

The Voice

UNCG Office of Disability Services

Alumni Spotlight-Michael Murray



This section is dedicated to recognizing the accomplishments of students with disabilities who have gone on to experience success in their lives after UNCG.

One such individual is Michael Murray who is now the Director of Programs

for the American Association of People with Disabilities in Washington, D.C. In his capacity of Director of Programs, Michael is involved in or directs the AAPD’s internship programs, the Paul G. Hearne/AAPD Leadership Awards Program, the Disability Mentoring Day and other activities and efforts aimed at emphasizing how capable people are and empowering individuals with disabilities to make a positive difference in their lives, and in the lives of others.

Michael shared with us his impressions of how he felt when he first started at UNCG. He felt terrified, but also excited as he began his educational journey. He experienced some difficulties along the

way in his college career, but he never gave up, and sought support and help from others when he needed it. Now he finds himself running 7 national programs with a staff of 5 and a budget of 1.3 million dollars.

While at UNCG, and in North Carolina, Michael strived to increase the representation and voice for students with disabilities in education through his efforts with Beyond Academics, the Center for Independent Living and other campus and community resources. He wrote a grant to help bring supportive disability agencies together, which reflected his belief in the power of being connected.

(see Murray, pg. 4)

Article Highlights

- Michael studied Theatre at UNCG
- Michael currently works for the American Association of People with Disabilities
- Michael has served as an advocate for people with disabilities in various roles

ODS Welcomes New Director

The Office of Disability Services is pleased to announce the arrival of our new director, Bruce Pomeroy.

Bruce hails from Broome Community College in Binghamton, NY where he served as the Director of Disability Services for over

30 years. In addition to his years of experience providing services to students with disabilities, Bruce is also a Past President of the Association on Higher Education And Disability (AHEAD), an international association of disability service providers,

and has been a trainer for the U.S. Department of Education.

Bruce is very excited about the opportunities to enhance the services provided in ODS. Please feel free to contact him at bpomero@uncg.edu.

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Online Testing Accommodation Form

The Office of Disability Services has recently changed the process for requesting test accommodations to make it easier and more accessible.

In the past students were required to submit a paper form to ODS one week prior to taking their test. Now, students will submit their request for testing accommodations online through the ODS website

(www.uncg.edu/ods/test).

Students will be required to create a profile the first time they use the online form. This profile must include the classes for which students would like to receive test accommodations. After the profile is complete, students can submit requests.

It is important to note that the request must be submitted seven (7) days prior to

the date and time of the test. For example, if you have a test on Wednesday, August 31 at 8:00 a.m., then you must submit your request *before* Wednesday, August 24 at 8:00 a.m., to prevent any difficulties in scheduling your test.

Directions on how to use this form are on our website. For further assistance, you can call or stop by ODS and schedule an appointment to meet with a staff member.

“Service animals can accompany persons with disabilities in all areas where the public is permitted to go.”

ADA Revised Requirements for Service Animals

The Department of Justice published revised final regulations implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on September 15, 2010, in the Federal Register. These regulations clarify and refine issues that have arisen over the past 20 years regarding service animals.

A service animal is a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. Effective March 15, 2011, only dogs are recognized as

service animals. Generally speaking, service animals can accompany persons with disabilities in all areas where the public is permitted to go. Assistance animals, which are a different issue, are addressed further under the Fair Housing Act and the Air Carrier Access Act.

In addition, service animals must be under control (harnessed, leashed, or tethered) unless methods of control hinder the service animal’s ability to perform tasks.

In these situations, other means (e.g., voice or signal) must be used to control the service animal.

Service animals work with individuals with various types of disabilities, including, but not limited to, individuals who are blind, deaf, have a medical condition, or a psychological disability.

For more information on this issue, please visit www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm.



Q & A with ODS

True or False: Faculty and staff are required to provide accommodations to a student with a disability even if the student does not request it.

Answer: False. The student is responsible for self-disclosing to ODS, providing the appropriate documentation of a disability and requesting accommodations before the university is required to provide accommodations.

For Veterans Only



The Dean of Students Office is here to assist veterans with any situations that may arise. We assist veterans in transitioning from military to college, transcripts, getting involved on campus, and much more.

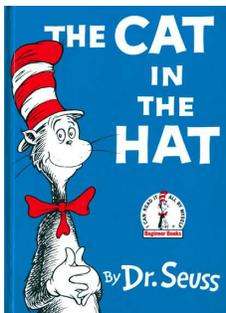
Coming Fall 2011, the Dean of Students Office will sponsor a Veteran Support Network

with the Vacc Counseling and Consulting Clinic in the hopes of creating a connection among veterans.

Currently, a Military Task Force appointed by the Chancellor is looking at ways to improve services to veterans and their families. UNCG strives to be a military-friendly campus where veter-

ans and their families will be successful while receiving appropriate resources to accomplish their goals. Please come see us in the Dean of Students Office or call (336) 334-5514 if you need any assistance with veteran services on campus.

Did you know???



Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, joined the Army in 1943. He was given a rank of Captain and served as Commander of the Animation Department of the First Motion Picture Unit of the United States Army Air Forces based in Hollywood, California.

Dr. Seuss was given the task

of creating informational training films and illustrations for the military and public. Dr. Seuss was awarded the Legion of Merit for his service.

To find out more of what Dr. Seuss did, checkout the following websites:

<http://libraries.ucsd.edu/speccoll/dspolitic/>

http://signal150.army.mil/theodor_seuss_geisel.html

“The mission of VR...assist persons with disabilities to achieve gainful employment... increase their ability to live independently...”

NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The mission of the NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) is to assist persons with disabilities to achieve gainful employment and/or increase their ability to live independently through the effective administration of state and federal programs in accordance with the National Rehabilitation Act and the Work Force Investment Act.

The following are VR FAQs:

How do I become eligible for services?

You may be eligible if (1) you have a physical, mental, learning, or emotional disability that affects your ability to find or keep a job, and (2) you require VR services to get ready for, find, or maintain employment.

How do I get started?

With an interview with VR staff. You will learn about

the VR program and, if you choose to, complete an application. You may be asked to provide income information and medical records, sign a release form so VR can obtain this important information, and allow us to arrange medical, psychological, vocational, or other evaluations.

(see VR Services, pg. 4)

VR Services (cont'd from pg. 3)

When do services start?

Once you are determined eligible. You and your counselor will identify your needs, skills, areas of interest, and how you think and learn. You and your counselor will develop an “individualized plan of employment” or IPE. You and your counselor will determine your job goals, the services you’ll need, and the responsibilities each of you will have

in helping you reach your career objective.

What services can I expect?

Many services are offered at no cost. If needed, these might include guidance and counseling, testing and evaluation, rehabilitation engineering evaluations, interpreter services, supported employment services, job-seeking skills training, and

job placement and follow-up.

So VR will send me to school?

If you require training or education to reach your job goal, VR can assist you with tuition, books, supplies, and related costs. The extent of VR financial assistance depends on a number of factors—for example, your income level and availability of financial resources for your educational

needs.

(Adapted from NC DVRS handout, <https://dvr.dhhs.state.us>)

Murray (cont'd from pg. 1)

Michael shared with us a number of his experiences at UNCG. One involved an instructor that kept trying to help Michael spell. The instructor’s heart was in the right place, but what they weren’t getting was that Michael’s disability affected him in spelling so that traditional methods of instruction would not work. Once the instructor was “educated,” Michael could be valued for the talents he brought to the class, not how his disability affected him. Michael emphasized that his personal philosophy is to never give up and to look at each situation as an opportunity to educate.

Michael realized early on in his time at UNCG that the campus and its “family” were caring and supportive. An excerpt from a letter Michael wrote to the Theatre faculty and staff emphasizes this:

“I have had a great freshman

year here at UNCG as a BFA Theatre Ed. Major. In high school, my teachers were somewhat tolerant of my learning disability. I expected that college professors would be completely reluctant to help students with different learning styles and challenging physical circumstances. I found the opposite to be true. The theatre staff at UNCG has made a conscious effort to be understanding, helpful and supportive. I’m not saying my professors made it easy on me. Many of my classes were very, very challenging but I could always tell they genuinely wanted me to do well and learn. My professors were willing to meet with me outside of class and help me work through things I found difficult.”

When Michael was asked about what advice he would like to share with those who are starting their college journey, he responded by

reaffirming that individuals with disabilities are the largest minority in the US, and no one should ever feel alone. He stressed finding the power in being connected and talking and working with others. Michael’s personal and professional activities have reflected this idea - of the power that comes from being connected with others in a supportive network and his on-going efforts will continue to help individuals with disabilities be empowered and change society for the better. Oh yes, one more bit of advice from Michael, be sure to find some time to have fun! Ensuring that you find a personal balance in your life will lead to success. Thank you Michael for your words of encouragement, and for your daily efforts that make a difference for us all.

*“My professors were willing to meet with me outside of class and help me work through things I found difficult.” --
Michael Murray*

Faculty & Staff Corner

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WWW.UNCG.EDU/ODS

Legal Matters: Technical Standards

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, schools can have technical standards. Technical Standards are all the non-academic requirements a student must have/meet to enter a program. Students with disabilities must meet any reasonable technical standards required by the programs to which they are applying or in when they are enrolled.

Technical Standards cannot be written to exclude a class of people, including students with disabilities, and must have the tag-line "able to meet these requirements with or without a reasonable accommodation." They should be written as the "what" of a skill, not the "how," (e.g., "must be able to gath-

er vitals using variety of means" versus "must be able to hear a heart murmur through a stethoscope"). A qualified student may not be denied admission on the sole basis of disability.

Institutions must make academic adjustments for students who meet the academic and technical standards of a program in which they are enrolled. Colleges and universities are not required to accommodate students with disabilities by altering requirements that are essential to their programs. If a school is asking a particular student to "prove" they can, in fact, meet the technical standards, then they should be asking all the students to prove they

can also meet the technical standards. Institutions should provide technical standards to students upfront so they know what to expect and what they will encounter.

