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Spring 2022

SSD Newsletter (Spring 2022)

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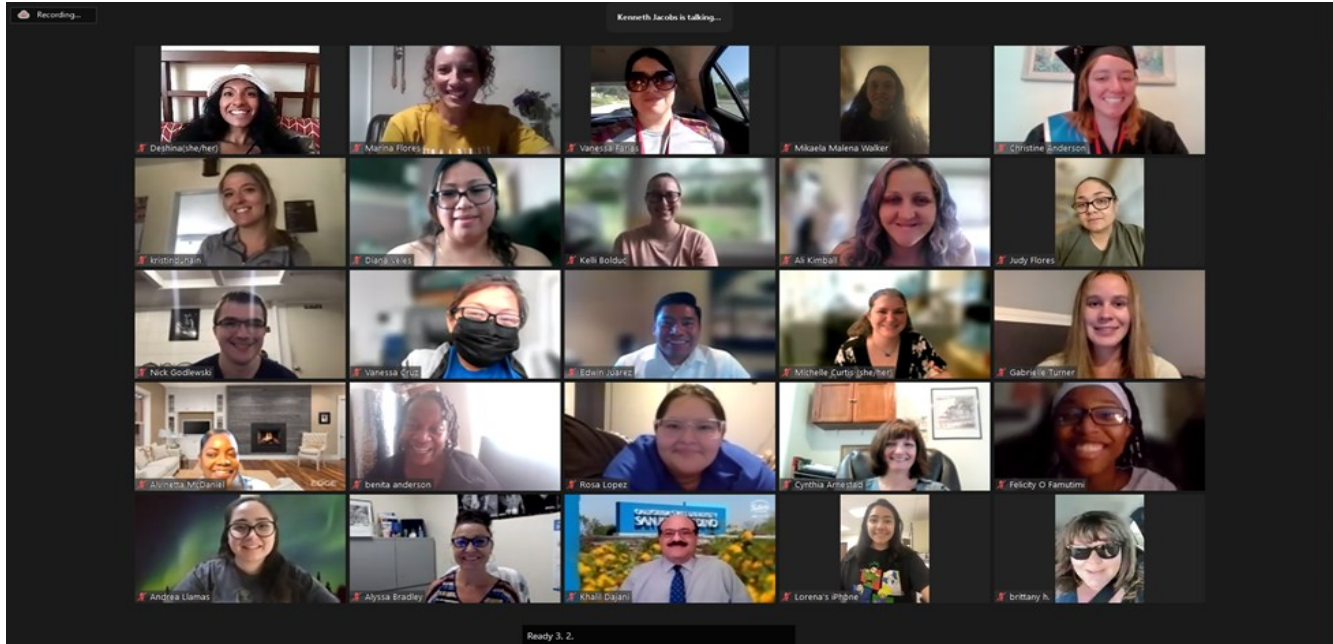
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SSD's Graduation Celebration Class of 2022

SSD Gives a Congrats to Grads at the Graduation Celebration!

Services to Students with Disabilities (SSD) hosted its 6th annual Graduation Celebration on May 13, 2022. The event was held virtually. A total of 104 people attended the event with 52 graduates celebrated. Fourteen of the graduates were WorkAbility IV (WA-IV) participants.

The celebration was highlighted by remarks shared by Dr. Paz Olivérez (VP of Student Affairs), Dr. Shari McMahan (Provost and VP for Academic Affairs), and Jake Zhu (Dean of CSUSB Palm Desert Campus). The keynote address was provided by Eileen Grubba (GREW-BAH), an award-winning actress, producer, writer, and fierce disability advocate.

The graduates enjoyed shoutouts from Dr. Sastry Pantula (Dean of the College of Natural Sciences), Dr. Conrad Shayo (Professor, Department of Information and Decision Sciences and WA-IV Cooperative member) and Dr. Barbara Brough (Lecturer, Department of Information and Decision Sciences).

Students were recognized individually. Of the 52 graduates, 80% were designated as recipients of honors from the Delta Alpha Pi Honor Society. Graduate Mikaela Walker remarked, "I want to thank you and SSD for the ceremony. It was nice. I could really see the thought and planning behind it."

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Services to Students with Disabilities

Experience the Power of SSD's Social Networks

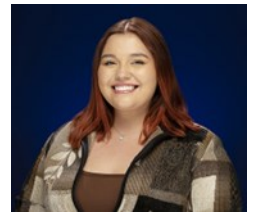
Jacob Cisneros, Columnist

SSD's social media platforms feature a variety of stories about people with disabilities that are making a difference in our world, accessible programs, exciting new technologies that make the world a bit easier to navigate, get the word out about disability awareness events/days, topics affecting our communities, information on campus events, and important dates to remember. Check us out on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

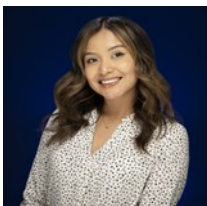
Student employees and guest contributors research and write the content in areas that they are passionate about. Recently our student writers had the opportunity to interview Eileen Grubba (pronounced GREW-BAH), an award-winning, actor, screen writer, and disability advocate who champions for the inclusion of actors with disabilities to portray characters with disabilities in all forms of media. Marci Daniels, SSD's director, related, "Exposing our student writers to these opportunities broadens their perspectives on diversity, equity, and inclusion and increases their knowledge of the challenges faced by disabled individuals and advocacy efforts to address them." The Writer's Group was inspired by Grubba's journey and remarked that it was one of their favorite experiences as CSUSB. Check out the interview on page 5.

Meet the Crew!

MaKelsey Sibille, the coordinator and the front office operations staff member, transformed SSD's social media platforms. "I am passionate about connecting people with information. This includes information on disabilities because it is not talked about as often as it should be," she remarked. MaKelsey reports on disability awareness days, biographical stories and campus events. She is studying French language and culture and plans to complete her Master's in Speech Language Pathology. She is also an entrepreneur and runs a small hand craft business.



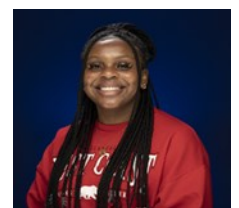
MaKelsey Sibille



Tanya Padilla

Tanya Padilla assists with the coordination of SmartPen and Notetaking accommodations. She reports on the CSUSB community to connect readers with events, activities, and programs on campus. Tanya is pursuing her Bachelor of Arts in English. During her free time, she likes to write poetry and hike outdoors with her three dogs for peace of mind.

Mmesoma Ubatuegwu is SSD's Mobility Services Lead, assisting with coordinating cart rides to transport students across campus. She is also a contributing writer focusing on entertainment and industry-related stories focusing on celebrities with disabilities. Mmesoma is a Business Administration major with a concentration in Marketing. She is also a photographer and loves taking pictures and expressing her creative freedom. During her free time, she likes to explore new places and sample new foods.



Mmesoma Ubatuegwu



Services to Students with Disabilities



Jacob Cisneros

Jacob Cisneros is an Accommodations Support Student Assistant and a sportswriter for SSD's social media platforms. He is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in English at CSUSB. He writes about sports, accessible sports programs, and athletes with disabilities. During his free time, Jacob enjoys playing video games and writing about professional sports for other websites.

Veronica Ramos is an Accommodations Support Student Assistant. She reports on health and healthcare-related technology for people with disabilities. Veronica is majoring in Nursing and plans on obtaining her Master's in Pediatric Oncology. During her free time, she enjoys taking her dog for a walk to get some fresh air and to be outside.



Veronica Ramos



David Cornejo

David Cornejo is a student assistant splitting his time between SSD, WA-IV, and as a writer for SSD's social media platforms. He is a Business Management major at CSUSB and is passionate about music. David transforms his love of music into his writing reporting on entertainment and music. An interesting fact about David is that he also plays in a local band here in San Bernardino!

If you are a CSUSB student or alumni and are interested in contributing stories, contact MaKelsey Sibille at ssd@csusb.edu.

We encourage you to take a moment and check us out at our social media handles at the bottom of the page.



SSD Featured in Diverse Issues in Higher Education

SSD and WA-IV director Marci Daniels was featured in the article "Access for All: Higher Ed Institutions Step Up to Address Need of Disabled Students" in the March 31 edition of Diverse Issues in Higher Education. The article focuses on how colleges and universities have helped support students with disabilities since the onset of the pandemic. Daniels spoke about the combined efforts the campus undertook to assist students with disabilities during this challenging time to include training them on virtual platforms, providing an increased social media presence, facilitating social events to alleviate feelings of isolation, facilitating campus grants for economic needs associated with the pandemic, additional faculty and staff outreach, and increased focus on universal design.

In the article, Daniels says, "At CSUSB, it took a combined effort from faculty, staff, and student assistants to create a comprehensive strategy that enabled operations to move to the new learning environments. We had to ensure that remote environments were accessible and were able to train students, faculty, sign language interpreters, and captionists on software platforms such as Zoom. Assistive technology was provided to students as needed. Faculty has to know how to work with the features essential to students with disabilities. The [training] efforts reduced resistance to change through open communication. Our deaf students' GPA[s] actually increased." For the full version of the article, go to: <https://www.diverseeducation.com/student-issues/article/15290278/access-for-all>.



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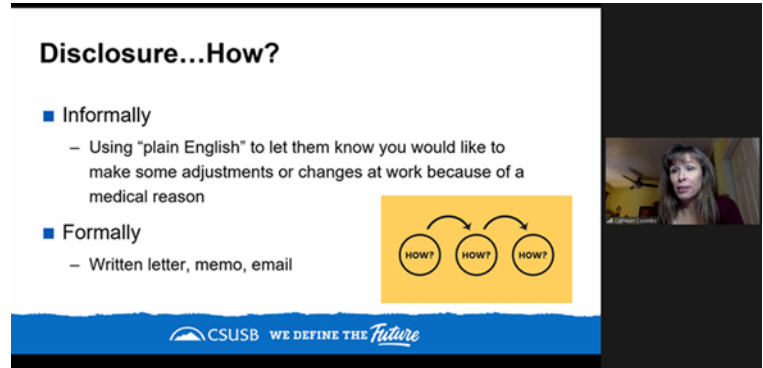


<https://www.linkedin.com/in/csusbssd/>

Disclosing Your Disability in the Workplace

On April 5, 2022 WorkAbility IV (WA-IV) conducted a workshop via Zoom called “Disclosing Your Disability in the Workplace.” Dr. Priyanka Yalamanchili, Ph.D., CRC, Assistant Professor of Rehabilitation Counseling, Department of Special Education, and Cathleen Coombs, M.S., CRC, Training Officer and Rehabilitation Counselor, QRP, from the California Department of Rehabilitation, co-presented. The goal of the workshop was to help students prepare to make an informed decision on the why, when, what, who, and how to disclose a disability to an employer. The Americans with Disabilities Act and understanding disclosure rights were discussed along with how to ask for workplace accommodations. Clover Carmichael, a WA-IV student, stated, “This workshop enlightened my knowledge on an important aspect now and for the future.”

Students practiced how to disclose in small breakout room activities facilitated by nine cooperative members to practice “My disability impacts my ability to... And this is important for you to know because...” For the second breakout room activity, students were given a template to make a script with a brief description of their disability, key skills, and abilities they possess related to a job and practice the statement, “My functional limitations are..., and to accommodate my limitations, I need...” WA-IV student Tony Brooks stated, “I feel more comfortable and confident in disclosing my disability to potential employers.”



Cathleen Coombs discusses how to disclose to an employer

WorkAbility IV: “Get LinkedIn”



Christopher Greder,
Computer Lab Technician II

On May 4, 2022, Christopher Greder, WA-IV’s Computer Lab Technician II, facilitated the virtual workshop, “Get LinkedIn.” The workshop taught students to create a well-rounded LinkedIn profile that promotes their skills, abilities, and work experiences; make professional connections that can lead to job placement; and navigate the platform to find and apply for jobs. Two breakout sessions were conducted for the students to work on “Building a Professional Summary” and “Building Connections.”

Workshop participant Ana Chavez related, “It helped me improve my LinkedIn profile through this workshop. I plan to have a one-on-one meeting with Christopher to work on my profile.”

If you are enrolled in WA-IV, Christopher is available to assist you one-on-one with creating a LinkedIn profile, email Christopher.Greder@csusb.edu

Training Tomorrow’s Workforce Today

Services to Students with Disabilities

Up Close and Personal with Eileen Grubba

On April 29, members of the SSD Student Writer's Group had the opportunity to interview Eileen Grubba on her experiences as a disabled actor, writer, and advocate for individuals with disabilities. Grubba has starred in many television series, shorts, and feature films including appearances on *Sons of Anarchy*, *New Amsterdam*, and *The Watchmen*. She is also a Brand Ambassador for Global Disability Inclusion.

What was your toughest role as an actor?

"I really had a wonderful time doing *New Amsterdam*. It was a challenging one because it is the most close to home for me. The character had a lot of physical challenges that I had in my lifetime. Including the heartbreak and damage done by modern medicine."

Have you noticed a difference within the disability community from when you first became a part of it?

"It's such a difference from when I was growing up because we had to hide it. It's not easy to do when you're recovering from a spinal cord injury and your feet are all rebuilt."

Did you ever face discrimination because of your disability within the film industry?

"I faced a lot of flat out discrimination, people just saying, 'You'll never work in this industry because you walk funny.' Literally just saying it to my face because back then, they could get away with it."

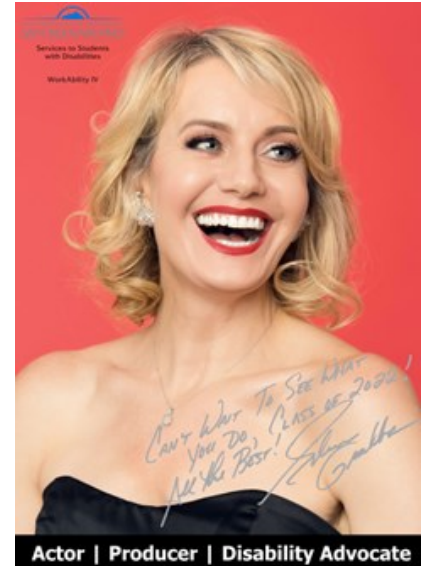
You're an advocate to help hire people with disabilities; can you tell us more about that?

"I still get heartbroken and sick to my stomach when I think about it. Pay discrimination is a real issue. We still have a long way to go. A female with a visible physical disability— They're not there yet. They're still anxious every time I move on set. I keep trying to shatter that illusion of imperfection. We should be able to wear tennis shoes and braces and we should be able to have scars and battle wounds."

We're trying to boost our platform from students enrolled in our services to campus wide and further out to the community; do you have any insight on what we should focus on?

"One of the big things that I learned is if you want to change society, if you want to change the world, and you want to create a more welcoming environment for everyone, you have to speak to everyone. The worst way to talk to people is to shame them."

Grubba is an inspiration to the disabled community, and we appreciate the time she took to speak with our writers and graduates as she continues to advocate for the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all forms of media and entertainment.



Actor | Producer | Disability Advocate
Autographed Photo of
Eileen Grubba

Services to Students with Disabilities

7th Annual Disability Awareness Fair Featuring Kat Cressida



Ability Awareness Flyer featuring
Kat Cressida

In support of Global Accessibility Awareness Day, SSD and WA-IV hosted the 7th annual Ability Awareness Fair virtually on May 5. “Global Accessibility Awareness day focuses on digital access and inclusion for the more than one billion people alive today who live with disabilities or impairments” (GAAD, 2022). The event kicked off with keynote speaker Kat Cressida, who provided a session discussing her life’s journey, including her work as an internationally recognized voice over artist, and her diagnosis, treatment, and recovery from Dermatofibrosarcoma Protuberans (DFSP).

After an arduous diagnosis process, Cressida was estimated to have 6 months to live, but was determined to defy the odds. Despite successful surgery, her journey was just getting started. She still had a long

road ahead of her. Cressida successfully endured radiation along with residual pain and although her vocal chords were saved, she struggled with relearning her own voice. Her unique journey brought awareness and understanding about the difficulties or returning to one’s life, and work, after tremendous hardship, loss, and pain. Cressida’s remarks were followed by a robust question and answer period.

The daylong fair also included interactive breakout sessions highlighting different disabilities. A brief video titled “History of Disabilities Rights” was shown, and Robert Lainez from California Phones spoke about how qualified Californians can get free specialized mobile phones and accessories. CSUSB Kinesiology student, Lucrecia Ayala, demonstrated adaptive yoga, and Augustin Ramirez, CSUSB’s Veterans Success Center Director, provided a session on “Disabilities in the Military.” Throughout the day opportunity drawings were held.

Upcoming Events

- ◆ **August 11, 2022:** Get Zoomed In: Introduction to Zoom, Series I, Noon to 2 p.m., RSVP at waiv@csusb.edu
- ◆ **August 18, 2022:** SSD and WA-IV New Student Orientation, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., email ssd@csusb.edu for Zoom link
- ◆ **August 23, 2022:** SSD and WA-IV Open House, Noon to 1 p.m., University Hall, Room 183, RSVP at ssd@csusb.edu
- ◆ **September 13, 2022:** WRP Preparedness Workshop, Noon to 2 p.m., RSVP at waiv@csusb.edu



Go Yotes