



Newsletter

April 2016

Volume 5, Number 1

President's Thoughts

By Leisa Pickering

KY AHEAD Members,

As we warm up to Spring and enjoy all of the colorful daffodils, tulips, and flowering trees, and the flow of our work is closing in on finals week, we have our KY AHEAD Conference to look forward to on **May 18th through the 20th at Lake Cumberland State Park!**

The KY AHEAD Board and Conference Planning Committee have been working together to plan an informative and meaningful program. Our theme this year is "Telling our Story." Hope everyone has registered and reserved a room. If not, please do so right away. You can call the **Lake Cumberland State Park at Phone: 270-343-3111** to reserve your room, and register for the conference on our KY AHEAD website at the link <http://kyahead.org/events.html>. You will find further information later in this newsletter about the outstanding guest speakers and sessions that have been planned.



This year we have two positions on the KY AHEAD Board that will be open for nominations: President Elect (3 year commitment) and Secretary (two year commitment). We also need a Chair for the Nomination and Election Committee (one year commitment). I would encourage anyone who is interested in taking a more active role in AHEAD to consider running for an office or joining a committee. If you are interested or would like to learn more about either of these positions contact any of the Board members listed below. I have thoroughly enjoyed this experience and want to thank the KY AHEAD Board members and Committee members for their dedication and commitment to our mission.

Be thinking about silent auction...

Our scholarship committee has awarded scholarships to cover the Conference costs for two KY AHEAD members and is receiving applications for two student \$500 scholarships. We will continue to fund this through our silent auction proceeds, so please consider this as you plan your regional items to bring and items you will want to purchase. And remember that cash donations are always welcome!

Also, the AHEAD Conference will be in Indianapolis this year, July 13-16. There is a Silent Auction Competition for Regional Affiliates. Be thinking about the flavors and spirit of Kentucky and let's put together an amazing basket for AHEAD's silent auction. We came close last year, but South Carolina won with their cookbooks and wine, and Wisconsin came in second with their beer and cheese. If you would like to donate to the KY AHEAD Basket for the AHEAD Conference, please let me know.

Best wishes as you finish this semester and I'm looking forward to see everyone in May!!

Leisa Pickering, Ph.D.
KY AHEAD President

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Nomination & Election Chair TBD

2016 KY-AHEAD Conference

By David Beach

The setting for our yearly gathering is beautiful [Lake Cumberland State Resort Park in Jamestown](#). Our theme this year is “*Telling Our Story*”. Many of us now find ourselves in situations where we are being asked to collect, analyze and report data to justify our funding, our staffing needs, or even our existence. Some of us are required to develop assessment plans and/or define our student learning outcomes. We also seem to be faced with faculty, staff and administrators who seem to have a difficult time understanding the roles, responsibilities, and identity of the disability resource offices. This year’s conference is intended to start the conversation regarding best practices related to how we can best tell our story.



The Conference begins at 1:00 PM Central Standard Time on Wednesday, May 18 and will conclude on 12:00 PM on Friday, May 20. Registration will open Wednesday morning at 11:00 AM. Registration forms must be received by Friday, May 6, 2016. The registration fee for this conference is \$210. For those able to attend only one or two days of the three-day conference, registration for individual days is available: for Wednesday, the fee is \$55; for Thursday, the fee is \$100; for Friday, the fee is \$55. A continental breakfast will be available on Thursday morning, along with a lunch during the KY AHEAD Business Meeting. A full breakfast will be provided on Friday morning.

An optional networking cookout is being planned for Thursday evening at Pumpkin Creek Lodge, which will include grilled chicken, ribs, and sides. There will be an additional \$20 fee for this activity and guests are welcome to purchase dinner as well. The main course will be spare ribs and barbecue chicken, and alternate menu items can be made available for those with specific diet requirements.

Kicking off the conference will be Holly Hendricks, Assistant Director of Program Services with the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, who will be discussing the impact on the Workforce Investment Opportunities Act on Post-Secondary Education and students with disabilities. We will also have panel discussions surrounding the topics of program assessment, data analysis and data reporting.

On Thursday, Robert Unseld from Western Kentucky University will discuss the value and viability of students with disabilities participating in practicums and internships. After his presentation, we will then have a panel discussion regarding how we tell our story through policy development surrounding emerging campus disability related issues. We will also have the opportunity to hear from the Coalition for Workforce Diversity and their efforts to assist college graduates with disabilities obtain professional and administrative level jobs and careers.

Our Key Note Speaker on Friday morning is Scott Lissner, the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator at The Ohio State University. He will share information regarding current legal issues and trends impacting colleges and universities.

Conference registration can be completed by clicking [here](#)

Room reservations are open now and are reserved under "KY-AHEAD." Conference rates are \$71.96 (+ tax) for single/double rooms per night.

Make your reservation early – rooms are guaranteed until May 1st.

Please contact the park directly to make your reservations.
Phone: (270) 343 -3111.

Lake Cumberland State Park is located at 5465 State Park Road, Jamestown, Kentucky 42629. Their website is <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/resortparks/lake-cumberland>.



Conference Committee:

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THIS YEAR'S SILENT AUCTION DONATIONS

By Matt Davis,
Silent Auction Chair

This year's KY-AHEAD
silent auction theme is
***"My Area or Hometown
is Unique Because...."***

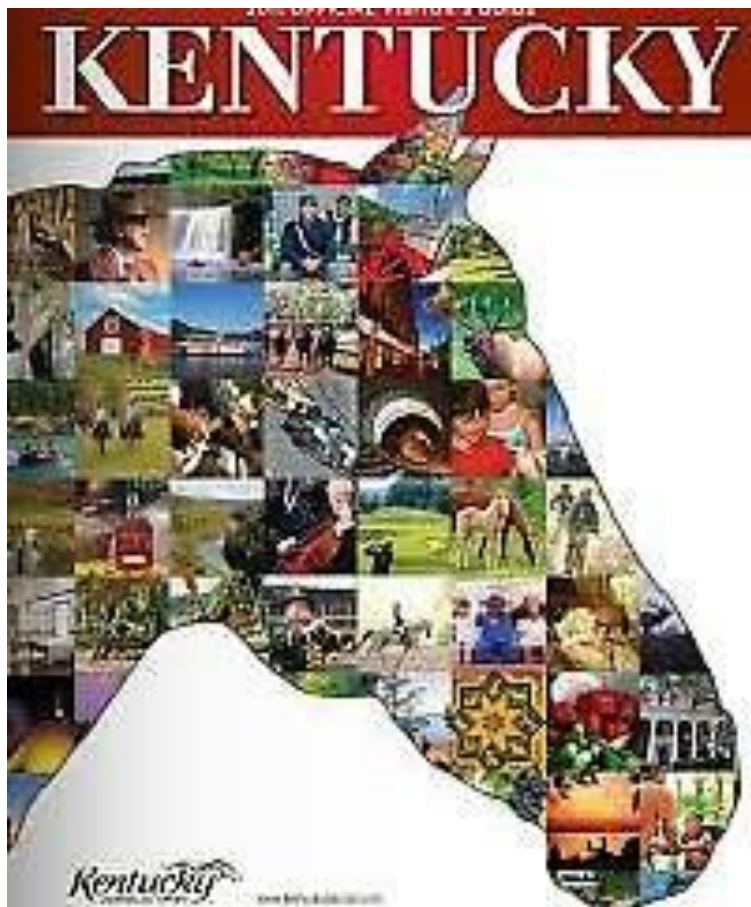
Plan to provide items that
are unique to your
community or county in
Kentucky. It can also be
items from where you
grew up, or have lived
previously, etc. These
would be items that are
different from your usual
University items (i.e., t-
shirts, hats, flags, etc.).

KY-AHEAD wants to know
what is special about your hometown or current location in Kentucky. Let's
celebrate our State and all that it has to offer.

*Think about tickets to local attractions, restaurant gift cards, overnight stays in
special historic areas or resort areas, chocolates, jams, coffees, jewelry, quilts,
and other Kentucky Proud products.*

Don't forget to bring items that will bring the highest bid!! All of the proceeds go
toward the KY-AHEAD Scholarship Fund.

Thanks for your support!!!



CURRENT ISSUES:

***Dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia* OR a student with Specific Learning Disorders in areas of reading, math, and writing?**

By Leisa Pickering

Last semester I was given a copy of a Dear Colleague Letter on Dyslexia (*issued by the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, dated 23 October 2015;*

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/guidance-on-dyslexia-10-2015.pdf>).

While this letter was addressed to teachers of school-aged children in K through 12 under the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**, it struck a chord with me.

The letter begins with a discussion that “stakeholders,” including parents, advocacy groups, and national disability organizations, are calling for State and local educational groups to use the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia in evaluations and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) documents. The discussion acknowledges that these terms are included under the definition of “specific learning disability” and that the determination that a local educational agency (LEA/*or school*) makes must be based on an evaluation to determine whether the student meets criteria for a specific learning disability or any other disabilities according to IDEA’s definition. On page 2 this discussion continues, listing as part of a comprehensive evaluation, “*use of a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child.*”

On page 3 it is repeated these stakeholders request that the terms dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia be used on a student’s IEP, and the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) indicates that there is nothing in IDEA that would prevent these terms from being used. In addition, the stakeholders requested a comprehensive guide to accommodations in the classroom for students with these diagnoses. OSEP pointed out that IDEA does not indicate specific accommodations based on diagnosis classification and directed those who are interested to resources for more information about accommodations. They concluded by encouraging State and local school agencies to allow the use of these terms.

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-V), Specific Learning Disorders must be diagnosed by meeting diagnostic criteria based on “the individual’s history (developmental, medical, family, educational), school reports, and psycho-educational assessment.” There are notes that the term “dyslexia” is an alternative term to refer to problems with word recognition, decoding, and spelling; and the term “dyscalculia” is an

alternative term to refer to problems with numbers, learning math facts, and performing calculations. In other words, these are terms to be used interchangeably with “basic reading/decoding learning disability” and “basic math/calculation learning disability.” Reading comprehension or math reasoning would need to be stated in addition to these terms if they are also areas of Specific Learning Disorders.

My concern, or the chord that was struck, relates to the agenda for these stakeholders. They included “parents, advocacy groups, and national disability organizations.” At the University of Kentucky, we have had students bring in documentation that was a series of reading assessments completed by Reading Specialists, with a conclusion that the student has “dyslexia.” There seems to be a push by some groups to consider dyslexia as some broader or different condition than learning disabilities.

We in Higher Education Student Disability Services need to be ready. We should continue to request the same documentation as we always have for Specific Learning Disorders. Our guide for documentation comes from the DSM-V.

Dyslexia is merely another name for Specific Learning Disorder in Basic Reading, and this diagnosis requires a comprehensive psycho-educational report.

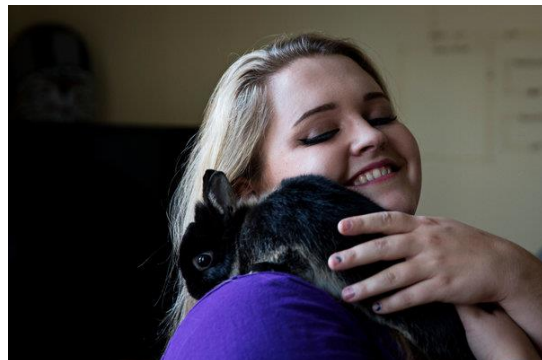
Animals on Campus

By Teresa Belluscio

Dogs, cats, snakes, sugar gliders, ferrets, and rabbits are invading colleges all across the nation. College Disability and Housing Offices are scrambling to learn as much as they can regarding the accommodation of assistance or comfort animals.



As colleges try to define the parameters of having a diverse set of animals on campuses and in Residence Halls, we take pause to learn from the numerous recent court cases regarding assistance animals on campus.



All too familiar is the University of Nebraska Kearny case in which UNK refused to allow a therapy dog into a residence hall citing its no-pets policy. This case ended in a settlement with DOJ for \$140,000. Kent State University also prohibited a therapy dog which ended in a settlement of \$145,000.

What do colleges need to know?

- The ADA Titles II and III recognize the public accommodation of a service animal as defined as dogs only (and miniature ponies). Service animals are permitted to accompany individuals with disabilities in all public areas. Colleges cannot prohibit the use of Service Animals on their campuses and cannot mandate a student to seek approval for a service animal. We can however ask 2 questions to ascertain if a dog is a service dog.
- The Department of Housing and Urban Development's Fair Housing Act includes a provision for assistance, therapy or comfort animals to be present in the dwellings of those with disabilities. Assistance animals can include a variety of animals. Colleges can mandate that students seeking this accommodation provide appropriate paperwork and approval to have an assistance, therapy or comfort animal inside residence halls.
- Disability, Housing and General Counsel Offices are actively involved in the development of the policies and regulations regarding assistance animals on campus.
- Have a policy and approval process for assistance animals as well as a student conduct resolution or process to handle animal issues like disturbing the peace and animal misbehavior. Handlers (dog owners) can be held liable for animal misbehavior and loss of property.



What do colleges need to do?

- Have an assistance animal policy that is in compliance with the Fair Housing Act
- Review the current assistance animal policy with Housing and Legal Counsel as key players in determining if the policy needs an update by adding elements including handler responsibility, informing roommates, expected animal care and how animal misbehavior will be handled.

- Check your no-pet policies. Some colleges have a NO pet policy (small fish may be exempt) for on-campus living. Some campuses have a NO pet policy across campus. Make sure that these policies are prefaced by a statement including considerations of animals under ADA and the FHA and provide links to students to such policies and procedures.
- Train Residence Hall Staff on these laws to ensure that your University is prepared to address students with animals and guide them through the policy and procedures.

Comment:

Who Let the Dogs In?

By Mary Petry

At Somerset Community College we do not have the volume of students that other universities have. We still have some of the same problems.



We have had service animals in the past, but we are seeing a new breed of service animal on our campus today. People with psychological problems, particularly veterans with post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD), are bringing service animals on our campus. This has caused some concern from our instructors, administration and staff. While people are used to seeing service animals for the blind and physically impaired, they are not used to seeing service animals for people with hidden disabilities. When they look at the person who has the service animal they do not understand why they have to have an animal on campus. This leads to some confrontation with the person as to why they are bringing an animal on campus when they do not appear to be disabled.

What complicates the matter is the fact that under the law the a person may ask only two questions: (1) *Does the dog perform a service?*; and (2) *What service does the dog provide?* (Revised ADA Requirements: Service Animals, http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm) The person does not have to state a disability. Under the law, Service animals do not have to be registered. If the person can answer those two questions they are allowed to have the service dog on campus. Many of our veterans will not ask for accommodations when they first come to our college. If they do not want accommodations, I cannot force them to register but I do provide a volunteer registry of their service dog if they wish to participate. This simply informs the instructor to expect a service dog in their class.

The only way I have found to ease the situation is by first informing everyone that we do have service animals on campus for people with hidden disabilities. I have also put out literature explaining what they allowed to ask the person. Some of the most common questions I get are:

“Do we have to pick up after these dogs?” The answer is no. The person who has the dog is responsible for cleaning up after their animals. They are also responsible for keeping the dog under control at all times. The dog should not roam around without the dog’s owner and must be under the owner’s control all the time.

“What if another person has an allergy to the dog?” The answer to this question is separating the person with the allergy from the person with the dog. One solution would be placing the person with the dog at one end of the classroom and the person with the allergy at the other end of the classroom. If this does not work we would have to take it on an individual basis. Here we have to be creative.

“Shouldn’t the dog be on a leash and have documentation?” We cannot demand documentation of the disability from the individual who owns the dog but we can ask them to follow any laws of the state, county or city. Since both Pulaski County and Somerset have leash laws, we can demand that the dog be on a leash at all times. Proper vaccinations are required. If dogs are required to be licensed in the person’s home county, then these dogs should be licensed in that county.

While there may be some conflicts when these dogs appear on campus, I find that the best way to handle this is to try to get information out to the instructors, administrators and staff at our colleges. Hopefully they can educate others as the problems arise. In Somerset, we do not have dorms and emotional comfort animals. Just be prepared for our veterans and those people with hidden disabilities who will be using services animals, and use your best judgment.

Membership Benefits

The Kentucky Association on Higher Education and Disability (KY-AHEAD) professional membership cost is \$20.00 and is included in the conference registration fee. If you are not a member and cannot make it to this year’s conference, please consider joining. The membership year is July 1 to June 30, and a form is available online on our website: <http://kyahead.org/application.html>.

Professional associations exist for the benefit of the individuals within that organization. Where do *you* get information about legal obligations, best practices and trends in serving students with disabilities in postsecondary education? By becoming a member of KY-AHEAD, you get these benefits and more. Also, membership provides individuals with a work-related venue in which to gain or demonstrate leadership skills. Support the only professional association in Kentucky that is solely dedicated to promoting full inclusion of students with disabilities in postsecondary education.

For more information please visit our website: <http://kyahead.org> and join us on Facebook.