A Campus-wide Committee on Disability and Access: Accomplishments and Lessons Learned

Jennifer Ashton (Education and Human Development)
M Obourn (Interim Assistant Provost for Diversity/Chief Diversity Officer)
Jessica Sniatecki (Healthcare Studies)
The College at Brockport, SUNY
CDA – Origins

- Disability Studies Faculty Learning Community (FLC) in 2014-15
- Proposal to the Provost in Spring 2015 to become a formal committee
- Campus Climate Survey Data
2014 Campus Climate Survey Results

- Individuals who experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, or hostile conduct:
  - 40% of respondents with mental health/psychological conditions (n = 32)
  - 34% of respondents with multiple disabilities (n = 26)
  - 32% of respondents with physical disabilities (n = 60)
  - 24% of respondents with learning disabilities/conditions (n = 26)
  - 24% of people with no disabilities (n = 4443)
2014 Campus Climate Survey Results

• Areas reported to be most “fully accessible”
  – Student Union (57%)
  – Restrooms (55%)
  – Elevators (53%)
  – Website (56%)

• Areas of concern:
  – Parking
  – Walkways
  – Ramps
  – Elevators
CDA – General Information

• The Mission of the Committee on Disability and Access at The College at Brockport, SUNY is:
  1. to ensure accessibility (physical & emotional) for all students (for academics and campus life)
  2. to increase awareness related to the needs of individuals with disabilities on campus, and
  3. to develop coursework for students to study disability

• The committee is comprised of members from multiple campus constituencies including The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), students (including at least one student with a disability), faculty, and staff (including a representative from facilities
CDA – Membership

- **12 Faculty Members**
  - Earth Sciences; Education and Human Development; English; Healthcare Studies; Kinesiology, Sports Studies, & Physical Education; Nursing; Psychology; Recreation and Leisure Studies; Social Work

- **14 Members of Administration/Staff**
  - Affirmative Action/ADA Compliance/Human Resources; Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching; Environmental Health and Safety; Facilities; Library; Office of Disability Services; Office of Diversity; Residential Life/Learning Communities; Student Affairs; Student Health and Counseling; Student Learning Center

- **2 Graduate Students**
  - Kinesiology, Sports Studies, & Physical Education; Psychology

- **5 Undergraduate Students**
  - Brockport Advocates for individuals with Disabilities (B.A.D.) student club; Brockport Student Government
CDA – Leadership

- Chair – Jessica Sniatecki
- Vice Chair – Jennifer Ashton
- Secretary – Jessica Pelz
- Treasurer – Sarah Demmin
- Subcommittee Chairs
  - Accessibility – Ryan Reynolds
  - Awareness – Lauren Lieberman
  - Coursework – Kate Yurko
Fall 2015 Accomplishments

- **Awareness Events/Guest Speakers**
  - Brought Linda Ware to campus for address titled “Disability Studies Across the Disciplines”
  - Screening of Documentary “MurderBall”
  - Promoting Excellence in Diversity (PED) grant to fund Bob Lujano’s visit
  - Bob Lujano (U.S. quad Rugby team and is the author of, “No Arms, No Legs, No Problem”) gave large campus address
    - Bob also gave a presentation at Brockport Middle School and to a group of KSSPE classes during his time at Brockport
Fall 2015 Accomplishments

• American Sign Language Class
• Accessibility Exploration
• Conference Presentation Proposals
• Graduate Level American Sign Language (ASL) Class Inquiry
Spring 2016 Accomplishments

• CELT Brown Bag Presentation
  – Disability as a Social Identity – Jennifer Ashton and Megan Obourn
  – March 10th, 2016
  – Joint effort with the Diversity Committee’s Professional Development Subcommittee

• “Darius Goes West” Screening and Skype Discussion
  – April 11th, 2016
Spring 2016 Accomplishments

• American Sign Language Class

• Disability Rights New York Speakers
  – Faculty and Staff Workshop (April 4th, 2016)
    • The Rights and Responsibilities of Students with Disabilities: What the Faculty and Staff Should Know About the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)”
  – Student Workshop (April 13th, 2016)
    • Know Your Rights: The Rights and Responsibilities of Students with Disabilities in College
Spring 2016 Accomplishments

- Stickers for Accessible Doors
- Relationship with Monroe Wheelchair
- Explorations in Diversity and Academic Excellence grant application
Fall 2016 Accomplishments

• Disability Rights New York Speaker at REOC (Rochester Educational Opportunity Center)

• Accessibility Exploration (with BAD student club)

• Coordinating with Facilities to Address Campus Accessibility Issues During Construction
Fall 2016 Accomplishments

• Speaker Darth Vader
  – November 15, 2016
  – Experiences in the military, adjusting to civilian life, PTSD, veteran suicide prevention, his personal journey with Leukemia, and resiliency

• Information on University Vehicles Parking in Accessible Spaces
Work in Progress

• Accessible Parking for Campus Events
• Grants for Wheelchairs for Campus Use
  – Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation
  – Investment Fund for the Future (Internal)
• New Programs
  – Interdisciplinary Disability Studies Minor
Spring 2017 Events

• Disability Studies Conference: An Interdisciplinary Conversation
  – SUNY Conversations in the Disciplines
  – Featuring Rosemarie Garland-Thompson (Disability Studies Scholar)
  – Thursday, February 9th

• Speaker Rachel Weeks
  – Parathlete who races all distances with emphasis on Ironman events and marathons
  – Usher syndrome and is both visually and hearing impaired
  – Monday, March 6th
Spring 2017 Events

• **Speaker Martha Ruether**
  – Member of Paralympic swim team
  – Brockport Student
  – Monday, April 3rd

• **Camp Abilities documentary screening and discussion** ([http://www.campabilities.org/](http://www.campabilities.org/))
  – Brockport Scholar’s Day
  – Wednesday, April 12th
Spring 2017 Events

• Disability Awareness Training
  – With Jennifer Geiger (ACCES-VR) and Matthew Fico (Peer Independent Living Specialist, Regional Center for Independent Living) and Colleagues
  – Thursday, March 2nd

• Rights for Students with Disabilities Training
  – With Stephanie Woodward & Meghan Moore from the Center for Disability Rights and Matthew Fico (Peer Independent Living Specialist, Regional Center for Independent Living)
  – Wednesday, March 22nd

• Disability Pride and Self-Advocacy Training
  – Damita Peace, our Curriculum Instructor at RCIL and Matthew Fico (Peer Independent Living Specialist, Regional Center for Independent Living)
  – Wednesday, April 19th

• Making Courses Accessible: What Faculty Need to Know
  – Ann Pearlman, Sherri Micheli, and Jessica Sniatecki (CDA Members)
  – Friday, April 21st
Future Plans

• Offer additional ASL Classes
• Accessibility Exploration Phase II
• Create webpage for committee
  – Linked with diversity office
• Address campus accessibility issues
  – Stickers for elevators
  – Bathrooms/doors/ramps that are not fully accessible
  – Gender Inclusive bathrooms
Committee Sustainability

• **Budget**
  – Have been funded through Provost’s Office
  – SUNY Explorations in Diversity grant

• **Continued Involvement in College-Wide Initiatives**
  – Diversity Strategic Plan
  – Physical Master Plan
Discussion Questions

- What challenges have you faced in making your campus more inclusive for individuals with disabilities?
- What approaches have been taken to make your campus more welcoming and accessible?
Questions/Comments?