or herself. Often, children are bullied not just once or twice, but repeatedly. For many years, bullying has been treated as a rite of passage - an undesirable, but sometimes unavoidable, reality of growing up. This is far from the truth. Bullying is a serious public health issue that affects countless young people everyday. Further, research shows that the effects of bullying can last well into adulthood.

Visit <http://www.pluk.org/training/Bullying.htm> for information and online registration

Montana Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Conference, April 13-15, Billings

The 2005 Montana CEC Conference focuses on "diverse abilities" and presents variety of topics suited to diverse audiences including parents, professionals, and students. Registration rates vary (\$45-\$125) and CEUs are pending.

Print a copy of the registration form at <http://www.mtcec.org/registration.htm>. For more information, visit the Montana CEC website at <http://www.mtcec.org/conference.htm>.

Montana Counseling Association Annual Conference

"A Community of Healing: Integrative Practices in Trauma Response"—April 21-22, Helena

The Montana Counseling Association (MCA) will hold its annual conference on April 21-22 in Helena entitled "A Community of Healing: Integrative Practices in Trauma Response." The schedule features nationally distinguished keynote speakers, state government officials, University researchers, and clinicians. This conference will address childhood traumatic stress, PTSD, sexual abuse, and trauma response to war, terrorism, natural disaster, and school violence and will emphasize the importance of collaboration between organizations.

The Division of Educational Research and Service (DERS) at The University of Montana (DERS) will contribute expertise from its Montana Center for the Investigation and Treatment of Childhood Trauma Project. This multi-year project is part of the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) National Child Traumatic Stress Network. The project joins DERS with childhood mental health experts at Duke University, the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA), RAND Corporation, Los Angeles Unified School District, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Similarly, St. Vincent Healthcare will contribute expertise in mental health issues specific to the health care community—particularly first responders. Through funding from the U.S. Department of Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), St. Vincent has begun collaboration with numerous agencies across Montana, including the

Department of Public Health and Human Services, to provide training programs using the all hazards approach to disasters as well as placing an emphasis on the interagency response required in the event of bioterrorism.

CEUs are available. For more information, including the schedule and registration, visit <http://www.montanacounseling.org/conferences.htm>.

It's NOT About the Technology! Tools for Independence, April 22, Wolf Point

Presenter: Roger Holt, ATP

Roger is a native Montanan. He works as the director of technology programs for Parents, Let's Unite for Kids, serving families state-wide. He serves on a number of Councils and Boards and presents nationally focusing on technology and disabilities and the realm of Assistive Technology. He's recognized nationally as a creative and talented professional in the field. Mr. Holt is a RESNA Certified Assistive Technology Practitioner.

Overview: This full-day seminar offers a unique opportunity to gain valuable information on the topic of assistive technology. The two morning sessions will cover the basic information of technology and the law and how to make technology decisions. The afternoon sessions will cover specific strategies, devices, resources and what may be expected in the future.

Visit <http://www.pluk.org/training/AT.htm> for information and online registration.

Region I CSPD

"Child Abuse and Neglect," April 22-23, Glasgow

Cost - \$20.00, includes lunch on the 23rd. This training is an 8-hour approved training for participants on the Practitioner Registry and for Day Care Provider Renewals and CEU's.

For more information or to register contact: Jody King at 406-228-9431 or 1-800-659-3673.

PASSPORT to Health Summit, April 26, Helena



As the PASSPORT to Health program enters its twelfth year of successfully managing the delivery of health care to Montana's Medicaid clients, the DPHHS Managed Care Bureau is planning provider summits to solicit your feedback about the program and identify suggestions for change. A primary goal of these events is to look at the program in a truly comprehensive way; all ideas are open for consideration.

One-day facilitated summits are planned for locations across the state.

Helena on Tuesday, April 26 at the First Presbyterian Church (535 Ewing) from 10:00 AM to 4:30 PM

Coffee and doughnuts will be served at 9:30 AM, and lunch will be provided.

Summits are also planned for:

- Havre during the week of May 10
- Billings during the week of May 17
- Kalispell the week of June 7

A cross-section of PASSPORT stakeholders will be invited, including: PASSPORT providers, specialists and other non-PCPs, representatives from billing companies, hospitals, FQHCs, RHCs, the tribal health community, and client advocates.

If you have ideas and would like to participate in one of the summits, contact PASSPORT Program Officer Niki Scoffield at (406) 444-4148 or niscoffield@mt.gov.

For more information on the PASSPORT to Health Program, visit the DPHHS website at <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/hpsd/medicaid/medrecip/pdf/passporthandbook.pdf>

Fourth Annual Native American Brain Injury Conference, April 26-27, Billings

The Fourth Annual Native American Brain Injury Conference, scheduled for April 26-27 in Billings, will feature nationally recognized speakers and an evening concert with singer-songwriter Jack Gladstone.

Registration fees vary (\$55-\$105). Pre-register by April 8, 2005 for the best rates. Register online at <http://www.msubillings.edu/mtcdregister>. Questions? Call Ian Elliot at 1-888-866-3822, or Nell Eby at 406-655-7636 for more information

Step Up to Writing—A Key to Academic Success, April 25-26, 2005 - Missoula, April 27-28 - Kalispell

Step Up to Writing is a writing program that makes a dramatic difference in student success. This two-day workshop is designed for teachers who want to help struggling students learn to communicate in an organized and effective manner. Participants will leave the workshop with a wealth of strategies that motivate students as they significantly increase their academic success.

The trainer, Neilia Solberg, B.A., is a Step Up to Writing consultant for Sopris West Educational Services. Included in her years of teaching are elementary school and staff development in the language arts and content reading. Recent

experience in Academic Achievement plans across the curriculum and grade levels as well as expanded responsibilities in coordinating instruction development.

For more information and to register online, go to the Region V CSPD web site: <http://www.cspd.net>.

Session 3: Getting Students Past the "Gatekeeper" Courses in Math-Creating Success in Pre-Algebra and Algebra, May 5, Missoula

Effective instruction, especially at the middle school level, is a critical component for laying the foundation for higher-level mathematics. This one-day workshop focuses on the "big picture" concepts and those topics necessary for algebra success. By tackling the important topics and modeling the "big picture" concepts for students, teachers and students can "tear down" these roadblocks to algebra success.

To register, or for further information, please go to <http://www.cspd.net>

Family Learning Weekend for the Visually Impaired, Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind June 10-12, MDSB, Great Falls

A FREE three-day weekend in Great Falls at MSDB is designed specifically for families with children who are visually impaired. This weekend is packed with ideas. A nationally renowned keynote speaker, Judith Lesner from the National Association of Parents of the Visually Impaired (NAPVI), will be speaking to families about the importance of parent advocacy. She will present with her son, Jacob Lesner-Buxton, who will be addressing the current issues in the education of the blind. Both Judith and Jacob are experienced will be working with our parents to design a Montana chapter of NAPVI. For more information, please contact MSDB at 1-800-882-6732 or Barb Rolf, Outreach Vision Consultant at (406) 251-5674.

MASP Summer Institute, June 12-14, Billings

Jack M. Fletcher, PhD (professor, Dept. of Pediatrics at University of Texas Health Sciences Center-Houston, Assoc. Director Center for Academic and Reading Skills (CARS)), will present "Neuropsychology of Developmental Disorders." Explore the origins of brain dysfunction, review the behavior systems model, discover the current concepts behind the behavior-brain relationship, and investigate learning disabilities identification, intervention, and research.

The Institute will be held from Sunday June 12 through Tuesday June 14, 2005, at the Mansfield Health Education Center in Billings. CEUs are available. Fees vary (\$110-\$145)

Pre-register before May 30, 2005, registration will also be available on site.

Download the MASP SI Brochure at http://www.pluk.org/MASP_SumInst_2005.pdf. The brochure will print out at full size on legal paper (8.5" x 17") and at reduced size on letter paper (8.5" x 11").

Power Mobility Camp, June 13-17, Billings

Located at MSU-Billings campus, the purpose of the camp is to allow any individual an opportunity to try power mobility. Several sessions are encouraged for evaluation. For more information, please call Mary O'Connell, PT, ATP at 1-800-732-0323 or 406-243-5688. People of all ages, with any disability, are welcome.

Walk F.A.R. for NAAR Autism Walk—June 12, Great Falls

To date, NAAR has committed \$21.1 million to fund 211 autism research projects and fellowships worldwide - more than any other non-governmental organization. NAAR has been able to make these investments, in large part, through the success of Walk F.A.R. for NAAR, the signature fundraising and autism awareness event of NAAR. Each year, walks throughout the USA, Canada and England attract thousands of walkers and raise millions for research.

Great Falls Walk (<http://www.autismwalk.org/greatfalls>)

Help spread the word about the Montana Walk F.A.R. for NAAR event. Download the event flyer at http://www.autismwalk.org/site/DocServer/Great_Falls_Walk_Flyer_FINAL.pdf?docID=705. Want to build a Walk F.A.R. team, check out http://www.autismwalk.org/site/PageServer?pagename=fundraising_tips.

Find out more about the Walk F.A.R. for NAAR Events at <http://www.autismwalk.org/site/PageServer?pagename=homepage>.

Interested? Want to Learn More?

Penny Martin--Local Volunteer Leadership--406.771.3998 or j.martin@bresnan.net

Scott R. Moore--Pacific Northwest Regional Director

National Alliance for Autism Research - 1370 Stewart Street - Seattle WA 98109

206.464.5182 smoore@naar.org <http://www.autismwalk.org> or <http://www.naar.org>

Closing The Gap Forum Announcements

Closing The Gap Forums is a discussion board exploring the many ways that technology is being used to enhance the lives of people with special needs. Please feel free to participate in the discussions listed below and share this valuable resource with friends and colleagues. There is no fee to participate. Visit: <http://www.closingthegap.com/forums> and go to the "Featured Discussions."

- **Activities and Camp for Families**

Moderators: Jill E. Senner, PhD, CCC-SLP; Lesly Levitas, OTR/L; Pam Harris

Participants in this discussion will learn about camp and how naturalistic summer recreation activities can provide rich communication opportunities for AAC users.

- **Using Technology With Children With Cerebral Visual Impairment**

Moderators: Roger Bates, Information Director, Inclusive Technology Ltd/Inclusive TLC; Kay Wrench, Team Leader, Oldham Education Authority

A chance to share expertise and experiences on working with CVI children.

Other discussions:

- **IntelliFeatures Match**

Moderators: Mariangeles "Nena" Murphy-Herd, e-Learning Design Lab, University of Kansas; Mary Dunbar, e-Learning Design Lab, University of Kansas; Susan Bashinski, PhD, Bureau of Child Research, Assistant Research Professor; Cathy Drobny, Educational Technology Consultant; Suzanne Feit, Curriculum Developer and Training Specialist, IntelliTools

With a limited budget, what are creative ways to use limited hardware for access assessment and training using the IntelliTools Classroom Suite.

- **Electronic Mentoring for Students with Disabilities**

Moderators: Scott Bellman, Project Coordinator/Counselor DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, & Technology)

Discuss the benefits to students, available online programs, how to start your own online mentoring community.

- **Video Magnification: The Good, the Bad, and the Future**

Moderator: Lou Lipschultz, CEO, OcuSource.com

We will be discussing features and ergonomic considerations of video magnifiers currently available.

- **OS X Perspectives**

Post your questions and comments about Apple's latest operating system and its new accessibility features.

Check out the "Closing The Gap Forums" <http://www.closingthegap.com/forums>.

Individual Supports to Increase Access to an Inclusive College Experience for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (Online Training Module)

The purpose of this online training module is to provide guidance on developing an Individual Support Model (ISM) to increase access to inclusive college experiences and to improve chances for the success of students with intellectual disabilities. An ISM approach provides students with individualized services and supports (e.g., educational coach, tutor, technology, natural supports) in college courses, certificate programs, internships, and/or degree programs. Offered by the On-Campus Outreach project at the University of Maryland; funded by the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs. Learn more at http://www.education.umd.edu/oco/training/oco_training_modules/IndividualSupports/start.html.

FCTD Hosts Online Discussion of AT and Early Childhood, Beginning March 3

This month national expert Susan Mistrett, Director of the Let's Play! Projects, and parent advocate Lisa Johnson, join us to discuss disabled children and the variety of uses for AT enrichment. This month's discussion expert, Sue Mistrett, has many years of experience helping early childhood programs capitalize on "low tech" tools and strategies that support development and promote play in children's lives. In this discussion, Sue will be sharing her ideas and strategies in the use of assistive technologies for young children with disabilities. The discussion also offers a unique parent perspective from Lisa Larson, who's young son Trey, has been successful with a wide range of assistive technology.

Post your experiences, questions and comments. Learn from the experts! We look forward to "seeing" you online! Join in the forum at <http://www.fctd.info/webboard/index.php>.

Telecast, Social Security Disability Benefit Issues Affecting Transition-Aged Youth April 13, 3- 5 PM EST

From One-Stop Toolkit Resources of the Week Technical Assistance Project RRTC on Work Support Satellite Telecast: Social Security Disability Benefit Issues Affecting Transition-Aged Youth April 13, 2005 -- 3:00 - 5:00 PM Eastern Time <http://worksupport.com/Topics/training.asp>.

The successful transition of students with disabilities from school to work and full community participation is rapidly gaining momentum as a major policy and program initiative for Federal, State and Local government agencies. As school systems work collaboratively with State VR agencies, community rehabilitation programs, one-stop career centers, and employers to facilitate transition from school to work, they quickly encounter the barrier posed by Social Security disability benefits. Students with significant disabilities and their families are understandably concerned about the effect that employment will have upon cash benefits like SSI or SSDI as well as Medicaid.

Fear of losing these critical benefits often prevents families and students from participating in community based employment programs during school. This telecast will focus on what school personnel, disability professionals, Benefits Specialists, and parents need to know about Social Security disability benefits for transition-aged youth and will provide specific instruction for using Social Security work incentives to promote employment, facilitate career planning, and enhance earnings capacity during and after secondary education. Presenters will offer strategies for preparing for and handling critical transitions within the Social Security benefits systems, with particular emphasis on issues surrounding the 18th birthday. Failure to consider Social Security benefits issues during transition planning is not just a missed opportunity. Harm can be caused when students and family members are not educated about nor prepared for the effect of earnings on cash benefits and medical insurance.

For more information, contact Roberta Martin, rsmartin@titan.vcu.edu, (804) 827-0749

Teleconference, Reasonable Accommodation: Best Practices for an Interactive Process, April 19

Speaker: Bart Bartlett, County of Orange, Santa Ana, California; Beth Loy, Ph.D., Human Factors Consultant with the Job Accommodation Network; Kendra Duckworth, Human Factors Consultant for the Job Accommodation Network

The cost for the session is \$25 for nonprofits and \$40 for other entities for each location, regardless of the number of participants at each location (multiple people can attend at one location for the same flat fee). There is no charge for participants who come to the following locations: Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission in Columbus, OH, and Southeastern Ohio Center for Independent Living (SOCIL) in Lancaster, OH.

Sessions are 90 minutes in length and delivered via audio conference. Participants are in a "listen-only" mode until the question and answer period. The sessions are offered real-time captioned on the Internet, and a transcript is developed and posted to the Internet following the session. In addition, a digital recording of the session is archived on the Great Lakes ADA Center web site at <http://adagreatlakes.org/PnServices/AudioConferencing/Archives/>.

If you are unable to access this site, please email us at adaohio@aol.com, and we will assist you further.

For more information, teleconference times, and registration, please contact the Region 8 DBTAC at <http://www.ada-infonet.org/>, email RegionVIII@mtc-inc.com, or call (719) 444-0268 (V/TTY), (719) 444-0269 (Fax)

Training/Workshops/Conferences outside Montana::

Disability Research Institute 2005 Symposium -- SSA Disability Programs: Comprehensive Work Opportunity Initiative—April 5, National Press Club, Washington, DC

The Disability Research Institute (DRI) 2005 Symposium will bring together nationally recognized disability scholars to discuss key policy questions affecting Social Security disability programs and policies as related to DRI research. This interactive discussion will include designated time for audience participation. Detailed information on DRI research projects will be made available throughout the day and researchers will be available to discuss their work during the scheduled poster session. The Symposium will include four interactive sessions that will address the following key policy questions:

- What are your reactions to the currently identified barriers to return to work in the Comprehensive Work Opportunity Initiative? What other barriers are there (if any) that need to be addressed and what recommendations would you make to SSA regarding strategies that should be employed to decrease or eliminate those barriers?
- How can SSA modify or restructure the disability determination process to facilitate return to work simultaneously with determination of eligibility of benefits?
- What are the most important issues for SSA to address to integrate and coordinate the long-term process of transitioning youth with disabilities to work? What are the educational, career planning, assistive technologies and other transition issues that need to be addressed in order to help youth with disabilities maximize their economic self-sufficiency?

- What are the critical research and policy questions that need to be addressed in order to maximize the impact of research outcomes and policy recommendations on fully integrating persons with disabilities in the workforce and society at large?

Access <http://www.dri.uiuc.edu/symposium2005.asp> for more information, including registration. There is no charge to attend the Symposium; however, registration is required due to limited space.

2005 CEC Convention and Expo, April 6-9, Baltimore MD

The "largest and most exciting professional development event devoted to special and gifted education" the CEC Convention and Expo offers pre-convention workshops, more than 700 program sessions, the world's top exhibit show for professionals who work with exceptional students, the CEC Career Connections (with school district representatives from throughout the U.S.), and a variety of special events—including the CEC Teacher of the Year luncheon and the Yes I Can! Awards Gala. Convention registration varies (\$50-\$525), group discounts and CEUs are available. Register by phone 1-888-232-7733, TTY 1-866-915-5000, fax 1-703-264-9494, or online at <http://www.cec.sped.org>. <http://www.cec.sped.org>

Institute for Family-Centered Care Seminar: Hospitals Moving Forward with Patient- and Family-Centered Care, April 10-13, Houston, TX

An in-depth seminar focusing on maternity care, newborn intensive care, pediatric inpatient and outpatient care, pediatric intensive care, emergency care, and rehabilitation. For a seminar brochure, and more information, please visit <http://www.familycenteredcare.org>.

2005 ADA Multiple Perspectives on Access, Inclusion, and Disability Conference, April 11 - 13, Columbus OH

(Courtesy of Ohio State University, ADA Office)



April 11th Pre-conference seminar presented by ADA-OHIO Demystifying the Interplay of the ADA, FMLA & Workers Compensation
April 12th and 13th Multiple Perspectives on Access Inclusion & Disability

The Fifth Annual Multiple Perspectives conference will provide opportunities to share practical information on best practices, explore current research, and develop collaborations. The conference will continue its tradition of bringing together a diverse audience (individuals & employers, students & educators, advocates & policy makers, consumers & service agencies) to reflect on the many dimensions of disability. This year's theme, sameness, difference and equity, is summed up by the comments below:

In her opinion in *Tennessee v. Lane* Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said "Including individuals with disabilities among people who count in composing 'We the People,' Congress understood in shaping the ADA, that it would sometimes require not blindfolded equality, but responsiveness to difference; not indifference, but accommodation."

In an article discussing accommodations for college students with disabilities Paul Grossman, attorney for the Office For Civil Rights, described the accommodation mandate in disability law as an opportunity for rewarding self-examination. "No other set of laws so entreats academia to take its own temperature, examine its traditions, and thoughtfully deliberate about which of its standards are essential and which are merely unexamined habits." Grossman's observation is as true for the workplace and wider society as it is for education. For more information, contact: ada-osu@osu.edu or ADA Coordinator's Office, 614-292-6207 (V), 614-688-8605 (tty).

Visit <http://ada.osu.edu/conferences/2005.htm> for more details.

Making Sense—Autism and Sensory Processing Conference, April 15, Denver CO

Discussing medical, intervention, educational, and research issues related to autism and sensory processing. This conference offers dozens of choices for attendees and features keynote speaker Dr. Morton Ann Gernsbacher, PhD, "internationally recognized researcher, and mother of a sensational child with autism and severe dyspraxia. For 20 years, Gernsbacher has investigated the cognitive processes and mechanisms that underlie language comprehension. She is a central figure in the field of psycholinguistics and cognitive psychology."

Registration rates vary (\$150-\$175). Register online at https://www.blacktie-colorado.com/online_sales/kidfoundation.cfm or download a registration form at <http://www.kidfoundation.org/conference/conference.reg.pdf>.

Autism One Conference, May 26-29, Chicago IL

As always, Autism One 2005 features four major tracks to help parents and professionals make the most informed choices and decisions, they are: Biomedical Treatments; Behavior / Communication / Education Therapies; Complementary/Alternative Treatments; Government/Legal/Personal Issues. Each track offers three days of presentations focusing on particular treatments, research, and/or issues of that field. All presentations are open on a walk-in basis—conference registration covers them all.

Learn about the most effective treatments and therapies, how to obtain services and how to deal effectively with schools. Learn what to expect in future for the fields of medicine, education, government, and law.

Registration rates: \$99-\$295

Register online at <https://www.exporeg.com/autismone/>. Questions or registration concerns, email Registration@AutismOne.org. For more information, visit <http://autismone.org/homepage.cfm>.

National ADA Symposium, May 17-19, Overland Park, KS

(From Monday Morning in Washington, DC)

The National ADA Symposium is the most comprehensive and effective event available on the Americans with Disabilities Act and disability related issues. It is designed to meet the specific needs and interests of professionals who are involved in interpreting and implementing the American with Disabilities Act's guidelines and regulations. Experts directly involved in interpreting, regulating and implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act provide the training. The Symposium brings together presenters from the key agencies involved with the ADA including the U.S. Dept. of Justice, the EEOC, Dept. of Education, Dept. of Labor and the U.S. Access Board. These presenters provide dynamic training that participants can put to use in their professions.

For more information, including online registration, go to <http://www.adaupdate.org/Symposium.html>.

People on the Move Sessions, June 8-9, Salt Lake City, UT

The People On The Move program consists of two days of instruction for travel trainers, teachers, job coaches, bus operators, transportation coordinators, independent living specialists and others who assist people with disabilities in their use of public and private transportation so that they can go to school, jobs and other community destinations.

If you missed the March 2 deadline for Ann Arbor, there are other dates and cities; each is followed by the application deadline:

- June 8-9, 2005: Salt Lake City, Utah (May 27)
- September 7-8, 2005: Boston, Mass. (Aug. 3)
- November 14-15, 2005: New Orleans, La. (Oct. 3)

The Collaborative Assistive Technology Conference of the Rockies, June 9-11, Westminster, CO

Attendees will learn about local and national perspectives on state-of-the-art assistive technology devices and services. Don't miss the largest assistive technology conference in the Rocky Mountain Region, with attendance estimated at over 600. With over 70 sessions geared toward every age and disability, there is something for everybody! Presenters are among the most respected in their fields. This conference is co-sponsored by the Colorado Department of Education, SWAAC teams and Assistive Technology Partners, a division of the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Department of Rehabilitation Medicine - NIDRR Grant #H224A0014.

The goal of the conference is to enhance the quality of life for individuals with disabilities through the appropriate selection and use of assistive technology. Anyone with an interest in assistive technology devices and services is welcome. Breakout sessions will focus on funding issues and legislation, education, employment, hands-on assistive technology training and the design and development of low-tech adaptive devices.

This conference is designed for people with disabilities and their families, special educators, teachers, government agency representatives, occupational & physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, public health administrators, legislators, rehabilitation counselors, employers, insurers, and people who need up-to-the-minute information about technology devices and services.

If you use or recommend assistive technology now - or you're planning to take advantage of all that technology can offer—this conference will give you the "inside track." With 70+ sessions covering all aspects of assistive technology, you'll have the opportunity to take a walk along today's technology landscape and 'surf' what tomorrow's technology will offer. With local and national presenters, this conference is your hands-on route to new insights and information, including:

Today's Assistive Technology Devices and Services

- Future Trends
- Changes in Legislation
- Case Studies

- Innovative Technology Applications
- Funding Strategies and Procedures
- Technology Assessment

The deadline for early registration is April 29, 2005. Register early and save! Access a PDF registration form at <http://www.uchsc.edu/atp/conf2005/conf2005reg.htm>.

**"Making Connections, Strengthening Communities" 14th Annual Community Technology Conference
June 17-19, Cleveland, OH**

(Courtesy of CTCNet.org)

The Community Technology Center Network's major event is "the largest national gathering of community technology organizations, programs, and experts." The goal for the 2005 conference is to "to chart the progression of the community technology movement from a small grassroots effort, focused on technology access, to a growing national and international field of practice harnessing technology to meet human and social needs." According to CTCNet, the Annual Conference "is a gathering of our member organizations, leaders in the field, and others in related fields interested in creating equitable participation in information technology. CTCNet members receive a discounted registration rate and repeatedly cite this conference as one of the most important services CTCNet offers."

Register before May 17th to take advantage of early-bird discounts. For registration rates and more information, visit www.ctcnet.org/conf/2005. Online registration may be available soon. Registration concerns or other questions? Email Stephen Quinn, CTCNet Member Services Coordinator, at squinn@ctcnet.org.

NATIONAL DOWN SYNDROME SOCIETY CONFERENCE, July 7-10

Sponsored by NDSS, this conference will be held at The Fairmont Hotel in Chicago. Self-advocates, families and professionals are encouraged to attend. For more information, visit <http://www.ndss.org/content.cfm?fuseaction=NwsEvt.EvtConfNC>

Selected Sources::

1. *Monday Morning in Washington, DC*, <http://www.inclusionresearch.org>
2. *Rocky Mountain DBTAC*, <http://www.adainformation.org>
3. *PEN Weekly NewsBlast* <http://www.publiceducation.org>
4. *Health and Disability Training Calendar* <http://mtdh.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/training.htm>
5. *The American Indian Disability Technical Assistance Center Training Calendar*
<http://aidtac.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/TrainingCalendar.htm>
6. *Technology for Nonprofits*: <http://www.techsoup.org>

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- ❖ **Vision Statement:** Given information and support, individuals with disabilities and their families will feel empowered to advocate for themselves and participate fully in educational and community opportunities.
- ❖ **Statement on accessibility:** Today, we endeavor to be conscious of the need for making all electronic information accessible, as we are aware of physical accessibility issues in our community. For design guidelines visit <http://ncam.wgbh.org/cdrom/guideline/>.
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