

# CAP UPDATE

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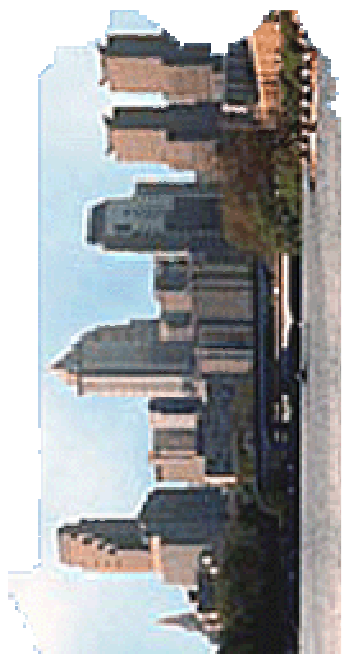
## **"Anne Does Her Homework in Preparation for her IAR, Informal Administrative Review" By: Margaret McKenna**

Anne has been very nervous about her upcoming IAR. Although her counselor had previously explained what happens at the IAR, she was still unsure as to what was going to happen. She called her counselor five times in one day and left five voicemail messages for her CAP Advocate to discuss her IAR. Anne even asked her counselor if she could have her counselor's cell phone number so she can call her if she gets really nervous before the IAR. The counselor stated she really does not have anything to worry about and there is no need for Anne to have her cell phone number. In addition, the counselor stated that Anne should talk with her CAP Advocate to go over any of her concerns. The counselor will have documentation in Anne's case file but may or may not be present at the actual IAR. Anne will be meeting with the District Administrator of the office with the CAP Advocate. At the IAR, the client's role is to present his/her case and provide support or justification as to why the decision she or he is appealing should be changed.

Anne thanked the counselor for her information and hung up but would like her more if she approved her real goal of teacher. Anne's CAP Advocate returned her call. She first mentioned to Anne that although she realizes Anne is a bit worried about the upcoming IAR, there is no need to leave five voicemails in two days. The Advocate suggested Anne put her energies into preparing for the IAR. These are a few steps you can take, said the CAP Advocate. Anne is willing to do whatever she needs to do to help herself be successful.

The first thing the CAP Advocate suggested was for Anne to get a letter from the teacher of the class where she is volunteering. This letter should provide a little detail as to Anne's skill, work behavior, etc. Anne has no problem asking for this letter. It would also help if Anne got a letter from her cognitive therapist stating that the goal of teacher, as opposed to teacher's aide, would be appropriate for her. Her therapist could specify how they are working on Anne's organizational skills. It may also help if Anne does some research and finds out the specific job tasks of a teacher as opposed to a teacher's aide. She can give this to her therapist when asking her to write the letter. The CAP Advocate also suggested Anne complete OVR's labor market survey. This is a form she completes by calling 2 to 3 potential ER's (schools) to find out the specific job duties of a teacher of the blind/visually impaired, the training needed, etc. Anne said this would be helpful for her to do anyway and would have no problem trying to complete these surveys. The CAP Advocate will send them to her.

Anne has been accepted to the college she is interested in and will bring her acceptance letter and information about the program and the disability services as well to the IAR. Speaking of good organizational skills, Anne wrote all of this down after she got off the phone



with her CAP Advocate and will start following up with these suggestions tomorrow. She feels so much better now that she has discussed all of this with her Advocate and that she has a plan in place to prepare for her IAR. Her Advocate told her that "doing some homework" should help in persuading OVR that a teacher would be a good choice for her vocational goal. Anne thought about this for a moment. As a teacher she will be giving homework and as a student she will be getting homework, she might as well start practicing now. Anne will mail copies of these letters to her CAP Advocate ASAP. Her Advocate stated she will call her soon after she receives a letter from the District Administrator with the date of the IAR. Anne is feeling a bit more relieved and only hopes the District Administrator is not ignorant, airhead like, or rude.

The next segment of Anne's Story will describe Anne's experience at the Infamous IAR.

## **"NO BLIND CHILD LEFT BEHIND" IN ERIE PA**

**By Jamie C. Ray**

On Saturday and Sunday August 19 and 20, the Tom Ridge Center in Erie PA was alive with the sounds of children. Kids from more than a dozen Erie area families explored the science exhibits in the Tom Ridge Center, took a nature walk and explored a pond in search of frogs, bugs and other creepy crawlers. Close by, in adjoining conference rooms, you could almost hear a pin drop as parents and other family members listened to a jam packed agenda of speakers cover topics including orientation and mobility, socialization, transition from school to work, and self-advocacy, just to name a few.

This conference, sponsored in part by the Parents of Blind Children, Pennsylvania Division was a first time effort to bring together Erie area families to address the challenges faced by blind and visually impaired children and young adults. Over two days, more than 75 individuals networked, shared and learned. CAP advocate Jamie Ray was among the presenters discussing tips for making a smooth transition from school to higher education or work, and the important role that self-advocacy skills play in that process. For more information on self-advocacy skills, please see the "step by step" guide on the CAP website at <http://www.equalemployment.org>

## **Pennsylvania Transition Conference**

**By: Lee Lippi**

Margaret Passio-McKenna and Lee Lippi presented at the 2006 PA Community on Transition Conference held in State College in July. The presentation focused on Outreach: Creating the Connections. Our focus was to provide both parents and students with information and resources pertaining to transitioning on school and work. We also stressed the importance of strengthening individual advocacy skills, as well as the attention needed to plan for their outreach and communications strategies. Our session was well attended and based on the responses, the presentation was well received

## Upcoming Meetings and Events of Interest

For a complete list of OVR stakeholders and their meeting dates, please visit:

<http://www.dli.state.pa.us/landi/cwp/view.asp?a=128&Q=177551>

### Upcoming Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council Meetings:

September 28 & 29, 2006 – Penn Stater Conference Center \* Please note this change: the OVR/PaRC Retreat will be on September 28th as planned. The PaRC Full Council meeting will now be in the morning of September 29th and the OVR Board meeting will be in the afternoon of September 29th.

December 6, 2006 – Harrisburg Hilton

February 21, 2007– Harrisburg Hilton

May 9, 2007– Harrisburg Hilton

August to be determined (Full Council Meeting and Retreat)

November 14, 2007– Harrisburg Hilton

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**Upcoming Outreach Events**

On **September 8, 2006** Attorney Steve Pennington and Attorney Jamie Ray will present at the annual SILC Conference in Harrisburg PA. They will discuss employment rights and responsibilities for people with disabilities. For more information on this conference, please visit [www.pasilc.org](http://www.pasilc.org).

**CAP ADVOCATE LEE LIPPI TO SPEAK**

On **Tuesday October 10, 2006**, THE PITTSBURGH AREA CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) will welcome CAP advocate Lee Lippi at its monthly meeting. Meetings are held at 6pm, at "Lifeswork" Pittsburgh. Lee will discuss the services available through the Client Assistance Program (CAP). For location information or to RSVP, you may e-mail Lee at [Leelippi@aol.com](mailto:Leelippi@aol.com).

On **Wednesday October 18, 2006**, CAP attorney Jamie Ray will speak to the Jefferson Hospital Brain Tumor Support Group in Philadelphia PA. The group meets at 7:30 pm. The location of this event is TBA, please check back here for updated information.

**CAP at NATIONAL MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY GREATER DELAWARE VALLEY ANNUAL MEETING**

On **November 29, 2006**, CAP will have an information table in the Exhibit Area at the annual meeting of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Greater Delaware Valley Chapter. For more information on this meeting, please visit <http://www.nationalmssociety.org/pae/>

**The above events are open to the public, please contact Jamie Ray at [Jamiemray@aol.com](mailto:Jamiemray@aol.com) if you would like more information.**

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<http://www.equalemployment.org>