

WCU ACCESS NEWS

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From the Director

Dr. Lance Alexis

Office of Disability Services

We have a very strong drive this year to look inward in an attempt to update, clarify, and accentuate the ways in which we work toward making Western a more accessible campus. This drive is leading to many changes, some of which are significant. We hope everyone who views this newsletter will join us as we continue to foster a spirit of accessibility at Western Carolina.

Lance Alexis

TO ALL THOSE WHO LEAD CLASSES:

We at Disability Services have been working to update our test proctoring procedure. Since this has a direct impact on your classrooms, we would like to present our proposed changes to you and gain your feedback.

We will hold sessions on November 10, 11, 12, 15, 16 & 17 in Killian Annex Room 136 from 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

We are capping each session at 15 participants, so please respond by email (lalexis@wcu.edu) if you are interested in attending and please include the date that is the best fit. We hope to hear from you soon!

NC AHEAD 2010 CONFERENCE

The Office of Disability Services recently served as proud host of the NC AHEAD (North Carolina Association on Higher Education and Disability) 2010 Fall Conference, October 18-19, 2010. Sixty-six attendees enjoyed food, fun, workshops, and the glorious autumn weather. The event kicked off in the UC Grand Room and all of our participants had a great time! Comments from attendees were very positive and special appreciation was expressed for the gorgeous drive through the mountains, which for many folks was a wonderful benefit to their trip. The University Center also got rave reviews, with one attendee promising to send engineers from his campus to “borrow” our UC as soon as they worked out the logistics. All in all, we could not have been more pleased with the turnout. Regarding UC staff, we would like to especially acknowledge Eric Margiotta, Jill Lindsay, and their wonderful crew for their professional and courteous service. Thanks also to Yolany Gonell, without whom we would not have had buttons or badges! Much appreciation to all on campus who donated goodies for our presenter and attendee goody bags; they were a big hit! THANKS SO MUCH EVERYBODY for helping make this a great conference!

ASL FUN AND FELLOWSHIP

For those of you interested in learning about sign language and deaf culture, WCU invites you to join the WheeSign ASL Club. Knowledge of deafness and/or sign language is not required; simply a desire to learn and have fun. For more information, please contact president Shane Sullivan (ssullivan1@catamount.wcu.edu).

DISABILITY AWARENESS

October was Disability Awareness Month and several on campus enjoyed free movies, awareness presentations, and classes throughout the month.

MANY THANKS TO THOSE ACCEPTING AND DISPLAYING THE DISABILITY THEMED MAGNETS WE DISTRIBUTED!

DEAF AWARENESS

Deaf Awareness week was observed September 27 – October 1 and the Office of Disability Services presented several activities designed to promote awareness on our campus. Students, staff, and faculty enjoyed two wonderful presenters - Cory Parker; Deaf Services Specialist for the Asheville Regional Center (Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing), presented *Deaf Culture with Cory Parker* on September 28 and Jane Fernandes; Provost and Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at UNC-A, presented *Many Ways to Be Deaf* on October 1. We were honored to welcome them both to campus.

Our resident intern has created a survey addressing faculty's understanding of practices related to working with students with disabilities. The findings from this survey will help guide the direction of next semester's faculty training offerings.

COMING UP

The Office of Disability Services will offer trainings focusing on information intended to help faculty gain a better understanding of the services we offer. We hope to not only define roles and responsibilities, but also clarify commonly held misnomers. Dates have yet to be set, but please be on the lookout for an email invitation in the spring.

Meet the Staff

DR. LANCE ALEXIS; DIRECTOR

Lance began his career with WCU in September 2007. He earned a Doctorate of Education from East Tennessee State University, a Master of Education from Christian Brothers University, and a Master and Bachelor of Arts from the University of Mississippi. He has been happily married since 2003 and has two adorable children and one very spoiled kitty. He and his family reside in Sylva.

ANGIE SONG; TRANSLATOR

Angie joined the staff at WCU in January 2009. As Western's only sign language transliterator, Angie is responsible for providing interpreting services to students, staff, and anyone requiring such accommodation. Angie is nationally certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and is also trained in C-Print speech-to-text transcription software. She resides in Sylva and is the proud parent of two children and several kitties.

We are located in rooms 135D, 140, and 144 in Killian Annex (One Stop). When you visit us, you may also meet one of our student workers (Kallie, Sammie, or Brandon). Please feel free to visit or call anytime with questions or concerns.

A VERY TALENTED STUDENT ENROLLED WITH ODS HAS PENNED THE FOLLOWING POEM AND GRACIOUSLY AGREED TO ALLOW US TO SHARE WITH OUR READERS. ENJOY!

I watched the little downy woodpeckers this morning, through my window glass overlooking the river. They circle skip-hop the tree, after the suet I just refilled at dawn light. Is this the pecking order, or is it a courtship? The bigger bird fills his beak and then gently turns and kisses the smaller. Ahh! Parent to fledgling, teaching the source of all suet. Red bellied bird scolds, the smaller two fly away, galumphing in their dip and rise manner.