Education News:

**Principals threaten legal action**

April 03, 2009

*PRINCIPALS are threatening to take the Rees Government to court, claiming it is failing to adequately fund thousands of disabled students.*

The principals will seek legal advice on whether they can take action, arguing the Department of Education and Training has breached anti-discrimination laws over its treatment of special needs children. Principals spokeswoman Cheryl McBride said yesterday the Disability Discrimination Act made it unlawful to contravene standards aimed at ensuring all students received equal opportunity. The threatened legal action comes as a major row looms over the treatment of 30,000 special needs and disabled students in public schools across NSW.
**Student racks up $310K HECS debt**

By Sharri Markson
The Sunday Telegraph
March 22, 2009 12:01am

INDIVIDUAL university students are racking up hundreds of thousands of dollars in HECS debts that may never be paid off.

The list of biggest HECS debts, obtained for the first time by The Sunday Telegraph, shows one student has accumulated a staggering university bill of $310,497.

The next debtor owes $237,151 in deferred university fees followed by another with a HECS bill $150,331.

The Higher Education Contribution Scheme, now called HELP loans, was introduced in 1989 to recoup some of the costs of a university education.


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**TAFE takes a crack at uni snobbery**

Heath Gilmore Higher Education Reporter
March 24, 2009

UNIVERSITIES must stop treating TAFE colleges as "poor cousins" if Federal Government higher education reforms are to succeed, TAFE directors believe.

They describe the outlook of universities as akin to "master and servant relationship" with "academic snobbery alive and well". In a speech to the Higher Education Congress in Sydney today, the director of TAFE's Sydney Institute, Pam Christie, will support closer ties between universities and vocational education and training institutions and a more seamless movement of students between them.


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**Employment News:**

**New training assistance for disabled workers**

Stephanie Peatling
April 8, 2009

PEOPLE with disabilities will receive immediate assistance to retrain and learn new skills as part of the Federal Government’s push to rein in welfare expenditure and get people into jobs.

Places in training and employment programs will no longer be capped, the Minister for Employment Participation, Brendan O’Connor, said yesterday.

“This removes a significant hurdle that has required people with a disability to wait for employment services and that has, for example, prevented service providers from properly planning the transition of school leavers with a disability into the workforce,” Mr O’Connor said.

Employers will also be able to apply for increased funding to help modify their workplaces.


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**Disability pensioner numbers ‘will rise’**

Susanna Dunkerley
April 1, 2009

The global financial crisis is likely to lead to an increase in the number of people accessing the disability support
pension, the federal government says. Parliamentary secretary for disabilities Bill Shorten says growth in the number of people accessing the disability support pension has been greater than in any other pension category in the 10 years to 2007. Between 1996 and 2007, the number of disability support pensioners increased from 499,000 to about 725,000, he said. "In these difficult economic circumstances, yes, I think it will go up again," he said following an address at the National Press Club on Wednesday. The government wants to develop a national plan to get more people with disabilities into the workforce and off the pension.


One in four workers to go on welfare
David Uren, Economics correspondent | March 31, 2009
The Australian
THERE could be one person of working age on welfare for every three people with a job by the time the recession ends, according to one of Australia's leading economists, Bob Gregory. The welfare blowout, with more than a million more people likely to be relying on benefits, will far exceed the threat posed by an increasing aged population and has so far been overlooked by federal Government and Treasury. Professor Gregory has modelled the changes in the welfare population following the 1990-92 recession, and says the rise in unemployment is likely to be followed by increases in the number of people on disability, carer and sole-parent pensions. A paper to be presented by Professor Gregory to a Victoria University conference next month shows the full-time male workforce never recovered from the 1990-92 downturn, when it dropped from a historic average of about 62 per cent to 54 per cent of the male working-age population.

For the rest of the article go to http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/business/story/0,28124,25267133-5017996,00.html

Sickness certificates more harm than good
Friday, 27 March 2009 Dani Cooper
Sickness certificates should be considered one of the most potentially dangerous treatments a general practitioner can offer a patient, a behavioural scientist says. Dr Debra Dunstan of the University of New England in Armidale says an incorrectly issued sickness certificate can be the catalyst for a relatively well person ending up in long-term unemployment. In a paper recently published in the Australian Family Physician journal, Dunstan points to an alarming rise in sickness certification with a 70% increase in requests during the past nine years.

For the rest of the article go to http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2009/03/27/2527719.htm?site=science&topic=latest

Pension boost not just for the aged
Patricia Karvelas, Political correspondent | March 26, 2009
Article from: The Australian
CARERS, disability support pensioners and veterans have been guaranteed increases in their fortnightly payments in the Rudd Government's second budget. Kevin Rudd's office yesterday moved to allay the fears of people on welfare, saying they would not miss out on a rise in their pensions amid concerns the boost would go only to age pensioners. "We have always been clear, age pensioners, disability support pensioners, carers and veterans will get a pension rise in the May budget," Families Minister Jenny Macklin told The Australian yesterday. But she did not guarantee that single parents, who are also recipients of pensions, would get a rise. It comes after welfare groups said they were concerned the Government was sending confused messages about who would get an increase in the May budget.

For the rest of the article go to
Welfare News:

Opposition pledges new deal for disabled

Brian Robins
April 6, 2009

THE NSW Opposition is proposing to overhaul the delivery of disability services, which may emerge as a template for its approach to social services in the state if it gains power in 2011.

It said its policy was to give disabled people money and the ability to choose the services they needed, rather than having this organised for them by government-provided caseworkers.

This approach has already been adopted in other states, such as Victoria and Queensland, but with only small pilot programs under way in NSW.

"The emphasis on quality of life outcomes for people with disability is central to the development of our plan," the Opposition spokesman on Disability Services, Andrew Constance, said. The Opposition released a discussion paper outlining its proposal as it seeks to win broader backing for the plan.

For the rest of the article go to

Treasury takes aim at welfare payments

Jacob Saulwick and Adele Horin
April 3, 2009

DISABILITY pensioners will face stronger pressure to return to work under reforms flagged by the Treasury Secretary, Ken Henry, as the Federal Government faces a blow-out in welfare costs.

Dr Henry told a conference in Sydney yesterday that the pension and the public housing system discouraged people from joining the workforce.

A clearer picture is emerging of where the Henry tax review - the broadest inquiry into the system ever held - is heading.

Tax on business is likely to fall, while the review will suggest to the Government that it takes a knife to anomalies within the network of taxes and family and welfare payments.

In his speech yesterday Dr Henry emphasised the aim was to make the system fairer - by minimising quirks as well as providing for the disadvantaged.

For the rest of the article go to

International News:

Students can't find vocational work in bad economy

Michael Sears

Andrew McIntyre packs small brushes into envelopes at Elmbrook Work Center at Fairview South School in Brookfield. A teacher said she'd like to give her students a wider variety of work opportunities.

more photos

. Michael Sears

Andrew McIntyre packs small brushes into envelopes at Elmbrook Work Center at Fairview South School in Brookfield. A teacher said she'd like to give her students a wider variety of work opportunities.

Brookfield NOW

You'll find more news, sports, photos and opinions about Brookfield on BrookfieldNOW.com.

Brookfield - Photos line the hallway outside the Elmbrook Work Center, showing smiling students delivering office
mail, washing dishes, stuffing envelopes and shredding paper - part of contracts forged with private businesses and other entities.

For the rest of the article go to http://www.jsonline.com/news/education/42481122.html

Fewer People With Disabilities Unemployed In March, But Gains Don’t Tell Whole Story

By Michelle Diament
April 3, 2009 Contrary to what’s happening with the rest of the population, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities dropped in March, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

After a three month rise, unemployment among people with disabilities fell to 13.1 percent compared with 14 percent in February. But that doesn’t mean that more people with disabilities have jobs. In fact, the number of people in this population with jobs remained steady. However, in March more people with disabilities were deemed not in the labor force.

For the rest of the article go to http://www.disabilitycoop.com/2009/04/03/march-employment-data/2758/

Oregon tracks special ed students after high school

by Betsy Hammond, The Oregonian
Wednesday April 01, 2009, 8:51 PM

During their first year out of high school, more than one in four special education students in Oregon never held a paying job or enrolled even part time in college or job training, a new state report shows.

It marks the first time that Oregon has tried to determine what happens after high school to students who received special education services.


AFP Launches Employment Initiative

The Alliance for Full Participation (AFP) has announced a national effort to increase employment in the US for people with developmental disabilities. The Alliance's initiative includes networking among state teams; nationally webcast education and town-hall events; national and state-level policy change advocacy; and local efforts to increase and enhance employment for people with developmental disabilities. Also anticipated is an October 2011 national summit to share leading practice, process recommendations and establish national outcomes. This effort stems from goals voiced and agreed upon by self-advocates and advocates participating in the 2005 Alliance for Full Participation national summit in Washington, DC. The AFP is comprised of 13 national nonprofit organizations in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities.

http://www.allianceforfullparticipation.org

Conference and Workshops:

Successful inclusion conference – 22 and 23 May 2009

Family Advocacy, with support from NSW DET, will host the “Successful Inclusion….building allies, practical strategies” conference on 22 and 23 May 2009. The conference will explore inclusive schooling in the context of the New South Wales education system.

Location: Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club, 117 Ryedale Road, West Ryde 2114

Would you like to hear practical steps to facilitate inclusive classrooms and schools? Are you interested in building partnerships between families and education professionals?

Successful Inclusion…building allies, practical strategies will be a unique opportunity bringing together families of students with developmental disability, education professionals and allies who are keen to explore what is possible for students with developmental disability in mainstream learning environments at both primary and high school.

On Friday 22 May, the conference content will be of relevance and interest to both families and education professionals with topics including practical tips to enhance school inclusion.

On Saturday 23 May, the conference will have a family focus with an exploration of the planning and thinking families
can do to work with schools around successful inclusion. The content on 23 May will be aimed at families. A limited amount of sponsorship will be available for family members of students with disability. Please contact Family Advocacy directly for more information on telephone (02) 9869 0866, freecall 1800 620 588 (NSW only), email: conference@family-advocacy.com, or see www.family-advocacy.com.

AFDO Conference - Policy About Us, For Us!
A Practical Revolution in the Lives of People with Disabilities
May 28 & 29 2009
Jasper Hotel, Elizabeth Street, Melbourne
The Australian Federation of Disability Organisations is a peak body which represents people with disability at the national level. In May 2009 we will be having our first conference. The program of the conference will focus on the recently ratified United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and how it relates to Australia. The discussion of human rights will have a significant presence at the conference. Please note the call for speakers will close on February 20, 2009
Registration fees are
* Individual $150
* Community Group $320
* Government $550
To register for the conference go to http://www.hotelnetwork.com.au/conferences/conferences/afdo
Call for Sponsors and Exhibitors
Interested in becoming a sponsor or exhibitor? There is a range of opportunities. For more information go to http://www.hotelnetwork.com.au/conferences/conferences/afdo/sponsorship
For updates on the conference register at www.afdo.org.au or ring 03 9662 3324.

Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities Inc.
2009 National Conference
Sydney – New South Wales
Starting on the Future Now!
How service delivery organisations are preparing for the consumers of tomorrow while maintaining viable service orientation for the users of today.
Saturday 30th May – Tuesday 2nd June 2009
Conference Program
The aim of Round Table is to facilitate and influence the production and use of quality accessible formats for and by people with print disabilities. As the end of the first decade of the 21st century draws near, service organisations that provide accessibility to information for people with print disabilities are managing the future in a variety of ways. Equally important is continuing to provide a viable service delivery to the people these organisations serve at present. The 2009 Round Table Conference will showcase what service delivery organisations are researching, developing and implementing for the future, while still maintaining the vital perspective of delivering the service needed for today.
Venue: Citigate Central Hotel, 169-179 Thomas Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Australia
Visit Round Table at www.e-bilty.com.au/roundtable/
Enquiries and Conference Registrations to:
Tammy Axelsen
Administrative Officer
Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities Inc
PO Box 229
NORTH HOBART TAS 7002
Australia
Ph: Mobile 0417 101 418
Fax: +61 3 6265 1519
Towards A National Disability Studies Agenda
Disability Studies Conference, Australia UNSW Sydney
June 26-27 2009
The Disability Studies and Research Centre (DSRC) invites offers of papers for presentation at a Disability Studies Conference to be held at the University of New South Wales, from 26-27th June 2009.
Established in 2008, the DSRC is a national inter-disciplinary research centre which promotes the critical social perspective of disability in education and research to maximise Australia’s capacity to ensure an equitable, participatory and accessible society for people with disability. Its forerunner was the Disability Studies and Research Institute (DSaRI). Recent research by DSRC and DSaRI includes disability and human rights, international development, accessible information, financing of disability services, specialist service design and delivery, housing and supported accommodation, bioethics, employment and income-support. The centre is aligned with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Law at UNSW.
The overarching aim of the conference will be to bring together, for the first time, people from the disability studies academia, students and members of the disability community to discuss in the context of the new United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities developments towards a national disability studies agenda. The possibilities, realities and practical challenges of this will be discussed by two keynote speakers and taken up in contributed papers.

Hearing Awareness Week 2009
Theme: At home At work At play – One in Six.
One in six Australians suffer from some form of hearing loss.
When: Sunday 23 August – Saturday 29 August 2009
Where: Events such as hearing screening and information days held around the country. Check website for calendar of events in your area www.hearingawarenessweek.org.au
Free posters for the week will be available from the national secretariat in late May.
To place your order for posters please contact Deafness Forum at info@deafnessforum.org.au
Deafness Forum is the National coordinating body for Hearing Awareness Week

For a list of all current national and international conferences and workshops click here.

NSW Events:
INVITATION: Access to Premises
NEW DISABILITY ACCESS STANDARDS
6th May 2009
Navigating the changes and understanding your obligations
Access to premises for customers and employees with disability is critical for business. As the new Disability (Access to Premises - Buildings) Standards progress towards implementation in 2010, the Employers’ Network is holding a working lunch for interested professionals to gain further insight into the proposed changes and understand their obligations.
Murray Mountain, Principal of Access Design Solutions, and Michael Small, Senior Policy Officer at the Australian Human Rights Commission, will outline the amendments and address the possible consequences for your business.
This event would be most suited to architects, designers, surveyors, building owners, property developers, service providers and building / facilities managers.
Wednesday 6th May 2009
12:00pm - 2:30pm
Menzies Hotel
14 Carrington Street, Sydney (opposite Wynyard Park)
Cost: Members $325 + GST / Non-members $395 + GST
RSVP: By Wednesday 29th April 2009 to events@aend.org.au or by phoning (02) 9261 3922.
DOWNLOAD REGISTRATION FORM IN PDF / WORD
Please advise of any dietary or accessibility requirements when registering.

Enhancing the Links Seminar – 24 June 2009
The NDCO program will host a seminar for education staff and disability service providers in Southern and South-Western Sydney. To be held at Campbelltown Catholic Club on Wednesday 24 June 2009, this seminar will provide:
§ Presentations from expert practitioners in disability areas
§ Strategies to support students with a disability or chronic medical condition prepare for transition from school
§ Essential up-to-date information about post-school pathways, including apprenticeships and traineeships, TAFE, university, employment – open and business services, and DADHC post-school programs – transition to work and community participation
§ Details of how students can access support in post-school education and employment
§ Panel discussions, case studies, resources and networking opportunities
This event is free for participants and funded by the National Disability Coordination Officer Program. Morning tea and lunch will be provided. Please find attached an invitation and registration form. Places are limited so register early. For more information see www.uws.edu.au/ndco or contact Nicole Ison n.ison@uws.edu.au or (02) 4620 3246 or Gillian Hilt g.hilt@uws.edu.au or (02) 4620 3175.

DEAN PD Day Dates for 2009
Please take the time to mark the 2nd April in your diary as well as the rest of the DEAN PD Day dates for 2009:
- Wednesday 17th June (PD Day) - Mental Health
- Tuesday 29th September (PD Day and DEAN AGM)
- Wednesday 9th December (University Nuts and Bolts Day) ***Please note change of date ***
- Thursday 10th December (PD Day) - ***Please note change of date ***

For a list of all NSW Events click here.

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Calls for Expressions of Interest and Input:
Stepping into... 2009
The Employers’ Network on Disability is offering university students with disability internship opportunities for the 2009 Winter semester break. Further information can be found at

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Publication:
The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare:
The geography of disability and economic disadvantages in Australian capital cities
How is severe disability distributed within Australian capital cities? What is the relationship between the percentage of people with severe disability living in a local metropolitan area and the socioeconomic disadvantage of the area? This report presents data on the geographical distribution of severe disability among people aged less than 65 years living in Australian capital cities, based on analysis of the 2006 Census of Population and Housing.
AIHW catalogue number (DIS 54).
The Report can be downloaded for free from:
JILPT Databook of International Labour Statistics 2009 [30 March 2009]

JILPT Databook of International Labour Statistics 2009 is the 13th edition of a comprehensive statistical annual from a variety of sources in different countries. The databook 2009 contains 145 tables corresponding to nine major substantive chapters on 1) economy and business; 2) population and labour force; 3) employment structure; 4) unemployment, unemployment insurance and employment adjustment; 5) wages and labour costs; 6) hours of work and working-time arrangements; 7) trade union, industrial relations and occupational accidents; 8) education and human resources development; 9) worklife and welfare. All tables are available for download in Excel and PDF format.

For a list of Publication click here.

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New Resources:
TidyRead
TidyRead is a service that extracts the text from almost any web site and displays it on an easy to read page that removes all of the clutter that can make reading on the internet so hard sometimes. While reading is one of the main activities on the internet, a lot of sites pay very little attention to the readability of their text and the display on smart phones, such as iPhone, iPod Touch and Android phones. Instead, the reader's eye is constantly drawn to other UI elements, ads, and widgets. This problem is even worse when surfing on smart phones. TidyRead is setting to change this and makes online reading and surfing on smart phones enjoyable.

http://www.tidyread.com/

ODEP Releases Business Case for Hiring People with Disabilities
ODEP has released the Business Case for Hiring People with Disabilities, a new online, multi-media resource that illustrates how people with disabilities add value to businesses. The site covers six key concerns common to all employers, regardless of size or industry: return on investment, human capital, marketing, innovation, diversity and social responsibility. It features up-to-date research, video clips and real-world examples.


Western Australia National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program website
The Western Australia National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program has launched a new website at www.ndcowa.net.au
The website has information on employment and education for people with a disability as well as projects, career tips, events, resources, information and useful links.

For a list of New Resources click here

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Media Releases:
TITLE: Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children’s Services | Early intervention learning centres for children with autism
PORTFOLIO: Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
SNIPPET: with Minister for Families Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The Early Days Workshops are for families and carers in the early days of autism assessment, and for families of children displaying autism like symptoms. The Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children’s Services Bill Shorten said these
workshops aimed to connect families and carers with each other and help them manage the many pressures involved with bringing up children with ASDs.

**TITLE:** Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services | Applications open for National Disability Conference Funding

**PORTFOLIO:** Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs


**SNIPPET:** Applications open for National Disability Conference Funding. The Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services, Bill Shorten, said funding will help empower people with disability by enabling them, their families and carers to attend and be involved in disability conferences held within Australia. Applications are now open to organisers of disability conferences, to be held between 1 July 2009 and 30 June 2010.

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We hope that this edition of Disability Education and Employment News has been of interest.
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To read the Disability Education and Employment News [Disclaimer click here](http://www.cdds.med.usyd.edu.au/ndco/DisabilityNews/).

**To Contribute:**
If you have any comments, suggestions or articles, resources, scholarships, workshops, conferences, Events or any other information that is Disability Education, Training or Employment related and you wish to promote it send an e-mail to thart@med.usyd.edu.au
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