

SOWER

it's my LIFE!

Individuals with developmental disabilities, their parents or guardians, service providers, community professionals, state staff and others working with or interested in serving people with developmental disabilities are invited to attend the *It's My Life!* Conference September 22-24, 2014. The colossal conference will be held at the La Vista Conference Center, 12520 Westport Parkway, La Vista, Nebraska.

Highlights of the conference include keynote presentations by Cathy Ficker Terrill, Frank Pastizzo and Eustacia Cutler, breakout sessions in five tracks, evening sessions of special interest to self-advocates and parents or guardians, artistic expressions by Nebraskans with developmental disabilities, exhibits by organizations and companies specializing in DD, meeting in a fully accessible Project SEARCH location and lots of opportunities for networking.

Eustacia Cutler is the featured speaker for the conference. On Wednesday, September 24, at 3:00 p.m., she will share her story of raising her daughter, Dr. Temple Grandin, in the conservative *Leave-it-to-Beaver* world of the 1950s. It was a time when children with autism were routinely diagnosed as "infant schizophrenics" and banished to institutions.



Eustacia Cutler
Autism Activist & Mother of Temple Grandin



Contact Christina with your story ideas:
Christina Mayer
Community Liaison
402-440-4129
christina.mayer@nebraska.gov
Give her your name and a way to contact you so she can find out more about your story idea.

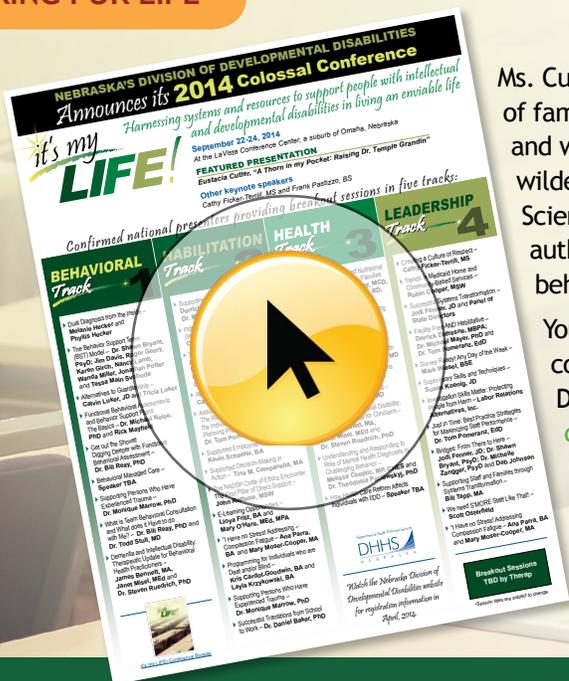
We hope you'll enjoy reading the *Sower*. If you'd like to read it online, go to:
http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/newsletters_sower.aspx

Sower is published quarterly by the Division of Developmental Disabilities, part of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. It is a celebration of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families, guardians, service providers, community agencies and services, advocates and other interested individuals.

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DHHS
NEBRASKA
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PREPARING FOR LIFE



Ms. Cutler will tell of her fight to keep Temple in the mainstream of family, community and school life, how Temple responded and went on to succeed, as Ms. Cutler puts it, “beyond my wildest dreams.” Dr. Temple Grandin is a Doctor of Animal Science, a professor at Colorado State University, a best-selling author, a consultant to the livestock industry on animal behavior and an activist regarding autism.

You can learn more or register for the *It's My Life!* conference on page 7 of this Sower, on the Developmental Disabilities website http://dhhs.ne.gov/developmental_disabilities/Pages/ItsMyLife.aspx or by contacting Christina Mayer, Community Liaison, at 402.440.4129 or Christina.Mayer@Nebraska.gov.



Preparing for life after graduation

Students graduating from high school often face a future that has more questions than answers. For students with disabilities, the future can be even more uncertain. Transition planning helps students with disabilities, and their families, prepare for the transition into adult life after graduation from high school.

Eligibility

Preparing for adult life can include finding out if you are eligible for developmental disabilities (DD) services. Funding for DD services is provided through the Division of Developmental Disabilities. That funding is based on an individual's needs and provides for vocational and residential services that will address specific needs you have as you become an adult. The services address questions like, “Where will I live?” “How will I purchase the things I need and want?” “How will I earn money?” and “Who will I choose to be part of my adult life?”

In order to find out if you are eligible for DD services, you must fill out an application. You can request an application through a referral from your teacher or online at <http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/dip/ded/DDEligibility.htm>. You can also begin the application process online through ACCESSNebraska at http://dhhs.ne.gov/Children_Family_Services/AccessNebraska/Pages/accessnebraska_index.aspx

Upon receiving a referral, Kendra Wiebe with the Division of Developmental Disabilities will send you or your guardian an application packet. The packet gives instructions about documents you need to send to the Division. Some of those documents include IEPs and MDTs from school, information from your doctors and forms that you or your guardian sign.

When your completed application reaches the Division of Developmental Disabilities, a Disability Services Specialist looks over the documents and makes a decision. When a decision is made, a letter explaining the decision, called a notice of decision, is sent to you or your guardian. If you are found eligible, you may request a Service Coordinator to help you plan your future. After graduation from high school at age 21, you will receive day services automatically. You are also placed on the registry for residential services.

If you are found not eligible, you have up to 90 days to request an informal dispute resolution and/or an appeal hearing.



If you have any questions, contact:
Kendra Wiebe at 402-471-8720 or
kendra.wiebe@nebraska.gov

School transition programs

Transition services in Nebraska's public schools include a coordinated set of activities for students with a disability. Among other things, transition services help to facilitate a student's movement from school to post-school activities including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. Schools provide transition services in a variety of ways. A couple are described here.

The **Elkhorn South Young Adult Program** is about two years old. It is a community based transition program through the high school. Before becoming the program that it is today, the school contracted with private service providers to deliver transition services.

The classroom in which the students meet is like a traditional classroom . . . plus. The Young Adult Program classroom includes an area with sofas and easy chairs, an area that looks like a dining room, a kitchen and a laundry room. There is a dry erase board and a table around which students meet for traditional coursework as well. The classroom reflects the breadth of the "curriculum" of the transitional program.



Students in the program volunteer at a variety of locations in the Elkhorn community in order to gain job skills. Among the places they volunteer are restaurants, a hospital and a car wash. They have different tasks to complete at each

of the locations. Many times they try a variety of new tasks throughout the year. For example, they may start with wrapping silverware and move to bussing tables.

In addition to working at several sites, the students complete classwork. The classwork focuses on strengthening independent living skills. Among their daily living skills are preparing menus, shopping for groceries, preparing meals, doing laundry and participating in chores according to a checklist. They also participate in numerous social activities throughout the year.

Dillon Denton (pictured above), **Kalyn Mowrey**, and **Kirsten Wilcox** (pictured below) are recent graduates of the program.



Project SEARCH



Project SEARCH

Project SEARCH is a high school transition school-to-work program that takes place entirely at the workplace. Total workplace immersion facilitates classroom instruction, career exploration, independent living skills training, hands-on work experience and feedback from teachers, coaches, and employers. In Nebraska there are several Project SEARCH locations including Columbus, Grand Island, Hastings, Kearney, La Vista, Lincoln, Norfolk, North Platte and York.

The Kearney Project SEARCH is located at the Good Samaritan Hospital. Job opportunities include Radiology, Rehab Services, Pharmacy, Cancer Center, Wellness and Fitness, Corporate Communications, Health Information Management, Environmental Services, Nutrition Services, and more. Project SEARCH students participate in three rotations a year. Each rotation provides the opportunity to work in a particular job for 10 weeks.

Students learn different skills and participate in numerous activities during each rotation. Jobs can involve computer work, cleaning, transporting, delivering and organizing. The students also participate in classwork. They prepare for their future by practicing interview skills, updating their resumes, and learning about their paycheck and budgeting. They receive written evaluations after each rotation to learn what they are doing well and what they need to improve. They write a letter of resignation at the end of each rotation.

Sarah, Andrew, Trevor, Stacey and Amber are recent graduates of Kearney Project SEARCH. Their teacher, Risa Molesworth, says that she has seen a lot of change and growth in the students. Andrew reported that Project SEARCH helped him become more mature. Work and classwork kept him interested, and he was treated like an adult. Andrew plans to attend college in the near future.

Amber enjoyed Project SEARCH, especially making friends. Amber plans to continue to work at her new job (Hy-Vee). Sarah's favorite thing about Project SEARCH was getting to work with good people. Sarah is currently applying for jobs.

The 8th Annual Project SEARCH Conference will be held July 21-25, 2014, in Omaha, Nebraska. You can find out more about the conference at <http://www.projectsearch.us/Events.aspx>.



Trevor



Amber



Andrew



Sarah



Stacey

Who ya gonna call?

Here are some resources for individuals, parents, guardians, resource teachers and others related to transition from high school to adulthood.

Answers 4 Families



» Answers 4 Families

⊙ Providing internet resources for Nebraskans with special needs. Available online at: <http://www.answers4families.org/other/common/disabilities/disabilities.php> or by phone at **402-472-0844**

» EducationQuest

⊙ Information for students with disabilities at: <http://www.educationquest.org/11th-12th-grade-students/information-for-students-with-disabilities/>

» Nebraska Department of Education

⊙ Information about education laws in Nebraska. Online at: <http://www.education.ne.gov/>
 ⊙ Information to assist students during the transition process. Online at: <http://ndetransition.site.esu9.org/>

» Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities

⊙ Additional resources may be found at: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

» Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation

⊙ Providing individualized vocational rehabilitation services with a goal of helping people with disabilities prepare for, find, and keep jobs.
 Available by phone at: **402-471-3231** or online at: www.vr.nebraska.gov

» PTI Nebraska

⊙ Providing training, information, and support to Nebraska parents of youth with disabilities and special health care needs.
 Available by phone at: **402-346-0525** or online at: <http://pti-nebraska.org/>

» Ready, Set, Go!

⊙ An interactive web based resource tool specifically for transition students, family members, educators, and professionals online at: <http://readyssetgo.site.esu9.org/>

» WinAHEAD

⊙ Specializes in facilitating communication with college disability service providers in two and four year colleges. Online at: <http://www.ahead.org/affiliates/western-iowa-and-nebraska>

DHHS/OMNI

Trainings are provided by OMNI Behavioral Health and the Department of Health and Human Services as an effort to improve the quality of life and care for people with developmental or intellectual disabilities in Nebraska.



DR. TOM POMERANZ

Dr. Tom Pomeranz is presenting a series of trainings throughout 2014. Participants in the first set of trainings “Just in Time Supervisory Training” have called it “very inspirational” and the “best training ever!” Trainings by Dr. Pomeranz and their locations this quarter include:

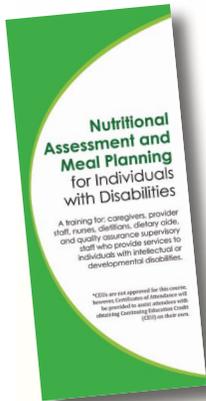
Maximizing Successful Outcomes of Inclusive Education will be presented July 7 in North Platte, July 8 in Kearney, July 9 in Hastings, July 10 in Grand Island, July 11 in Lincoln, July 21 in North Platte, July 22 in Kearney, July 23 in Hastings, July 24 in Grand Island, July 25 in Lincoln, August 11 in Ogallala, August 12 in Sidney, August 13 in Alliance and August 14 and 15 in Scottsbluff/Gering.

There is Life After High School - The Pathway to Adult Status: Supporting teenagers or adult children in your home will be presented July 7 in North Platte, July 8 in Kearney, July 9 in Hastings, July 10 in Grand Island, July 21 in North Platte, July 22 in Kearney, July 23 in Hastings, July 24 in Grand Island, August 11 in Ogallala, August 12 in Sidney and August 13 and 14 in Scottsbluff/Gering.

Just in Time: Supervisory training for provider clinical staff and management will be presented September 8 in McCook, September 9 in Ogallala, September 10 in North Platte and September 11 in Kearney.

Nurturing the Development of Young Children with Developmental Disabilities - from birth to age 5, for parents with young children with special needs will be presented September 8 in McCook, September 9 in Ogallala, September 10 in North Platte and September 11 in Kearney

To learn more about any of these training opportunities or to register, contact Rebekka Erks at rerks@omnibehavioralhealth.com or 402.397.9866, extension 120, or go to <http://www.omnibehavioralhealth.com/training/>.



NUTRITION AND MEAL PLANNING FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Attention to a quality diet, food safety and specialty dietary needs for people with developmental disabilities is very important and rarely discussed. Terri Lykins, RD, LMNT, and Deb Kolman, RD, LMNT offer

two presentations related to dining, nutrition and other support. There are two different sessions.

The morning session, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., is a basic level: “Safe, Easy and Successful Meals.” This training covers methods of food preparation, considerations when preparing food for individuals with special dietary needs and basic nutrition and menu planning.

The afternoon session, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m., is advanced level: “Nutritional Care for Adults with DD.” This course is designed for professionals who provide nutrition services for adults with DD.

Sessions will be held July 18 in Lincoln, October 17 in Grand Island and November 7 in Omaha.



WRITING INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS

This is a one-day program designed to help investigators write final investigation reports that clearly and concisely communicate what evidence was collected and how it was collected. Topics include the form and function of the investigative report, recording investigative activities, physical and demonstrative evidence, testimonial evidence, documentary evidence, summarizing evidence, and findings and analysis.

Prerequisite: Attendees must have completed “Conducting Serious Incident Investigations” prior to attending this course. The course will be held July 18, 2014, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Lincoln. There is a \$50 fee for this course.

NEBRASKA'S DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Announces its **2014 Colossal Conference:**



CONFERENCE REGISTRATION TIPS

If you want to register for the It's My Life! Conference, here are a few tips to make your registration process go smoothly:

Review the It's My Life! Conference Registration Booklet:

- ▶ Make note of the sessions you want to attend.

Register for the Event:

- ▶ On the registration page, choose the registration type that most closely represents you. **Individuals in services and on the registry of needs, their parents and guardians attend at half-price. Simply enter your Registration Type as "Individual/Parent/Guardian."**

Sign up for the **Daily Sessions** by following the links at the end of the Event Registration page or the links below:

Monday, September 22 • *Tuesday, September 23* • *Wednesday, September 24*

- ▶ Enter the reference ID from your Event Registration confirmation email when you sign up for the daily sessions.
- ▶ You will receive a confirmation email showing your session selection for each day.
- ▶ You must register for each day separately.

Important Points to Remember

- ▶ Sign up for **ONLY one session per time slot.**
- ▶ Some sessions are two hours long. Be sure that you don't select a session for the second hour.
- ▶ Sessions that are full do not appear as an option for registration. Please make a different selection for that time slot.
- ▶ Once completed, your registration cannot be edited! Take a moment to double check your selections before completing your registration.
- ▶ If you find that you've made a mistake or need to change any part of your registration, send your information with your request to:

DHHS.DDDConferenceRegistration@nebraska.gov



Lodging

Special room rates have been negotiated for the Conference at the Embassy Suites Omaha-La Vista Hotel & Conference Center, 12520 Westport Parkway, La Vista, Nebraska.

Lodging rates are:

- ▶ \$109/night single or double occupancy
- ▶ \$119/night triple occupancy
- ▶ \$129/night quadruple occupancy

Reserve your room early! • *These rates are available until August 21, 2014.*

To reserve a room with the special rates via telephone, call 402.331.7400, and mention the group code NE DHHS (Nebraska DHHS).

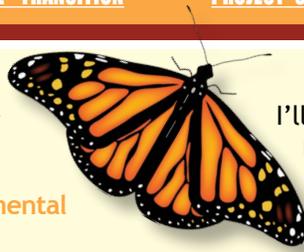
Check out the Nebraska Division of Developmental Disabilities website for registration information.
<http://dhhsemployees/sites/dd/Pages/DDHome.aspx>

JOTTINGS FROM:



Jodi Fenner

Director of DHHS
Division of Developmental
Disabilities



I'll be at the *It's My Life!* Conference, and I would love to see you there, too!

The La Vista Conference Center, where the conference is being held, is a Project SEARCH site. You can read more about Project SEARCH and other resources for students transitioning from high school to adulthood inside. Summer is a great time to dream about what you would like to do after high school—where you want to live and with whom, what things you'd like to do and how you'll earn money to do them, what you'd like to do in your free time and how you'd like to be part of your community.

You are invited! The Division has put together a colossal conference for individuals with developmental disabilities, their parents, guardians, advocates, service providers, community professionals and anyone who wants to learn more. It will happen September 22-24 at the La Vista Conference Center. People from Nebraska, the region and the nation will attend.

We have pulled together great speakers from all over the country. They'll present information about everything from what it's like to live with a dual diagnosis to things to know to advocate for yourself with your physician or psychiatrist to e-learning opportunities for individuals and their providers. You'll read more about the *It's My Life!* Conference in this *Sower*. Individuals with developmental disabilities and their parents and guardians receive a deep discount on registration. Professionals will receive certificates of attendance for CEUs.

It's My Life! Conference
Important Registration Information

Individuals who are receiving or are on the registry of need for DD services and their parents or guardians receive a deep discount for attending the *It's My Life!* conference, and evening sessions are free! When you register, select "Individual/Parent/Guardian" as your registration type. If you have questions, email DHHS.DDDConferenceRegistration@nebraska.gov, or call 402.471.8501.

**Annual Conference for
People First of NE**

October 10, 11 & 12, 2014 • Holiday Inn, Kearney, NE

One of the very basic ideas behind the entire Disability Community is "**Nothing About Us Without Us,**" which is the theme of the 2014 Annual Conference.

Attendees will share and learn from each other. People with disabilities, family members and support staff share a vision of inclusion.

People First asserts that people with disabilities should be at the table anytime there is a discussion about disability. The October Conference will provide an opportunity to gain new perspectives on how this can happen from young advocates and veteran leaders. There will be opportunities to discuss issues affecting young people with disabilities, communicate strategies for including and empowering new advocates and provide a forum to develop proactive systems advocating action and solutions to barriers new and old!

Workshops at the conference will include issues related to the following themes: **Inclusion • Advocacy • Self-Determination • Accessibility**

For more information, "like" People First of Nebraska's Facebook page.

**11th Annual NDE
Transition Conference**

October 13 & 14, 2014 • Holiday Inn, Kearney, NE

The conference is for transition specialists, high school resource teachers and counselors and administrators. The two-day conference will feature keynote presentations and breakout sessions. Cost for the conference is \$65 per person. Registration is open now. <https://connect.esu9.org/workshops/SectionList.aspx>

Keynote presentations include "Transition Assessment: Connecting to the Transition Plan & RDA to Transition" with Dr. James Martin and Dr. Amber McConnell and "Transition Assessment Planning with Dr. Amy Baumer Erickson and Megan Bomgaars. Breakout sessions will highlight issues of interest and importance to educators and administrators working with students with developmental disabilities.

For more information, contact Rita Hammitt, State Transition Coordinator, Nebraska Department of Education at 402.595.2092 or rita.hammitt@nebraska.gov.

To register online at <https://connect.esu9.org/workshops/SectionList.aspx>