

Southern Tier



Steps to Success!

For Students with Disabilities

**Volume II,
Issue I**

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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**Alternate formats available
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Questions or comments:

**Contact Dot Marinaccio at
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VESID's Eligibility Criteria

- * Individual must have a permanent, documented disability
- * The disability must pose an impediment to employment
- * Individual must require services to successfully enter and maintain employment
- * Individual must be able to benefit from services

The State Education Department does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, religion, creed, disability, marital status, veteran status, national origin, race, gender, genetic predisposition or carrier status, or sexual orientation in its recruitment, educational programs, services and activities.

Attention Juniors and Seniors

You've spent the last few weeks settling into the routine of classes and school activities for the 2007-2008 school year. If you're a junior or a senior, you have even more to think about - what will your plans be for further training, college, apprenticeship training, or work after you graduate? For students who have a physical or mental impairment which impacts on their ability to participate in school or work, there can be additional questions.....

- What type of career will be best for me?
- How will my disability affect my performance in this career?
- What reasonable accommodations might I need for training or work?

NYS VESID can assist you, with the help of your guidance counselor, CSE Chairperson, Resource Room Teacher or other school personnel, in preparing for your final year(s) of school and identifying what you will need to insure your success in the career field that is best for you.

This fall, at school parent nights and other informational meetings, you may have had the opportunity to meet VESID Counselors and find out how they can assist you. Your school may have already referred you to VESID for services, or your parent may have contacted VESID to ask what services may be available to you.

If you apply for VESID services, your school district will provide us information regarding your disability and any difficulties it presents for you, as well as what accommodations or assistance you are currently receiving. If you are eligible for services (see eligibility criteria at bottom left), a VESID counselor will work with you to discuss your interests and abilities, careers you may be considering, and what the job market is expected to look like when you are ready to enter the workforce. Once a vocational goal has been agreed upon, your counselor will work with you to determine what services you may need to help you reach your goal. These services may include job placement services, job coaching (assistance with learning a new job), financial assistance with college training (notetakers, tutoring services, and books up to \$1,100/yr are not dependent on financial need, tuition/fees, transportation, are contingent on financial need).

If you would like more information regarding VESID and how we can assist you, ask your guidance counselor or other school personnel.



BEST OF LUCK TO YOU THIS SCHOOL YEAR!

Southern Tier VESID Staff Corner...



Diane Marshall left the Southern Tier Office to become the Coordinator of the Model Transition Program at GST BOCES. Diane worked for VESID for over 27 years, first as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor then as a Senior Counselor. We wish her the best!

Vincent Pellegrino has joined the Elmira VESID staff as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. He covers the Chemung County school transition caseload.

Dot Marinaccio received a promotion from Regional Marketing Representative for the Southern Tier Office to Regional Marketing Coordinator. She will be coordinating VESID marketing activities for the Central New York region, including the Syracuse and Utica District Office areas. She will continue to be based in the Binghamton Office.

Denise Solan was promoted from Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Assistant to Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, covering a Delaware County caseload as well as Oxford and Greene schools.

Katherine Donahue left her position as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor with VESID to begin a counseling position with the Veteran's Administration in Buffalo. Best of luck to Kate in her new job!

Dale Tewksbury has joined the Binghamton staff as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Assistant and will be assisting with Broome County group orientation and initial interviews.



Driven to Succeed!

Matt Coleman was a Senior at Alfred-Almond High School when he was referred to VESID in 2004. He was also a student in the Steuben-Allegheny BOCES Heavy Equipment program.

Matt was referred with a learning disability, which caused difficulties for him in school. Matt was also color blind. Despite Matt's academic challenges, he showed a talent for working with his hands, as well as a



strong work ethic. Matt had gained work experience during his high school years in painting, mowing lawns, food service, and helping neighboring farmers. Matt's career goal was to work with heavy equipment.

Following his graduation in June 2005, Matt entered the Diesel Mechanics and Heavy Equipment program at Alfred State College. Working with VESID Counselor Diane Stachowski, Matt was provided with financial assistance with his college program, including tuition, fees, books, tools, purchase of a computer and a scanner.

To remediate Matt's colorblindness, which could impact his performing mechanical work, Matt was provided a piece of technology called a color tester, which indicates to him whether an item is red or green.

Matt flourished in his program at Alfred College, and in March 2007, he was offered a part-time position with Silk Road Transport, Inc. in Arkport as a Diesel Mechanic.

Matt enjoyed this position very much and upon his graduation was offered a full-time position with benefits. His starting pay was \$14/hr. VESID purchased steel-toed work boots and additional tools for Matt when he started his job.

Matt enjoys his job a great deal. When asked about VESID, Matt stated that he appreciated the assistance that he received and that he especially wanted to thank Diane for all of her help and support in realizing his goal.

GREAT JOB, MATT!

Did You Know?

October was National Disability Employment Awareness Month. Around the nation, events were held to honor employers who have demonstrated a strong commitment to hiring individuals with disabilities.

In a proclamation by President Bush on September 28th, 2007, he stated "Americans with disabilities strengthen our country's workforce, and their achievements help keep our Nation the world's economic leader."

Congratulations to the Southern Tier employers who received awards this month for their efforts to provide opportunities to individuals with disabilities.

Check our website for this year's winners!



Catskill ILC assists with VESID initial interviews

by Marian Ferguson, VESID Senior Counselor

VESID has partnered with Catskill ILC (CCFI) to assist with completing initial interviews for school referrals and to collect information for VESID eligibility. Since April 2006, CCFI has been working with 14 school districts and 2 BOCES sites in the DCMO and ONC BOCES region. The majority of schools are in Delaware County.

The 2006-2007 was our first full year for this service. CCFI sent 54 referrals to VESID (38 for the DCMO districts and 16 for the ONC districts). 42 of those referrals have been made eligible for VESID services and 17 students now have an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in place. 2 students indicated that they did not want further services. VESID is still working with 12 students to obtain documentation of their disability or additional evaluations.

VESID and CCFI are working closely together to improve the process. Schools included in this project have received a letter from Catskill reviewing the process for the upcoming year. CCFI has already received some referrals for the 2007-2008 school year. Thanks to all the participating districts and to CCFI for increasing the number of VESID referrals.



Deposit School Hosts Job Fair

by Suzanne Pearson, VESID Counselor

On Wednesday, April 18th, 2007, VESID Counselor, Suzanne Pearson, participated in a Job Fair sponsored by Broome Tioga Workforce New York, and held in the Deposit Elementary School Gymnasium. Students in grades nine through twelve spent a school period at the job fair, speaking with employers, completing job applications and presenting resumes to potential employers. The following are a few of the employers who were present: United Health Services, Lourdes Hospital, Maines Paper and Food Service Inc., Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Local 112 Training Center - Apprentice Recruitment, IBEW Local 325 (a joint program of the National Electrical Contractors Association and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers), and the Plumbers and Steam Fitters Union.

The Job Fair was a wonderful opportunity for students to learn about job seeking skills and the many career opportunities that are available just a quick commute from Deposit!

Check out our website at www.vesid.nysed.gov/southerntier