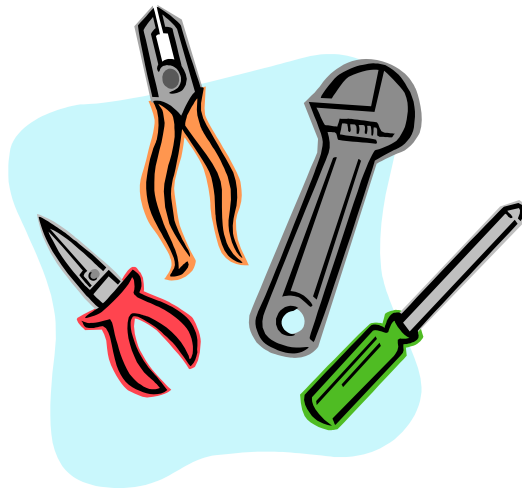


# Sixth Annual Tools for Life: Secondary Transition and Technology Fair

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March 1-2, 2010  
Doubletree Riverside Hotel - Boise, ID



## POST-CONFERENCE REPORT

*Tools for Life is sponsored by  
the Idaho Department of Education,  
the Idaho Assistive Technology Project,  
and the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities*

Report prepared by:

Nora Jehn  
Idaho Assistive Technology Project  
Center on Disabilities and Human Development  
121 West Sweet Ave.  
Moscow, ID 83843

## Introduction

It just keeps getting better and better! The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Tools for Life: Secondary Transition and Technology Fair held March 1-2, at the Doubletree Riverside Hotel in Boise, was a full house of enthusiastic attendees including first-time students, returning students (including two chartered busloads of students from the northern and southern regions), YLF alumni, educators, professionals, agency representatives, and many national, state, and regional vendors. Attendees were pumped and ready to learn after outstanding keynote addresses and luncheon speakers. With former keynote speakers, trainers, and vendors spreading the word nationally, our Tools for Life conference is attracting attention around the nation as a top transition and technology fair!

*"This was an amazing wonderful experience and I am lucky to have the opportunity to attend."*

*Professional Attendee*

## Keynotes

Welcoming our audience and introducing our first day keynote speaker, Miss Idaho 2009, **Kara Jackson**, shared her love of Idaho, agriculture, and her own goal-setting journey with conference attendees. Kara later joined the evening social and was a wonderful addition to the event.



*Keynote Speaker, Sarah Vazquez (right) with Tools Fair Coordinator, Nora Jehn*

New to the Tools for Life conference was keynote speaker **Sarah Vazquez** from New Jersey. Beautiful, tiny, tottering but poised on impossibly high heeled boots, voice shaky but confident, Sarah set the light-hearted but deep tone for the two-day conference for her massive audience of over 500 attendees. Sarah mesmerized us with stories of growing up with cerebral palsy and her strongest advocate, her mother. Sarah's mother never let Sarah forget her proud Puerto Rican culture, the importance of rice and beans, and that Sarah could do whatever she set her mind to do. Sarah graduated from Rutgers University, is currently the Support Coordinator for Neighbours Inc., and is editing her first autobiography.

At lunch, Sarah Vazquez facilitated the lunch panel of young adult self-advocates **Oscar Carreno, LaNae Waddell, Randy Warren, Damen Jensen, and Emily Cryder**. The insights of these motivated, hard-working, goal-oriented young adults were invaluable to the attendees. It can't help but be noted that all of these self-advocates have experienced exceptional transition experiences through the all-too-few transition programs in our state, and the newly resuscitated Idaho Youth Leadership Forum.

Day two morning keynote speaker, brought back by popular demand, was **Michael Beers**, comedian, Montana Independent Living Center employee, and Montana Youth Leadership Forum staff. Mike kept his audience in stitches but also shared his pride and knowledge of the disability rights movement. All attendees left that general session with heads held high in pride with a personal invitation from Mike to join in that movement with him.



*Miss Idaho, Kara Jackson with Ashley, a Tools attendee.*



*Tuesday Keynote Speaker and comedian, Michael Beers*

*"Inspirational keynote speakers inspire my daughter to Think and fell she can accomplish her dreams also."*

*Parent Attendee*



Guest lunch speaker Logan Olson (left) and her mother Laurie (right)

Also back by popular demand was Tuesday's lunch speaker, **Logan Olson** and her mother, **Laurie Olson**. Along with her ongoing rehabilitation from a traumatic brain injury, Logan and Laurie produce *Logan Magazine* which features inspiring stories of young adults with disabilities, fashion, and technology tips. Logan and Laurie challenge us all to think outside the box and to explore entrepreneurial opportunities.

*"I liked listening to the speakers and Felt empowered afterwards."*

*Professional Attendee*

## Breakout Sessions

High quality sessions prevailed at this year's Tools for Life conference. Our biggest complaint on evaluations was that it was hard to choose a session! The following is a list of breakout sessions and presenters:

### Self Advocacy-Self Determination

*I Am* – Sarah Vazquez

*Demystifying the SSSA Disability Process* – Valerie Stephen-LeBoeuf

*Is There a Leader Inside of You?* - Tracy Warren and YLF Alumni

*My Life Story* – Mike Smith

*Affirmative Life Planning* – Christa Ledbetter

*Why Try?* – Lana Kirkham and Bird Derrick

*Self-Advocacy/Self-Determination* – Michael Beers

*You're at Tools for Life! Now What?* – Irene Jones and Beth Eloë-Reep

*Self Advocacy Training: What is a Guardianship and Do I Need One?*

–Mary Jo Butler

*Tools Box for Success: How to Deal with people Who Say 'You Can't' and Other Bullies* – Mel Leviton

*Person Centered Planning* – Trina Balanoff, Dawn Sauve, and Tracy Warren

*You're Moving On! Tools to Help with Transition* – Irene Jones and Tracy Warren

*Healthy Relationships: From Being Friends to Getting Married* – Jen and Larkin Seiler

*Get Out of Your Head and Into Your Life: Mindfulness for Stress* – Carol Pangburn, BSU Counseling



*One of many sessions focusing on the needs of transitioning students*

### Assistive Technology

*Road to Greater Independence: Revolutionizing of Assistive Technology for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing* - Steven Snow

*AAC Show and Tell and More* (amazing new technology including eye gaze, iTouch, etc.) – Kathy Griffin and Anne Kuhlmeier

*Accessible Books and Textbooks* – Nora Jehn and Todd DeVries

*New AT for Work and School* – Kathy Griffin

*Assistive Technology Professionals Meeting* – Nora Jehn

*Best Practices: Universally Accessible Reading, Writing, and Study Support with Kurzweil 3000* – Richard Chance, Cambium Learning

*Tools for Communication through Idaho Relay* – Russell Patterson

*Tips for Maximizing Your AT Potential with WYNN Software* – Steve Boyle, Freedom Scientific

*Bookshare and the Post-Secondary Student: Making the Transition* – Cherie Miller, Bookshare

*Assistive Technology, Higher Education and You: What You Need to Know About AT in the Post Secondary World* – Mike Gibson



*Session: AAC Show and Tell and More with Anne Kuhlmeier and Kathy Griffin*

## Employment

*Career Information System: Tools to Help Map Out Your Future* – David Wallace Eastwood  
*Career Connect* – Scott Truax  
*PEPNet Presents: Transition from School to Work* – Paula Mason and Brian Darcy  
*The Young and the Workless: Five Acts to Future Employment* – The Navigators  
*Employment for Student with disabilities: From Competitive to Customized* – Robin Greenfield  
*Creative Access Center for the Arts* – Evelyn Mason  
*Federal and State Benefits 101* – Suzie Hanks  
*Vocational Rehabilitation – Transition Services for Students* – Rocio Ayala  
*Working Without Fear of Losing Benefits* – James Turner and Suzie Hanks

## Community Living

*That's Life* – Karen Richel, UI Extension  
*Developing and Implementing 18-21 Programs for Adult Students with Disabilities* – Debra Cooper & Pamela Houston-Powell  
*Accessible Sailing* – Miles Moore  
*Healthy Relationships and Identifying Readiness* – Camille R. Workman, BSU Counseling Support: *Determined to Vote: Your Vote is Your Voice* – Christine Pisani and Mel Leviton  
*Choices and Pathways – Transitioning from Children's to Adult Medicaid Developmental Disability Support and Services* – Patty Breshears and Mellie Turritin  
*Community Transition Team – A Tool to Enhance Transition Services in Your Community* – Irene Jones and Ann Flannery  
*Juvenile Justice and Youth with Disabilities* – Mark Gunning, Angela Lindig, Susie Depew-Sarcello  
*Computers for Kids* – Tammy Gardner and Molli Wingert

## Post Secondary Education

*Keys to Creating a Collaborative Transition Plan/Team and What is Your Role* – Teri, Cami, and Rebecca Smith  
*Entering a Brave New World: Keys for a Successful Transition to College* – Katelyn Smith  
*PEPNet Presents: Transition from High School to College and Training Programs* – Paula Mason and Brian Darcy  
*The Daring Book for College Students: A Guide to All the Little Things You Should Know About College* – Wendy Turner

## Supporting Rural Families

*Idaho Families of Adults with disabilities* – IFAD – Deborah Cuilla and Fran Wood  
*Idaho Help: An Online Directory of Local Services, Resources and Information* – Julie Magelky



*"That's Life" Financial Literacy Session*

Ten of the above sessions were presented on Monday evening and local parents were invited to come to the evening sessions without charge. 63 family members attended the evening sessions.

The session, *That's Life*, a hands-on, interactive, fun, financial literacy session presented by **Karen Richel, UI Extension**, is a feat of extraordinary preparation. Karen partners with the UI College of Business to recruit student volunteers to work the sessions (3 two-hour sessions). Students from Lewis & Clark State College also helped with the sessions. It takes 18 volunteers to man all the stations of the *That's Life* sessions.

## Exhibitors/Vendors

Highlighting the exhibit area was the **VSA arts** exhibit generously brought in by Idaho Parents Unlimited. This exhibit featured art from the top 15 emerging U.S. artists with disabilities.

Other exhibitors and vendors included A New Leaf, ADA Task Force, Bookshare/Benetech, Cambium Learning, Computers for Kids, Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Disability Rights Idaho, Enabling Technologies, Freedom Scientific Learning Systems Group, Gallaudet University, Gem State



VSA Art display hosted by IPUL



Developmental Center, Inc., Hamilton Relay Services, Idaho Assistive Technology Project, UI Center on Disabilities and Human Development, Idaho Center for Assistive Technology, Idaho Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired, Person Centered Planning Project, Idaho Career Information Systems, Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities, Idaho Department of Labor, Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Idaho Self-Advocacy Leadership Network, Idaho Families of Adults with DisAbilities, Idaho Parents Unlimited, Medicaid Bureau of Developmental Disability Services, Prentke Romich Company, SAIL, State Department of Education – Special Education Division, State of Idaho Children’s Special Health Program, Tobii, Work Incentives Planning & Assistance, and the Idaho Youth Leadership Forum.

## Pizza- Dance-Karaoke



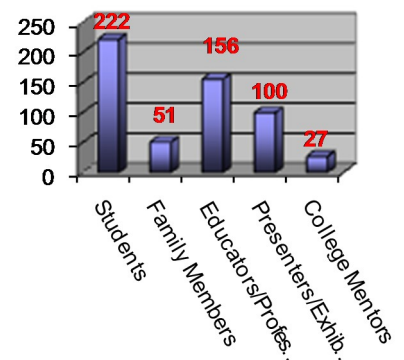
Chase Doty provides the music at the Monday Night Social

With a record number of students joining us for the pizza, social, dance, and karaoke, spirits were high and behavior was awesome. Music and karaoke was provided by the **Country Boys, Chase Doty and Randy Doty.**

*“Loved the dance,  
To me it was my favorite part,  
Besides meeting new people.”*

*Student Attendee*

2010 Tools for Life Attendees



## Attendees

Although conference organizers tried to limit attendees to 450, the total number inched up to 521. This included 222 high school students, 99 educators, 60 professionals, 51 family members, 90 presenters, exhibitors, vendors and agency representatives.



Over 500 people attended the Tools for Life 2010 Fair!

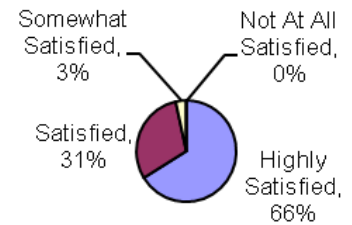
## Consumer Satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction remains stable and high. Of the 118 respondents, 66% rated themselves as 'highly satisfied' with the event, 31% were 'satisfied', and 3% were 'somewhat satisfied'.

As always, conference organizers take attendees' praise, suggestions, and criticism very seriously. Keynote speakers continue to reap the highest praise and seem well worth the expense. The evening social and dance are also appreciated. More educators seemed aware and appreciative of assistive technology sessions. Suggestions for future conferences include sessions in autism awareness, disability recognition and disclosure, multiple presentations of sessions, assistive technology for students with severe disabilities, options for students who are not college bound, mock transition meetings and employment interviews, more room for accessibility, etc.

In addition to the students with disabilities, special education teachers, related services professionals, and disability agency representatives, we had **ONE general educator** attendee who was adamant that this information needs to get to other general educators!

Consumer Satisfaction



## Financial, Moral, and Physical Support

It continues to take a lot of financial, organizational, and physical help to put on the Tools for Life conference. The Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition (IICST) continues to provide the impetus and much of the content for the Tools for Life conference. The agencies and representatives that make up the IICST work separately and collaboratively to improve transition opportunities and outcomes for students with disabilities in Idaho. These agencies include the Idaho State Department of Education and individual educators, Idaho Department of Labor, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Lewis Clark State College, Idaho State University, Idaho Department of Corrections, Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Disability Rights of Idaho, Idaho Assistive Technology Project, Eastern Idaho Technical College, Idaho Parents Unlimited, Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind, Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections, and the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Some of the agencies included in the IICST also provide monetary support of Tools for Life. These agencies include the State Department of Education, Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Idaho Assistive Technology Project, and the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities. In addition, donations were received from Key Bank, Mountain West Bank, and Tri-State Outfitters. The cost of the 2010 conference was \$65,948.11. See attached budget breakdown for income and expenses.

The Idaho Assistive Technology Project (IATP) provides the organizational support to put on the Tools for Life conference. The staff of IATP, Sue House, Irene Lunsford, Wendy Kizer, and Nora Jehn provide days and months of planning, contracting with speakers and hotel, marketing the event, organizing presenters and registration, and working at the event. Many thanks to Ron Seiler, Director of IATP, for this generous personnel support for Tools for Life. Additional conference planners included Yvonne



Tools staff and IATP members (starting bottom left): Wendy Kizer, Irene Lunsford, Yvonne Wright, Sue House, Michelle Doty, Nora Jehn and Ron Seiler

Wright and Angelina Little, University of Idaho's Center on Disabilities and Human Development, Michelle Doty, Lewis Clark State College, Tracy Warren, Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities, Ed Chilgren, Wallace School District, Paula Mason, Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind, Karen Richel, UI Extension, Janice Carson and Jacque Hyatt, State Department of Education, Carol Carnahan, Boise School District, Kelly Hall, Meridian School District, and Evelyn Mason and Angela Lindig, Idaho Parents Unlimited.

Special thanks goes to Computer for Kids for supplying the computers for the assistive technology computer lab and to Ed Chilgren for setting up, manning, and breaking down the AT lab. Thanks also goes to Miles Moore, SAIL, for providing the three-wheeled bike for the raffle. Again, special thanks to Idaho Parents Unlimited for bringing, setting up, and supervising, and the VSA arts national exhibit.

*"I have used things that I learned at Tools for Life two years ago in my classroom...  
This conference has given me the opportunity to network with professionals who  
Help me to improve the transition planning and outcomes for my students.  
A huge thanks to the sponsors and to the conference planners."*

*Professional Attendee*

## **Tools for Life 2011**

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Making our circuitous route through the state, Tools for Life 2011 will be held March 7 and 8, 2011, at the Shilo Inn, Idaho Falls. Every effort will be made to find funding to continue to bring students in from every part of the state. With budget cuts and recession, the Tools for Life: Secondary Transition and Technology Fair is as important as ever for our students, families, educators, and professionals!

*"This conference is AWESOME!  
This was my first time to attend and I look forward to next year.*

*I LOVED IT!"*

*Professional Attendee*

<b>Budget Tools for Life 2010 - Boise</b>		
<b>Income:</b>		
SDE	23,000.00	
IATP/VR (ICAT Deb Brown - pay direct)	10,000.00	
Registration	12,400.00	
IATP -	5,000.00	
Pizza (cash deposited to Idaho Impact)	215.00	
<b>Total Income:</b>		<b>50,615.00</b>
<b>Stipend Grants:</b>		
DD Council	10,000.00	direct pay
Key Bank - Idaho Impact	2,500.00	
Tri-State - Idaho Impact	830.00	
Mountain West Bank - Idaho Impact	2,000.00	
<b>Total Grants:</b>		<b>15,330.00</b>
<b>Total Combined Income and Grants:</b>		<b>65,945.00</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>		
Hotel - Doubletree Riverside		
AV	4,194.00	
Food (based on 422 count)	18,435.30	
Meeting rooms	4,080.00	
Guest rooms	11,584.99	
<b>Total Hotel Expenses</b>		<b>38,294.29</b>
Pizza	613.32	
Dollar Store - headphones, gift bags,	20.14	
Wal-Mart - snacks for buses	113.39	
Country Boys	200.00	
ATP Travel	3,500.00	
Monday social - glow necklaces & bracelets	307.92	
Programs Printed	2,761.18	
Initial Flier Printed	2,195.47	
Charter Buses (N. \$4,508.00 E. \$1,664.00)	6,172.00	
<b>Total Miscellaneous Expenses</b>		<b>15,883.42</b>
Keynotes Speaker Fees		
Michael Beers	1,500.00	
Logan Olson	500.00	
Sarah Vazquez	2,000.00	
Mike Beers airfare	476.80	
Olson airfare	421.20	
Vazquez airfare + per diem	597.80	
Interpreters	3,368.10	
<b>Indirect Costs (5-10%)</b>		
SDE	1,840.00	
IATP	800.00	
Tri State	41.50	
Key Bank	125.00	
Mountain West Bank	100.00	
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>65,948.11</b>