

President's Message

So far, 2006 has been a very good year for the San Diego Branch of the IDA. We were pleased to welcome three outstanding new members, Sara Boswell, Ph.D., Roxanne Ruzic, Ed.D., and Richard Totah, to our board at the annual dinner in January.

Dr. Boswell is a pediatric neuropsychologist whose private practice serves those with a history of learning and social challenges. In addition, she is a staff neuropsychologist at UCSD Medical Center.

Dr. Ruzic is a developmental psychologist and researcher who trained at Stanford and Harvard. She is the president of Varsity Coaching, an organization that provides coaching and mentoring to high school, college, and graduate students, including those with learning differences.

Richard Totah is a successful, adult dyslexic who attended public school in San Diego County and graduated from California State University-San Marcos, with degrees in Economics and Business Administration. He currently works as a business analyst for Bainbridge Inc., a strategy consulting firm that works with fortune 1000 clients.

These three unique individuals bring a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to our board.

We will miss Dr. Dena Harris and Dr. Christy Watson who have completed their terms on the board of directors. Both were very strong and reliable board members. Each of them currently wants to spend more time at home raising her family. We look forward to their eventual return to the board when they have more time.

Our board is in the process of redesigning our website so that it looks more professional and conveys more information. We have been awarded a grant by the National Board of the IDA to develop a website template that can be used by each IDA branch throughout the country. Our design will be the basis of this template. A website template that can be used by all the branches will help IDA take on a more consistent look when individuals search for information on the web. This template will allow smaller branches to develop local websites at a reasonable cost. Please look for our "finished product" and a great web design later this year.

Several of our board members will present the Dyslexia Simulation Workshop at the READ/San Diego Tutor Conference, in June. The dyslexia simulation exercises are very effective in helping others understand the impact of dyslexia and learning disabilities on students. We are pleased to be asked to present these simulation exercises to parents and tutors.

Stay tuned for more in October, Dyslexia Awareness Month, and...if you are interested in being more active in our efforts, do make sure to contact us. Everyone has something different to offer.

Linda Altes
President



National Educational Computing Conference

www.iste.org

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Viewpoint:

If a student has a valid IQ test on file, is it necessary to administer a new IQ test as part of a three year re-evaluation in high school?

Melissa Behrens-Blake, M.A.,

*Certified Educational Diagnostician University of New Mexico
Psychology Clinic*

There is no official rule across the country concerning this, but we know from experience that when documentation is received at the level of review for either the ACT or the Bar Exam, a current cognitive measure is highly desirable. ACT's policy for documentation posted on their website (www.act.org) states under Currency of Submitted Documentation:

Students applying for accommodation on the ACT who have current reconfirmation of a diagnosis originally made early in the student's educational life and a history of accommodation on the basis of that diagnosis normally need not submit full documentation. Instead, ACT usually accepts the school's verification of appropriate documentation on file at the school. However, ACT reserves the right to request copies of documentation from the school to verify compliance. In cases where the initial diagnosis was made within the 12 months prior to the request for accommodation, full documentation must be submitted with the request.

Cognitive testing is described as "an aptitude assessment using a complete and comprehensive battery" meaning that quick measures such as the K-BIT (Kaufmann Brief Intelligence Test) or WAISI (screening test based on the Wechsler Scales) or giving partial batteries is not acceptable. It is also the case that if a student has not been using the accommodations they are eligible for based on an early diagnosis (as in many cases at the high school level) and there is no current IEP or 504 Plan on file, a current evaluation would be necessary. ACT will ask to review documentation if it appears that the accommodations requested do not necessarily match the diagnosis. Unfortunately, many schools grant extended time, or better yet, untimed tests to

Walk in the Shoes of a Dyslexic!

Saturday June 3, 2006

Have you ever wondered what it feels like to be dyslexic? Many of us have taught dyslexics, studied dyslexia, and asked many questions...but we still find ourselves questioning what it is like to be dyslexic.

The San Diego Branch of the International Dyslexia Association will be presenting two dyslexia simulation workshops at the upcoming READ/San Diego 16th Annual TUTOR CONFERENCE (see flyer in this newsletter).

The workshops have been one of the highlights at this very informational conference. The workshops will provide an experiential, hands-on opportunity to walk in the shoes of a dyslexic.

We hope that you will join us at the conference and at one of the Walking in the Shoes of a Dyslexic presentations.

Viewpoint (continued)

any student with a learning disability, ADHD, auditory processing disorder, language processing disorder, or test anxiety, etc. It is important for the diagnostician to support the request for a specific accommodation with documented results and observations involving standard measures that specifically support that request.

What we should be asking here is not "What do we have to do?," but what is best for these students as they continue to take an ever-increasing number of standardized tests and move toward admittance to various post-secondary settings. Universities, colleges and community colleges like to see a cognitive measure that was done after the age of 16 (an adult measure) at the very least in order to help them develop appropriate accommodations at the adult level. It is not uncommon for a student to have been given the WISC (Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children) at the age of 7 and then receive services based on that initial test with re-evaluations involving brief testing in the area of achievement and maybe some short processing measures, usually the Short-Term Memory and Processing Speed Clusters from the Woodcock-Johnson. While IQ tests are designed to remain consistent across time which they usually do in the general population, we find that this is not always true in the dyslexia population and the information offered concerning individual strengths and weaknesses continues to be important. Although many diagnosticians do not like the discrepancy model used as a "gate keeper," the IQ has always offered great information concerning how an individual thinks. Are we getting ready to throw the baby out with the bathwater if we abandon cognitive measures or use quick tests to save time? Tests should be re-administered during the high school because it is the best thing to do. Why send students out of the system without the documentation that is sought by test companies and colleges? Additionally, one of the most important aspects of a measured intelligence level is that the student is able to see documentation that he/she is very bright.

International Dyslexia Association

57th Annual Conference Racing to Literacy

November 8-11, 2006

Indiana Convention Center &
RCA Dome
Indianapolis, IN



READ/SAN DIEGO'S 16TH ANNUAL
TUTOR CONFERENCE

"THE SHOULDERS ON WHICH WE STAND"
KEYNOTE SPEAKER TOM STICHT

SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 2006

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



**FOR A CONFERENCE BROCHURE PLEASE
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