Inclusion Toolkit:
A Guide to Including and Engaging People with Disabilities in Service and Conservation

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Greetings,

I would like to share the Utah Conservation Corps (UCC) story and how we became involved with inclusion. In 2005, Andy Zimmer, a UCC crew leader, was in a bike accident that resulted in quadriplegia. After rehabilitation, Andy wanted to return to the Conservation Corps and complete his term of service. At that time, there were no opportunities for him to serve in a field-based conservation corps... anywhere. Although Andy was no longer able to swing an axe, he had many other strengths and abilities. Andy gave me the motivation that led me to think outside the box.

Prior to working for the Utah Conservation Corps, I founded a non-profit that provides adaptive outdoor recreation opportunities for people of all abilities. Although I had been immersed in adaptive outdoor recreation and getting people with disabilities outside, I had not yet found a way to include people with disabilities in the UCC, a program that requires its members to be tough, rugged, and physically strong. I knew what the "crew experience" meant to our members, and I wanted to give Corpsmembers with disabilities that same experience. Living in a tent, spending every day outside, working on conservation projects, and being part of a close-knit team…this is what the "crew experience" was all about. This is the life that Andy had come to love and wanted to return to. He also wanted to share this experience with other people with disabilities.

Thanks to the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation (MEAF), The Corps Network, the Utah Commission on Volunteers, the USU Center for Persons with Disabilities and many others, this dream became a reality in the summer of 2007. Andy returned to the Utah Conservation Corps and served as a crew leader. In many ways, his position was similar to what he had done two years prior. The UCC simply broadened what we were already doing and created new projects that were more physically accessible and required fewer physical skills to get the job done.

Labeling a crew as "inclusive" was something we struggled with. It is hoped that there will come a day when this term is no longer needed and disability inclusion is a part of all programs. Until then, we have chosen to use this term because we need to make the distinction and become more intentional about including people with disabilities.

I hope these materials provide you with all the information and resources you need to feel confident starting down the path toward a more inclusive corps. Whether you are a literacy project that can involve people with physical limitations in all of your existing programs or a conservation corps that needs to create some new ways for people to serve, we hope that you will use the Inclusion Toolkit to open your doors to people with disabilities who, like Andy, are eager to serve with your program.

Happy Trails,

Kate Stephens
UCC Assistant Director
Project Leader, The Corps Network Inclusion Project

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I. INTRODUCTION

Inclusion is more about a willing spirit and positive attitude than a specific activity. Inclusion generally encompasses an approach and a process, rather than a specific program. It is about making a commitment to serve all individuals and promote the values of cooperation and community.

Inclusion means:

- ❖ being welcoming and offering the same activities to everyone,

- ❖ seeking to understand and accommodate differences,

- ❖ actively reaching out to people who are traditionally excluded,

- ❖ fostering a sense of belonging as a respected and valued peer, and

- ❖ honoring the intrinsic value of each person's life (Inclusion Task Force, MEAF, 2009).

The UCC Inclusion Toolkit, comprised of this guidebook and a DVD, will enable service and conservation corps to become proactive, rather than reactive, about the inclusion of corpsmembers with disabilities, including individuals with vision, hearing, cognitive, and mobility disabilities. Through education and dissemination of this toolkit, we hope to shift the paradigm and create a new corps culture that is inclusive of corpsmembers of all abilities. Most AmeriCorps and Conservation Corps programs understand the importance of inclusion, but just don't know where to begin. This toolkit will provide corps with a step-by-step guide to becoming an inclusive program, including information on program models, sample curriculum, and adaptive equipment. The forthcoming DVD will include equipment demonstrations and interviews with AmeriCorps administrators, land managers, crew leaders, AmeriCorps members, and more, to better illustrate and explain practical inclusive concepts.

What is an Inclusive Crew?

Traditional conservation corps projects are often located in physically inaccessible areas and require Corpsmembers to be in excellent physical condition. In contrast, inclusive crew projects are intentionally selected and designed to include crew members of all abilities. Crew members with disabilities are actively involved in all phases of the project, adding a valuable perspective and knowledge that only comes with living with a disability.

The following quotes attest to the value of an inclusive crew:

"Working with this crew was a wonderful experience, both from the perspective of the quality of the work done and the development of the crew members in their expertise and confidence in getting out in their national forests. This project had a lot of unknowns and the crew answered the challenge at every change. The crew went beyond the guidelines and recognized additional barriers that had not occurred to us. People with disabilities were empowered to be a part of the solution and agencies were 'enlightened.' We were able to see our trails and campgrounds through the eyes of the user. The completion of transition plans enables agencies to prioritize projects and could make them more competitive for limited funding."
– Ron Vance, U.S. Forest Service Recreation Resource Manager

"One of the most significant benefits of an inclusive crew is to show all of us we have blinders on and those perceived limitations don't exist. It's for staff to learn about a group of folks we have shied away from, 'I don't know anything about it, so I'm going to avoid it.' The people with disabilities on a crew can prove to themselves they can do a whole lot more than they think they can, just like our other Corpsmembers."
– Lori Gruber, Yellowstone National Park Landscape Architect

"Inclusion happens when everyone is a valuable team player and nobody sits on the sidelines. On the UCC inclusive crew, crew members of all abilities are given real responsibilities and they are held accountable. Everyone's contribution is important to the success of the project."
– Jamie Maestro, UCC Crew Leader

"When you think Utah Conservation Corps, you think outdoors, but this is going to help you for the rest of your life. These people [with disabilities] who never thought they would be able to do this are doing it and working hard. It's awesome. It's definitely the best employment I've ever had."
–Jordan Pease, UCC Crew Member with a mobility impairment

"Regardless of what disability you have, you are capable of anything if you have the support and motivation you need. I would highly recommend that other corps jump on board with the inclusive crew, take a look at this model, and implement it. The inclusive crew has things to offer to anybody. I feel it has opened up my opportunities and changed my life and I feel it will do the same for others."
– Quintin Williams, UCC Crew Member who is blind

"This is a great program and if other crews don't have an inclusive crew, they should. It is very important that people with disabilities can enjoy the same freedoms we have on earth, especially nature."
– Luke Lecalir-Marzolf, UCC Crew Member

Why Inclusion?

Individuals with disabilities have a great deal to contribute to the world of service and the desire to participate. Unfortunately, the current shortage of meaningful opportunities in most locations means that it is not often possible for them to do so. Providing these opportunities, through inclusive programs, has multiple benefits. First of all, inclusion in employment, educational, recreational, and community settings is a basic element of human rights. Furthermore, equal access, inclusion, and accommodations are required of all programs receiving federal funds. Compliance should be considered, however, not just to fulfill legal requirements, but to improve overall program effectiveness and to further community integration. Hiring and accommodating Corpsmembers with disabilities is generally much easier and less difficult than most people imagine. In addition, there are tax incentives available to employers of individuals with disabilities to help cover the costs of accommodations as well as funding from AmeriCorps state and national programs. See Section III on funding under the heading Challenges, Opportunities, and Lessons Learned.

The benefits of inclusive programs for crew members with and without disabilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ❖ increased understanding of their abilities,

- ❖ improved self-esteem and self-confidence,

- ❖ heightened appreciation of nature,

- ❖ healthier fitness levels,

- ❖ augmented skill development resulting in enhanced career opportunities,

- ❖ increased understanding of the requirements and strategies for accessibility,

- ❖ enhanced independence,

- ❖ deepened understanding of different perspectives,

- ❖ increased friendships and support networks, and

- ❖ enhanced opportunities to experience satisfaction and enjoyment.

The accessibility work that the UCC has completed, with inclusive crews, benefits not only the organization and corpsmembers, but everyone in the community who wants to garden or enjoy the natural beauty of the forest. There are excellent detailed materials on inclusion available, including the following free publications:

Access AmeriCorps Training Project developed by United Cerebral Palsy, with sections on program accessibility and inclusion, an accessibility checklist, interaction tips, targeting recruits with disabilities, the inclusive application process, accommodations, and more at: www.ucp.org/ucp_generalsub.cfm/1/6619/6621

Inclusion: Creating An Inclusive Environment: A Handbook for the Inclusion of People with Disabilities in National and Community Service Programs by the Corporation for National and Community Service with 103 pages on inclusion, outreach, recruitment, selection, retention, and more, at: www.serviceandinclusion.org/handbook/inclusion.pdf

Paths to Inclusion: A resource guide for fully including youth of all abilities in community life, a publication by Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation, at: www.meaf.org/docs/PathsToInclusion.pdf

Social Inclusion Through Recreation for Persons with Disabilities, Impact Feature Issue by the Institute on Community Integration and the Research and Training Center on Community Living, at: http://ici.umn.edu/products/impact/162/

A National Movement

The Utah Conservation Corps (UCC) inclusive crew project is part of a larger movement to take proactive steps to include corpsmembers of all abilities. The Minnesota Conservation Corps (MCC) has implemented a program that includes corpsmembers who are deaf and hard of hearing. Operation Fresh Start in Wisconsin has implemented a program to include corpsmembers with mental illness.

Information on these programs is included in the appendices.

The UCC has worked in partnership with The Corps Network to develop the successful model described in this toolkit that will hopefully provide corps throughout the country with the resources and tools necessary to develop similar inclusive programs.

Overview and History of the UCC Inclusive Projects

The UCC inclusive crews have focused on the following two main project areas: 1) accessibility surveys and transition plans for the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service, and 2) the development of an accessible community garden.

Accessibility surveys are a critical first step in the development of transition plans. During the survey, each portion of a structure is compared to accessibility standards or guidelines, and compliance and deficiencies are recorded. Every Forest Service unit in the nation is required by law to have transition plans in place, however, many do not. The UCC inclusive crew has demonstrated that it is an effective partner in addressing this federal mandate and making developed areas on federal lands accessible to users of all abilities.

Since the inception of the UCC's inclusive program, crew members have conducted accessibility surveys on 16 trails and 40 campgrounds. In 2009, the UCC inclusive crew assisted the U.S. Forest Service on the national level in the development of a new accessibility information database that will provide the public with information on accessible campsites, facilities, and services. The accessibility information gathered and entered into the database automatically feeds Forest Service District web portals that are accessed by the public. Conservation Corps throughout the country will now be able to enter accessibility information into the new database in a consistent manner, making the Inclusive Crew program model easily replicable by other corps. Quintin, a UCC crew leader who is blind, worked very closely with database developers to ensure that data entry could be completed by someone who uses a screen reader. Many people with disabilities, such as blindness and mobility impairments, rely on a screen reader to use their computer.

The crew not only surveys accessibility and identifies barriers for trails and campgrounds, they are also an active part of the solution. Inclusive crews are trained in trail maintenance and construction, making it possible for them to remove some barriers while the crew is on-site. For example, sections of trail can be widened, rocks can be removed, and vegetation can be pruned. The UCC crew has worked hand-in-hand with the Cache National Forest to develop ways to make trails and campgrounds more accessible. At Tony Grove Lake, the crew helped install accessible door handles on restrooms

and conducted trail work to remove barriers. Quintin Williams, a UCC inclusive crew member who is blind, is developing an audio interpretive tour of the Logan River nature trail.

In addition to the Cache National Forest in our backyard, the UCC inclusive crew also worked with the Evanston Ranger District, Ogden Ranger District, and Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks. On the Evanston Ranger District, the crew surveyed a trail at Bridger Lake in the Uinta Mountains. The crew's recommendations are being used to make this trail accessible. On the Ogden Ranger District, the crew surveyed Anderson Cove campground at Pineview Reservoir. This is a new campground that was designed to be accessible; however, there is no accessible path to the beach. Swimming and water recreation are the main reasons people visit the Reservoir, so this access is a critical part of the experience. The crew will be working with the Ogden Ranger District designing and assisting in the construction of an accessible trail to the beach.

II. BECOMING AN INCLUSIVE CORPS: STEPS TO BE INCLUSIVE
This section of the toolkit is designed to give national service programs practical, step-by-step guidelines on how to implement the philosophy of inclusion into existing and future projects. Over the course of the past three years, as a participant in The Corps Network Inclusion Project, the UCC has learned many valuable lessons about how to create an inclusive program. This experience has led to the development of a "Model for Inclusion of Corpsmembers with Disabilities". The rest of this section highlights, in detail, how programs can address each component of this model as they take intentional steps to build more inclusive programs. Information about additional resources that national service programs can access to support their inclusion efforts are also provided for each component of the model.

The "Model for Inclusion for Crpsmembers with Disabilities" is divided into two main parts: 1) Pre-Season Program Preparation, and 2) In-

Season Implementation. A flow chart for each part of the Model is presented as a quick reference to the overall process of building an inclusive program, followed by a detailed explanation of each step in the flow charts.

A Model for Inclusion of Corpsmembers with Disabilities:

Pre-Season Program Preparation

1. Organizational Accessibility Self- Assessment

⬇

2. Partners and Projects → **3. Develop Project Schedule**

⬇

4. "Essential Functions" of the Job

⬇

5. Recruitinging and Marketing

⬇

6. Hiring Corpsmembers

⬇

7. Program Modifications and Reasonable Accommodations

⬇

8. Development of Disability Awareness Training

⬇

9. Staff and Crew Leader Training

⬇

10. Pre-Service Meeting
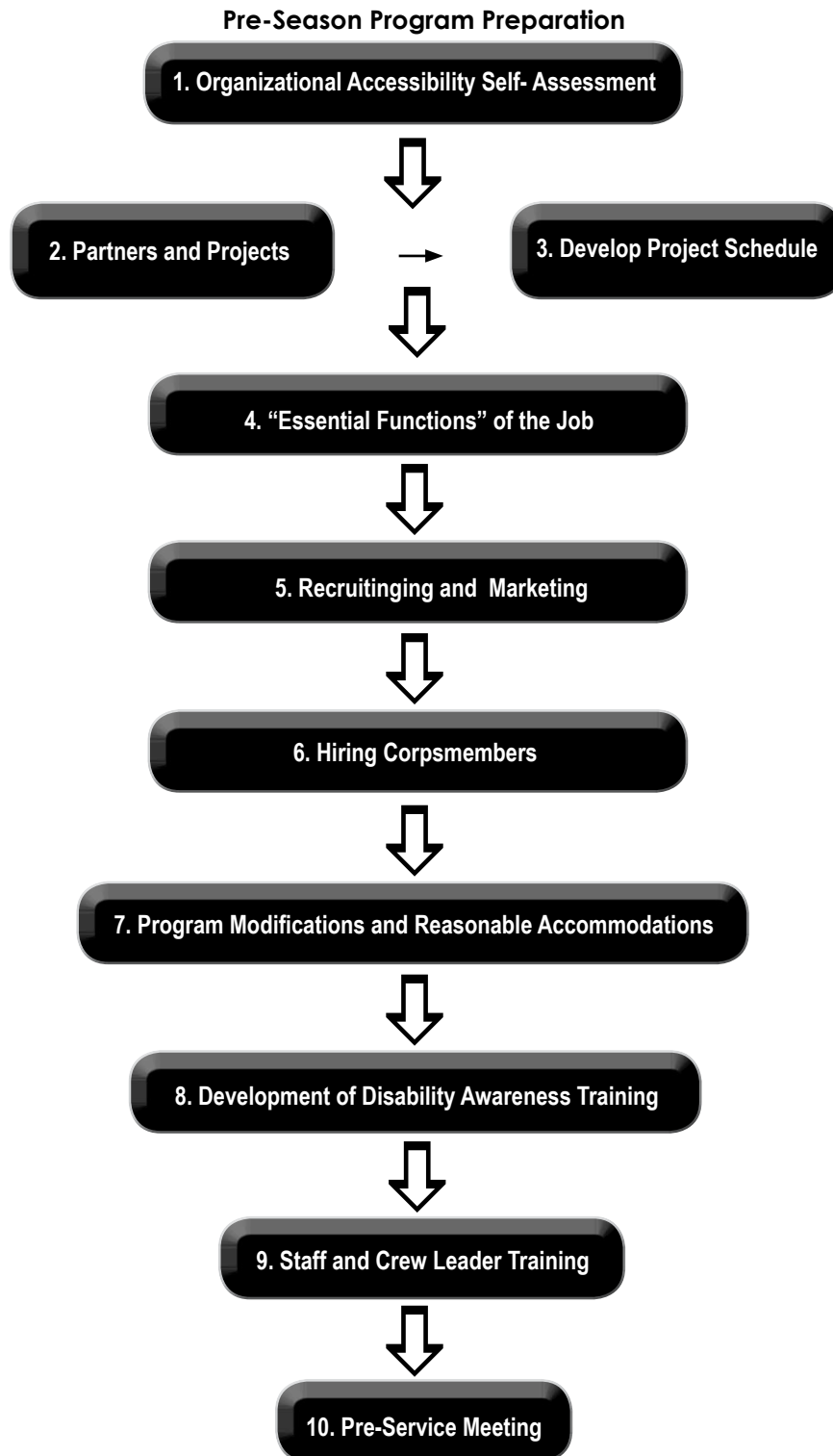
Pre-Season Program Preparation

▶ Step 1: Organizational Accessibility Self-Assessment

Key Points: Use an accessibility self-assessment tool, such as the "Access AmeriCorps Checklist" developed by United Cerebral Palsy (UCP), to determine your organization's current level of accessibility. Assign specific sections of the tool to appropriate staff and set a target date for completion. Review the results with staff and develop an action plan to correct deficiencies. A solid action plan is based on establishing priority areas to address, then identifying specific and manageable tasks that address the priority areas. Next, a reasonable timeline is developed for the completion of each task to keep your organization moving forward.

Helpful Hints:
- Access AmeriCorps Checklist: Determining Accessibility in Your AmeriCorps Programs and Facilities.
www.ucp.org/ucp_generaldoc.cfm/1/6619/6621/6621-6621/1417

More Information:
- Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS) "Inclusion Handbook" Section VI: Access (pages 32-37).
www.serviceandinclusion.org/handbook/inclusion.pdf

- Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation (MEAF) "Paths to Inclusion" Section IV: Where is Inclusion Happening (page 9).
www.meaf.org/docs/PathsToInclusion.pdf

▶ Step 2: Partners and Projects

Key Points: All programs and projects should be as physically accessible as possible and inclusive of the varied abilities of Corpsmembers. Before selecting project sponsors and securing projects, make sure that the sponsor understands that the project must involve active participation from all crew members, regardless of their physical or cognitive abilities. Provide the project sponsor with information on inclusion and disability awareness. Explain to the project sponsor that all Corpsmembers should be able to complete the essential functions of the job and should be held accountable. Schedule a pre-season meeting with the project sponsor and crew to discuss the project goals, accommodations, and individual responsibilities.

Many well-meaning project sponsors assume that if the project is located in an accessible area, it's an accessible project. Although that's a good start, it's not enough. The project goals must include

all crew members. Job carving, or developing new job descriptions based on combining or reorganizing existing job descriptions to better fit the abilities of an individual while still meeting the needs of the project, is a very effective way to include all crew members in project goals (see the example below in the Helpful Hints section). If the project does not utilize the strengths and abilities of all Corpsmembers, we are merely reinforcing old stereotypes that make individuals with disabilities feel like excess baggage rather than a contributing team player. As an inclusive program, the goal is to move beyond outdated stereotypes and embrace the diversity of abilities that different Corpsmembers bring to the project.

Remember, if an inclusive project is to be sustainable, it must address a real and important need for the agency and/or community. The last thing you want to do is create a token inclusive project.

Helpful Hints:
UCC Project Selection:
UCC Projects are selected based upon the following criteria:

❖ Physical accessibility
❖ Project goals can be accomplished by people with varied physical abilities
❖ Adaptive equipment is provided/developed and utilized so that Corpsmembers with physical disabilities can maximize their participation

Job Carving:
Job carving is a way to create a job where certain duties from one or more existing jobs are selected and combined into a new position to better fit the abilities of an individual crew member (http://www. realworkstories.org/glossary). If the project requires crew members with specific physical abilities, such as lifting heavy objects and swinging hand tools, make sure that the crew members who do not have the physical abilities are given equally important alternative responsibilities that contribute to the overall project goal. For example, if the crew is working on an accessible trail project, the members with disabilities can be given the responsibilities of surveying the trail, making recommendations, designing interpretive information and signage in alternative formats, etc., while the members without disabilities can be given the physical responsibilities of trail construction. Throughout the trail construction, crew members with disabilities can provide feedback on grade, width, tread material, etc. In this example, the Corpsmembers with disabilities have a unique and important role that strengthens the project. After all, who better to design accessible trails than trail users with disabilities?

Successful Partnerships:
The U.S. Forest Service has been extremely satisfied with the work the UCC inclusive crew has accomplished. The UCC continues to work with the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest on the development of transition plans for campgrounds and trails and the implementation of many of the suggested changes. The Forest Service National Accessibility Program Manager, Janet Zeller, has given the inclusive crew project her full support and has been instrumental in expanding the program on the national level. In 2009, the UCC inclusive crew partnered with Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks.

The key to the success of these relationships is that the projects are inclusive of Corpsmembers of all abilities and address real and important needs of the partner agencies.

More Information:
More detailed descriptions of inclusive projects and successful partnerships can be found in Appendices A and B.

▶ **Step 3: Develop Project Schedule**

Key Points: Once suitable projects have been determined, a calendar with specific dates and logistics should be developed. For many individuals with disabilities, information about travel and logistics is needed well in advance of the start date so that arrangements can be made for accessible transportation, personal aides, interpreters, etc.

Make sure that your project calendar and all other program information can be made available in alternative formats such as audio, braille, or large print. Disability Resource Centers at local colleges and universities can often assist with making materials available in alternative formats.

For individuals with disabilities, transportation is often the primary barrier to participation in community living and employment. It is a key logistical concern for your program to be aware of. As you consider your project calendar, think ahead about possible transportation needs for Corpsmembers with disabilities. If your program transports field crews to project sites, you will need to make lift-equipped vehicles available to those who need them. If your program does not have funds to purchase or rent an accessible vehicle, you may be able to partner with another agency or non-profit in your local community and share a lift-equipped vehicle. If your program is community-based and does not require travel to field sites, make sure that project locations are accessible using public transportation or call-a-ride services.

Helpful Hints:
In 2007, the Utah Conservation Corps (UCC) rented a lift-equipped van through Wheelchair Getaways, http://www.wheelchair-getaways.com/ or (866) 886-3100. In 2008 and 2009, the UCC rented a state motorpool lift-equipped van through Utah State University where the UCC program is currently located. UCC members were responsible for getting themselves to and from the main office every day, which is located across the street from a bus stop.

More Information:
Section III: Challenges, Opportunities, and Lessons Learned and Section IV: Resources of this toolkit address additional transportation issues and resources in more detail.

▶ **Step 4: Essential Functions of the Job**

Key Points: Including Corpsmembers with disabilities in service programs sometimes requires no modification at all or it may require purchasing a piece of adaptive equipment, hiring an interpreter, or utilizing job coaches. In making decisions about appropriate accommodations, it is important to first develop a position description that outlines the "essential functions" of the job and assess individuals based on their ability to perform the job rather than assumptions about disability.

An "essential function" is a task or service duty that is critical to the position. If it is not performed, then the nature of the position is fundamentally changed. For example, in order for a Corpsmember on a backcountry trail crew to complete the essential functions of the job, they must be able to carry a 50 lb. backpack for up to 10 miles in mountainous terrain, use trail tools such as shovels and pulaskis, and spend long days outside. A Corpsmember conducting accessibility surveys must be able to pay attention to detail, collect and enter data, and camp in a developed campground.

Consideration of Essential Function Guidelines provides the program and participant many benefits, including:

Quality of Experience:
Knowing that they have the necessary skills and behaviors to perform a particular task or duty, with or without accommodations, can provide individuals with a sense of self-worth, heightened esteem, and a realization that they are making legitimate and valued contributions to the organization. This positive affect and sense of accomplishment will also be felt by the others on the crew, individually and as a group,

as they see each person pulling their own weight and contributing to the planned outcomes. Finally, the community as a whole, especially the business and agency partners which involve the Corps crew, will see the contributions of the Inclusive Crew and their value.

Safety:
Knowing that the individual has the necessary skills and behaviors to perform a particular task or duty assures the program manager that the right person is paired with the right task. Risks associated with performing that task are minimized as a result. If an unqualified person attempts a task and fails, the result could be injury to themselves and others. This opens the corps to potential legal liability suits, as well as presents them with a public relations concern.

Meets the Spirit and Intent of the ADA:
The purpose of the ADA is to assure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of their communities. The intent is to assure that these opportunities occur within integrated settings (people with and without disabilities together). It is further assumed that if individuals with disabilities are able to fully access programs and settings in their communities, an increase in social integration will occur as a result. Relationships and friendships between people who have differing abilities can occur if given the chance - the "spirit" of the ADA.

Helpful Hints:
Example Position Description:
Service Position Title: Inclusive Crew Member (full-time summer AmeriCorps position)

Time Commitment and Pay:
- May 26 – August 14, 2010
- $1,240/month AmeriCorps Living Allowance
- $1,250 AmeriCorps Education Award

Immediate Supervisor: Kate Stephens, UCC Assistant Director

Service Position Summary: The Utah Conservation Corps (UCC) is seeking eight crew members of varied physical abilities to serve as AmeriCorps members on the 2010 Inclusive Crew. Crew members will conduct accessibility surveys of trails, campgrounds, and facilities within national parks and forests, and work closely with agencies to develop transition plans and make changes on the ground. Crew members will enter survey data into a U.S. Forest Service database for

use by the agency and the public. The inclusive crew will also design and develop accessible features within the Cache Valley Community Garden and provide community education through public speaking and information dissemination.

Essential Functions:
- Participate in on-site accessibility surveys of developed campgrounds, facilities, and trails within national parks and forests
- Enter accurate survey data into U.S. Forest Service database
- Provide land managers with professional reports and feedback, enabling them to improve disability access on public lands
- Participate in the planning and implementation of an accessible community garden
- Participate in group presentations to community organizations, school groups, land managers, and public officials

Marginal Functions:
- Transport equipment and tools to and from project site
- Conduct trail maintenance to make trails more accessible
- Set up tents
- Cook meals

Principal Working Relationships:
- Work as a team with other crew members with and without disabilities to complete project tasks
- Work in partnership with agency sponsors (National Park Service and Forest Service)

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:
- High School Graduate (minimum)
- Computer skills
- Camping experience
- People skills

Service Conditions: Accessibility surveys will be conducted outdoors and data entry will be performed in an office. Service at the community garden will be performed outdoors.

Physical and Mental Requirements: Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- Be 18 years old or older
- Be able to manage all personal care and mobility
- Work successfully as part of a mixed-ability team
- Be outdoors for extended periods during the summer months
- Be able to use a computer
- Be able to communicate clearly and consistently
- Be able to record accurate information and pay attention to detail
- Travel in lift-equipped van for up to six hours to/from job sites
- Camp overnight with crew

Equipment Used: Smart Tool level*, inclinometer* (measures running slope), scale, camera, GPS unit, roll-a-wheel* (measures longer distances), tape measure*, gardening tools*
*These tools have been adapted so that they are usable by people of all abilities.

The Utah Conservation Corps (UCC) is an equal opportunity employer. Other than completion of marginal functions, the above functions may be completed with or without accommodations. This description lists the minimum duty requirements.

More Information:
- CNCS "Inclusion Handbook" Section III: Inclusive Service Descriptions. www.serviceandinclusion.org/handbook/inclusion.pdf

▶ **Step 5: Recruiting and Marketing**

Key Points: Promotional materials, including website, brochures, and flyers are necessary for recruiting and publicity. If your website is not currently accessible (see www.webaim.org), develop a plan to make it accessible so that program information is available to everyone. Likewise, make sure that any materials your program develops are available in alternative formats upon request.

Here are some general tips to help you get started:
- Make your website accessible! See the "Helpful Hints" section below for a summary of web accessibility principles.

- Include photos of people with disabilities in all marketing/ recruiting materials.

- Make all materials available in alternative formats.

- All materials should enlarge well and have sufficient contrast for individuals with visual impairments.

- Develop position announcements/descriptions in your recruiting material that outline the "Essential Functions" (Step 4) of the job so that expectations are clearly spelled out from the beginning. Remember, Corpsmembers must be able to fulfill the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodations to be hired. Position descriptions should not only state that projects are physically accessible, they should describe what that means. For example, "The first project will take place in Logan Canyon on the Riverside trail, a hardened trail with accessible restroom facilities located at the trailhead. A lift-equipped van will be available for transportation to and from the Utah Conservation Corps main office. Funding is available for reasonable accommodations." This is critical information for individuals with disabilities that will assist them in making a decision about whether or not to apply.

- Make applications available online through an accessible website.

- Include disability-specific information in your recruiting material, such as how national service program benefits impact other disability benefits (See Section III: Challenges, Opportunities, and Lessons Learned) and information on accommodations (adaptive equipment, interpreters, personal assistants, or counselors).

- In addition to your typical recruiting locations, you will also want to recruit through organizations who work with individuals with disabilities. Establish contacts at Independent Living Centers (see www.ilru.org for a list), University Disability Resource Centers (www.ahead.org), and University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (www.aucd.org), adaptive recreation programs and sports teams, schools for the deaf, spinal cord injury rehabilitation programs, etc.

Helpful Hints:
Principles of Accessible Website Design:
Below you will find a list of some key principles of accessible design developed by WebAim, a project of the Center for Persons with Disabilities (http://www.webaim.org/) at Utah State University. Most accessibility principles can be implemented very easily and will not impact the overall "look and feel" of your website.

Provide Appropriate Alternative Text:
Alternative text provides a textual alternative to non-text content in web pages. It is especially helpful for people who are blind and rely on a screen reader to have the content of the website read to them.

Provide Headings for Data Tables:
Tables are used online for layout and to organize data. Tables that are used to organize tabular data should have appropriate table headers (the <th> element). Data cells should be associated with their appropriate headers, making it easier for screen reader users to navigate and understand the data table.

Ensure Users Can Complete and Submit all Forms:
Ensure that every form element (text field, checkbox, dropdown list, etc.) has a label and make sure that label is associated to the correct form element using the <label> tag. Also make sure the user can **submit the form and recover from any errors**, such as the failure to fill in all required fields.

Ensure Links Make Sense Out of Context:
Every link should make sense if the link text is read by itself. Screen reader users may choose to read only the links on a web page. Certain phrases like "click here" and "more" must be avoided.

Caption and/or Provide Transcripts for Media:
Videos and live audio must have captions and a transcript. With archived audio, a transcription may be sufficient.

Ensure Accessibility of Non-HTML Content, Including PDF Files, Microsoft Word Documents, PowerPoint Presentations, and Adobe Flash Content:
In addition to all of the other principles listed here, PDF documents and other non-HTML content must be as accessible as possible. If you cannot make it accessible, consider using HTML instead or, at the very least, provide an accessible alternative. PDF documents should also include a series of tags to make it more accessible. A tagged PDF file looks the same, but it is almost always more accessible to a person using a screen reader.

Allow Users to Skip Repetitive Elements on the Page:
You should provide a method that allows users to skip navigation or other elements that repeat on every page. This is usually accomplished by providing a "Skip to Content," "Skip to Main Content," or "Skip Navigation" link at the top of the page which jumps to the main content of the page.

Do Not Rely on Color Alone to Convey Meaning:
Color can enhance comprehension, but do not use color alone to convey information. That information may not be available to a person who is colorblind and will be unavailable to screen reader users.

Make Sure Content is Clearly Written and Easy to Read:
There are many ways to make your content easier to understand: Write clearly, use easy to read fonts, and use headings and lists appropriately.

Make JavaScript Accessible:
Ensure that JavaScript event handlers are device independent (e.g., they do not require the use of a mouse) and make sure that your page does not rely on JavaScript to function.

Design to Standards:
HTML compliant and accessible pages are more robust and provide better search engine optimization. Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) allow you to separate content from presentation. This provides more flexibility and accessibility of your content.

This list does not present all accessibility issues, but by addressing these basic principles, you will ensure greater accessibility of your web content to everyone. You can learn more about accessibility by browsing the articles and resources at www.webaim.org.

Conclusion:
The web offers so many opportunities to people with disabilities that are unavailable through any other medium. It offers independence and freedom. However, if a website is not created with web accessibility in mind, it may exclude a segment of the population that stands to gain the most from the internet. Most people do not intend to exclude people with disabilities. As organizations and designers become aware of and implement accessibility, they will ensure that their content can be accessed by a broader population.

More Information:
- CNCS "Inclusion Handbook" Section IV: Inclusive Recruitment and Outreach (pages 21-27). http://www.serviceandinclusion. org/handbook/inclusion.pdf

- WebAim http://www.webaim.org/ Information on designing accessible websites.

- National Service Inclusion Project www.serviceandinclusion.org/index.php?page=nsprograms Information on how national service benefits impact other disability benefits.

▶ **Step 6: Hiring Corpsmembers**

Key Points: Develop an interviewing protocol that will help you to be consistent with your interviewing and hiring process, whether an individual has a disability or not. A well-defined protocol will assist you in following the legal requirements for interviewing and hiring individuals with disabilities and avoid any discriminatory practices. The "Inclusion Handbook" (CNCS, 2004) is an excellent resource for more information on this topic. Additional technical assistance in this area is also available through the Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC) and the Job Accommodation Network (JAN). Contact information for these two national organizations is provided on page 27 and in the Resources section of this toolkit.

Remember, establishing clear and accurate descriptions of the "essential functions" of the job for each position you post is a critical first step in your hiring protocol. Also, it is important that you conduct interviews in a fully accessible location and provide reasonable accommodations upon request.

To be considered for a position, an individual with or without a disability must be able to perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation. The three service and conservation programs that have been recently involved in The Corp Network Inclusion Project have developed and tested the following variations of program modification to accommodate individuals with disabilities and create inclusive crews. The Program Modification Decision Tree shows how these program variations were chosen and may be helpful to refer to as you develop your program plan for inclusion.

- Inclusion without Modification: Service and conservation corps programs do not need to be modified to fully include people with disabilities.

- Inclusion with Support Services: Interpreters, counselors, tutors, etc., assist individuals, but programs and projects are not altered.

- Inclusion with Modification: Adaptive equipment or assistive devices such as talking tape measures, vehicle hand controls, screen readers, and adaptive tools, are purchased or developed. Service projects are designed and selected to maximize inclusion of individuals with a variety of physical abilities.

- A job coach will help the crew member with a disability learn the job, perform the job accurately, efficiently, safely, and help

acclimate the individual to the work environment. (See the more detailed discussion of job coaches in Step 7 below).

Program Modification Decision Tree:

1. Can the individual perform the essential functions of the job (with or without accommodation)?
   - ⊕ If yes: Go to question #2
   - ⊖ If no: They are not qualified to be hired for the job

2. Can the individual participate without accommodation?
   - ⊕ If yes: Inclusion without modification (traditional crew) is appropriate
   - ⊖ If no: Go to question #3

3. Can the individual participate with the assistance of an interpreter, counselor, etc. without modifying the program activities?
   - ⊕ If yes: Inclusion with support services is appropriate
   - ⊖ If no: Go to question #4

4. Can the individual participate if adaptive equipment is provided and/or the program activities are modified to accommodate physical disabilities?
   - ⊕ If yes: Inclusion with program modification/adaptive equipment is appropriate
   - ⊖ If no: Go to question #5

5. Can the individual serve if paired with a supportive, trained job coach?
   - ⊕ If yes: Inclusion through the use of job coaches is appropriate
   - ⊖ If no: This may not be an appropriate position for the individual; refer back to question #1

Helpful Hints:

Hiring the right individuals to be crew leaders is essential to developing successful crews and having a productive season. Below are some additional points to consider when hiring crew leaders for an inclusive crew.

The following leadership qualities and traits are traditionally discussed and explored in UCC Crew Leader Training...

Leadership Qualities:
- Decision-making ability (sometimes unpopular decisions)

- Knowledge of own strengths and weaknesses (know and develop yourself)

- Selflessness

A successful service or conservation corps crew leader:

- Has strong communication skills
- Facilitates positive group dynamics
- Provides valuable feedback
- Recognizes problems and safety issues
- Is resourceful
- Gains the confidence of crew members
- Leads without dominating
- Exercises good judgment
- Uses time efficiently
- Is dependable
- Is patient
- Is cooperative
- Is reliable
- Has a positive attitude
- Is organized
- Is able to delegate

In addition, a successful crew leader of an inclusive crew must develop the following skills:

Open Mindedness: The leader of an inclusive crew must treat their crew members equally and be open to working with a diversity of abilities. They must be open to developing non-traditional ways of accomplishing goals.

Awareness/Knowledge of Specific Disabilities: The leader of an inclusive crew must have a basic understanding of common disabilities so that they can appropriately assign tasks and accommodate members.

Awareness of Community Resources: It is important that the leader of an inclusive crew is familiar with community resources for people with disabilities. For example, the Utah Conservation Corps inclusive crew partnered with the Utah State University Center for Persons with Disabilities Assistive Technology Lab to develop adaptive tools and equipment; the Utah State University Disability Resource Center to create audio copies of course materials; Options for Independence, the local independent living center, to obtain contact information for personal aides and interpreters; and the Utah State Commission on Volunteers to provide funding for reasonable accommodations.

Ability to Adapt Tools and Equipment: Crew leaders of inclusive crews should be familiar with existing adaptive equipment and resources available to develop new adaptive equipment and tools.

Ability to Communicate Openly: An inclusive crew leader must be able to create a safe space within which all voices are heard and members of all abilities feel comfortable openly communicating their needs. If an accommodation is needed or a task is not appropriate, crew members should be comfortable discussing this with their crew leader and adapting the situation.

Ability to Assess Abilities and Delegate Tasks: The inclusive crew leader must be able to assess the skills and strengths of individual members and assign tasks that crew members can successfully accomplish with or without reasonable accommodation. Project goals are broken into tasks that fit individual abilities. All tasks must be meaningful contributions rather than just "busy work."

Values Non-Physical Contributions: The crew leader of a mixed-ability inclusive crew must emphasize the value of non-physical as well as physical contributions. It is important that the crew leader facilitates an environment in which every crew member plays an active role in accomplishing the goals of the project.

Ability to be Flexible: Crew leaders of mixed-ability inclusive crews must be flexible and open to trying things in a new and creative way.

Ability to Identify and Facilitate Symbiotic Relationships Among Members: Leaders of mixed-ability inclusive crews should encourage mutually beneficial relationships. For example, a UCC member who was blind worked with a member who used a wheelchair. The wheelchair user served as a guide for the blind Corpsmember and the blind Corpsmember pushed the chair when necessary. It was a mutually beneficial relationship that enabled them to get the job done.

More Information:
- More detailed descriptions of the different levels of program modification listed in Figure 2 can be found in the individual project descriptions in Appendices A and B of this toolkit.

- **CNCS** "Inclusion Handbook" Section V: Inclusive Interviewing and Service Selection (page 28-31) and Section XII: Legal Requirements (page 61-68). www. www.serviceandinclusion.org/handbook/inclusion.pdf

- **DBTAC** www.adata.org or (800) 949-4232.

- **JAN** http://www.jan.wvu.edu/ or (800) 526-7234.

▶ **Step 7: Program Modifications and Reasonable Accommodations**

Key Points: A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adaptation that enables a qualified person with a disability to perform the essential functions of the job. Modifications and adaptations can occur at the program level, as described in Step 6, and/or they can take place at the individual level. When providing reasonable accommodations at the individual level, it is important to remember that the needs of each person are unique and an accommodation that works for one person may not be appropriate for an individual that has the same or similar type of disability. If possible, it is best to determine and acquire the needed resources to provide reasonable accommodations before the project start date so that newly hired corpsmembers with disabilities can start their job on day one with the rest of the crew.

Funding for reasonable accommodations is available in each state through the State Commission on National and Community Service. The Utah Conservation Corps (UCC) was able to cover the cost of a trail wheelchair, voice recognition computer software, a personal aid, and rental of a lift-equipped van with funds available through the Utah Commission on Volunteers. The Minnesota Conservation Corps covered the cost of hiring interpreters through the Minnesota State Commission's reasonable accommodation funds.

Additionally, the UCC has developed several pieces of adaptive equipment for their accessibility survey and community garden projects that can be made available to other service and conservation corps programs upon request for a nominal fee. More information and detailed descriptions with illustrations of these pieces of adaptive equipment can be found in Appendix B.

Because reasonable accommodations at the individual level are unique and specific to the person, a list of general accommodations, based on disability type, is not always helpful. The individual with a disability who is requesting a reasonable accommodation is the expert on what they need and should be the first source of information in this area. However, there are several national and local organizations that can provide additional technical assistance in this area if you are unsure of how to proceed after consulting with the individual requesting the accommodation. These include JAN, DBTAC, the National Service Inclusion Project, and local Centers for Independent Living. Contact information for these resources is listed in the "More Information" section below. In the "Helpful Hints" section you will find some broad examples of accommodations by categories that are based largely on the actual experiences of the UCC.

Helpful Hints:

Adaptive Equipment:

The Utah Conservation Corps has developed and acquired several pieces of adaptive equipment that enable Corpsmembers with disabilities to participate in programs more fully and independently. For example, a trail wheelchair with knobby tires is used by a Corpsmember with a spinal cord injury to access rugged areas that are technically inaccessible and voice recognition computer software (Dragon Naturally Speaking) is used by a Corpsmember who is blind to enter trail data. Many reasonable accommodations are simple and inexpensive, requiring only creativity. When conducting trail surveys, a UCC member who has limited use of his hands, simply attaches an inclinometer to his helmet with Velcro and duct tape to measure the slope of trails and pathways. This UCC member also uses an adapted gardening trowel with a bent blade and padded handle. Once reasonable accommodations have been identified and equipment has been developed or purchased, it is important that all members are given training on proper equipment use and maintenance.

Transportation:

For people with disabilities, transportation is often the primary barrier to participation in community life and employment. If your program transports field crews to project sites, you will need to make lift-equipped vehicles available to those who need them (see the Transportation heading in Section III. Challenges, Opportunities, and Lessons Learned for more information about arranging accessible transportation).

Personal Aides:

An aid or paid staff who is hired to assist with dressing, bathroom transfers, personal care needs, etc., is sometimes needed by individuals with physical disabilities, especially when overnight camping. If Corpsmembers are working together as a crew, it is inappropriate to require them to assist their fellow crew members with disabilities with dressing, bathroom needs, etc. This does not respect the dignity of each individual and can make people with disabilities feel out of control of their own life and independence. On the other hand, if a personal aid is on-site and available, the individual with a disability does not have to be placed in the awkward position of asking their friends for assistance. When hiring a personal aid, it is best to involve the individuals who will be utilizing this service in the interview and hiring process. The person who uses an aid may want to hire someone they have hired in the past.

Interpreters:

If your program works with individuals who are deaf or have hearing impairments, it may be necessary to hire a sign language interpreter.

Detailed information and resources about accommodations for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can be found in the Resources section and in the example of Inclusive Crews Partnering with Land Management Agencies in Appendix A.

Job Coaches:
A job coach is a person who provides specialized on-site training to an employee who is disabled. Individuals with intellectual or cognitive disabilities are the most likely to utilize job coaching as an accommodation. Typically, a job coach will help the employee with a disability learn the job, perform the job accurately, efficiently, and safely, and may also help acclimate the employee to the work environment. The best place to find out about job coaching resources is your local or state vocational rehabilitation agency.

(Adapted from: Job Accommodation Network [JAN] http://www.jan.wvu.edu/cgi-win/OrgQuery.exe?Sol547)

More Information:

- Program examples of accommodations from Utah Conservation Corps, Minnesota Conservation Corps, and Operation Fresh Start are located in Appendix A.

- CNCS "Inclusion Handbook" Section VII: Accommodations (pages 38-42). www.serviceandinclusion.org/handbook/inclusion.pdf

- JAN - Technical Assistance around accommodation issues and job coaches http://www.jan.wvu.edu/ or (800) 526-7234.

- DBTAC - Technical assistance around accommodation issues www.adata.org, or (800) 949-4232.

- Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU) - Directory of Centers for Independent Living who can provide information on local accommodation resources http://www.bcm.edu/ilru/

- Reasonable Accommodations for People with Psychiatric Disabilities http://www.bu.edu/cpr/reasaccom/

- Working Effectively with People who are Blind or Visually Impaired www.uatpat.org/resources/empoyment_sheets/blind.pdf

▶ **Step 8: Development of Disability Awareness Training**

Key Points: Developing training around disability awareness is an important step toward building a culture of inclusion. It is an

opportunity to be proactive in addressing negative or uninformed attitudes around disability, which are often more difficult barriers to address than those related to physical access to programs and projects. As people gain more awareness of disability issues, outdated stereotypes and attitudinal barriers begin to disappear. A general disability awareness training presentation, developed by the UCC and the Center for Persons with Disabilities, is included in this toolkit in Appendix B. We would encourage you to use this training in its entirety or as a foundation for the training you may wish to develop for your specific program. You are welcome to adapt the training materials to better meet the needs of your program.

If you prefer to develop your own disability awareness training, consider including at least the following topics in that training:
- History of Disability Rights Movement
- Core Precepts of Disability Policy
- People First Language
- Disability Etiquette
- Inclusion Strategies

When developing training, make sure that all activities are adapted to include corpsmembers with disabilities. Examples of how to do this are provided in Step 9.

Helpful Hints:
In the past, some organizations have conducted "Disability Simulations" as part of their awareness training. Before proceeding with a simulation event, please consider the points made in the following article from the National Service Inclusion Project (NSIP):

Disability Awareness: Beyond the Day:
Sometimes national service and disability organizations use "disability awareness days" to teach service members and volunteers about the disability experience. These days may use simulations to convey what it's like to live with a disability. Participants are blindfolded, for example, or put into a wheelchair and told not to use their legs. However, many disability advocates feel that simulations are the wrong way to go.

What's Wrong with Simulations?

- Simulations are unrealistic. A person who's been blind for 25 years has the coping skills to handle their environment, but a sighted person who is blindfolded doesn't have those skills. This gives participants a false idea of what it's like to live with a disability. In fact, some find the simulated experience terrifying,

which can lead to pity or other stereotypes about people with disabilities.

- Simulations promote pity or "superperson" stereotypes. Stuck in a situation they haven't learned how to handle, participants may react with amazement that people with disabilities can accomplish everyday tasks: To think you can drive without using your arms! On the other hand, simulations can evoke pity. Participants may find the experience so unpleasant that it makes them think that life with a disability is miserable. A Joliet, Ilinois high school student reported, "At the end of the day, I took off the blindfold. I was so grateful because so many people do not have the option of taking off the blindfold."

When a person with a disability is seen as helpless, barriers go up in the minds of the people around them. People with disabilities want to be included in their communities and be treated like anyone else–with dignity and respect. In reality, people with disabilities do everything others do, just differently.

Bottom line: National service organizations should sensitize participants to the disability experience, but there are better ways to do it.

Better Ideas
The key to increasing understanding is to have people see what it's like to have a disability first-hand -- from people in the disability community, not a blindfold.

- Read books and magazines written by people with disabilities. These publications give a uniquely "for us/by us" perspective. Magazines include Ragged Edge, Mouth, and Braille Monitor. For books, check out the recommended reading list at the end of this brief.

- Invite people with disabilities to talk to service groups. Ask persons who have had a disability from birth or a longtime disability to speak about their experiences. Encourage service members to ask questions.

- Include people with disabilities as service members, volunteer leaders, and employees. More likely than not, you already do! Organizations benefit from everyone's contributions. Having people with disabilities in your organization helps everyone keep the disability perspective in mind.

- Learn about disability culture. Yes, there is such a thing! The history of the disability rights movement, how people with disabilities have been viewed and treated over time, civil rights

laws, heroes such as Ed Roberts, Gini Laurie (grandmother of the Independent Living Movement), and Justin Dart (father of the Americans with Disabilities Act). The disability community has a rich and illuminating history. Some websites to start with:

- o Disability Social History Project: www.disabilityhistory.org

- o Society for Disability Studies: www.disstudies.org/

- o Disability History Museum: www.disabilitymuseum.org

- Attend meetings of disability consumer groups, where people with disabilities take leadership roles. Nothing illustrates the "independent living" philosophy like a group of people who live it.

These experiences send service members the message that despite a disability, a person can cope, learn, and contribute to society. Attitude change doesn't happen overnight, but these doses of real-life experience can open doors for service members. (NSIP, 2009).

Article available at:
www.serviceandinclusion.org/index.php?page=simulations

More Information:
- The UCC Disability Awareness training materials and the "Creating an Inclusive Service Program" DVD with discussion questions are included with this toolkit. Electronic copies of the PowerPoint slides are available. To obtain copies, email kate.stephens@usu.edu.

- Check with your local disability related organizations, such as centers for independent living (www.ilru.org), university affiliated centers (www.aucd.org), disability resource centers (www.ahead.org) or others regarding disability awareness training that they may have available. Often local disability related organizations will provide training designed to meet your needs free of charge.

▶ **Step 9: Staff and Crew Leader Training**

Key Points: It is important to provide disability awareness training to permanent program staff and project leaders prior to the arrival of new corpsmembers. This will help them to be more aware of issues to consider as they welcome new corpsmembers who may have a disability. Receiving training prior to the start of the project year will also allow staff and project leaders to be prepared to assist with

providing a similar training to new Corpsmembers at the start of the project (See the "In-Season Implementation" section below).

The UCC crew leaders, who led the inclusive crew, spent time before the field season preparing for inclusive crew projects. They also received additional training on accessibility surveys, data reports, accessible gardening, and job carving. Crew leaders for the inclusive crew must possess the same leadership skills as other crew leaders and also have a desire to lead mixed-ability crews. One of the most important project goals is to involve people with disabilities in positions of leadership whenever possible. By placing qualified people with disabilities in positions of leadership, outdated stereotypes are lifted and attitudes toward people with disabilities evolve and change in fundamental ways.

Helpful Hints:
As you prepare to offer your disability awareness training, here are some additional tips to consider to help make your training not only about accessibility and inclusion, but an actual practical demonstration of these concepts.

"Tips for Presenting in Audiences with People with Disabilities"
Taken from (CNCS, 2004, Appendix C).

The following are some tips to ensure that your presentation is accessible to everyone in your audience. Remember that everyone in your audience is there because your workshop has value to them. Everyone should have access to all of the information, comments, and questions that are part of a good workshop.

1. Before you begin, make sure that everyone has the accommodations they need: Are the listening systems working? Is large print/Braille available? Can everyone see the interpreters?

2. Face the audience.

3. Keep your mouth and face free of obstructions such as hands, microphone, and papers.

4. If you tend to speak quickly or softly, please slow down and speak up. There is a short delay when using interpreters or captioners.

5. If you are using visual aids – PowerPoint, flip charts, slides – take a moment to describe the visual message, e.g., "This

chart compares the number of apples to the number of oranges." "There is a flower in the upper-right-hand corner."

6. Use "people-first" language, e.g., "people with disabilities," or "people with developmental disabilities."

7. If someone who is speech-impaired is speaking, wait calmly for him or her to finish. Do not interrupt them. If you do not understand them, ask them to repeat their statement or question. If you still do not understand, restate what you did understand, and ask for more information.

8. If interpreters are being used, face the person using the interpreter, not the interpreter.

9. If someone has a personal attendant, address him or her, not the attendant.

10. Restate questions before answering.

More Information:
- CNCS "Inclusion Handbook" Appendix C www.serviceandinclusion.org/handbook/inclusion.pdf

- UCC - Disability Awareness Training in Appendix B

▶ **Step 10: Pre-Service Meeting**

Key Points: Because there are often more logistics and adaptive equipment involved with an inclusive program, it is beneficial to have the entire crew meet before the start of the field season to discuss project goals, job carving (determining who is responsible for specific tasks), program modifications and adaptations, transportation, and camping equipment. If these questions and concerns can be addressed before the start of the season, the crew will be much more organized and efficient during the first project week.

Helpful Hints:
It is the crew leader's responsibility to facilitate the pre-service meeting. The following checklist can be used to organize the meeting. If the crew leader does not have sufficient information about the following topics, they should contact program staff for further information and clarification.

Pre-Service Meeting Checklist:

Before Your Pre-Project Meeting:

- Obtain pre-project information sheets, summer project calendar, weekly report forms, accessibility conditions survey forms, time sheets, and accident/incident report forms.

- Gather information on the area in which you will be working: maps, hospital locations, emergency contacts, facility descriptions.

- Review tools and equipment. Make sure that they are in good repair and all crew members know how to properly use them. Demonstrate adaptive equipment options.

- Obtain information on job carving.

- Develop an itinerary for each project with departure/arrival time, meeting times with project sponsor, etc.

- Formulate alternative plans in case of weather, transportation difficulties, or medical issues.

- Have menu planning information. (recipe ideas or cookbooks).

- Plan your safety talk: consider the type of work, equipment, and the location of the project.

- Plan to distribute copies of:

    - Summer Project Calendar

    - Pre-Project Info Sheets

    - Gear List

    - Adaptive Equipment Information and Resources

    - Bus Schedule (if needed)

    - Information on Support Services: Personal Aides, Interpreters and Counselors

    - Recipes

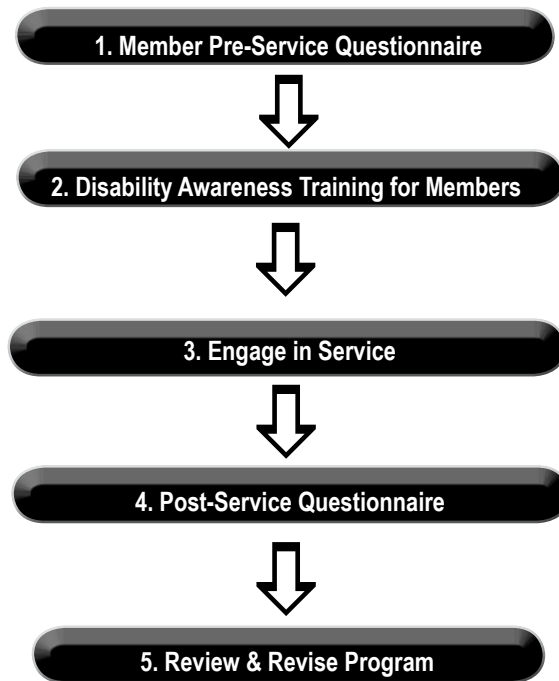   - LNT Principles (specific to project site)

- ■ Time Sheets

- ■ Incident Report Forms

- Outline your meeting!

During Your Pre-Service Meeting:

- Open the meeting with a simple icebreaker or team building activity such as "Fear-In-a-Hat".

- Distribute and discuss project information, summer calendar, and gear list. Work through the project information sheets and itineraries with crew members. Explain clothing, gear, and equipment they must bring. Inform members about campground and bathroom facilities. Discuss expectations, physical exertion levels, weather, and safety considerations.

- Show your crew where you are going on a map.

- Discuss the emergency response plan.

- Discuss job carving and assign individual responsibilities.

- Discuss accommodations and adaptive equipment. Make sure that all crew members have appropriate accommodations before the start date.

- Remind members about the zero tolerance drug and alcohol policy.

- Distribute Leave-No-Trace information specific to the project location. Some crew members may not have much wilderness experience and what may seem obvious to you may need to be explained.

- Distribute recipes and discuss menu planning and cooking for a crew.

- If you're planning a multi-week project, make suggestions for weekend excursions close to the project site.

- Distribute and discuss time sheets and incident report forms.

In-Season Implementation

> **1. Member Pre-Service Questionnaire**
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> ⬇
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> **2. Disability Awareness Training for Members**
>
> ⬇
>
> **3. Engage in Service**
>
> ⬇
>
> **4. Post-Service Questionnaire**
>
> ⬇
>
> **5. Review & Revise Program**

<u>In-Season Implementation</u>

▶ Step 1: Member Pre-Service Questionnaire

Key Points: On the first day of training, a pre-service questionnaire is conducted that pertains to skill development, personal development, disability awareness, and environmental awareness (see Appendix B). The same questionnaire is conducted on the final day of service. If a Corpsmember is unable to complete the written questionnaire due to their disability, they can either team up with a peer or use a computer with voice recognition software. The pre-and post-service responses are compared and used to assess whether or nor inclusion is happening. They are also used to measure personal development and skill development.

▶ Step 2: Disability Awareness Training for Members

Key Points: This training can be the same or similar to the training provided to staff and crew leaders prior to the start of the season. Disability awareness training is an important part of creating an inclusive program and environment. This program is a great first step in overcoming any concerns, negative attitudes, and stereotypes that other program member may have regarding working with people who

have disabilities. Don't overlook the importance of disability awareness training. When asked to work alongside people with disabilities for the first time, many Corpsmembers were initially uncomfortable. Negative attitudes and misconceptions about people with disabilities were most often the result of lack of awareness rather than malice or apathy. Take adequate time to discuss the issues and have Corpsmembers with disabilities present and facilitate discussion.

This training, included in Appendix B of this toolkit, is designed to provide a broad overview of key disability issues and to increase knowledge and awareness of:

- Common Myths and Facts about Individuals with Disabilities

- History of Disability Rights Movement

- The Old and New Paradigm of Disability

- People-First Language

- Different Disabilities

- Disability Etiquette

Please adapt the training materials to meet the needs of your program. There is enough information in this training to spend approximately two hours to present and discuss. These materials are intended to serve as a starting point for disability awareness training in your organization. However, you may already have access to a similar training or be able to work with a local disability-related organization to develop your own training materials. In that case, we would encourage you to use the training that best meets your program's unique needs.

Helpful Hints:
This training should be held in a fully accessible location. If the training is held outside of your main office, visit the location ahead of time and go through the facilities using a wheelchair (if possible). Use the closed fist test on all door handles, sinks, etc., to determine if they are usable by people with limited manual dexterity or grip. All hand-outs and training materials must be available in alternative formats (audio, Braille, large print) upon request. If necessary, hire a sign language interpreter. You can search for a local interpreter agency at www.rid.org or contact your local center for independent living (www.ilru.org).

More Information:
- UCC - Disability Awareness Training in Appendix B of this toolkit.

► **Step 3: Engage in Service**

Skill Development:

Key Points: As with all service crews, Corpsmembers serving on the inclusive crew develop a number of both general and specific skills during their term of service. Some of the skills that inclusive crew members develop during their term of service with the UCC include the following:

- Ability to use Global Positioning System (GPS) units

- Ability to use survey tools such as a Smart Tool level, inclinometer, roll-a-wheel, and talking tape measure

- Ability to collect accurate data in the field

- Ability to enter data into U.S. Forest Service database

- Ability to use Google Earth to map survey sites

- Knowledge of the Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines (FSORAG)

- Knowledge and understanding of disability legislation

- Knowledge and understanding of land management issues

- Knowledge and understanding of sustainable lifestyle choices

- Ability to organize and conduct community garden workshops on topics such as organic vegetable gardening and drought tolerant plants

- Knowledge and understanding of adaptive equipment design and construction

- Knowledge and understanding of raised garden bed design and construction

Personal Development:

Key Points: One of the goals of the UCC's inclusive crew project is to support the personal development of individual Corpsmembers. UCC Corpsmembers are intentionally provided with opportunities to develop in the following areas:
- Ability to work as part of a team with a diverse group of people
- Leadership
- Organization

- Time Management
- Independence
- Self-Confidence
- Accountability

Individualized Goal Planning:

Key Points: All UCC AmeriCorps members complete an individual goal plan during training (see Appendix C). If a Corpsmember is unable to complete the written goal plan due to their disability (i.e. limited manual dexterity or a visual impairment), they can either team up with a peer or use a computer with voice recognition software. This goal plan is used to set clear goals in relation to skill development and personal development. These goals are communicated to the crew so that peers can support each other in accomplishing individual goals. The individual goal plan is referred to during the mid-term evaluation and end-of-service evaluation. Progress is noted by crew leaders and staff.

Member Evaluations:

Key Points: All UCC AmeriCorps members receive mid-term and end-of-service evaluations (see Appendix C). These evaluations are completed by crew leaders and UCC staff. Mid-season, the crew leader and staff member (crew supervisor or program staff) meet with the Corpsmember one-on-one and discuss their progress toward accomplishing goals, skill development and personal development. After discussing the evaluation, Corpsmembers and staff sign and date the evaluation form. These forms are kept on file and can be referred to when employment references are requested.

Program Evaluations:

Key Points: On the final day of service, all UCC Corpsmembers complete an evaluation of the program (see Appendix B). These evaluations are carefully reviewed, and member feedback is used to make program improvements.

▶ Step 4: Post-Service Questionnaire

Pre- and Post-Service Questionnaire:
On the first day of training, a pre-service questionnaire is conducted that pertains to skill development, personal development, disability awareness, and environmental awareness (see Appendix B). The same questionnaire is conducted on the final day of service. If a

Corpsmember is unable to complete the written questionnaire due to their disability, they can either team up with a peer or use a computer with voice recognition software.

▶ Step 5: Review and Revise Program

__Annual Review and Revision of Program:__

Key Points: In the fall, after the summer season is complete and thoughts are still fresh, the UCC program and administrative staff hold a retreat to review member evaluations, discuss lessons learned, and review risk management policies. Program revisions are made, goals are developed, and an action plan for the upcoming year is put into place.

Inclusion Advisory Group: An advisory group made up of representatives of the disability community is assembled annually to review the inclusion plan and inclusive elements of the program. This group meets in the fall after the UCC staff retreat. The inclusion advisory group includes representatives from OPTIONS for Independence independent living center, the Utah State University Disability Resource Center, Utah State University Center for Persons with Disabilities, Common Ground Outdoor Adventures, and the Utah Assistive Technology Program.

Helpful Hints:
Below are some examples of indicators that the UCC looks to when considering how inclusive their programs truly are.

Indicators of Inclusion:

- **Each crew member has a valuable role on the crew and contributes in a significant way to project goals.**
  This project was selected and designed to include crew members with disabilities in a meaningful way. Crew members with disabilities provided the crew with a valuable perspective that was needed to collect accurate data and develop transition plans. Crew members with disabilities were an asset to the crew. Because they could speak from the perspective of users with disabilities, their opinions and ideas were essential to the success of the project.

- **Friendships extend beyond the work day.**
  The Access to Service inclusive crew leaders created opportunities for recreation and social activities while out on projects and beyond the work day. Crew members enjoyed each other and chose to spend time together outside of work. There was a lot of laughter.

- **The crew relies on individual members and holds each member accountable.**
When inclusion happens, people with disabilities are not just along for the ride. Jamie Maestro, Access to Service inclusive crew leader, did an excellent job assigning project tasks to individual members who had the necessary skills and (to successfully complete them. Once tasks were assigned and responsibilities were understood, she held crew members accountable for their completion. If crew members are not held accountable, it becomes apparent that their work is not truly valuable and necessary to the success of the project.

- **People with disabilities hold leadership positions.**
When inclusion happens, people with disabilities are represented at all levels of the organization. Andy Zimmer served as a crew leader on this project. In addition to being a natural leader, he has a C6 spinal cord injury and uses a wheelchair. Andy was an outstanding role model and leader to both crew members with disabilities and those without. Quintin Williams, who is blind, served as a crew leader in 2009.

- **Projects were meaningful and important to the community.**
The Access to Service inclusive projects were not just "special" add-on projects. The work completed by the crew had a direct impact on the decisions made by the Forest Service. The Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest is very invested in the work of this crew, and has come to rely upon them as advisors on accessibility.

In addition, the crew secured funding to design and construct accessible garden plots within the new Cache Valley Community Garden. Taking ownership of a project and completing it from start to finish is a valuable accomplishment.

III. CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND LESSONS LEARNED

Lessons Learned – Utah and Minnesota Conservation Corps

Trying to do something new or better than you've done before will always teach you new things. Some lessons require small tweaks to the current model in order to improve the experience offered to members. Other lessons are larger and require programmatic change.

Lesson 1 – Integrate Inclusive and Traditional Crews

Integrate the inclusive crew with traditional crews to the greatest extent possible. It is best if all crews can share start and end dates in order to complete the same orientation and training. Rotate members onto the inclusive crew frequently. Try to avoid creating a stand alone "special" crew…this is not inclusion. However, if the project is highly technical with a lengthy training process, it may be more efficient not to rotate the crew.

During a roundtable discussion with representatives from The Corps Network, MCC youth, and MCC staff, the concept of inclusion was at the forefront. The discussion started and there seemed to be some confusion as to what an inclusive crew was, because at MCC the "inclusive crews" were so ingrained into the culture of the program. Youth really felt like all crews were inclusive because all crews had members with different abilities. There is a theoretical discussion that could be largely based on two questions, "What is an inclusive crew?" and "How does labeling a crew as inclusive affect how it is perceived?" The questions have not yet been fully answered, but some of the following actions are clear. When you act to be inclusive of individuals with disabilities, you really are looking

for ways to make the program better and more accessible for everyone regardless of their ability.

Lesson 2 – Training

Don't overlook the importance of disability awareness training. When asked to work alongside people with disabilities, many Corpsmembers were initially uncomfortable. Negative attitudes and misconceptions about people with disabilities were most often the result of lack of awareness rather than malice or apathy. Disability awareness training was a very necessary first step in overcoming negative attitudes and stereotypes. Take adequate time to discuss the issues and have Corpsmembers with disabilities present and facilitate discussion.

Lesson 3 – SurveyForms and Equipment

If your inclusive crew is conducting accessibility surveys, they should have data collection forms and adaptive equipment organized and ready to go at the start of the season. People with disabilities should have accommodations developed and purchased to the greatest extent possible before the project begins so that they can "hit the ground running" with their crew. Stay organized with equipment checklists and inventory tools and equipment regularly.

Lesson 4 – Website Accessibility

Web accessibility means making your website usable for individuals with all kinds of disabilities. Accessible websites are readable by people with screen readers, provide captioning and a transcript for multimedia content, and alternative text for photographs and graphics. PDF, Adobe Flash, PowerPoint, and other non-HTML documents should be accessible or provided in an accessible format. Color should not be used alone to convey meaning. Content should be clearly written and easy to understand. For more information and assistance, visit www.webaim.org.

Lesson 5 – Member Participation

When developing long and short-term project goals, carefully consider individual strengths and abilities and how each person can contribute in a meaningful way. Project goals should be designed to benefit from the varying physical and non-physical abilities of crew members. If at all possible, determine and develop and/or purchase any needed appropriate accommodations pre-season so the crew can be ready to go when the field season begins.

Lesson 6 – Deaf Culture

One lesson learned involved a youth returning for a second summer with Minnesota Conservation Corps. The youth wanted to be on the Wilderness Crew and knew she would be the only person who was deaf. While this individual was very successful and served as a role model for first-year youth, it was very difficult for her on the crew. Basically, there was no one on the crew with whom she shared her culture. Even interpreters are from a hearing culture. If a youth wanted to do something similar in the future, MCC would recognize that it's in everyone's best interest to have more than one individual who is deaf on a crew.

Lesson 7 – Member Accountability

Don't "baby" people…give everyone the chance to put themselves out there and take chances. Treat all crew members with disabilities as you do everyone else. Require that they meet the same standards and expectations.

Lesson 8 – Conduct an Organizational Self-Assessment and Implement an Action Plan

Your organizational self-assessment should be comprehensive and form the basis of your action plan with steps needed to improve accessibility and inclusion (this is Step 1 in Pre-Season Implementation). Your self-assessment and action plan should cover all aspects of the organization, including the built environment, programs, hiring process, transportation, staff and board composition, project partners, etc. It's important to place people with disabilities in positions of leadership and responsibility within your organization (see Appendix C for more information on The Access AmeriCorps Checklist, page 67).

Lesson 9 – Clear, Constructive Communication is Key!

Check in regularly with individual members, making sure that feelings are respected, appropriate accommodations have been made, and everyone understands daily project goals and individual responsibilities.

Lesson 10 – Inclusion and Member Experience

The last lesson continues to be learned year after year by the youth and summer staff. People at MCC and UCC have great summers not in spite of inclusion, but because of inclusion.

Disability Benefits and AmeriCorps

SSDI and SSI

VISTA member benefits generally do not affect social security government benefits, but for all other types of AmeriCorps members (state, national, education award, and promise fellows), there is a possibility that Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) may be negatively impacted. The AmeriCorps living allowance is counted as earned income for SSDI. The AmeriCorps living allowance, health insurance, and child care subsidy are not counted as earned income for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and does not affect eligibility.

There is a risk that the AmeriCorps living allowance will result in a determination by Social Security that the individual was engaged in substantial gainful activity and therefore considered as no longer disabled. This risk can be decreased by taking advantage of SSDI work incentive options and income exclusions, and working with a benefits planner. Benefits planning services are free to all social security beneficiaries with disabilities. Local benefits planning services can be found at the following website: http://www.ssa.gov/work/ServiceProviders/BPAO Directory.html.

In addition to work incentives available to all beneficiaries, the student earned income exclusion was recently extended for AmeriCorps members under the age of 22 who are not married or head of a household, and the AmeriCorps education award was excluded from countable income to the extent it is used to pay tuition fees and other educational expenses, not including room and board, and repaying student loans. More information is available at these websites: www.socialsecurity.gov/work/youth.html or www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/eng/main.htm or by calling the Social Security office at 800-772-1213.

Medical Assistance (MA)

Even if they have other health coverage, people with disabilities may need MA to cover high prescription drug costs and special health expenses such as personal care assistants. Persons on SSI can receive MA at no cost. Other people with disabilities may qualify for the Medical Assistance for Employed Persons with Disabilities (MA-EPD) program, which provides MA coverage for a monthly premium, based on income. As long as FICA taxes are withheld, the AmeriCorps living allowance is counted as earned income, thereby allowing AmeriCorps members with disabilities to meet the work requirement for MA-EPD.

Food Stamps

The AmeriCorps living allowance does not affect eligibility for Food Stamps.
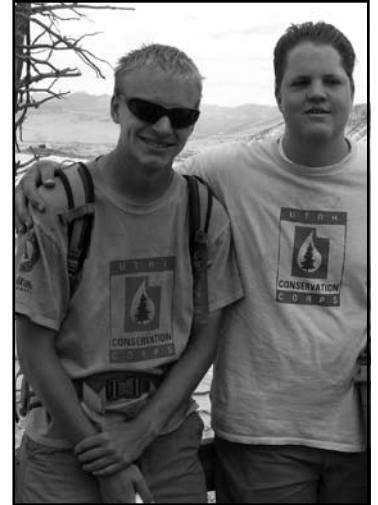
Housing and Other Benefit Programs

Involvement in AmeriCorps may affect eligibility for other programs. Some subsidized housing programs do not count the living allowance, but others may count it.

Waiving the Living Allowance

Although AmeriCorps rules allow members to waive their living allowance, people with disabilities should use caution in doing so. The 2008 AmeriCorps provisions state: "Even if a member waives his or her right to receive the living allowance, it is possible – depending on the specific public assistance program rules – that the amount of the living allowance that the member is eligible to receive will be deemed available." Moreover, it may not be necessary to waive the living allowance if a person qualifies for certain work incentives that can be used to reduce the amount of income counted by public programs.

Transportation

It is critical to arrange accessible transportation (lift-equipped vehicles) for any crew members who use scooters or wheelchairs. Payment for transportation may be available through your AmeriCorps state office disability accessibility/accommodation fund (See the section on Funding below). There are a number of options available to find accessible transportation. If your organization participates in a state motor pool with accessible transportation available, that will most likely be your least expensive option. You can also contact your local center for independent living (www.ilru.org/html/publications/directory/index.html) or senior citizen center to see if you can rent their lift-equipped van if it isn't being used. Easter Seals Project Action (800-659-6428, 202-347-7385) has information on van rental companies, public transit operators, accessible taxis, airport transportation, shuttles, and more.

A couple of national car rental companies have accessible vans in their fleets. These companies include: Enterprise (800-325-8007, 866-534-9270 TTY) and Hertz (800-654-3131, 800-654-2280 TTY). There are a number of companies that specialize in renting accessible vans, but they are often more expensive. If you go this route, be sure to book your van as early as possible, as they often have limited inventory with fairly high demand. Ask for a demonstration of all equipment and the van. Accessible van rental companies include the following:

- Ability Van Rentals (www.abilityvanrentals.com or 800-584-7368)

- Accessible Vans of America, LLC (www.accessiblevans.com or 866-224-1750)

- Disabled Travelers (www.disabledtravelers.com/accessible_van_rentals.htm)

- Mobility Works (www.mobilityworks.com or 888-202-5996)

- ScootAround, Inc. (www.scootaround.com or 888-441-7525)

- Wheelchair Getaways, Inc. (www.wheelchairgetaways.com or 800-642-2042)

- Wheelers Accessible Van Rentals (www.wheelersvanrentals.com or 800-456-1371)

Accessible Housing

Don't wait until the last minute to find accessible housing for any crew members who use a wheelchair or scooter, are hard of hearing or blind. You also need to make sure all of your on-site field work sites are accessible as well. An accessible campsite means the site is accessible, the bathroom entryway and stalls are level and wide enough, and the sink is at the right height for someone using a wheelchair. For more detailed information, check out the accessibility checklist in the appendices. A crew member with disabilities may develop an infection without adequate access to clean water. Although other crew members may carry water or help with accommodations, the crew member with a disability loses independence and dignity – not what you want to promote or have happen on your watch. Consider which areas will work best for your crew and what their individual needs are.

A good place to start looking for accessible housing is by calling your local center for independent living (www.ilru.org/html/publications/directory/index.html). You can also call local colleges and universities to see if they have accessible dorm rooms available. There is a national database that lists 46,000 apartments for people with disabilities nationwide at www.accessibleapartments.org or by calling 800-421-1221. Another national databank that has information on accessible housing in 27 states can be located at http://www.accessiblespace.org/housing/index.php. You may consider renting an accessible hotel room if the person is only going to be there for a short time.

Funding

Specific disability funds are available from AmeriCorps state and national programs, including the Utah Commission on Volunteers,

for the specific purpose of facilitating the inclusion of persons with disabilities in service programs. These funds can be used for making accommodations, marketing, outreach, and training. Reasonable accommodations that have been funded include adapted gardening tools, an accessible desk, portable ramps, video cameras for Skype, and voice recognition computer software. Contact the AmeriCorps program in your state to obtain information about application procedures.

Tax incentives are available for employers of people with disabilities. These tax incentives may cover the cost of any needed accommodations for employees and equipment to make businesses accessible. Tax incentives available are the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), the Disabled Access Credit (DAC), and the Architectural and Transportation Barrier Removal Deduction. More information about tax incentives can be found at: www.jan.wvu.edu/media/tax.html or by contacting the Job Accommodation Network at 800-526-7234 (voice) or 877-781-9403 TTY. For additional information on tax credits, contact a local Internal Revenue Service (IRS) office or visit the IRS on the Web at: http://www.irs.gov.

The UCC has received fee-for-service match dollars through partnership projects with land management agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service. The U.S. Forest Service has been very satisfied with the work the UCC inclusive crew has accomplished. The UCC continues to work with the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest on the development of transition plans for campgrounds and trails and the implementation of suggested changes. The Forest Service National Accessibility Program Manager, Janet Zeller, has given the inclusive crew project her full support and has been instrumental in expanding the program on the national level. In 2009, the UCC inclusive crew partnered with Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. The Minnesota Conservation Corps has also utilized partner support from service projects to support the program.

There are other opportunities to obtain funding through writing grants on a local, state, and federal level. Initial funding for the UCC inclusive crew project was provided by the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation (MEAF). The UCC has applied for and received multiple small grants and donations for the accessible garden project. The Minnesota Conservation Corps has been successful in securing funding from a number of sources to support the inclusion program. The State of Minnesota, through the Department of Employment and Economic Development, has awarded the Corps with funds to support youth participants and crew leaders who are deaf, and provides additional funding to support interpreters. Finally, inclusion of

participants who are deaf and hard of hearing has been highlighted in several successful grant proposals.

The best place to start searching for federal funding opportunities is www.grants.gov. Searches for current request for proposals (RFPs) are available by keyword, category, agency, number, or other criteria. You may also sign up for an email subscription so applicable grants will be sent to you. You can receive all grant notices daily or notices based on eligible applicant (nonprofits, governments, universities, etc.), funding type, category (agriculture, arts, community development, education, health, etc.), or agency.

The Foundation Center (www.foundationcenter.org) is one of the nation's leading authorities on philanthropy with a comprehensive database on U.S. grant-makers and their grants. On the Center's website, searches may be conducted by location or keywords. The Center has main libraries in five cities and 340 cooperating collections in participating libraries across the country. In Utah, cooperating collections are located in the Salt Lake City Public Library, Grand County Public Library, Moab, and the Utah Nonprofits Association. You can also sign up for the Philanthropy News Digest, a free newsletter with RFPs and notices of awards for nonprofits and grant-making organizations, and the RFP Bulletin, a roundup of recently announced RFPs from private, corporate, and government funding sources.

Another good resource is funds net services (www.fundsnetservices). This website has many grant links by category, including disability-related projects.

Many states have foundation directories in one form or another. There are regional associations that produce directories in some states, while others are produced by the state attorney general's office or by small publishing houses or fundraising firms. These directories vary considerably in size, quality, and price. A list of state directories may be found at: http://www.tgci.com/magazine/Finding%20Local%20Funding.pdf. If you want to search individual form 990s for more than 60,000 foundations, you may do so at the website of the following nonprofit service: www.grantsmart.org.

Information on the Philanthropic Foundations of Utah Directory, published annually by Henry Dean Publishing, can be found on the web at: http://www.henrydeanpublishing.com/ or email: roger@henrydeanpub.com. This directory contains a listing of foundations in Utah, including their address, purpose/interest, application procedures, fiscal information, and gifts awarded. Local businesses, banks, organizations, and civic clubs such as Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis, etc., often will consider donating funds or materials to community

projects. Local Wal-Mart and Target stores, among others, often offer small annual grants. Check with the stores for their application process.

Hopefully your search for funding will be successful, but please keep in mind that whether or not disability funds are available, accommodations must be provided to the extent that they are reasonable and do not cause an undue financial burden. Undue burden may be considered an excessive cost, or an extensive, substantial, disruptive, or fundamental alteration of the nature or operation of the program. You might consider adding a disability accommodation line item into every project budget to ensure adequate resources are available.

IV. RESOURCES

Accessibility

- Accessibility Guidebook for Outdoor Recreation and Trails by the USDA www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility/htmlpubs/htm06232801/index.htm

- Accessibility: Forest Service Recreation Accessibility http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility/

- The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 http://www.eeoc.gov/types/ada.html

- ADA Title III Compliance Materials – Accessibility Checklist Existing Facilities http://www.adaptenv.org/publications/checklist-pdf.pdf

- Draft Final Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas and the ADA www.access-board.gov/outdoor/draft-final.htm www.access-board.gov/ada-aba/final.cfm

- Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines (FSORAG) www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility/ www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility/FSORAG.pdf

- Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines (FSTAG) http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility/

Adaptive Equipment/Assistive Technology

- Assistive Technology Devices with information on 22,000 devices http://www.abledata.com/

- Assistive Technology Devices database, reuse and exchange locations www.assistivetech.net

- Assistive Technology Programs list of AT programs in all states and territories
  http://www.resnaprojects.org/nattap/at/statecontacts.html

- Utah Assistive Technology Program Assistive Technology Lab and Info
  www.uatpat.org or call Stan Clelland at (435) 797-0699

Deaf Resources

- ASL Pro – Helpful resource with a sign language dictionary
  http://www.aslpro.com

- Deaf Nation – Language, Culture and Pride for Deaf and Hard of Hearing with news, blogs, DeafNation expo, videos, and many other things.
  http://deafnation.com

- Deaf Resource Library - A virtual library -- an online collection of reference material and links intended to educate and inform people about deaf cultures in Japan and the United States, as well as deaf and hard of hearing related topics
  http://www.deaflibrary.org

- Nationwide telephone relay access number
  7-1-1

- Video Relay Services, Federal Communications Commission
  http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/videorelay.html

- Sorenson VRS
  http://www.sorensonvrs.com/

Disabilities

- Disability Database by Wilderness Inquiry (description and resources)
  www.wildernessinquiry.org/programs/youth_disabilities.php

- Disability Information and Resources
  http://www.makoa.org/index.htm

- Disability Information and Opportunities
  www.disability.gov

- Disability-Related Resources
  http://www.familyvillage.wisc.edu/

- Disability Resources on the Internet
  www.disabilityresources.org

Gardening

- Accessible Gardening Forum on GardenWeb
  www.forums/gardenweb.com/forums/accessible

- Building Accessible Raised Bed Gardens
  www.dowlingcommunitygarden.org/pages/projects.htm

- Carry On Gardening, Whatever Your Disability
  www.carryongardening.org.uk/

- Gardening for People with Disabilities
  www.christopherreeve.org/atf/cf/%7B3d83418f-b967-4c18-
  8ada-adc2e5355071%7D/GARDENING%20FOR%20PEOPLE%20
  WITH%20DISABILITIES%205-09.PDF

- Gardening – People with Disabilities
  http://www.horticulturaltherapy.com.au/download/pdf/OnlineRes/
  Gardening%20people%20with%20disabilities1.pdf

- Handicap Accessible Gardening
  www.inthecountrygardenandgifts.com/jspece/gardening/
  accessible.html

- Home Enabling Gardening, Parts I, II, and III
  www.ncpad.org/fun/fact_sheet.php?sheet=301

- Tips for Gardeners Who Use Wheelchairs
  http://agrability.missouri.edu/gardenweb/Wheelchair.htmlInclusion

- Access AmeriCorps, Training, TA on Inclusion for AmeriCorps Programs
  www.ucp.org/ucp_generalsub.cfm/1/6619/6621

- CNCS Disability Coordinator in Each State
  www.serviceandinclusion.org/index.php?page=coordinatorslist

- Impact Issue on Social Inclusion Through Recreation
  http://ici.umn.edu/products/impact/162/

- Including All Kids, Paths to Inclusion Guidebook
  www.includingallkids.org

- Service Learning and Individuals with Disabilities
  www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/bibs/he_bibs/indiv_disab/

- National Institute on Recreation Inclusion, National Recreation and
  Park Association
  http://www.nrpa.org/niri/

- National Service Inclusion Project
  www.serviceandinclusion.org

Job Accommodations

- Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTACs)
  www.adata.org or 800-949-4232

- Disability Discrimination, Summary of ADA requirements with links
  http://www.eeoc.gov/types/ada.html

- Job Accommodation Network (JAN), Accommodation by Disability, ADA, resources
  http://www.jan.wvu.edu/ or 800-526-7234

- Job Accommodations Links on Examples, Tax Incentives, Guidance, U.S Dept. of Labor
  www.dol.gov/dol/topic/disability/jobaccommodations.htm

- Workplace Accommodations and Supports from Disability.gov
  www.disability.gov/employment/workplace_accommodations_%26supports

Mental Health Resources

- Mental Health America, nonprofit dedicated to helping ALL people live mentally healthier lives
  http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
  http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/

- Mental Illness "What a Difference a Friend Makes" - Sponsored by SAMHSA
  http://www.whatadifference.org/

- National Alliance on Mental Illness
  http://www.nami.org/

- Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Boston University
  http://www.bu.edu/cpr/

- National Mental Health Consumer Self-Help Clearinghouse
  http://www.mhselfhelp.org

- National Mental Health Association
  http://www.nmha.org

Outdoor Recreation

- Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center, Meaningful Outdoor Experiences
  www.boec.org

- National Ability Center, Affordable Outdoor Sports/Recreational Experiences
  www.discovernac.org

- Outdoors Without Limits, Education, and Opportunities for Outdoor Activities
  www.outdoorswithoutlimits.net

- Wilderness Inquiry, Outdoor Adventures to Destinations Throughout the World
  www.wildernessinquiry.org

- Common Ground Outdoor Adventures
  www.cgadventures.org

Transportation (Wheelchair Accessible Van Providers)

- Enterprise www.enterprise.com or 800-325-8007, 866-534-9270 TTY

- Hertz www.hertz.com or 800-654-3131, 800-654-2280 TTY

- Ability Van Rentals www.abilityvanrentals.com or 800-584-7368

- Accessible Vans of America, LLC www.accessiblevans.com or 1-866-224-1750

- Disabled Travelers.com www.disabledtravelers.com/accessible_van_rentals.htm

- Mobility Works www.mobilityworks.com or 888-202-5996

- ScootAround, Inc. www.scootaround.com or 888-441-7525

- Wheelchair Getways, Inc. www.wheelchairgetaways.com or 800-642-2042

- Wheelers Accessible Van Rentals www.wheelersvanrentals.com or 800-456-1371

Web Accessibility

- Section 508 was enacted to eliminate barriers in information technology
  www.section508.gov

- Web Accessibility Initiative
  www.w3.org/WAI

- WebAIM
  www.webaim.org

CONTENTS:

I. INCLUSIVE CREWS PARTNERING WITH LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

Project Overview:
The UCC inclusive crew primarily worked on accessibility surveys and transition plans for the U.S. Forest Service. The crew surveyed campgrounds and trails according to the Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines (FSORAG), which provide guidance for maximizing accessibility of outdoor recreation areas in the National Forest System, while protecting the unique characteristics of their natural setting. After completing surveys on the ground, the crew developed reports that identified physical barriers and described methods to make areas more accessible. The Forest Service can use this information in the development of transition plans.

This year, the crew also assisted the U.S. Forest Service in the development of a new accessibility information database that will provide the public with information on accessible campsites, facilities, and services. The accessibility information gathered and entered into the database, by the inclusive crew, automatically feeds Forest Service District web portals that are accessed by the public. Conservation Corps throughout the country are now able to enter accessibility information into this new database in a consistent manner, making the inclusive crew program model easily replicable by other corps.

The Minnesota Conservation Corps' (MCC) Summer Youth Program is based out of St. Croix State Park and serves 85 youth for 8 weeks. It is unique in that it involves youth who are hearing, deaf, and hard of hearing. Youth will travel and work as a team to complete various conservation projects, including trails, restoration, and invasive weed removal. Corpsmembers also participate in educational activities 5 hours each week. Hands-on learning includes environmental education, American Sign Language, and local history and culture.

The youth represent a cross-section of Minnesota with 40% from minority backgrounds, equal numbers of males and females, equal urban and rural participants, and 15-20 percent who are deaf or hard of hearing. Typically, at least 75 percent of MCC youth participants come from populations that are underrepresented in green-collar and science fields: females, youth of color, youth from low-income households, and youth with disabilities. The crew leaders also bring a wide variety of experience to the program. Some crew leaders are sign language interpreters and lead crews with deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing youth participants.

For MCC, the concept of "inclusion" is not limited to individuals identified as deaf, hard of hearing, or anything else. Inclusion is discussed as the need each of us feels to be a part of a group, make meaningful contributions, learn about others, and have the room to grow as a person.

Establishing Partnerships:

Before selecting project sponsors and securing projects, make sure that the sponsor understands that the project involves active participation from all crew members, regardless of their perceived physical or cognitive abilities. Corpsmembers on all crews are hired to complete the essential functions of the job which are spelled out in the position description and discussed during the interview process. Provide the project sponsor with information on inclusion, disability awareness, essential functions, reasonable accommodations, and job carving so that the sponsor and crew have a common understanding and shared expectations. Prior to the start date, schedule a meeting with the project sponsor and crew to discuss the project goals, reasonable accommodations, and individual responsibilities. Make sure that reasonable accommodations are determined and developed/purchased pre-season so that all corpsmembers are ready to start work on the first day. If reasonable accommodations are not in place on the first day, corpsmembers with disabilities will not start out on a level playing field.

If the project is to be sustainable, it must address a real and important need for the agency and/or community. In the case of the

accessibility condition surveys, the UCC approached the U.S. Forest Service Logan Ranger District office, an existing UCC project sponsor, and brainstormed with them about a suitable project for an inclusive crew. The agency had a mandate to complete accessibility condition surveys and develop transition plans, and the crew had the skills and abilities to successfully meet this need. It was the perfect match. Since 2007, news of the project success has spread to the regional and national level. In 2009, UCC corpsmembers with disabilities were instrumental in getting the USFS database up and running and usable with screen readers. The Forest Service web developers worked closely with the crew to make sure that the survey forms and database functioned properly and that they were accessible using screen readers. This was a fantastic professional opportunity for the crew. Janet Zeller, the U.S. Forest Service Accessibility Program Manager, has encouraged inclusive crews throughout the country to fill the database so that the public and the U.S. Forest Service have a clear understanding of the truly accessible outdoor recreation opportunities on Forest Service lands.

At the Minnesota Conservation Corps (MCC), additional partnerships have been established to meet recruitment goals and provide quality pre-service training for crew leaders and youth participants. MCC maintains strong relationships with schools and community organizations in the Midwest that are local resources for the Deaf community. Program alumni and returning crew leaders have played a central role in trainings on American Sign Language (ASL) and Deaf culture. Additionally, alumni have mentored new crew leaders who are also serving as ASL interpreters in order to provide structured professional development opportunities.

Establishing partnerships with service project hosts has required very little modification of standard procedures. Program information, flyers given to potential project hosts contain information on crews including members who are deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing. This has not served as a limiting factor for partnerships to our knowledge. In fact, it has encouraged some projects such as historic landmark restoration and projects in highly visible service locations. Prior to project implementation, corps staff will contact the project sponsor to review project details. At this point, if the crew has unique considerations that the project host needs to be aware of, clarifications of the crew's ability and accommodations are made. Project hosts have the opportunity to ask for guidance specific to working with an inclusive crew and receive pointers on Deaf culture and American Sign Language. Many project hosts express how much they enjoyed working with the inclusive crews, specifically the youth and leaders who are deaf.

Adaptive Equipment Designs and Resources:

Assistive Technology (AT) Programs: Assistive Technology (AT) is commonly referred to as products, devices, or equipment used to help individuals with disabilities increase, maintain, or improve their functional capabilities and independence. Statewide AT programs are located in every state and territory throughout the country. These programs provide a number of services, usually including training, technical assistance, device loan, demonstration, funding information and more. The following website has a list of every state AT program: www.resnaprojects.org/nattap/at/statecontacts.html**.**

The following AT is available through the Utah Conservation Corps. The cost of materials and shipping must be paid in advance. Contact Kate at kate.stephens@usu.edu to order:

- Wheelchair Attachments for Roll-A-Wheel

- Wheelchair Attachments for Smart-Tool level

- Hard Hat Attachment for Inclinometer

- Adaptive Gardening Tools

Adaptive Equipment Presentation Script and Slides:
(This is the text version of the Adaptive Equipment PowerPoint presentation for projects involving trail/campground surveys.)

SLIDE 1: Utah Conservation Corps Access to Service Inclusive Crew Adaptive Equipment
➢ Title slide with logo of Utah Conservation Corps and universal symbol of accessibility (stick figure using a wheelchair).

SLIDE 2: Accessible Office Space

Photo Description:

1. Picture of a wheelchair accessible desk with a computer on it. The computer has the "Dragon Naturally Speaking" voice recognition software and headset.

2. Close-up picture of a trackball mouse that is useful for people with limited fine motor control.

3. Close-up picture of an accessible door handle, the lever type that can be opened with a closed fist.

SLIDE 3: Adapted Gardening Tools

Photo Description:

1. Pictures of six different hand tools used for gardening with a variety of modifications to the handles. Adapted gardening tools have large no-slip handles and straps for people with limited manual dexterity and grip.

2. An individual in a wheelchair using an adapted hand tool to garden in a raised bed that is wheelchair accessible.

SLIDE 4: Trail Survey Toolkit Contents

- Survey Forms

- Roll-A-Wheel with Wheelchair Attachments

- Smart Tool with Wheelchair Attachments

- Talking Tape Measure

- Scale

- Clipboards

- Flagging

- Tape Measures

Additional Equipment:

- Inclinometers (2)

- Camera

SLIDE 5: Survey Tool Checklist

Photo Description:

1. Picture of "Smart Tool" level attached to wheelchair with person in chair using the tool.

2. Picture of "Smart Tool" level with metal brace that attaches to wheelchair arm.

"Smart Tool" attaches to chair so that it can be read without having to lean over.

SLIDE 6: Adapted Inclinometer

Photo Description:

1. Picture of an inclinometer that was adapted by attaching it to a hard hat with a clip, a stick, and a roll of duct tape.

This is a great example of simple adaptations that just require some creative thinking.

<u>Note</u>: An inclinometer is an instrument for measuring the angles of elevation, slope, or incline of trails, campsites, etc.

SLIDE 7: Adapted Roll-A-Wheel

Photo Description:

1. Picture of roll-a-wheel tool with adapted brace for attaching to arm of wheelchair.

2. Picture of individual in wheelchair using roll-a-wheel attachment. Wheelchair users can measure distances with roll-a-wheel while pushing their chair.

SLIDE 8: Talking Tape Measure

Photo Description:

1. Close-up of talking/digital tape measure.

A corpsmember who is blind, used the Talking Tape Measure to collect data for accessibility surveys and construct raised beds in the garden.

Available through Independent Living Aids:
www.independentliving.com/ila

SLIDE 9: Camping Gear and Equipment

When camping with people with spinal cord injuries and other mobility impairments, we found the following items to be essential to our happiness…

• Paco Pads: Super thick inflatable mattresses that will help prevent pressure sores. These mattresses were created for sleeping on rocks on Grand Canyon river trips. (Picture of camping pad shown).

• Roll-A-Cot: Cots work well for folks who transfer from their chair onto a sleeping bag.

Paco Pads and Roll-A-Cots can be purchased through NRS at www.nrsweb.com or 877-677-4327. Ask about setting up a professional discount.

SLIDE 10: Eureka Freedom Tent

Photo Description:

1. Picture of the Eureka Freedom Tent.

The zipperless fan door is easily opened by people with mobility, strength, and dexterity limitations. Once open, its wide doorway provides easy unobstructed access for anyone, including people using wheelchairs or walkers.

Note: Another alternative to use would be a large 6-8 person tent(s) with plenty of space for a cot and wheelchair so that individuals can easily transfer, change clothes, etc. inside the tent.

SLIDE 11: Trail Wheelchair

Photo Description:

1. Three photos of the trail wheelchair, two with individuals using on a trail and one of just the chair in an open field.

The Utah Conservation Corps has developed and acquired several pieces of adaptive equipment that enable corpsmembers with disabilities to participate in programs more fully and independently. For example, a trail wheelchair with knobby tires is used by a corpsmember with a spinal cord injury to access rugged areas that are technically inaccessible.

The wheelchair pictured was developed by George Young (picture bottom right). More information about this particular trail wheelchair is available by visiting http://www.axessoutdoors.com/.

SLIDE 12: Funding for Adaptive Equipment and Support Services

- Funding for reasonable accommodations is available in each state through the State Commission on National and Community Service.

- The Utah Conservation Corps was able to cover the cost of a trail wheelchair, voice recognition computer software, a personal aid, and rental of a lift-equipped van with funds available through the Utah Commission on Volunteers.

- The Minnesota Conservation Corps covered the cost of hiring interpreters through the Minnesota State Commission's reasonable accommodation funds.

SLIDE 13: Resources

For more information about acquiring adapted garden tools, construction plans for raised garden beds, adapted roll-a-wheels, and adapted smart tool level attachments contact:

- **Assistive Technology Lab**
  Utah State University Center for Persons with Disabilities
  Stan Clelland (435) 797- 0699 or stanford.clelland@usu.edu

- **Utah Conservation Corps**
  Kate Stephens (435) 797-0964 or kate.stephens@usu.edu

Slides:

Adapted Gardening Tools

Adapted gardening tools have large no-slip handles and straps for people with limited manual dexterity and grip.

Adapted Tools for Surveying Trails and Campgrounds

"Smart Tool" Level

Eureka Freedom Tent

The zipperless fan door is easily opened by people with mobility, strength and dexterity limitations. Once open, its wide doorway provides easy unobstructed access for anyone, including people using wheelchairs or walkers.

http://www.eurekatent.com/p-69-eureka-freedom-tent.aspx

Trail Wheelchair

http://www.axessoutdoors.com/

Support Services:

Communication: In the case of Minnesota Conservation Corps, the primary barrier is communication. Communication within the crew is facilitated by ASL interpreters serving as crew leaders. Communication via phone and the internet is accomplished through three basic strategies. The Conservation Corps provides TTYs, in which the handset of a phone is set on a machine that translates typed conversations. This can be thought of as the precursor to instant messaging. This technology is dated, but is reliable and is not dependent on cell phone signals to operate. While practical and cost effective, TTYs are becoming less used within the Deaf community as new technology is developed. In addition to TTYs, crew leaders often carry PDAs which can be used for communication when cell service is available. These are perhaps the most used form of long-distance communication during the program. Finally, arrangements have been made with the state park, where our base camp is located, so that crew leaders and youth participants who are deaf can use park computers on weekends to access Skype, a web communications tool.

Additional adaptive equipment for each crew includes: ASL resources, lanterns, dry bags, extra hearing aid batteries, and hearing aid repair kits.

Program adaptations are established as the culture of the program, not as a stand-alone feature for a portion of the participants. This includes everything from the layout of meeting spaces to flicking lights on-and-off to get people's attention. Program adaptations also affect crew composition, in which MCC values diverse crews of young people that strive for a "quantity of culture" on each crew. For youth who are deaf or hard of hearing, this typically means that three of the six youth on a crew are deaf or hard of hearing. This approach provides a level of comfort that fosters cultural understanding among the crew.

Interpreters: The Minnesota Conservation Corps seeks to enroll at least one ASL interpreter for every three youth participants who are deaf. Crew leaders who are deaf are also paired with ASL interpreters. Interpreters are located through private companies, nonprofits, and state agencies. In Minnesota, two useful resources are the Department of Employment and Economic Development and the Minnesota Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. Serve Minnesota, our local CNCS office, has a strong focus on inclusion and is able to connect our program with interpreters when needed. Many colleges and universities offer interpreting programs. Most programs require internship credits. Through local partnerships, we are able to offer supervision and evaluation of individuals serving as leaders-interpreters so that they receive college credit.

Interpreters must apply for crew leader positions and complete a skill evaluation with alumni who are professionals that work with the Deaf community. If an applicant successfully completes both aspects of the process, they are enrolled into the corps. Mentorship opportunities are provided with professional interpreters so that support and ongoing feedback can be used to improve skill and performance. In addition to crew leaders serving as interpreters, professional interpreters are contracted for larger corps-wide events and when crew leaders have time off.

Personal Assistants/Aides: The Utah Conservation Corps hired an aid to assist a corpsmember with a mobility impairment. This corpsmember was independently able to complete the essential functions of the job with reasonable accommodations, but needed assistance with personal care such as dressing and toileting on overnight camping trips. With reasonable accommodation funding made available through the Utah Commission on Volunteers, the UCC was able to hire a personal aide for this corpsmember which enabled him to participate in the projects that involved overnight camping.

When hiring an aide, it is important to first consult the individual who will be working with the aid. Most likely, they have hired an aide before and have someone in mind. If not, it is important to involve them in the hiring process to ensure that the aide is someone they feel comfortable with. Local independent living centers have contact lists for personal assistants/aides in your area. To find the independent living center near you, visit www.ncil.org.

Funding Opportunities:

Initial funding for the Utah Conservation Corps (UCC) inclusive crew project was provided by the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation (MEAF). The Utah Conservation Corps (UCC) has also received Fee-for-Service match dollars through partnership projects with land management agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service. Additionally, the UCC has received multiple small grants and donations for the accessible garden project.

State Service Commissions, which provide Corporation for National and Community Service funding to AmeriCorps State programs, provide funding for reasonable accommodations for AmeriCorps members. These reasonable accommodations have included adapted gardening tools, an accessible desk, portable ramps, and voice recognition computer software.

Minnesota Conservation Corps has been successful in securing funding from a number of sources to support the inclusion program. The State of Minnesota, through the Department of Employment

and Economic Development, has awarded the Corps with funds to support youth participants and crew leaders who are deaf, and provides additional funding to support interpreters. Serve Minnesota, our AmeriCorps State Commission, has made funds available for reasonable accommodations such as video cameras needed for Skype. Partner support from service projects has been used to support the program. Finally, inclusion of participants who are deaf and hard of hearing has been highlighted in several successful grant proposals.

II. INCLUSIVE CREWS PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITY GARDENS

Project Overview:

The accessible community garden, designed and constructed by the UCC inclusive crew, is fully accessible to all community members. In 2008, the UCC partnered with the new Cache Valley Community Garden project to turn this dream into a reality. The garden includes raised beds, table top planters, hardened pathways, and adapted gardening tools.

The Cache Valley Community Garden (CVCG) project is a large community venture. The role of the UCC inclusive crew is to design and construct garden tools, beds, and pathways that are physically accessible.

Accessibility and Inclusive Community Gardens:

Community and accessibility go hand in hand. As a part of the overall goal of the community garden to attract and include a diversity of community members, the accessible features within the garden accommodate people of varying abilities. No community member is denied participation in community gardening because of physical barriers in the built environment. In addition to accommodating community members who want to garden, the project also accommodates UCC AmeriCorps crew members with disabilities who

want to serve within an accessible and inclusive environment. UCC members of all abilities will conduct community gardening workshops every other Friday during the summer months. The Utah Conservation Corps inclusive crew will serve as an ongoing accessible gardening resource and will regularly disseminate this information.

Accessibility and Physical Design:

The physical design of the garden is inherently accessible and avoids an environment that is conspicuously augmented for accessibility. The goal is to create an environment that is accessible to all individuals with and without disabilities...a total environment. The organization of the beds is based on the branching proportions of Utah's only native orchid, the Epipactis Gigantea. The organic arrangement inherently uses space in such a way as to allow for larger spaces adjoining smaller ones. This ensures that there is plenty of space to move about without creating awkward voids. The raised beds can be enjoyed as an accessible environment and a stimulating composition.

UCC Table Top Planter Design:

This is an example of a table top planter built by the UCC for the Community Garden. For a copy of detailed construction plans and a material list for the planter contact Kate Stephens at kate.stephens@usu.edu.
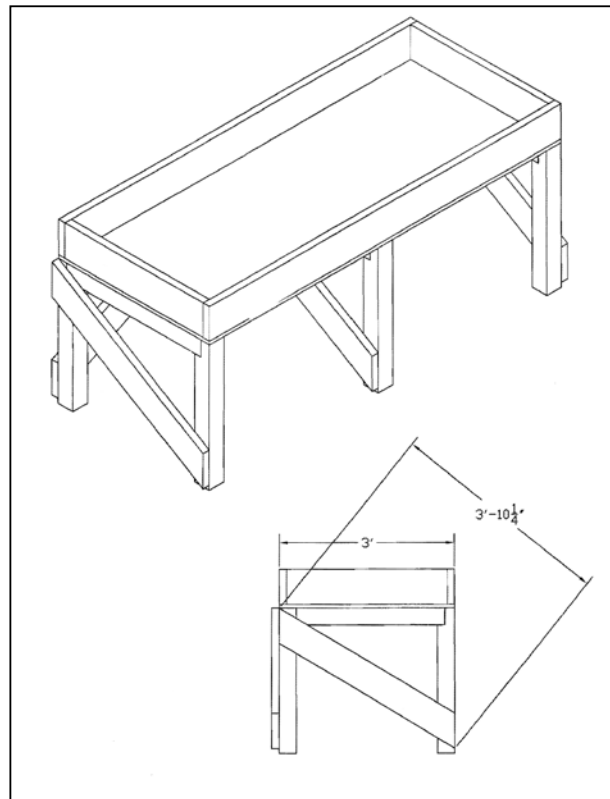
Books:

Accessible Gardening for People with Disabilities, A Guide to Methods, Tools, and Plants by Janeen Adil

The Enabling Garden: Creating Barrier-Free Gardens by Gene Rothert

Accessible Gardening: Tips & Techniques for Seniors & the Disabled by Joann Woy

Square Foot Gardening: A New Way to Garden in Less Space With Less Work by Mel Bartholomew

Websites:

- Accessible Gardening Forum on GardenWeb
  www.forums/gardenweb.com/forums/accessible

- Building Accessible Raised Bed Gardens
  www.dowlingcommunitygarden.org/pages/projects.htm

- Carry On Gardening, Whatever your Disability
  www.carryongardening.org.uk/

- Garden Forever www.gardenforever.com

- Gardening for People with Disabilities
  http://www.christopherreeve.org/atf/cf/%7B3d83418f-b967-4c18-8ada-adc2e5355071%7D/GARDENING%20FOR%20PEOPLE%20WITH%20DISABILITIES%205-09.PDF

- Gardening – People with Disabilities
  http://www.horticulturaltherapy.com.au/download/pdf/OnlineRes/Gardening%20people%20with%20disabilities1.pdf

- Home Enabling Gardening, Parts I, II, and III
  www.ncpad.org/fun/fact_sheet.php?sheet=301

- Tips for Gardeners Who Use Wheelchairs
  http://agrability.missouri.edu/gardenweb/Wheelchair.html

- Urban Agriculture Notes
  http://www.cityfarmer.org/tabletop.html

Funding:

The Cache Valley Community Garden has received numerous donations for materials from local businesses as well as larger corporations such as Lowes and Home Depot.

The Utah State University Center for Persons with Disabilities was instrumental in providing funding and expertise in the development of assistive technology and workshop space to construct raised beds.

III. INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

Building an inclusive service program is about finding ways to include individuals with a variety of disabilities, including mental illness. The following information is intended to provide a basic overview of important facts and resources related to mental illness. Additional detailed information about specific mental health conditions and diagnosis is available on each of the websites listed below. We encourage your program staff and members to become educated about mental health issues so that you can be more inclusive and supportive of individuals in your program that may experience a mental illness. An example of what Operation Fresh Start in Wisconsin has done to better support individuals with mental health disabilities in their service program is provided at the end of this section.

What is Mental Illness: Mental Illness Facts

Mental illnesses are medical conditions that disrupt a person's thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others, and daily functioning. Just as diabetes is a disorder of the pancreas, mental illnesses are medical conditions that often result in a diminished capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life. Serious mental illnesses include major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), panic disorder, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and borderline personality disorder. The good news about mental illness is that recovery is possible.

Mental illnesses can affect persons of any age, race, religion, or income. Mental illnesses are not the result of personal weakness, lack of character, or poor upbringing. Mental illnesses are treatable. Most people diagnosed with a serious mental illness can experience relief from their symptoms by actively participating in an individual treatment plan.

In addition to medication treatment, psychosocial treatment such as cognitive behavioral therapy, interpersonal therapy, peer support groups, and other community services can also be components of a treatment plan that assist with recovery. The availability of transportation, diet, exercise, sleep, friends, and meaningful paid or volunteer activities contribute to overall health and wellness, including mental illness recovery.

Important Facts About Mental Illness and Recovery:

- Mental illnesses are serious medical illnesses. They cannot be overcome through "will power" and are not related to a person's "character" or intelligence. Mental illness falls along a continuum of severity. Even though mental illness is widespread in the population, the main burden of illness is concentrated in a much smaller proportion, about six percent, or 1 in 17 Americans who live with a serious mental illness. The National Institute of Mental Health reports that one in four adults, or approximately 57.7 million Americans, experience a mental health disorder in a given year

- The U.S. Surgeon General reports that 10 percent of children and adolescents in the United States suffer from serious emotional and mental disorders that cause significant functional impairment in their day-to-day lives at home, in school, and with peers.

- The World Health Organization reports that four of the 10 leading causes of disability in the U.S. and other developed countries are mental disorders. By 2020, major depressive illness will be the leading cause of disability in the world for women and children.

- Mental illness usually strikes individuals in the prime of their lives, often during adolescence and young adulthood. All ages are susceptible, but the young and the old are especially vulnerable.

- Without treatment, the consequences of mental illness for the individual and society are staggering: unnecessary disability, unemployment, substance abuse, homelessness, inappropriate incarceration, suicide, and wasted lives. The economic cost of untreated mental illness is more than $100 billion each year in the United States.

- The best treatments for serious mental illnesses today are highly effective; between 70 and 90 percent of individuals have significant reduction of symptoms and improved quality of life

with a combination of pharmacological and psychosocial treatments and supports.

- With appropriate effective medication and a wide range of services tailored to their needs, most people who live with serious mental illnesses can significantly reduce the impact of their illness and find a satisfying measure of achievement and independence. A key concept is to develop expertise in developing strategies to manage the illness process.

- Early identification and treatment is of vital importance. By ensuring access to the treatment and recovery supports that are proven effective, recovery is accelerated and further harm related to the course of illness is minimized.

- Stigma erodes confidence that mental disorders are real, treatable health conditions. We have allowed stigma and a now unwarranted sense of hopelessness to erect attitudinal, structural, and financial barriers to effective treatment and recovery. It is time to take these barriers down.

(Source: National Alliance on Mental Illness [NAMI] http://www.nami. org/Content/NavigationMenu/Inform_Yourself/About_Mental_Illness/ About_Mental_Illness.htm).

How to Help:

If somebody told you he had diabetes, how would you react? If you're like most people, you'd express sympathy and concern, offer your support and reassurance, and feel confident that your friend's condition would improve with treatment. Now, if that same friend told you he had a mental illness, what would you do?

Too many people respond negatively when confronted with a friend's mental illness, and this only fuels the stigma surrounding the diagnosis. The reality is, mental illness is no different from physical illness. Conditions like depression, schizophrenia, and anxiety disorders affect a person's body. The emotional and psychological aspects of mental illness make supportive friends and family even more important to a person's recovery.

So, now you know you can help just by being there and offering your reassurance, companionship, emotional strength, and acceptance. You can make a difference just by understanding and helping your friend throughout the course of his or her illness and beyond.

(Source: Mental Illness: What a Difference a Friend Makes http:// www.whatadifference.org/support.asp?nav=nav02_0&content=2_0_ support).

Help a Friend:

If your friend tells you he or she has a mental illness, you might want to respond in any or all of these ways:

- Express your concern and sympathy.

- Ask for more details about the person's diagnosis and how he or she is managing. Really listen to the answers and continue the conversation. Make sure your friend understands that you honestly care.

- Ask what you can do to help. You can leave this open-ended or you can suggest specific tasks that might help your friend in his or her specific situation. Rides to medical appointments (or keeping the person company in the waiting room) can ease some of the anxiety and reluctance that people feel when faced with a life-changing diagnosis.

- You might also offer to help your friend with errands, but be careful not to patronize or make the person feel disempowered.

- Reassure your friend that you still care about him or her, and be sure to include him or her in your everyday plans—going out to lunch, catching a movie, taking a jog. If your friend resists these overtures, reassure and re-invite without being overbearing.

- Remind your friend that mental illness is treatable. Find out if he or she is getting the care he or she needs. If not, offer your help in identifying and getting the right kind of care.

- If a friend is having a psychiatric emergency, ask them what kind of help they need and respond immediately. It is important to give them hope and encourage them to seek support, including calling a crisis line or the National Suicide Prevention Line at 1.800.273.TALK (8255).

- Immediate medical attention is also in order if somebody you care about is very weak or ill from an eating disorder.

(Source: Mental Illness: What a Difference a Friend Makes http://www.whatadifference.org/support. asp?nav=nav02_2&content=2_2_helpfriend).

JAN'S ACCOMMODATION FACT SHEET SERIES

http://www.jan.wvu.edu/media/psyc.htm

Job Accommodations for People with Mental Health Impairments

According to the National Mental Health Association (http://www. nimh.nih.gov/), a mental health impairment is a disease that causes

mild to severe disturbances in thought and/or behavior, resulting in an inability to cope with life's ordinary demands and routines. There are more than 200 classified forms of mental illness. Some of the more common disorders are depression, bipolar disorder, dementia, schizophrenia, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), panic disorders, seasonal affective disorder (SAD), and anxiety disorders. Symptoms may include changes in mood, personality, personal habits, and/or social withdrawal. An estimated 54 million Americans suffer from some form of mental disorder in a given year.

The following is a quick overview of some of the job accommodations that might be useful for people with mental health impairments. For a more in depth discussion, access JAN's publications at http://www.jan.wvu.edu/media/atoz.htm. To discuss an accommodation situation with a consultant, contact JAN directly.

Maintaining Stamina During the Workday:
- Provide flexible scheduling

- Allow longer or more frequent work breaks

- Allow employee to work from home during part of the day or week

- Provide part-time work schedules

Maintaining Concentration:
- Reduce distractions in the work area

- Provide space enclosures or a private office

- Allow for use of white noise or environmental sound machines

- Allow the employee to play soothing music using headphones

- Increase natural lighting or provide full spectrum lighting

- Plan for uninterrupted work time

- Allow for frequent breaks

- Divide large assignments into smaller tasks and goals

- Restructure job to include only essential functions

Staying Organized and Meeting Deadlines:
- Make daily To-Do lists and check items off

- Use several calendars to mark meetings and deadlines

- Remind employee of important deadlines

- Use electronic organizers

- Divide large assignments into smaller tasks and goals

Dealing with Memory Deficits:
- Allow the employee to tape record meetings

- Provide type written minutes of each meeting

- Provide written instructions

- Allow additional training time

- Provide written checklists

Working Effectively with Supervisors:
- Provide positive praise and reinforcement

- Provide written job instructions

- Develop written work agreements that include the agreed upon accommodations, clear expectations of responsibilities, and the consequences of not meeting performance standards

- Allow for open communication to managers and supervisors

- Establish written long-term and short-term goals

- Develop strategies to deal with problems before they arise

- Develop a procedure to evaluate the effectiveness of the accommodation

Interacting with Coworkers:
- Educate all employees on their right to accommodations

- Provide sensitivity training to co-workers and supervisors

- Do not mandate employees attend work-related social functions

- Encourage employees to move non work-related conversations out of work areas

Handling Stress and Emotions:
- Provide praise and positive reinforcement

- Refer to counseling and employee assistance programs

- Allow telephone calls during work hours to doctors and others for needed support

- Allow the presence of a support animal

- Allow the employee to take breaks as needed

Maintaining Attendance:
- Provide flexible leave for health problems

- Provide a self-paced work load and flexible hours

- Allow employee to work from home

- Provide part-time work schedule

- Allow employee to make up time

Dealing with Change:
- Recognize that a change in the office environment or of supervisors may be difficult for a person with a mental health impairment

- Maintain open channels of communication between the employee and the new and old supervisor in order to ensure an effective transition

- Provide weekly or monthly meetings with the employee to discuss workplace issues and productions levels

Additional Mental Health Resources:
- Mental Health America, nonprofit dedicated to helping ALL people live mentally healthier lives http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/

- Mental Illness "What a Difference a Friend Makes"- Sponsored by SAMHSA http://www.whatadifference.org/

- National Alliance on Mental Illness http://www.nami.org/

- Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Boston University http://www.bu.edu/cpr/

- National Mental Health Consumer Self-Help Clearinghouse http://www.mhselfhelp.org

- National Mental Health Association http://www.nmha.org

Operation Fresh Start Project Example:
Background: Nationwide in 2008, more than 3 million youth between the ages of 16 and 24 were reportedly out of school and jobless. In Dane County, Wisconsin, that number is estimated to be as high as 4,000. These youth, many of whom are juvenile or adult offenders, have been called 'disconnected,' because they have severed ties to the mainstream community and have no plans to become reconnected.

Mission: Since 1970, Operation Fresh Start's mission has been to help young men and women, ages 16-25, from low-income backgrounds, acquire job skills, complete a high school credential, develop career

goals and strategies to achieve them, to enter employment and post-secondary education, and to become and remain self-sufficient.

Services: Operation Fresh Start is Dane County's largest youth employment and training organization, annually assisting 80-130 young people to prepare for career-track employment. Their comprehensive program includes:

- <u>Job skill training</u> and the opportunity to serve the community through the construction or renovation of affordable, green-built homes sold to lower income buyers. With the help of a skilled construction trainer, OFS participants complete all phases of residential construction, except those tasks requiring building trade licenses.

- <u>Classroom preparation</u> for drop-outs to pass the GED or HSED or complete a high school diploma, study an enriched subject and skills curriculum, and improve basic reading and math skills.

- <u>Support services</u>, including individual counseling, on-site health care and health education, a nutritious breakfast and lunch each workday, and mental health assessments and referral.

- <u>Career exploration</u> and guidance.

- <u>Placement</u> in career-track occupations or post-secondary education and an AmeriCorps Education Award to help pay the costs of higher education.

- <u>Follow-up</u> for two years to support graduates' retention and success in employment and higher education.

Outcomes: In its 39 years, Operation Fresh Start has enrolled over 6,000 young people, 80% of whom have achieved the goals of the program – job placement or graduation to higher education. Long-term follow-up studies show that 70% of graduates remain self-sufficient and free of reliance upon public assistance or involvement in the criminal justice system.

Lessons Learned: The groups from which Operation Fresh Start (OFS) recruits its corpsmembers – low-income youth, high school drop-outs, and offenders or ex-offenders – have a high incidence of individuals with mental illness. These concerns arise from many causes including family dysfunction, heredity, inadequate health care, and a chaotic and violent social environment. OFS has done its best to serve young people with a wide-range of mental health concerns. The inclusive crew project has provided OFS with additional resources to improve its ability to include those with mental health disabilities in their program and to help them succeed at OFS and in other social, employment, and educational contexts.

The lessons learned by OFS as part of the inclusive crew project include:

1) Affirmed that the Youth Corps model has the elements needed to help young people, with and without mental health concerns, to confront personal barriers and make fundamental, positive life changes. Young people succeed at OFS and in other Youth Corps because the adult staff provides what their community has not – the consistent message that they are valuable as individuals and that someone cares about their welfare. Staff members provide constant guidance, support, and direction to corpsmembers who trust and value their opinions. This bond renders training, education, and counseling to be effective.

2) Within this context, a young person with mental illness can benefit from additional support provided by skilled lay staff, as well as from treatment provided by licensed counselors. OFS provides in-service training to its teachers crew supervisors, and all lay people, on how to recognize and respond to the indicators of mental illness.

3) Creating an objective way to measure the effectiveness of the Corps experience with members with mental health issues can be difficult. OFS is accessing mental health professionals in the community to help create an evidence-based measurement tool.

4) Group discussions on the topic of mental health must be conducted with great care. Confidentiality about mental health status must be respected.

5) Identifying oneself with a "mental health label" is not always the healthiest way to proceed.

Service Model: The Bond Theory: Traditionally, OFS has worked with youth and young adults who have multiple barriers to success. They have been let down by and failed in or been failed by other institutions – family, schools, and other social service agencies. Typically, they are defiant of adult authority, self-destructive, headed toward increasing dependency on the public welfare system, and involvement in the criminal justice system.

The Bond Theory takes the view that conditions favorable to the violation of law are rooted in the absence or weakness of intimate relations with other persons, especially with adults (such as parents or teachers) who might be "significant others" in the life of a youth. A youth that is closely attached to and respecting of others, feels approval and esteem from others when his/her behavior is in accord with the other's values and beliefs. If such attachments are absent, the approval or esteem from someone who is not respected has little meaning. Lack of concern for the reactions of "significant others" is thought to generalize as a lack of concern for the approval of persons in positions of authority. The youth who does not have the love and

approval of those closest to him will tend not to expect or even desire the love and approval of impersonal others, and will thus be free to reject the normative pattern that society attempts to impose. For the unattached, the only reason to obey rules is to avoid punishment. In the case where attachment does not occur, the youth is assumed to have a low stake in conformity. "Stakes in conformity", as it is used here, includes both attachment to a significant other and having a stake in one's past and future achievements within the larger society.

Young people succeed at OFS because the adult staff provides what their community has not – the consistent message that they are valuable as individuals and that someone cares about their welfare. The staff provides constant guidance, support, and direction. In essence, the staff become "significant others" to OFS participants – substitute parents or big brothers and sisters. The participants begin to trust these adults and value their opinions. Once this bond has been established, it is possible for the program of training, education, and counseling to be effective.

Operation Fresh Start provides a positive opportunity for development, a holistic approach utilizing staff and volunteers as significant others, and a work setting that provides real work with significant value to the community.

Particularly for those working on long-term housing projects, this work is a concrete symbol of the rebuilding they are doing in their lives. Each day, slowly and surely, the crew brings the house closer to completion. Participants see the impact of their work and say, "I did that." For many, the first bond they form at OFS is to the house itself. This may be the first time that many have been a part of something that is positive, the first time they have been successful, the first time that they have given back to their community.

The program emphasis is on positive rewards that come from work and healthy human interaction. For those unaccustomed to success, the staff sets up a myriad of ways that participants can be successful in small ways and then succeed at increasingly larger and more complex tasks. Attainment of goals is always appropriately praised to reinforce the participant's sense of personal effectiveness. Additional rewards include the living allowance and educational stipend that are received for participating. Eventually, rewards include the promise of a brighter future.

Operation Fresh Start Combines Construction and Counseling:
Operation Fresh Start (Madison, WI) has developed an approach to working with YouthBuild participants so that construction staff act

as mentors, teachers, role models, and "significant others" while they teach construction and work skills. This approach emphasizes the development of individual strategies for each participant and collaboration between supervisors, teachers, and other program staff. In this program, construction staff are responsible for the overall development and progress of each of the participants. Although participants construct housing and learn carpentry skills while enrolled in the program, the goal of the construction staff is not to train carpenters, but to develop young people.

Since supervisors and participants work together each day, they have an opportunity to develop relationships and have time to talk about personal issues. Each supervisor manages a work crew of eight participants. Staff are expected to develop relationships with their participants, not just to teach carpentry. Although the program offers traditional one-to-one counseling to participants, they sometimes attend counseling sessions without really opening up. Discussing their issues in a non-traditional setting, with the supervisor with whom they already have a relationship, is more genuine.

Supervisors can bring up issues such as attendance problems or check in with a participant who seems to be having a tough time. The staff believe that better results are obtained when they talk with a participant about alcohol or drug abuse issues while putting up drywall, than in a traditional counseling session.

Developing personal relationships between participants and staff is not something the program leaves to chance; it begins during the application process. Construction supervisors, teachers, the placement coordinator and co-directors interview participants. The aim is for each participant to get the message that all of the staff is invested in their progress. From the very beginning, participants are told that as long as they are trying and meeting goals, the staff are 100% their advocates and mentors and will find resources to help them accomplish what they need to do.

After a participant is admitted, supervisors and teachers work together to develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for that participant. The ISS ensures that the program meets each participant's particular needs. Since participants are often receiving services from other agencies, OFS acts as the hub of the wheel to ensure that all programming is coordinated. As participants work their way through the program, staff meets formally as a group and informally to discuss the individual needs of participants.

I. DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING SCRIPT

Overview and Purpose of Training:
Disability awareness training is an important part of creating an inclusive program and environment, and is a great first step in overcoming any concerns, negative attitudes, and stereotypes that other program members may have regarding working with people who have disabilities. Don't overlook the importance of disability awareness training. When asked to work alongside people with disabilities for the first time, many corpsmembers were initially uncomfortable. Negative attitudes and misconceptions about people with disabilities were most often the result of lack of awareness rather than malice or apathy. Take adequate time to discuss the issues. Make sure to have corpsmembers with disabilities present to answer questions and facilitate discussion.

This training is designed to provide a broad overview of key disability issues and to increase knowledge and awareness of:

- Common Myths about Individuals with Disabilities

- History of Disability Rights Movement

- The Old and New Paradigm of Disability

- People-First Language

- Different Disabilities

- Disability Etiquette

Please adapt the training materials to meet the needs of your program. There is enough information in this training to take approximately two hours to present and discuss the materials. This training is intended to serve as a starting point for disability awareness in your organization. However, you may already have access to

a similar training or be able to work with a local disability-related organization to develop your own training materials. In that case, we would encourage you to use the training that best meets your program's unique needs.

This training script is intended to support the accompanying PowerPoint slides found in this appendix and provide trainers with a detailed outline of the content of the slides. The script includes the contents of each slide along with any notes about the content in a text format and can serve as an alternative format for individuals that may not be able to access the content of the PowerPoint slides due to a visual impairment or other disability. Throughout the PowerPoint slides, a variety of clip art graphics depicting individuals with different disabilities are used. In addition, there are several photographs included in the slides. In the note section of relevant slides, a photo description is provided for individuals with visual impairments. For additional tips on making your training event accessible to all individuals, please refer back to the material in Section II: Development of Disability Awareness Training of the toolkit. A list of references and resources to help you find additional materials on the information provided in the training is provided at the end of the presentation.

Section 1: Disability Myths and Realities • • • • • • • • • • • • •

SLIDE 1: Disability Awareness: Including People with Disabilities in Service

Staff and/or Member Training

➢ Title slide with picture of members of the Utah Conservation Corps' 2008 Access Crew at the scenic overlook at Tony Grove Lake in Logan Canyon.

➢ Also included on the slide are the logos of the Utah Conservation Corps and the Center for Persons with Disabilities.

SLIDE 2: Purpose of Training

➢ Increase knowledge and awareness of:

   ▪ Common Myths and Facts about Individuals with Disabilities

   ▪ History of Disability Rights Movement

   ▪ The Old and New Paradigm of Disability

   ▪ People-First Language

   ▪ Different Disabilities

   ▪ Disability Etiquette

   ▪ Effective Communication Techniques

➢ How many of you have a family member or friend with a disability?

NOTE: If you think about this question for more than a few minutes, chances are that most, if not all of us in this room, know someone with a disability that is fairly close to us. Disability is a natural part of life and when we stop to consider who we know that may have a disability, we begin to realize how common disability is and we begin to realize that disability issues are relevant to all of us.

SLIDE 4: Largest and Most Diverse Group

➢ People with disabilities constitute our largest (one in five Americans) and most diverse minority group, encompassing all ages, genders, religions, ethnicities, and socioeconomic levels. It is also the only group that any person can join at any time (Snow, 2008).

ASK: What does it mean that disability is "the only group that any person can join at anytime?" Does this help clarify the idea that disability issues really are important to all of us?

At some point in each of our lives the physical accessibility of a location or the prevailing societal attitudes about disability may become a very real and personal concern. It is in our own best interest to begin to make our communities more inclusive and to break down all physical and attitudinal barriers.

SLIDE 5: Invisible but Potent Barrier

➢ Attitudes determine whether or not children and adults with disabilities receive equal opportunities for success.

➢ While physical barriers are coming down, attitudes change very slowly. Negative attitudes and discrimination are the greatest obstacle people with disabilities face today (Snow, 2008).

➢ Negative attitudes usually stem from preconceptions, misunderstandings and misinformation.

ASK: Why are attitudes the greatest barrier people with disabilities face? *(With negative attitudes, people with disabilities are never given a chance.)*

SLIDE 6: Myths and Realities

➢ Can you think of some stereotypes about people with disabilities?

ASK: Ask group members for ideas about common stereotypes or myths about people with disabilities. For each myth or stereotype that is mentioned ask the group what they think the reality is.

SLIDE 7: Myths and Realities (cont.)

Myth: People with disabilities are heroes who are inspirational and brave.
Reality Check:

✓ Adjusting to a disability requires adapting to a lifestyle, not courage (Easter Seals, 2007).

✓ Individuals with disabilities are just people who have trouble with some life activities. They don't want to be put on a pedestal. They want to be treated the same as everyone else.

✓ Individuals with disabilities don't want to be stereotyped based on just one aspect of their life.

SLIDE 8: Myths and Realities (cont.)

*Myth: Having a disability impacts all areas of a person's functioning–
e.g., speaking louder to a person who is using a wheelchair.*
Reality Check:

✓ Even though some disabilities affect more than one area of functioning, it should never be assumed that a person has more than one disability. Individuals with disabilities need to be spoken to directly and treated as an adult, with respect and dignity.

SLIDE 9: Myths and Realities (cont.)

Myth: The lives of people with disabilities are very different than the lives of people witout disabilities.
Reality Check:

✓ Individuals with disabilities work, have families, grocery shop, pay taxes, vote, plan and dream like everyone else (Easter Seals, 2007). They are just people – moms and dads, daughters and sons, employees and employers, friends and neighbors, students and teachers, doctors, engineers, reporters, actors, scientists, presidents, and more (Snow, 2008).

SLIDE 10: Myths and Realities (cont.)

Myth: People with disabilities do not contribute to society and "drain" the system.
Reality Check:

✓ People with disabilities have made significant contributions: President Roosevelt (polio), Milton (blind at 43 wrote Paradise Lost), Beethoven (deaf when composed 9th symphony), Stephen Hawking (Lou Gehrigs), Einstein (learning – didn't speak until 3, hard time with math in school), and Edison (couldn't read until 12, hard time writing).

✓ People with disabilities have the same potential and talents as everyone else.

SLIDE 11: Myths and Realities (cont.)

Myth: People who are blind acquire a "sixth sense" and people who are Deaf read lips.

Reality Check:

- ✓ Although most people who are blind develop their remaining senses more fully, they do not have a "sixth sense."

- ✓ Lip-reading skills vary among people who use them and are never entirely reliable.

SLIDE 12: Misperceptions

Be aware of common misperceptions and assumptions:

- ➢ People with cerebral palsy may appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

- ➢ People with traumatic brain injuries may act belligerent or irresponsible.

- ➢ People who are hard of hearing may initially appear to be unresponsive.

ASK: Do you think that many individuals generally experience at least a little discomfort when interacting with people with disabilities?

How do you think that these myths and misperceptions contribute to this level of discomfort and make people less likely to engage with a person with disabilities?

Section 2: History of Disability Rights Movement • • • • • • •

SLIDE 13: History of Disability Rights Movement

Photo Description: Signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. President George H.W. Bush (center) is flanked by Evan Kemp, Chairman, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (left) and Justin Dart, Chairman, President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (right). Standing are the Rev. Harold Wilke (left) and Sandra Swift Parrino, Chairperson, National Council on Disability (right).

SLIDE 14: Ways of Thinking about Disability

- ➢ OLD Paradigm: "The person is defective and needs fixing."

- ➢ NEW Paradigm: "Fix the environment, <u>not</u> the individual."

NOTE: The **old** paradigm (medical model) regards disability as a defect or sickness which must be cured through medical intervention. This model/ paradigm continues to influence our attitudes and shape our world. It has dominated the formulation of disability policy for years.

The **new** paradigm (social model) sees disability as a natural part of the human condition that does not diminish rights. Disability is a consequence of societal, attitudinal, and social barriers that prevent people with disabilities from participating in society to the maximum extent possible.

SLIDE 15: The Old Paradigm of Disability

- People with disabilities were defective and in need of fixing.

- If they couldn't be fixed…excluded, segregated, and denied services.

- Out of sight out of mind, the norm.

- Ugly laws into the mid 1970's

- Elements of the Old Paradigm no longer explicit…but still implied in some attitudes, programs, policies, and environments.

NOTE: This is the way society has viewed disability in the past. Ugly laws refer to actual laws on the books that made it illegal to be a person with a disability and be out in public. In Chicago, up until the 1970's, a person with a physical disability or "deformity" could be fined for being in public. We no longer have ugly laws in the books, but we still have a lot of elements of this view in attitudes and environments.

SLIDE 16: The New Paradigm of Disability (cont.)

Two Core Precepts:

1) Disability is a natural part of the human experience that in no way diminishes a person's right to fully participate in all aspects of society.

2) The approach is to fix the environment, not the individual.

NOTE: This is the view of disability that disability advocates have been promoting for decades. It is the view that advocates have worked very hard to establish as the foundation for all disability legislation and policies since the late 60's/early 70's.

SLIDE 17: Disability Rights

The Civil Rights movement of the 1960's didn't specifically include people with disabilities, but it inspired disability activists to make themselves heard.

The following is an overview of some of the major milestones in the disability rights movement:

- In 1968, the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) required "any building or facility built, renovated, or leased with Federal funds, be built to be accessible to and usable by physically disabled persons."

- In 1970, "Rolling Quads" hit the Berkeley campus igniting the Independent Living Movement

NOTE: Inspired by the heightened awareness and civil rights successes of the 1960's, disability rights activists such as Ed Roberts in California and Judy Heumann in New York took the lead in overcoming discrimination and extending the basic right to full participation in society to include people with disabilities.

In 1970, Ed Roberts led a group of students with disabilities to start the "Rolling Quads" program on the Berkeley campus - a group that will soon set its sights

on accessibility issues across the nation. A couple years later, Ed founded the nation's first Independent Living Center in Berkeley, California.

SLIDE 18: 1973 Rehabilitation Act

"No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 of Title V).

NOTE: In 1973, after a flood of angry letters and protests, Congress overrode Nixon's veto and passed the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibits discrimination in federal programs and services and all other programs or services receiving federal funding.

SLIDE 19: Additional Legislation

- **In 1975**, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA) is passed.

- **In 1977,** Judy Heumann leads a 25 day sit-in at the Federal Building in San Francisco.

- **In 1978**, ADAPT holds a public transit bus hostage in Denver.

NOTE: 1975, "IDEA" was passed requiring free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment possible for children with disabilities.

April 5, 1977: Judy Heumann led disabled residents of San Francisco in a dramatic month-long sit-in at a government building, demanding access to federally funded buildings through enforcement of "Section 504." The sit-in resulted in winning civil rights for the nearly 50 million people with physical and mental impairments living in the United States.

In 1978, Wade Blank and 19 disabled activists hold a public transit bus "hostage" on the corner of Broadway and Colfax in Denver, Colorado -- ADAPT will eventually mushroom into the nation's first grassroots disability rights activist organization.

SLIDE 20: The ADA

Closely modeled after the Civil Rights Act, the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 provided a federal mandate to eliminate discrimination against people with disabilities in all aspects of life. ***The primary goal of the ADA is equal participation of individuals with disabilities in the "mainstream" of American society.***

NOTE: The landmark Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, provides comprehensive civil rights protections to qualified individuals with disabilities in the areas of employment, public accommodations, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

SLIDE 21: Not the End of the Story

➤ To be effective, laws must be enforced and attitudes must change.

➢ Programs such as The Corps Network's Inclusion Project work to ensure that individuals with disabilities have full access to their communities and the unobstructed right to direct their own lives in the most independent and integrated setting possible.

SLIDE 22: The Disability Policy Framework for Advocates

At the end of the day we have to ask ourselves…is change being implemented?

Four Goals of Disability Policy:

1. Equality of Opportunity

2. Full Participation

3. Independent Living

4. Economic Self-Sufficiency (Petty et al., 2004)

Are you addressing these goals in your program?

SLIDE 23: Promoting Inclusion Among AmeriCorps Members

All crew members should be involved in group decisions.

1. Project goals benefit from both non-physical and physical abilities.

2. Delegate tasks to appropriate people.

3. Each task must be a legitimate function.
   (Otherwise, people will see right through it!)

NOTE: This slide provides examples of ways an inclusive service program naturally supports the Four Goals of Disability Policy (equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency).

1. Making decisions with people is a credit to their intelligence, insight and judgment, building their dignity.

2. In the traditional UCC crew setting, project goals are reliant upon the ability to perform physical tasks.

3. For example, if the task is to create a raised bed garden, someone who has a C4 spinal cord injury may be given the step of designing the garden and selecting plants, while someone else with more physical abilities constructs the beds.

4. If tasks seem contrived, people with disabilities will feel patronized or devalued.

Projects must be designed to include people with diverse backgrounds and abilities.

Each delegated task must be a significant contribution to the project goal(s).

Delegate carefully. Be careful not to set members up for failure or competition.

SLIDE 24: Creating an Inclusive Environment

Photo Description: Picture of a sign at the top of a steep incline at a zoo. On the sign, which is in the shape of a red triangle, is a picture of a person in a wheelchair going down a steep incline. At the end of the incline is a picture of a crocodile with an open mouth. Needless to say, this sign does not indicate a welcoming or inclusive environment for individuals with disabilities.

SLIDE 25: Key Elements of Inclusion

❑ Understanding the Power of Language

❑ Disability Etiquette

❑ Awareness of Different Disabilities

❑ Practicing Effective Communication

SLIDE 26: How Many Errors?

❑ A wheelchair bound suspect made off with $10,000 in a bank robbery. The thief, apparently confined to a wheelchair and afflicted with cerebral palsy, pulled a gun on a teller. The teller told police the gunman was spastic, waving the gun around, and made everyone nervous. The suspect was given $10,000 in small bills. The handicapped robber roared out of the bank and disappeared into traffic. The police later caught him when the wheelchair got stuck on a curb cut blocked by a truck. The teller identified the suspect in a police lineup. Police said he also suffered from cerebral palsy since birth.

NOTE: Give participants a few minutes to read through the above paragraph and have them note any errors that they find. This paragraph will be revisited at the end of this section so have participants keep their responses to themselves for now. You may need to read the paragraph out loud if there is anyone in the audience that would have trouble reading the paragraph on their own.

SLIDE 27: The Power of Language

Outdated language perpetuates stereotypes that bring out pity, fear and patronizing attitudes *(NPR's "Beyond Affliction").*

How might use of the following terms influence the way crew members with disabilities are perceived?

▪ The disabled

▪ Suffering from epilepsy

▪ A victim of cerebral palsy

▪ Confined to a wheelchair

▪ Crippled

NOTE: The use of outdated language and words to describe people with disabilities contributes greatly to perpetuating old stereotypes.

People with disabilities should no longer be viewed as helpless, tragic victims.

Awareness (of how language influences attitudes) is the first step!

Activity: Outdated, insensitive language can be offensive and hurtful. Consider how you might challenge this type of language if it is used by your staff, crew leaders, or crew members.

Discussion:

> The disabled: lumps people with disabilities together under one huge category and dismisses individual differences.
>
> Suffering from ____: encourages pity.
>
> A Victim of ____: promotes disempowered, helpless image.
>
> Confined to a wheelchair: negative and inaccurate.
>
> Crippled: encourages pity.

Part of your role as staff/crew leader is to set an example and use appropriate language when talking about disability.

Handouts: You may consider using the "*Talking About Disability*" article *available from the* Memphis *Center* for Independent Living Center at http://www.mcil.org/mcil/mcil/talking.htm as a handout for training participants.

SLIDE 28: Terms for Disabilities have Changed

❑ Attitudes are often shaped by language.

❑ Lumping people into a stigmatized group brings attention to their disabilities while obscuring individual characteristics (Longmore, 1985).

❑ Negative stereotypical words cause harmful perceptions and damage self-image (Snow, 2008).

❑ Terms have changed as we have progressed medically, socially, and ethically, to be more respectful and accurate.

NOTE: Language shapes attitudes. Disability status is only one variable in the full range of human experience. When thinking about disabilities, it is important to put the person first. Using accurate, sensitive, and respectful terminology is a good first step.

SLIDE 29: People-First Language!

PUT PEOPLE FIRST, not their disability.

❑ People with disabilities are people first. They are not a homogenous group of "the handicapped" or "the disabled."

❑ People-first language shifts the focus away from a person's disability, as it puts the person first, with a simple description of their disability, when necessary.

❑ It describes what a person has, not who a person is.

NOTE: Crippled, deformed, suffers from, victim of, the retarded, infirmed, the deaf and dumb, etc. are never acceptable under any circumstances. Also, do not use nouns to describe people, such as epileptic, diabetic, etc.

Handouts: You may consider using the "*To Ensure Inclusion, Freedom, and Respect for All We Must Use People First Language*" article by Kathy Snow available through her website Disability is Natural at www.disabilityisnatural. com/images/PDF/pfl09.pdf as a handout for training participants.

SLIDE 30: Examples

Say…

- ❑ Person with a disability, not handicapped person.

- ❑ Person who uses a wheelchair, not wheelchair-bound or confined to a wheelchair.

- ❑ Person who has cerebral palsy, not person "afflicted" with or "suffering" from.

- ❑ Child with muscular dystrophy, not special needs child.

- ❑ Child with Down Syndrome, not Down's Kid.

NOTE:

- ➢ Person with a disability, not handicapped person. (Handicaps refer to barriers, not people. Implies person is incapable of ever overcoming effects).

- ➢ Person who uses a wheelchair, not wheelchair-bound or confined to a wheelchair. (Mobility devices provide freedom).

- ➢ Person who has polio, not person "afflicted" with or "suffering" from. (Implies the person is living a reduced quality of life, "tragic martyr" stereotype).

- ➢ Child with muscular dystrophy, not special needs child. (People with disabilities don't want to be considered "special," they are like everyone else).

- ➢ Child with Down Syndrome not Down's Kid.

SLIDE 31: Impact of Words

- ❑ The movie Tropic Thunder repeatedly uses the word, "retard." The point is made that the worst thing for an actor to do is to go "full retard."

- ❑ People with disabilities were not consulted and a number of groups protested.

- ❑ Why is this movie offensive to people with disabilities?

- ❑ Why does this matter?

NOTE: Ask group members to discuss these questions and share their thoughts and opinions.

SLIDE 32: Because Words Can Hurt!

- ❑ There is a limit to satire. Making offensive, mean, humiliating jokes isn't funny.

- ❑ People with intellectual disabilities are always harmed when words such as "retard," "imbecile," "idiot," and "moron," are used.

- ❑ These words reject, dehumanize, and demean. This may encourage young people and others to tease and/or torment their peers.

SLIDE 33: Thoughts from People with Down Syndrome

- ❑ John Stephens said it hurts and scares him when he hears jokes about "retards" on the bus. He says, "Nothing scares me as much as feeling all alone in a world that moves so much faster than I do" (J. Stephens, Roanoke Times, 8/19/08).

- ❑ Eddie Barbanell said the word makes him feel rejected, stupid, and demeaned.

- ❑ Loretta Claiborne said the word has been used to mock and degrade her. She asked that we stop using this word because of its effect on the hearts and minds of people with disabilities (M. Shriver, Los Angeles Times, 2008).

SLIDE 34: How Many Errors Revisited

- ❑ A wheelchair bound suspect made off with $10,000 in a bank robbery. The thief, apparently confined to a wheelchair and afflicted with cerebral palsy, pulled a gun on a teller. The teller told police the gunman was spastic, waving the gun around, and made everyone nervous. The suspect was given $10,000 in small bills. The handicapped robber roared out of the bank and disappeared into traffic. The police later caught him when the wheelchair got stuck on a curb cut blocked by a truck. The teller identified the suspect in a police lineup. Police said he also suffered from cerebral palsy since birth.

NOTE: How many people caught all of the errors? Do these phrases stand out more now that you have learned about people-first language? Why does using respective terminology make a difference?

SLIDE 35: Why use Person First Language?

- ❑ People are not their disability and their potential can not be predicted by their diagnosis (Snow, 2008).

- ❑ Accurately portrays people with disabilities as independent, productive, valued, and respected members of society.

- ❑ Demonstrates you are well mannered, sensitive, and informed. Provides a positive role model.

SLIDE 36: Understanding Specific Disabilities

Familiarize yourself with the characteristics of specific disabilities so that you can better recognize, understand, and accommodate individual needs.

However, be aware of limiting labels and the broad spectrum of abilities within a group of people described as having the same disability!

NOTE: Photo Description: Seven members of the UCC Access to Service inclusive crew in front of thermal pools in Yellowstone.

Remember that two individuals with the same disability can be affected in completely different ways. For example, if two individuals both have cerebral palsy, one may walk but have his or her speech affected and the other may use a wheelchair but have his or her speech speech unaffected.

SLIDE 37: Developmental Disabilities

- ❑ Diverse groups of severe chronic conditions that affect major life activities such as language, mobility, learning, self-care, self-direction, and independent living.

- ❑ Begins anytime during development from birth to 22 years of age and usually lasts throughout a person's lifetime.

- ❑ Includes autism, cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome, and intellectual disabilities.

NOTE: Intellectual disabilities refer to conditions that were formerly referred to as mental retardation. Thanks to the work of many self-advocates and their allies, the official term is now intellectual disability. Even national organizations that used to have mental retardation in their official title have changed it to intellectual disabilities.

SLIDE 38: Developmental Disabilities - Common Behavior Traits

- ❑ Eager to please

- ❑ May become frustrated easily

- ❑ May have difficulty following instructions

- ❑ May have trouble assessing situations

- ❑ Lack of impulse control

- ❑ Difficulty with new or stressful situations

SLIDE 39: Cognitive/Intellectual Disabilities

- ❑ Characterized by a significantly low score on an intelligence or mental ability test.

- ❑ Substantial limitations to think, remember, interpret social cues, and understand numbers and symbols.

- ❑ Possible communication difficulties:

- Limited vocabulary

- Short attention span

- Slower information processing

- Difficulty understanding questions

- Memory gaps

NOTE: Examples include Down Syndrome, autism, and significant learning disabilities. Although intellectual disabilities fit under the broad umbrella of developmental disabilities, it can be useful to discuss them as a separate group of disabilities. Similarly, some people discuss cognitive disabilities and traumatic brain injury together because they have similar characteristics, but we have chosen to separate them out for this presentation.

SLIDE 40: Traumatic Brain Injury

❑ Common to have decreased:

- Attention

- Initiation

- Mood regulation

- Executive function (say exactly what they think)

- Memory (often forget appointments)

- Increased impulsivity

- Easily fatigued

NOTE: Remember that every person with a TBI is unique. Two people can have a very similar injury to the brain and experience very different symptoms.

SLIDE 41: Persons with Mental Illness

❑ Wide range of treatable conditions with varying symptoms that may come and go including depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, and post traumatic stress disorder.

❑ May be insecure and fearful, find it difficult to concentrate, become agitated or withdrawn, emotionally changeable, show little empathy, and have trouble with reality.

SLIDE 42: Muscular/Neurological

A broad range of disabilities affect movement, including:

❑ Cerebral Palsy, caused by damage to the brain, characterized by an inability to control motor functions. May experience speech difficulties, unsteady gait, and slow reaction time. Does not affect intelligence but may co-exist with intellectual disability.

❑ Multiple Sclerosis is a chronic disease which attacks the central nervous system (brain, spinal cord, and optic nerves). Severity

and symptoms vary, often experience fatigue, tremors, pain and coordination difficulties. Vision, speech, hearing, and cognitive function may be affected.

SLIDE 43: Muscular/Neurological (cont.)

❑ Muscular Dystrophy is a genetic degenerative disease with nine different types which cause muscles to irreversibly atrophy. Symptoms vary but often include fatigue, muscle weakness, and paralysis.

❑ Stroke is a brain injury caused by the sudden interruption of blood flow to the brain. Can affect motor control, communication, cognition, and personality. Often experience weakness on one side of the body. May also have memory loss and speech difficulties.

SLIDE 44: Mobility Impairments

❑ Often due to another disability such as MS or CP, or an injury such as a spinal cord injury.

❑ Impact on ability of individual to move about in certain environments varies widely.

❑ Individuals may use a cane, walker, crutches, wheelchair, scooter, or other mobility device to navigate the environment.

SLIDE 45: Common Health Concerns Related to Spinal Cord Injuries

❑ Autonomic Dysreflexia

❑ Body Temperature Regulation

❑ Pressure Sores

❑ Skin Care

❑ Liquids/Hydration

NOTE:

➤ Autonomic Dysreflexia: This is an emergency situation seen in individuals with spinal cord injuries.

Common Symptoms include:

-severe pounding headache

-seeing spots and/or blurred vision

-slow heart rate

-goose bumps above the level of the spinal cord injury

-sweating above the level of injury

What to do: Find and remove the cause. Autonomic Dysreflexia will not be relieved until the cause is removed.

Check the following:

-catheter kinks or blockage

-cuts, bruises, or ulcers

-sunburn

-tight clothing

➢ Body Temperature Regulation: People with SCI's are particularly susceptible to hypothermia. SCI's result in the lack of ability to transmit sensory feedback determining skin temperature and in the lack of ability to cause muscles to shiver to keep warm. People with SCI's will need to manually check their skin temperature below the level of injury.

Prevention/Solution: Allow plenty of time to put on warm clothes – it may take a little longer for individuals with mobility impairments. (Bring extra warm, dry clothes, food, and a thermos of hot tea)

➢ Pressure Sores: Occur in people with SCI's. Also called decubitus ulcers or bedsores. They are caused when a person's body position does not change while the skin is pinched for an extended period of time between a bony area and hard surface (often the hip or tail bone). It is a serious problem and difficult to heal.

Solution:
Make sure their seat is comfortably padded and stable (foam or gel pads or blankets). They should change their positions frequently, at least every hour, and keep their skin clean and dry.

Symptoms:
Red, discolored area

What to do:
Take pressure off and seek help! Dress wound.

➢ Skin Care: Make sun block, hats, long sleeves/pants available. (Sometimes people with SCI's ignore or forget about skin below the level of injury).

➢ Liquids/Hydration: Drink plenty of water (gallon per person per day when working outside).

Sometimes people with SCI's will not want to drink because they don't want to deal with their catheter, bathroom transfers, etc. Be aware of this and communicate that there is plenty of time and space to meet individual needs.

SLIDE 46: Hidden Disabilities

May Include:

❑ Traumatic Brain Injuries

❑ Mental Illness

❑ Learning Disabilities

❑ Mild Multiple Sclerosis

- ❑ Hard of Hearing

- ❑ Chemical Sensitivities

- ❑ Heart Disease

- ❑ Arthritis

- ❑ Chronic Fatigue

NOTE: Why is it important to be aware of hidden disabilities?

SLIDE 47: Individual Differences

In the next section some standard guidelines for disability etiquette and common courtesies are presented, along with some general communication tips related to specific disabilities. This information is very general and is simply intended to provide a broad overview. Please keep in mind that each individual is unique.

SLIDE 48: Disability Etiquette

- ❑ People with disabilities are entitled to the same courtesies you would extend to anyone, including personal privacy. If you find it inappropriate to ask people about their sex lives, or their complexions, or their incomes, extend the courtesy to people with disabilities.

- ❑ If you don't make a habit of leaning or hanging on people, don't lean or hang on someone's wheelchair. Wheelchairs are an extension of personal space. (Eater Seals, 2009)

NOTE: You may wish to use the following information from Easter Seals as a handout. Available online at http://www.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ntl_etiquette

Most of these points are covered in the following slides, however a handout that participants can take with them may be helpful.

Disability Etiquette

- If you don't make a habit of leaning or hanging on people, don't lean or hang on someone's wheelchair. Wheelchairs are an extension of personal space.

- When you offer to assist someone with a vision impairment, allow the person to take your arm. This will help you to guide, rather than propel or lead the person.

- Treat adults as adults. Call a person by his or her first name only when you extend this familiarity to everyone present. Don't patronize people who use wheelchairs by patting them on the head. Reserve this sign of affection for children.

In conversation...

- When talking with someone who has a disability, speak directly to him or her, rather than through a companion who may be along.

- Relax. Don't be embarrassed if you happen to use common expressions such as "See you later" or "I've got to run", that seem to relate to the person's disability.

- To get the attention of a person who has a hearing disability, tap the person on the shoulder or wave your hand. Look directly at the person and speak clearly, slowly, and expressively to establish if the person can read your lips. Not everyone with hearing impairments can lip-read. Those who do will rely on facial expressions and other body language to help understand. Show consideration by facing a light source and keeping your hands and food away from your mouth when speaking. Keep mustaches well-trimmed. Shouting won't help, but written notes will.

- When talking with a person in a wheelchair for more than a few minutes, place yourself at the wheelchair user's eye level to spare both of you a stiff neck.

- When greeting a person with a severe loss of vision, always identify yourself and others who may be with you. Say, for example, "On my right is Andy Clark". When conversing in a group, remember to say the name of the person to whom you are speaking to give vocal cue. Speak in a normal tone of voice, indicate when you move from one place to another, and let it be known when the conversation is at an end.

- Give whole, unhurried attention when you're talking to a person who has difficulty speaking. Keep your manner encouraging rather than correcting, and be patient rather than speak for the person. When necessary, ask questions that require short answers or a nod or shake of the head. Never pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so. Repeat what you understand. The person's reaction will guide you to understanding.

Common courtesies...

- If you would like to help someone with a disability, ask if he or she needs help before you act, and listen to any instructions the person may want to give.

- When giving directions to a person in a wheelchair, consider distance, weather conditions, and physical obstacles such as stairs, curbs, and steep hills.

- When directing a person with a visual impairment, use specifics such as "left a hundred feet" or "right two yards".

- Be considerate of the extra time it might take a person with a disability to get things done or said. Let the person set the pace in walking and talking.

- When planning events involving persons with disabilities, consider their needs ahead of time. If an insurmountable barrier exists, let them know about it prior to the event.

SLIDE 49: Disability Etiquette (cont.)

❑ When you offer to assist someone with a visual impairment, allow the person to take your arm. This will help you to guide, rather than propel or lead, the person.

❑ Treat adults as adults. Call a person by his or her first name only when you extend this familiarity to everyone present. Don't patronize people who use wheelchairs by patting them on the head. Reserve this sign of affection for children. (Easter Seals, 2009)

SLIDE 50: Disability Etiquette (cont.)

Relax. Don't be embarrassed if you happen to use common expressions, such as:

❑ "See you later" or "Nice seeing you" to a woman who is blind.

❑ "Gotta run" to someone in a wheelchair.

❑ "Talk to you later" to a person who is Deaf.

❑ Put the person first and when in doubt ask the individual you are speaking with what to say (Easter Seals, 2009).

SLIDE 51: Common Courtesies

❑ If you would like to help someone with a disability, ask if he or she needs help before you act, and listen to any instructions the person may want to give.

❑ When giving directions to a person in a wheelchair, consider distance, weather conditions and physical obstacles such as stairs, curbs and steep hills.

❑ When directing a person with a visual impairment, use specifics such as "left a hundred feet" or "right two yards".

NOTE: Encourage frank and honest discussion about needs and expectations. The person needing assistance is the most able trainer. Always begin by asking the person needing assistance what she/he needs or how they would like to proceed.

SLIDE 52: Common Courtesies (cont.)

❑ Be considerate of the extra time it might take a person with a disability to get things done or said. Let the person set the pace in walking and talking.

❑ When planning events involving persons with disabilities, consider their needs ahead of time. If an insurmountable barrier exists, let them know about it prior to the event. (Easter Seals, 2009)

SLIDE 53: General Communication Recommendations

❑ Don't make assumptions.

❑ Don't patronize or say, "honey" or "sweetie."

❏ Individuals with disabilities want to be treated with respect, dignity, and courtesy.

SLIDE 54: Communicating with People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

❏ Make sure you have the person's attention.

❏ Use a quiet environment without bright or distracting backgrounds.

❏ If a person uses an interpreter or personal assistant, maintain eye contact and talk with the person, not their interpreter or assistant.

❏ Speak clearly, at a normal pace.

❏ Be patient and take time to communicate.

❏ Use facial expressions and body language.

❏ Ask the person what will make communication easier.

SLIDE 55: Communicating with a Person who is Blind

❏ Visual impairments can range from mild to severe.

❏ Identify yourself and anyone with you. Don't just start talking. Let the person know when you leave.

❏ Convey specific descriptive visual information (e.g. there is a table on your right).

❏ Speak in a normal tone of voice.

❏ Always ask the person what is the best way to provide assistance.

SLIDE 56: Communicating with a Person who is Blind (cont.)

❏ If you need to guide the person, offer your arm, and let the person hold on to you.

❏ If you offer a seat, place the person's hand on the back or arm of the chair or pat the chair.

❏ Don't pet or grab a guide dog.

❏ When guiding or giving directions, focus on the individual, not the dog.

❏ Don't separate the guide dog from the person.

SLIDE 57: Communicating with People who have Intellectual Disabilities

❏ Talk to the person to get a sense of their abilities.

❏ Use short words and sentences, but don't patronize or talk to the person like a child if they are an adult.

❏ Be prepared to repeat what the person said to make sure you understand. Rephrase and ask questions in different ways.

❏ Check to see if the person understands you.

❑ They may be easily distracted – redirect attention if needed.

SLIDE 58: Communicating with People who have Intellectual Disabilities (cont.)

❑ Give instructions for tasks one at a time. Break long tasks down in small steps. Allow extra time.

❑ Try to describe things in clear and concrete terms, not abstract terms.

❑ Offer assistance in understanding instructions or completing forms if needed.

❑ Be patient and supportive. They may feel frustrated – most things are harder and take longer.

❑ Praise success and give immediate feedback.

SLIDE 59: Communicating with a Person who has a TBI

❑ Get the person's attention, redirect if needed.

❑ Simplify the environment and remove distractions.

❑ Limit the amount presented and highlight relevant/important information.

❑ Summarize and repeat information often.

❑ Remind of appointments.

❑ Provide written information/checklists.

SLIDE 60: Communicating with a Person Who is Experiencing a Mental Health Crisis

❑ Be supportive, respectful, and accepting.

❑ Stay calm and speak softly.

❑ Get attention and repeat if necessary.

❑ Keep things clear and simple.

❑ Ignore delusions, don't argue. Change the subject.

❑ Allow the person to leave if needed and return later (C. Amenson, CAMI, 2008).

SLIDE 61: Communicating with People who have Difficulty Speaking

❑ People with cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, and some other disabilities may be difficult to understand.

❑ Provide extra time and let people talk at their own pace. Give them your complete attention.

❑ Ask them to repeat if you don't understand. Never pretend to understand. Ask yes/no questions if necessary.

❑ Repeat or rephrase what the person is saying to clarify that you understand.

❑ Be patient, flexible, and encouraging.

SLIDE 62: Communicating with People who use Wheelchairs or Scooters

❑ Offer to shake hands, even if the person appears to have little strength or movement.

❑ When talking to a person in a wheelchair or scooter at any length, sit or kneel so that they don't have to strain their neck.

❑ Don't lean on, push, pat or touch a person's wheelchair. It is inappropriate and could be dangerous.

❑ If a person is unable to hold a pen, ask how you can help. For instance, If you would like assistance, I can help you fill out this form.

❑ Talk directly to the person.

SLIDE 63: Final Myth and Reality

Myth: There is nothing one person can do to eliminate the barriers to inclusion.

Reality Check: Everyone can contribute to change by:

✓ Fully accepting people with disabilities in all environments.

✓ Ensuring that meetings and events are accessible.

✓ Not using accessible parking so it will be available.

✓ Understanding children's curiosity.

✓ Writing producers/editors when they portray someone positively and speaking up against negative phrases/images.

✓ Hiring qualified persons with disabilities.

✓ Using person-first language.

✓ Any other ideas?

SLIDE 64: Remember…

Two Core Precepts:

1) Disability is a natural part of the human experience that in no way diminishes a person's right to fully participate in all aspects of society.

2) The approach is to fix the environment, not the individual.

SLIDE 65: Practice Scenarios

The use of scenarios in training gives corpsmembers the opportunity to role play and think about how they would communicate and respond to situations in advance. Scenarios are often based upon actual experiences and the lessons learned from them.

Scenario #1: You are serving as crew leader of an inclusive (mixed-ability) crew. During the first week of training, a corpsmember who is prone to seizures communicates to you that her seizures are not usually a problem and will not interfere with work. She explains that she needs to be watched, however, because she could walk off a cliff or walk into oncoming traffic while experiencing a seizure. You do not have any experience with seizures and feel uncomfortable with this responsibility.

What do you do?

SLIDE 66: Scenario #2

You are the crew leader of an eight person inclusive (mixed ability) crew. The crew is made up of 50% corpsmembers with physical disabilities. One corpsmember has a C6 spinal cord injury and uses a manual chair, one corpsmember is blind, one corps member has MS causing him to tire easily and have difficulty with balance, and one is prone to seizures and has mild cerebral palsy that affects his speech. The other four members have no known disabilities.

At the end of the summer, all ten of the conservation corps crews are hiking into a high alpine lake to celebrate the end of the field season. The hike is approximately ½ mile downhill over rugged, rocky terrain.

How do you get the entire inclusive crew to the lake?

SLIDE 67: Scenario #3

Bob, one of your crew members, does not have control of his bowel movements. He is able to manage his disability in everyday life at home. The crew is going camping for a week while surveying trails and campgrounds in Grand Teton National Park. Although the group campground is physically accessible, it only has a pit toilet and water hydrant. Bob states that he cannot maintain his bowel program with these facilities and requests to stay in a lodge or motel on the overnight camping trips. This is determined to be a reasonable accommodation. Bob fears that he will be alienated from the group while serving on overnight projects.

Describe how you will decrease his fears and make sure that he feels a part of the crew.

SLIDE 68: Scenario #4

Fred, one of your crew members, is fully able to complete the essential functions of the job and requires no physical assistance on day projects. On overnight camping trips he needs assistance with dressing and going to the bathroom. Hiring a personal aid for overnight projects is determined to be a reasonable accommodation. When the aid is on projects with Fred, she is stuck in the field and wants to go out with the crew during the day. She hovers over Fred during the work day and assists him with everything which interferes with his independence and ability to be a team player. Fred doesn't seem to mind. However, you feel it interferes with group dynamics and the whole notion of inclusion.

What do you do?

SLIDE 69: "Life is either a daring adventure or nothing." Helen Keller

Photo Description: Three individuals in the midst of a rugged red rock desert in Utah. Two individuals are using wheelchairs and the third individual is using crutches.

SLIDE 70: Thanks!

Photo Description: Logos for Utah Conservation Corps, Center for Persons with Disabilities, Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation, AmeriCorps, The Corps Network.

In 2007, the UCC was awarded funding from the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation through The Corps Network, and the Utah Commission on Volunteers granted the UCC an additional AmeriCorps grant to start **Access to Service**!

The development of this training material and the accompanying toolkit with DVD was supported in part by each of the organizations listed below:

- Utah Conservation Corps

- Center for Persons with Disabilities at Utah State University

- Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation

- Utah Commission on Volunteers

- The Corps Network

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**Full slide presentation is available by contacting
kate.stephens@usu.edu.**

Contents:

I. Introduction to the Access AmeriCorps Checklist

II. Pre-Post Service Questionnaire-Disability Section

III. US Forest Service Accessibility Condition Survey

*Additional sample forms and tools used by the UCC Inclusive Crew project are available online at http://www.usu.edu/ucc/ including:

- UCC Personal Development Plan
- Evaluation of UCC AmeriCorps Member
- UCC AmeriCorps Member Exit Evaluation
- UCC Partner Evaluation

I. The Access AmeriCorps Checklist: Determining Accessibility in Your AmeriCorps Programs and Facilities

Go to link for full checklist:
www.ucp.org/ucp_generaldoc.cfm/1/6619/6621/6621-6621/1417

The information and survey contained in this document will enable AmeriCorps programs to do the required self-evaluations and to plan to meet the accessibility needs of individuals with disabilities who participate in AmeriCorps programs.

Accessibility is an on-going process. Technology, standards, and needs are constantly changing. Architectural accessibility codes of 20 years ago were a few pages long. Today, most codes are well over a 100 pages. Rather than look at this process as a static one, view it as an on-going process that is as much a part of your program as staff development, budgeting, and organizational development.

The Checklist will enable AmeriCorps programs to conduct a thorough self-evaluation and transition plan. Consider it a management tool that will help you to assess what you have already done to facilitate equal opportunity for people with disabilities and to plan what needs to be done in the future. The Checklist addresses requirements of the National and Community Service Trust Act regarding people with disabilities as well as those under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The purpose of a self-evaluation is to allow you to gather information regarding your organization's level of accessibility in one place and at one time. A good self-evaluation will capture your strengths and weaknesses. It will allow you to develop a concrete plan, based on real data, to increase the level of accessibility in your program.

A transition plan accomplishes the same goals in terms of architectural accessibility. A good transition plan will identify priorities, barrier removal and will assist you in developing an annual plan for continuing to do so.

In developing these tools, we have tried to simplify complex issues while maintaining the integrity of the goal of accessibility and for the requirements of the law. Questions regarding specific situations for specific programs will arise and should be expected. Call your State Commission or local resources for additional information.

Access AmeriCorps Accessibility Checklist

- SECTION I: Recruitment/Accommodation Practices

- SECTION II: General Non-Discrimination Obligations

- SECTION III: Communications Accessibility

- SECTION IV: Existing Facilities Checklist

II. Pre-Post Service Questionnaire-Disability Section

The Utah Conservation Corps distributed a questionnaire to all members on the first day of service and final day of service. The responses were compared and changes in member awareness and understanding of disability legislation, services, and etiquette were noted. This tool was also used to determine whether or not inclusion was actually happening. The UCC attempted to measure changes in attitude, social interactions, and friendships as an indicator of inclusion. The following disability-related questions can be inserted into your existing member pre and post service questionnaire.

1. I find it hard to make friends with people who are different from me.

STRONGLY AGREE   AGREE   DISAGREE   STRONGLY DISAGREE   NOT SURE

2. The idea of working on a crew made up of persons with and without disabilities makes me nervous.

STRONGLY AGREE   AGREE   DISAGREE   STRONGLY DISAGREE   NOT SURE

3. I believe that a person with a disability can make important contributions as a member of a Conservation Corps crew.

STRONGLY AGREE   AGREE   DISAGREE   STRONGLY DISAGREE   NOT SURE

4. The primary role of crew members WITHOUT disabilities is to help crewmembers who have disabilities.

STRONGLY AGREE   AGREE   DISAGREE   STRONGLY DISAGREE   NOT SURE

5. People with and without disabilities are really more similar than different.

STRONGLY AGREE   AGREE   DISAGREE   STRONGLY DISAGREE   NOT SURE

6. Serving on the Conservation Corps crew is a great way to show others what I can do.

STRONGLY AGREE   AGREE   DISAGREE   STRONGLY DISAGREE   NOT SURE

7. Serving on the Conservation Corps crew is a good way to make new friends.

STRONGLY AGREE   AGREE   DISAGREE   STRONGLY DISAGREE   NOT SURE

8. Together, crew members with and without disabilities can make a difference.

STRONGLY AGREE   AGREE   DISAGREE   STRONGLY DISAGREE   NOT SURE

9. I am aware of community resources for persons with disabilities.

STRONGLY AGREE   AGREE   DISAGREE   STRONGLY DISAGREE   NOT SURE

10. A person's disability is their greatest handicap.

STRONGLY AGREE   AGREE   DISAGREE   STRONGLY DISAGREE   NOT SURE

Open-Ended Questions:

1. Cite one or more laws that assure the rights of citizens with disabilities to have the same opportunities as citizens without disabilities.

2. What percentage (or number or ratio) of people in the United States is estimated to have a disability?

3. What do you think "Temporarily Able-Bodied" means?

4. What is the most appropriate way to address people with disabilities when talking about them to others?

5. What does "Inclusion" mean to you?

During your UCC interview and subsequent term of service, did you experience any of the following barriers to successful completion of service?

___ Possible or actual loss of benefits

___ Physical barriers/program accessibility

___ Problems with transportation

___ Health or physical limitations

___ Lack of education or training

___ Lack of work experience

___ Problems obtaining housing

___ Communication barriers

___ Corpsmember attitudes

___ Limited amount of hours you can physically work

___ Other

Please comment on any items checked above:

III. U.S. Forest Service Accessibility Condition Survey

In 2009, the UCC crew went beyond the original project goals and assisted the U.S. Forest Service on the national level in the development of a new accessibility information database that will provide the public with information on accessible campsites, facilities, and services. The accessibility information gathered and entered into the database by the inclusive crew automatically feeds Forest Service District web portals that are accessed by the public. Conservation Corps throughout the country will now be able to enter accessibility information into this new database in a consistent manner, making the Inclusive Crew program model easily replicable by other corps. The UCC crew worked very closely with the database developers to ensure that data entry could be completed by someone who uses a screen reader. Many people with disabilities, such as blindness and mobility impairments, need a screen reader to use their computer.

The Utah Conservation Corps inclusive crew surveyed campgrounds and trails according to the Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines (FSORAG) which provide guidance for maximizing accessibility of outdoor recreation areas in the National Forest System, while protecting the unique characteristics of their natural setting. After completing surveys on the ground, the crew developed reports that identified physical barriers and described methods to make areas more accessible. The Forest Service can use

this information in the development of transition plans.

A PDF version of the Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines (FSORAG) can be downloaded at www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility.

U.S. Forest Service Accessibility Condition Survey Quick User Guide:

Finding the Recreation Management Database

1. Open a web browser (Mozilla Firefox or Internet Explorer).

2. Enter the web address (Contact Kate Stephens for current URL; kate.stephens@ usu.edu).

3. Use the enter key.

Logging into the Recreation Management Database

1. This database requires district level data entry.

2. Enter the district organization number:
      041901 Salt Lake Ranger District

      041903 Kamas Ranger District

      041904 Evanston Ranger District

      041905 Mountain View Ranger District

      041906 Ogden Ranger District

      041907 Logan Ranger District

   a. Use the tab key and the remaining fields will fill in.

   b. Select the enter button at the bottom of the fields to enter the database.

3. If the organization number is not known:

   a. Select the Region, Forest, and District names from the drop down lists.

   b. Use the enter button to enter the database.

Data Entry Screen Layout

1. On the left side of the screen is the Site Navigator window.

   a. From this window select the site name for data entry.

   b. To return to the site detail screen, select the site name again.

2. Second from the left side of the screen is the Activity Form Navigator.

   a. These activities are associated with the site that is currently selected.

   b. Activity forms cannot be selected until the Site Detail form has been filled in and saved to the database.

   c. To return to an Activity form that has already had data entered, a list of those filled-in forms is directly below the Activity Form Navigator.

3. Third from the left side of the screen is the Feature Form Navigator.

   a. These features are associated with both the selected Activity and the Site.

   b. Feature forms cannot be selected until the Activity form has been filled in and saved to the database.

   c. To return to a Feature form that has already had data entered, a list of those filled-in Feature forms is directly below the Feature Form Navigator.

4. All data entry forms (Site Detail, Activity, and Feature) are in the window on the far right side of the screen.

   a. This is where all data is entered, added, or modified.

   b. Once data entry is complete, the add or modify button is on the bottom right corner of the form. Pressing this button saves the data to the database.

5. Leaving the Data Entry Screen.

   a. Be sure your data has been saved.