

Spring 2015

Student Disability Services Campus Newsletter, Spring 2015

University of Northern Iowa. Office of Student Disability Services.

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Letter from the Coordinator...

Oh, you can find that on our website! Just click here...

How many times have you said this to a student or a coworker? Weekly, perhaps even daily?

The internet has become a staple in regards to providing information about our services from recruitment to retention, to just being able to complete our jobs. As such, it is imperative that we make sure that our websites and the information we post on those websites are accessible to all patrons to create a welcoming and inclusive environment. (Additionally, it is important to understand that as an institution that receives federal financial assistance, we are legally mandated to make sure that our websites are accessible!)

So, what can you do to make sure that any websites you develop are accessible?

Here are a few key items to consider:

1. Use a descriptive page title to help readers understand what they can expect to learn from viewing the page.
2. Utilize HTML headings. These help individuals utilizing screen readers easily navigate the page and assists those viewing the website to visually scan for key pieces of information they are seeking.
3. Provide descriptive alternative text for images. When the screen reader comes to the graphic, it will read this descriptive text to provide the user with information on what the image is about.
4. Caption videos. Video platforms like YouTube and Vimeo provide an easy method to add captions to your videos. This allows individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to understand what is being said in the video. For more information on how to use the caption feature on YouTube, visit:

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2734796?hl=en>

**One key tip, make sure to edit the captions created by the automatic captioning feature of YouTube to make sure that your message is presented correctly!*

Want to learn more about how you can improve the accessibility of your website? Check out this website: <http://www.uni.edu/webtools/web-accessibility> or consider calling Carolyn Dorr, Electronic Communications Specialist in University Relations, at Carolyn.dorr@uni.edu or 3-2761.

Ashley Brickley
Coordinator

Did you know that this year marks the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act? In celebration, SDS is planning a variety of events for this momentous occasion. More information on these events will be posted on [our Facebook](#) as it becomes available.

Test your knowledge of Student Disability Services!

Demonstrate your knowledge about Student Disability Services (SDS) to **win a prize!** Answer all of the questions in the quiz to the best of your ability and submit your completed quiz to Jenny Lynes via email at lynesj@uni.edu or hand-deliver to SDS by Friday, April 24. Students with the most correct answers will be entered into a drawing for a prize. Winners will be notified by Tuesday, April 28.

1. SDS at UNI serves individuals with what type of disability the most?
 - A. LD/ADHD
 - B. Mobility
 - C. Psychiatric
 - D. Visual/Hearing
2. Where is SDS located?
 - A. Gilchrist
 - B. ITTC
 - C. Schindler
 - D. Student Health Center
3. What federal legislation guarantees individuals with disabilities certain protections and rights to equal access to programs and services (name one of the two)?
4. True or False: SDS provides tutoring services.
5. True or False: A disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities.
6. What is an invisible disability?
7. What program does SDS have for students registered with the office to receive assistance with developing skills in time management, organization, and prioritization?
8. According to the 2013-2014 Annual Report, about how many students did SDS serve at UNI?
 - A. 430
 - B. 830
 - C. 1630
 - D. 2430
9. According to the 2013-2014 Annual Report, how many books did SDS provide to students in an alternative format?
 - A. 62
 - B. 124
 - C. 188
 - D. 236
10. True or False: Students requesting permission to have emotional support animals in residence halls must go through SDS.
11. If a student believes that they might have a learning disability, where on campus can they go to get tested?
 - A. Psychological Assessment Clinic
 - B. SDS
 - C. Student Health Clinic
 - D. Student Wellness Services
12. Read&Write Gold, Open Book Reader, ReadPlease, and JAWS for Windows are examples of what?
 - A. Assistive Technology
 - B. Exam Accommodations
 - C. Classroom Accommodations

Deaf vs. deaf

By Shelley Hartman

¹**Deaf** (with a capital “D”) means to embrace cultural norms, beliefs, and values of the Deaf Community.

¹**deaf** (with a lowercase “d”) means the condition of partially or completely lacking in the sense of hearing to the extent that one cannot understand speech for everyday communication purposes.

In this day and age, an individual with a hearing impairment considers themselves part of a community rather than being an individual with a disability. In his article “Deafness as Culture,” Edward Dolnick explains “many deaf people now proclaim, they are a subculture like any other. They are no more in need of a cure for their condition than are Haitians or Hispanics.”² With more than 90% of deaf children born to hearing parents, it makes being able to speak and communicate very difficult.³ For a child who is deaf from infancy, it is especially difficult because they are trying to mimic sounds that they have never heard. For children who go deaf later in their adolescents, it is a little easier because they are able to retain some of their sound memory.

In order for deaf individuals to understand what those who are hearing able are saying, they learn to lipread. However, this is not always accurate as an average deaf person recognizes three or four words out of every ten.² This fact, along with others, proves why the deaf score poorly on tests of English skills and why only two deaf children out of a hundred go on to pursue a college education.² Fortunately the number of deaf students attending universities and colleges has dramatically increased over the past two decades.

The importance of American Sign Language (ASL) has grown over the last several decades. It was not until the late 1960s that critics stopped dismissing signing as a poor substitute for language. ASL is indeed a full-fledged language with grammar and puns and poems. According to neurologist and essayist Oliver Sacks, it is “a language equally suitable for making love or speeches, for flirtation or mathematics.”² ASL is a language that about half a million Americans use every single day. It is also one of the driving factors in the Deaf community. The whole basis of the Deaf culture is surrounded around ASL and affirmation, not denial of being deaf. The National Association of the Deaf was created in part to support ASL, and they highly encourage deaf and hard of hearing children to begin learning ASL at an early age for optimal results.

Interested in learning ASL? Learn ASL online today at <http://www.lifeprint.com/asl101/lessons/lesson01.htm>!

Resources

¹ASL Terminology, Retrieved from: <http://www.lifeprint.com/asl101/pages-layout/terminology.htm>

²Dolnick, E. (1993). Deafness as culture. *Atlantic*, 272(3), 37-53.

³Statistics: <http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/statistics/pages/quick.aspx>

Light It Up Blue! By Jenny Lynes

Since it was adopted by the United Nations in 2007, World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) has been celebrated around the world on April 2. Autism Speaks, an organization based in the United States dedicated to autism advocacy, describes on its website the importance of WAAD. It explains that the international event is intended to increase the knowledge and understanding of autism, emphasize the importance of early diagnosis and intervention, and highlight the achievements of individuals with autism. To celebrate WAAD, Autism Speaks has created the Light It Up Blue Campaign (LIUP) to honor the people with autism. The campaign involves buildings and sites throughout the world becoming illuminated by blue lights. Past landmarks have included Niagara Falls, the Empire State Building in New York city, and Tokyo Tower in Japan.

Interested in getting involved with LIUP? Autism Speaks lists on its website how you can celebrate World Autism Awareness Day on April 2. The list includes wearing blue clothes, hanging up the LIUP logo or Autism Speaks puzzle piece in your office, posting pictures to social media demonstrating your support using the hashtag #LIUP, or donating money to various autism-related charities. Go to www.autismspeaks.org for more information on WAAD and how you can show your support for individuals with autism and their families. Want to spend more than a day learning about autism and what you can do to support this community? April is recognized here in the U.S. as Autism Awareness Month, so look for opportunities to get involved all month long!

Graduate Student Feature: Shelley Hartman

- Tell us a bit about yourself. Where are you from?

I was born in Pomona, CA, but grew up in Stoughton, WI. I lived there until I went off to college in Waverly, IA, when I was 18. I am currently a third year in the Postsecondary Education: Student Affairs master's program and will be graduating this May.

- What is your role in the SDS office?

I am the graduate assistant in the SDS office, and I work primarily with the Weekly Mentoring Program. In my "space time," I coordinate outreach initiatives and assist with accommodations.

- What is your educational background?

I attended Wartburg College for my undergrad and received my bachelor's degree in Music Business. I started graduate school at UNI as a part-time student in Fall 2012. I did the program part-time for two years while I worked full-time for the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony. I decided to go full-time with graduate school in my final year to gain more experience.

- What do you like to do when you're not at work/school?

In my "free time," I enjoy spending time with my friends, playing games, exercising, cooking up a storm, reading, going to the movies, and crafting.

- What is your favorite quote?

"Life is what you make it."

~ Anonymous



The Role of Emotional Support Animals

By Steve Smith



The magnitude of mental illness that veterans face far surpasses the availability of treatment options outside of the Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals and clinics. Returning veterans may experience a variety of mental illnesses, including major depressive disorders, generalized anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance abuse, and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). PTSD is a very common diagnosis within the veteran population.¹ The lack of accessibility is a major problem when it comes to soldiers receiving the proper treatment, particularly in rural areas.² In 2013 the VA provided 1.3 million veterans with mental health services. It is estimated that 40%

of returning Afghanistan/Iraq veterans live with at least one mental disorder.² Some services provided for veterans include a pre-screen before deployment, a mental assessment upon returning from warfare, therapy, and other counseling services.³ One drawback for veterans who are in desperate need for care is the long wait list to see a service provider with the VA. Since there is a large population of veterans and few providers, it is unrealistic to provide individualized care for each veteran. Treatment can become even more difficult when the veteran has co-occurring situations, such as substance abuse or a physical disability paired with the mental illness. Recently the VA has faced scrutiny in regards to those long wait times. This problem, along with the question of accessibility to services, negative stigmatization attached to therapy, and lack of support, has direct implications for the fact that the current suicide rate among veterans is 22 individuals a day.⁴

In response to the scrutiny, the VA has taken steps to combat the lack of accessibility to services and the heavy demand for services. The VA has begun to implement psychotherapy by means of cognitive processing therapy (CPT) via skype or other like video call programs. A VA study found a significant increase in the likelihood of veterans living with PTSD engaging in therapy when it was presented via video call.⁵

A possible approach to combat the concern of mental illness in veterans is through the implementation of emotional support animals. These particular animals differ from service animals, and one should know these terms are not interchangeable. A service animal is any animal that has been trained to perform a specific task to assist an individual with a disability in order for that individual to be more functional in their home and social environment. Service animals are often trained to aid in the completion of activities of daily living. These tasks can include guidance of the handler, room search, interruption of behavior, redirection, locating an item, balance assistance, clearing one's airway, and retrieval of items.⁶

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UNI just recently finalized their university policy in accordance to the Fair Housing Act regarding service animals and emotional support animals on December 1, 2014. For more information about Policy 8.09 Animals on University Owned or Controlled Property,⁷ go to <http://www.uni.edu/policies/809>

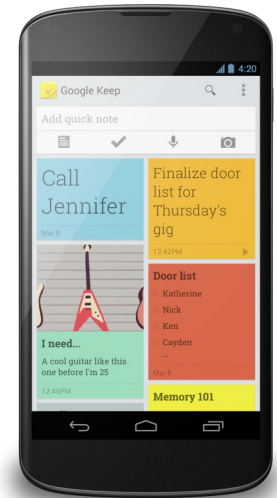
Keep: Your Life Organized

By Jenny Lynes

Shopping lists. Notes from a group meeting. To do lists full of assignments for class. We all have things we want to remember without having to leave sticky notes everywhere we go. One online search reveals that there are numerous note-taking applications that promise to help you organize your life with ease. If you are looking for a simple and easy-to-use app that can be used on your phone, tablet, and computer, Google Keep is perfect for you.

I was introduced to Google Keep by one of my Weekly Mentoring students about a month ago, and it has since changed my life. You can find this app online by signing into Google, clicking on the apps symbol, and selecting “Even more from Google.” It is under in the Home & Office category. An easy shortcut is simply going to keep.google.com. Those with Android devices can find the app either pre-installed on their phones or download it for free from Play Store.

Google Keep is very similar in its concept and design to Google Docs/Drive. You can go from your phone to a web device (computer or tablet) and back without any problems. I have used Google Keep to create checklists for each of my courses this term, my graduate assistantship in the Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships, my practicum in SDS, and random things I need to accomplish. The app allows me to keep track of everything I have going on in one easy to access location. Rather than keeping written notes stuck in folders or notebooks, I can open Google Keep on my computer or phone whenever I need it. I highly suggest it to anyone who loves to make lists but wants an easier way to manage them.



Things You Can Do in Google Keep:

- Create notes/checklists that are automatically saved
- Categorize notes using titles and eight different colors
- Insert photos from the desktop or ones taken on your phone/tablet
- Create voice notes that converts speech to text while keeping the original voice recording (phone only)
- Set reminders within each note for a specific date, time, and location
- Share your notes with other people
- Search for a specific note using the universal search bar at the top
- Archive notes once you are finished with them to refer back to later



Like us on
Facebook

We're On Facebook!

The UNI Student Disability Services Facebook page is intended to keep you updated on upcoming events, current issues in the news, and fun happenings within our office on campus. Like our page today to follow along!

Graduate Student Feature: Steve Smith

- Tell us a bit about yourself. Where are you from?

I'm originally from Peoria, IL, but I grew up in southeast Iowa. Since then I have also found myself in Chicago and Phoenix.

- What is your role in the SDS office?

I am a MSW [Master of Social Work] intern and currently work with students through the Weekly Mentoring Program. During weekly meetings, the students and I focus on academics and utilizing strategies to aid in academic success.

- What is your educational background?

I attended UNI for my undergrad, in which I received my BSW in December 2013. I then began to pursue my MSW at Arizona State University, and I will return there in July to complete the program.

- What do you like to do when you're not at work/school?

I love being outside and seeing friends and family. My hobbies include longboarding, Frisbee golfing, attending music festivals, and hiking.

- What is your favorite quote?

"To give anything less than your best is to sacrifice the gift."

~ Steve Prefontaine



A Day in the Life of SDS Student Workers By Kelli Theilen

As accommodations roll into the Student Disability Services office, it is up to everyone to help make the process run smoothly. One of the needs within SDS is student workers. The office is full of student workers that help make the process of providing accommodations to students registered with SDS quick and easy. We are students just like you—we all have classes, homework, and work on the side. As student workers in SDS, we work to convert textbooks into PDFs and then Word documents so the readings are accessible to students with print-related disabilities. SDS student workers also watch videos and add captioning so it is easier for students to understand what is being said. We are flexible and find time in our schedules to be readers and scribes for students' exams. To be a student worker at SDS, you need to be ready for anything. This job is very rewarding and has fantastic support within the office. We have the opportunity to help students succeed in their academics here at UNI while building our communication skills with others. Many of us are going into fields in which we will be able to help others, so we believe this position in SDS is perfect for us. Our job is something in which we take pride. Thank you to my fellow SDS student workers for everything they do to help students with disabilities!

SDS Student Workers

Heather B., Jordan B., Kristen B., Isabella J., Janessa L., Jenny L., Molly M., Heather P., Hannah T., & Kelli T.

The Role of Emotional Support Animals

(Continued from page 5)

Emotional support animals provide a therapeutic benefit for an individual with a mental illness. These animals are prescribed by a licensed health professional and, unlike service animals, do not require specific training. Their mere presence mitigates the effects of the disability. Some feelings of being unloved or isolation can be relieved by unconditional positive interaction with an emotional support animal. Although an emotional support animal cannot act as a service dog, a service dog can present the same characteristics as an emotional support animal. This essentially creates a dual role for service dogs. Although service dogs are trained to complete specific tasks, one cannot negate the other characteristics the dog presents. These characteristics include licking the owner, cuddling, and stimulation of petting. Another difference between service dogs and emotional support animals is emotional support animals can be any animal. An individual is not restricted to solely a dog, as long as the animal is manageable in public and does not create a nuisance in or around the home setting.⁸

One local agency, Retrieving Freedom in Waverly, IA, has taken it upon themselves to provide veterans and children with autism with service dogs. However, training the dogs is extremely time consuming and expensive, approximately \$25,000 a service dog. For more information, please visit <http://retrievingfreedom.org/>. If one would like to further connect with the agency, please contact Scott Dewey, the Co-President/Co-Founder of Retrieving Freedom, at Scottdewey@retrievingfreedom.org.

Mental illness is an area of concern that should not be taken lightly. Many individuals live with debilitating disorders on a daily basis, especially veterans returning from a combat situation. The recent research and work involving emotional support animals has become evident with the implementation of the Fair Housing Act, which has ultimately raised awareness. Are emotional support animals the treatment of the future? Only time will tell.

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Graduate Student Feature: Jenny Lynes

- Tell us a bit about yourself. Where are you from?

I am a first year graduate student in the Postsecondary Education: Student Affairs program. I moved around a couple times when I was growing up, so I consider Waverly, IA, where I currently live, my home. Besides working in SDS, I am a graduate assistant in the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships here at UNI.

- What is your role in the SDS office?

This semester I am a practicum student in the office. I serve as an academic coach within the Weekly Mentoring Program, along with helping organize the SDS newsletter and planning various outreach events and activities. As a student worker in the office, I am a book editor for the alternative textbook conversion process and act as a reader/scribe for students receiving exam accommodations.

- What is your educational background?

I earned my bachelor's degree in American and World History Education from Wartburg College in May 2014. During my time at Wartburg I worked in the Admissions Office, served as a Student Orientation Staff member, and played the flute in the Symphonic Band.

- What do you like to do when you're not at work/school?

I enjoy watching films, reading, listening to music, baking, studying history, spending time with family and friends, and taking walks around town. I have two orange cats, Max and Rory, who are a handful.

- What is your favorite quote?

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

~ Dr. Seuss, *I Can Read With My Eyes Shut!*



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