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## Teaching All Students, Reaching All Learners, including Students with Disabilities as Diverse Learners

The Northern Marianas College University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), Pacific Basin University Center for Excellence (PBUCE) and the Hawaii Center on Disability Studies (CDS) offers access to no cost professional development training within the disability field. Entitled, Teaching All Students, Reaching All Learners professional development training program, this program is to support postsecondary faculty and staff by providing information on ways to improve postsecondary education outcomes for all students, including those with disabilities. Increasing understanding of: (1) Universal Design for Learning (UDL); (2) Assistive Technology (AT); (3) Knowledge about students with hidden, or invisible disabilities; and (4) Rights and responsibilities related to students in postsecondary education, will enhance education for all students. The four training curricula are intended both to facilitate acquiring this knowledge and to evaluate an understanding of it. Those who complete the test will

receive a Certificate of Completion that may be used in resumes or for promotion or tenure information. The test may be taken at any time before, during, or after any one or all of the sections are completed. The Certificate will be awarded at the end of this training upon successful completion of the test with a score of 80% or higher. Please visit <http://www.ist.hawaii.edu/training/design/> to begin your training.

### Sections

The Teaching All Students, Reaching All Learners professional development training program is composed of four modules:

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**
- Assistive Technology (AT)**
- Hidden Disabilities**
- Rights & Responsibilities**

The first module focuses on the importance of accessibility and Universal Design for all. The next module provides information about the different types of Assistive Technology (AT) available to support students with disabilities.

The third module is about hidden, or invisible, disabilities, including learning disabilities. The final module provides information about the rights of students with disabilities and responsibilities of postsecondary faculty or staff in providing reasonable accommodations.

A 5-10 minute test will be given at the end of the final module to assess your knowledge on the content of this training.

### **Certificate**

A 20-question mastery test may be taken at any time before, during, or after completing the Teaching All

Students, Reaching All Learners training program. Upon successfully completing this test, with a score of 80% or higher, you will be instructed on how to download and print a Completion Certificate either to submit to your employer or for your personal records.

Please visit <http://www.ist.hawaii.edu/training/design/> to begin your training.

*Please note: The Teaching All Students, Reaching All Learners project, funded by the US Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, concluded*

*in Oct. 2012. No changes will be made to this site at this time.*

*Disclaimer: The minimal use of graphics, photos and video on these pages is intentional. Descriptions and captions are provided when they are included. Our aim is to provide information that is universally accessible. We thank you for your interest and welcome any feedback from our visitors on how to further improve the accessibility of this Web site.*

*Please feel to provide feedback to Kelly Roberts, Project Coordinator, at [robertsk@hawaii.edu](mailto:robertsk@hawaii.edu).*

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## **Transition Mini Conference & Cooperative Education's Job Fair September 12 - 14, 2016**

The Council and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation in collaboration with partners in the CNMI Transition Coalition and Disability Network co-sponsored a transition mini-conference for transition-aged students with IEPs held on September 12 and 14, 2016. The purpose of the conference and job fair is to offer students with disabilities with meaningful opportunities to engage in activities that will help them to prepare for the workforce as well as consider other postsecondary options such as pursuing college or a trade/vocational school. Some of the conference topics include: Self-Advocacy & Leadership, How to Have a Successful Interview, Resume

Writing, Soft Skills Basics, Assistive Technology & App, College-Bound: Financial Aid & Disability Support Services, Transition: High School vs. College, Self-Advocacy/Leadership, to name a few.



In addition to the sessions being offered, the conference also featured exhibits by various public agencies, private entities, and non-profit organizations as they showcase their programs and services available to students.

# Social Security Administration and Social Security Disability Insurance

Elsie S. Tilipao, *NMPASI Client Advocate*

Advocates at NMPASI receive an average of 10 calls a month inquiring about cash benefits from the Social Security Administration. The following information is on one of the cash benefit one can receive from SSA, the Title II benefit-Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

## Cash Benefits Administered by SSA

- The Social Security Administration (SSA) is a federal agency that administers two federal cash benefit programs:
  - Social Security (Title II)
  - Supplemental Security Income (Title XVI)
- Both pay benefits to those who meet the agency's disability standard.
- Each includes a different set of detailed work incentives and rules about work.

## How and when do you get a Title II benefit (SSDI)?

- File an application and provide evidence of diagnoses and functional limitations.
- SSA determines disability and the onset date – 5 month waiting period – 12 month duration rule
- SSA calculates the benefit rate based on the applicant's work history in FICA covered work.

## Eligibility Requirements

- Disability Benefits from Social Security SSDI – Meet disability or blindness criteria and have worked long enough in jobs covered by Social Security taxes.

## Disability Definition

- The inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity (SGA) by reason of medically determinable physical and/or mental impairment(s) which can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months or result in death.

20 CFR 404.1505, 416.905. Statutory Blindness. 20 CFR 404.1581 et seq., 416.981 et seq.

## Distinctive Features SSDI - Social Security Disability Insurance

- SSDI - Funded by FICA taxes and is not needs based or based on living arrangement.
- Benefit amount is based upon level of earnings over working years
- Paid on 3rd of month or on a Wednesday – based on the day of birth.
- Medicare coverage starts after 24 months of entitlement

## More distinctive features

- The Social Security program is compulsory for most workers, and based on insurance principles. It is designed to partially replace earnings lost due to the retirement, disability or death of an insured person.
- To qualify, the disabled person must have a recent work history.

The amount of work one needs to qualify depends on their age

Before age 24 - 1-1/2 years of work in a three-year period before becoming disabled  
Age 24-31 - work during half the time between age 21 and the time the disability began  
Age 31 or older - work during five out of the 10 years before the disability began

## When you pay Social Security taxes you earn work credits

- You can earn up to a maximum of 4 work credits each year.
- The work credits are based on the total amount of your wages or self-employment income during the year.
- In 2016, for each \$1,220 in gross earnings you get one credit, max. of 4 credits per year
- Earn \$4,880 to earn 4 credits in 2016

## Amount of SSDI Benefit

- Benefits are calculated based on work history
- Monthly benefit payment amounts depend upon the worker's work/wage history and are unique to each worker.
- Maximum benefit payable is \$2639 per month in 2016.
- If the Social Security benefit amount is lower than the full SSI payment, one may be eligible to receive both Social Security and SSI.

## Disability Onset

- Date SSA will determine the disability onset date for SSDI benefits. It is the first day the applicant meets the definition of disability
- The 5 month waiting period counts from the month of disability onset.
- The 12 month duration of disability requirement counts from the month of disability onset.

## Retroactive Payments

- SSDI benefits may be paid retroactively for up to 12 months prior to the date of application. The actual amount of retroactivity depends on the disability onset date and where that falls in relationship to the date of application.
- For Example: Disability onset was 09/10/2012. Five month waiting period makes the first month of eligibility 03/2013. However, beneficiary doesn't file until 01/22/2015. If approved, benefits are only paid back one year to 01/2014, not back to 03/2013.

## Five Month Waiting Period

- Payment begins the sixth full month after the date SSA determines the disability began. In other words the first 5 months after disability onset are nonpayment months.
- For example, if the disability began on June 15, 2014, the earliest a benefit could be paid would be for the month of 12/2014.
- Benefits are paid a month behind. So, the December benefit would be paid in January 2015.

I hope you have a better understanding of SSDI but should you need more information on SSDI or any other disability related information you can contact NMPASI at (670) 235-7273 or (670) 235-7274 and via the internet at [www.nmpasi.org](http://www.nmpasi.org).



## University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

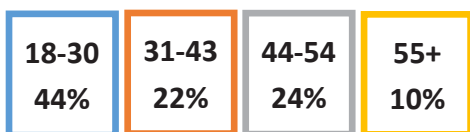
### CNMI Needs Assessment Results



Winter 2016 Newsletter

During Spring 2016, the Commonwealth participated in a comprehensive program Needs Assessment across all three islands. Floyd Masga and Vincent Merfalen collected data from 237 individuals through focus groups, home visits, electronic surveys and on-campus with NMC students. The assessment targeted consumers of disability services including their families, partners and others who work with individuals with disabilities. When appropriate, facilitators provided one to one interviews and Chamorro or Carolinian language translations. Overall average response rates were over 95% for majority of questions. Questions related to NMC services were specific to NMC students.

#### AGE OF PARTICIPANTS



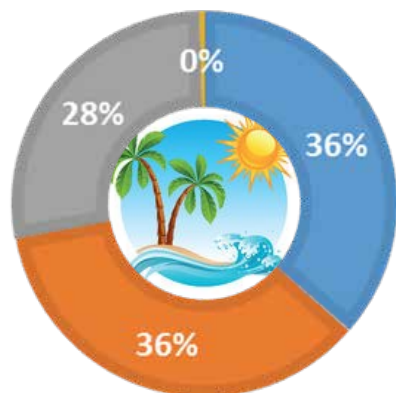
#### PARTICIPANT ROLES



- 42% General Public/Community Members
- 27% Student
- 21% Family Member/Caregiver
- 18% Professional/Para-professional
- 14% Adults with Disabilities
- 8% Trainee
- 4% Youth with Disabilities

#### RESIDENCY

■ Saipan ■ Tinian ■ Rota ■ Other



#### HOME COMPUTER

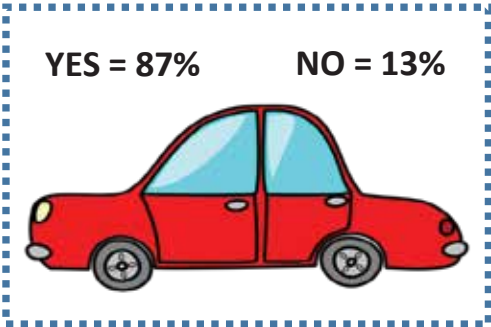


#### INTERNET ACCESS

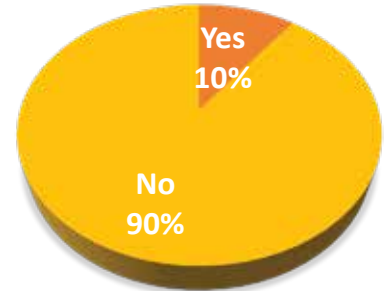


**YES = 84%**  
**NO = 16%**

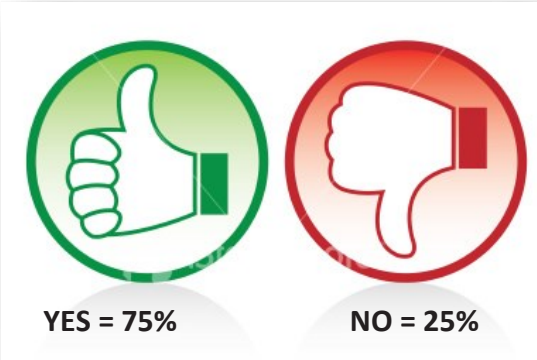
## ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION



## USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



## AWARENESS OF DISABILITY RIGHTS



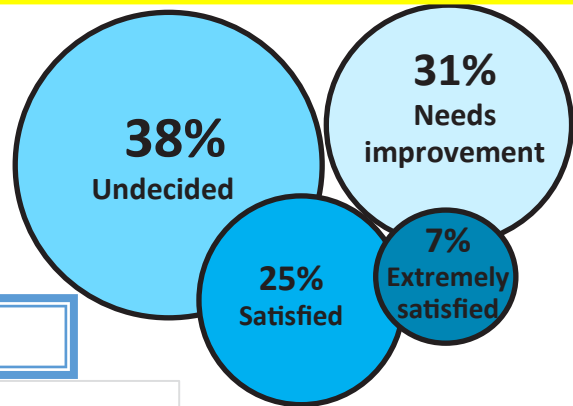
## ACCESSIBILITY OF PUBLIC PLACES



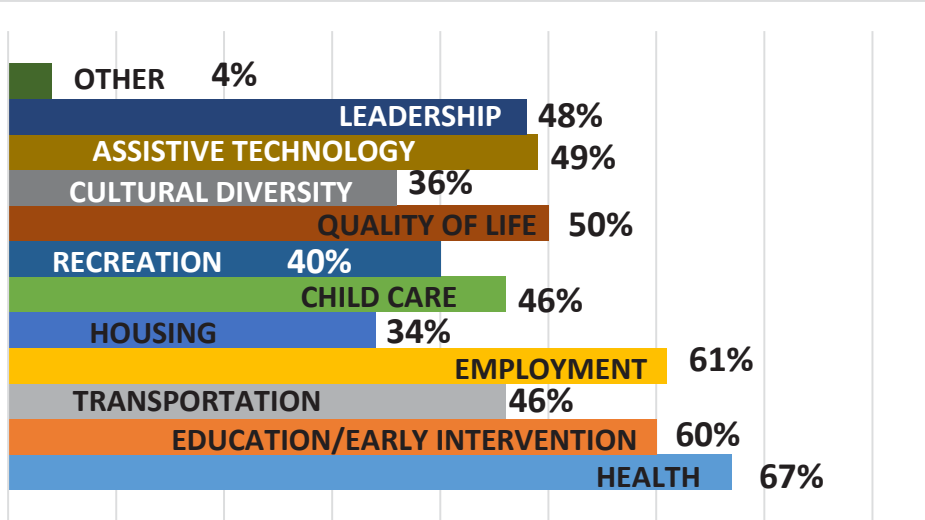
## DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES IN CNMI



## NMC DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES



## SUGGESTED UCEDD SERVICES



Contact:  
Floyd Masga  
(670) 237-6808  
Data Input:  
Vanessa Yatco Deleon  
Guerrero & Floyd Masga

The NMC-PBUCE is funded by the federal Association of University Centers on Disabilities through a sub-contract with the University of Hawaii Center on Disability Studies.



*The CNMI Office on Transit Authority (COTA) and NMPASI collaborated to bring all 18 employees of COTA four hours of Disability & Discrimination training at the Napu Room at the Pacific Islands Club on October 6th & 7th. COTA is the main provider of door to door accessible transportation services in the CNMI. Call them at (670) 664-2690 for more information.*

## SUPREME COURT TO HEAR SPECIAL EDUCATION CASE

On September 29, 2016, the United States Supreme Court granted certiorari in *Endrew F.V. Douglas County School District*, a 10th Circuit case concerning the standard of education schools must provide to students with disabilities. The oral argument is currently scheduled for January 11, 2017.

The issue to be addressed is: What is the level of educational benefit that school districts must confer on children with disabilities to provide them with the free appropriate public education guaranteed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act?

In this case, the parents of an autistic child withdrew him from the Douglas County School District because they believed his education progress was inadequate. They later sought reimbursement that the District challenged. Reimbursement was denied.

The parents advocated for a heightened "meaningful educational benefit" standard but the Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit held that the public school district need only offer an education that is "more than de minimus."

A decision by the Supreme Court will resolve a conflict among the circuits and provide parents and educators guidance regarding their rights and obligations.

## I am Diabetic

November 2016 was Diabetes Awareness Month.

When the doctor told me in 2004 that I had an elevated sugar level and that I would need to go on medication to control it, I was shocked. I thought I was healthy. Days after the doctor's visit, I had not taken any medication and was still in disbelief. It was still very difficult to talk about it with anyone, including my wife, who is my partner in life.

Through my work at NMPASI, I learned that people with diabetes can live productive and meaningful lives once we control our sugar levels. Without realizing it, I was slowly changing my lifestyle to help curb my sugar levels. I began trying to fit my meals into a bowl. I stopped eating late at night just before bed. I reduced my intake of rice from two or more scoops to just one a meal. I also have started including brown rice in my meals. I also began to develop a habit of walking on the weekends with my wife. I even joined a gym and fell in love with the spa. The spa works wonders for me with the circulation it brings to my legs and feet. I also try to eat something healthy the size of my fist every 2 to 3 hours. I eat about five times a day to help my metabolism continue to burn calories all day long.

Before western contact, the people of our islands were very healthy in the way they fished and worked the land to produce what they ate. We islanders also have a gene in us that helps us survive long periods of time without food. What this gene would do in our bodies is to tell it to conserve energy and begin storing energy in the form of fat to prepare for these inevitable times of famine.

Unfortunately, this gene still exists within us islanders and is actually a catalyst for diabetes. In other words, it helps us become more

susceptible to diabetes, because it still does the same job of storing energy. However, we no longer have long periods of time without food as our food supplies now are abundant and full of fat and cholesterol. Knowing these things enables me to make better choices every day. Each one of us is responsible to be productive members of society; but before that can happen, we must take care of ourselves first.

Today I am still battling diabetes but I am more aware of the way it affects my body. I don't eat as much, but I do not limit my diet to any particular food so that I continue to enjoy all the foods I love. An example would be getting a mini ice cream cone instead of a full size one. I have read up on diabetes and continue to learn about the new methods of dealing with it like using leaves from specific types of trees called "Banaba" in Tagalog to make tea, also known as Pride of India. I have also read into stem cells and how they will actually be able to take stem cells from me to reproduce a new pancreas with my own cells. This is still some years down the road, so I live with the motto to take one day at a time, and to remember how wonderful it is to be alive. I am determined to go on living, loving, contributing, sharing, learning and serving others in this life.



Thank you for your time with this, and I hope that, if you or a loved one are dealing with diabetes, that you not lose hope. Also take the time to look at your intake and frequency of meals to ensure that intake is reduced and frequency of meals is increased. Finally, take it one day at a time and live a wonderful life!

I have much to be thankful for this season. Merry Christmas to everyone!

Thomas M. Thornburgh  
Diabetic since 2004

## National Family Caregivers & Diabetes Awareness Month

On October 31, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. Honorable Governor Ralph DLG. Torres proclaimed the month of November as National Family Caregivers & Diabetes Awareness Month. Approximately 45 individuals were in attendance mainly Family Caregiver's and Partner Agencies. Afterwards, with the collaboration of the NMC Nursing Club & Marianas Visiting Nurses conducted a Blood & Sugar Check at the Governor's Office.



## CAREGIVER'S SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT November 10 - 13, 2016



# STRESS-FREE HOLIDAY FAIR

November 19, 2016

Staff from Joeten-Kiyu Library

Volunteers assisting in gift-wrapping



DPS

## Diabetes & Caregivers Symposium

November 29 - 30, 2016



On November 29 & 30, 2016 the Ayuda Network, Inc., Commonwealth Respite Service Program in collaboration with the Commonwealth Diabetes Coalition facilitated a Diabetes & Caregiver's Symposium. The event was held at the Royal Taga Ballroom, Saipan World Resort from 7:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m.



### Heart Disease and Health

