DISABLED STUDENTS PROGRAM AND SERVICES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONTRACT

DSPS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE VISIT REPORT

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DSPS STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION PARTICIPATING IN THE TA VISIT

Dr. Jane Feuerhelm, Director, DSPS; Scott McAfee, Access Coordinator, Dr. Christi Franklin, LD Specialist and we spoke briefly with Susan Ling, DSPS Counselor

BACKGROUND TO COLLEGE AND DSPS

Established in 1969, College of the Canyons (COC) operates within the Santa Clarita Community College District on 153 acres in the city of Santa Clarita. Over the span of 40 years, the college has been transformed from a small community college serving several hundred students in the Los Angeles County into one of the nation's fastest-growing, largest community colleges serving more than 25,000 students each semester.

This sort of growth has created demands for new academic, occupational and athletic programs, training partnerships with businesses and the facilities to house them.

The college offers associate of arts and associate of science degrees in 58 academic programs as well as credentials in 39 certificate programs. Programs include audio and radio production, biotechnology, child development, dance, film and video production, fire control technology, industrial manufacturing, music, nursing, paralegal studies, television production, theatre arts and video game animation.

The college main campus is referred to as the Valencia campus and the second campus, referred to as “Canyon Country,” serves approximately 5000 students. The DSPS program
serves over 1300 students. The TA visit occurred at the Valencia campus, which is spacious with beautiful open areas and rolling hills. The new construction on this campus is strikingly modern and unique.

LIST OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ISSUES

➤ ABI Software
➤ E-text
➤ Assistive Technology Training
➤ Campus signage

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

The DSPS program at College of the Canyons is an exemplary program. The program has not received staffing cuts despite the statewide budget issues. The program has a full-time DSPS Director, one full and one part-time Counselor, an LD Specialist and an Access Coordinator. They report that they are able to continue to conduct LD eligibility determinations and keep pace with the number of students coming in for services. The office is located in a central campus location and the High Tech Center is adjacent to counseling and Director’s offices. DSPS has two conference rooms, one of which is used for math tutoring and the other is a quiet room for students to use for study. The technical assistance visit was scheduled to address several technology issues, as well as campus signage.

The program has the benefit of an exceptional Director, with specialized expertise in Acquired Brain Injury, Learning Disabilities and many years in her position. This program is unique in that all incoming students meet with the Director prior to their counseling or LD appointments. She reports that this model enables her to gauge changes in the program and trends as student needs change. The staff clearly works as a very effective group and demonstrate attitudes of collaboration, respect and teamwork. Likewise, the campus community is supportive of DSPS and the needs of students with disabilities.

During the visit, various strategies used at other colleges throughout the system were shared as suggestions for efficiency and cost savings. Surprisingly, several were already in place at College of the Canyons, demonstrating the effective leadership of the Director and the support of the campus community.

TECHNOLOGY
The Assistive Technology Coordinator from Ventura College had recently attended the CSUN Technology conference and came with a wealth of resources to share with the Access Coordinator at College of the Canyons.

College of the Canyons High Tech Center offers:

- Dragon Naturally Speaking- speech recognition program
- JAWS- screen reading program
- Kurzweil 1000 and 3000- programs that allow the user to scan and read printed materials
- ZoomText- a screen magnification program
- Inspiration - mind mapping program
- Write: OutLoud - typing program that speaks as it types
- Co:Writer: Word prediction software program

The High Tech Center Lab also has ergonomic hardware such as wave keyboards, Trackball mice, wrist rests, document holders, and large screen monitors available. COC is using classroom/instruction tools including a virtual learning lab, http://www.canyons.edu/offices/matric/vll/.

The Access Coordinator worked in the Information Technology department prior to employment at DSPS. This history has served DSPS very well, as the staff report excellent working relationships with the IT department. Accessible computer stations are located throughout campus. We toured The Learning Center and assessment testing center, as well as the library and observed accessible workstations with assistive technology available. The Access Coordinator installs AT as needed when student requests come in; the college does not have site licenses for all software. A unique approach taken at COC involves incorporating the use of laptop computers. When students require Dragon, they are loaned a laptop computer that has the software installed on it. Students are then able to transport the computer to an appropriate location to work without distraction and/or disrupting other students.

Technology classes are not currently being offered at COC, but are a goal for the future. Classes currently offered at Ventura College were reviewed and this method of revenue generation was encouraged. At present, the Access Coordinator position is a classified position. However, this individual is qualified for faculty appointment and would efficiently train groups of students if classes were created. The staff was advised that modifications to existing approved courses may offer a shortcut to course approval for AT classes. The classes at Ventura are revenue neutral as costs of offering the classes are covered by fees.
As for tracking e-text requests, the program has a suitable policy in place and the possibility of developing online request options was positively received. The following link was provided after the visit as a reference for online e-text requests:
https://bellevuecollege.edu/drc/media_form.asp

In regards to software, the Assistive Technology Coordinator from Ventura College shared a few deployment ideas that will help students at little or no cost. First, from Natural Soft, http://www.naturalreaders.com/free_version.htm, a free screen reader that will enable students to experience listening to any text on their PC was suggested. Also, server/ghost image delivery of some software (Inspiration, Read and Write Gold, Kurzweil 3000) and expanded use of Dragon were discussed for students needing help with language arts.

The availability of the statewide contract with Learning Ally was new information to the program. They had discontinued use of RFB&D because the program was primarily using Daisy technology which has not been used effectively at COC. The revitalized Learning Ally program promises to be a useful resource for individual students and many other e-text options.

Lastly, the possibility of streamlining alternative media operation for the students with tools available at http://www.yourdolphin.com/productdetail.asp?id=10&z=14&page=298, was suggested, as now Daisy, e-text and MP3 are separate operations in two rooms.

During the campus tour, we visited the Veterans Resource Center which is spacious and inviting. The center also serves reentry adults, this combination is reported to be an excellent match, as many vets are reentry students. DSPS works with a number of veterans and the Access Coordinator has provided technology to the Veterans Resource Center. His own background as a veteran has enabled him to achieve positive relationships with veterans and enables DSPS to reach many veterans who might otherwise not involve themselves with DSPS.

In addition to the loan of laptop computers for student use, the program was also successful in obtaining a grant for purchase of LiveScribe pens. These pens are also available on loan to students of DSPS. The program was forward-thinking when they established accountability for equipment loan to be handled by the library. The library has the ability to withhold grades if students fail to return equipment, whereas DSPS does not have that capacity.

Ventura College also offers math through a module course that was developed in conjunction with the math department. This design enables students to move through the material at their own pace and has proven to be a key to student success with math courses. College of the Canyons was urged to consider this type of course delivery for students with disabilities who are experiencing difficulty with math.
Additionally, materials from several CAPED annual conference sessions where DSPS programs from various colleges shared changes they have made to cut costs were provided.

CAMPUS SIGNAGE

The question of campus signage was addressed via resource materials that were provided during the visit. The new checklist for readily achievable barrier removal from the New England ADA Center offers extensive signage detail. Apparently, signs indicating the availability of assistive listening devices have been posted in new campus buildings, but, in fact, the campus does not have devices to lend. Additionally, the signage indicates that individuals in need of service should contact DSPS. It would appear that architects are installing this signage because of the directives from the state architect’s office, but have failed to ensure that such equipment is available on campus. The DSPS Director will hopefully be able to pursue this topic further with campus facilities management, given the resources provided.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES PROVIDED

- A Guide to DSPS: A Primer, version 1/12
- Bookmarks identifying the Galvin Group website and resources
- Section Fourteen Galvin Group website
- CAPED Program Management CIG- notes- 10/19/2009
- CAPED Program Management CIG- notes- 10/25/2010
- CAPED DHH Budget Issues Workshop notes- 10/19/2009
- CAPED 2009 Workshop on DSPS Budget cuts and Cost Saving Ideas – 10/20/09
- CAPED LD CIG Notes- 10/2009
- Gavilan Group Registration Process
- Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Services to Students with Disabilities
- Q and A New Director’s Training September 12-13, 2011
- Q and A from CAPED Pre-Conference ADA/504 Workshop- 10/2010
- Learning Disabilities Assessment- White paper
- Financial Aid- new regulations email
- Policy and Procedures Guide on Service Animals
- Commonly Asked Questions About Priority Registration
- High Tech Training Center brochure and schedule
- Kurzweil 3000 materials
- Bookshare promotional materials
- TextHelp Read Write Gold- informational brochure and demo DVD
- Gridcheck brochure
- Network Interpreting Service Brochure
- QuickCaption brochure
- ADA Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal- New England ADA Center- 2011
- DSA Access Compliance Comments (Checklists)
- Various emails from the Director’s listserv discussing signage
- Email announcing Learning Ally statewide contract
- Hyperlink to Natural Soft
- Hyperlink to Bellevue College for online e-text examples
- Hyperlink to Dolphin for alternate media tools
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS REPORT OR OTHER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ISSUES PLEASE CONTACT: Bette@galvin-group.com

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