

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM
RSA-IM-02-24
DATE: July 25, 2002

ADDRESSEES: STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCIES (GENERAL)
STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCIES (BLIND)
STATE REHABILITATION COUNCILS
CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
PROTECTION & ADVOCACY OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS
PROGRAMS
REGIONAL REHABILITATION CONTINUING EDUCATION
PROGRAMS
AMERICAN INDIAN VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE
PROGRAMS
CONSUMER ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS
RSA SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

SUBJECT: Launching of a new website on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities, developed by *Quest: Arts for Everyone*

CONTENT: The purpose of this Information Memorandum (IM) is to share with you the enclosed flyer announcing a new website on Careers in the Arts for Persons with Disabilities. The website has been developed by *Quest: Arts for Everyone*, under contract with the National Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Technical Assistance Center.

The website is directed to rehabilitation counselors and managers to assist them in providing career options and resources for VR consumers. Careers in the arts do not represent some kind of impossible dream or exotic promise for persons with disabilities. The arts involve not only acting, performing, or executing works of art – a small percentage of individuals, whether disabled or non-disabled, get to fill these roles. The arts field also includes administration, support, marketing, public relations, and other technical “behind the scenes” roles. This new website presents all the possibilities for different careers in the arts. Even more important, the website points the way to opportunities for quality employment with hope for a future.

Offering VR consumers options in the arts field enhances employment opportunities and careers within the VR services system in full recognition of the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individuals that are served.

If you have any questions or input regarding this IM or the attached flyer, please contact a *Quest* representative at (301) 552-1703 or by e-mail at quest4arts@aol.com.

Joanne M. Wilson
Commissioner

CC: CSAVR
NORP
NAPAS

CAREERS IN THE ARTS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

ANNOUNCING NEW INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

People with disabilities face significant barriers in achieving professional status in the arts and are therefore often underrepresented in the arts world. Sharon Jenson, executive director of the Non-Traditional Casting Project, captured the depth of the problem when she wrote in the April, 2001 issue of the Theatre Communications Group magazine, *American Theatre*, “Statistically, 54 million Americans – 20 percent of our national population – have a disability of some kind. The actors in three performing unions who identify themselves as having a disability, however, comprise less than one half of one percent. At an elementary level, whatever the ratio to talent to population is, the chance of a good deal of talent being found within 54 million individuals is very high. If we are to benefit from the full range of our national talent pool, it is time to be open to and to open up to this last frontier of casting and hiring to include theatre professionals who are deaf and hard of hearing, who are blind and have low vision, who have physical disabilities and developmental disabilities.”

Careers in the Arts for People With Disabilities Is No Fallacy!

Discover What Jobs Exist In The Arts and Where The Resources Are

Meet Some Artists With Disabilities

Come Visit The Web Site

The arts represent a new frontier for employment of people with disabilities. To access this new frontier people with disabilities need the appropriate training and education. Vocational rehabilitation services has a critical role in facilitating the acquisition of essential skills and knowledge leading to employment in the arts.

New informational materials and links to valuable art resources are now available to assist you as you work with your client in planning an art career. These materials were created for vocational rehabilitation counselors and managers.

The materials describe the four main fields in the arts: literary, performing, visual and design, and administration. Under each is listed some of the types of jobs available. Resource links are provided for further information about a particular field or training for certain job types. People with disabilities employed in various jobs in the arts are profiled.

These materials were compiled by Pat Laird for Quest: Arts for Everyone. Quest has experience in using the arts to enable individuals (including individuals with disabilities), who have been marginalized, to realize their full potential. This new career in the arts information in combination with vocational rehabilitation services provides another option for counselors and managers in reaching the full potential of clients with disabilities.

Visit www.quest4arts.org/careers_arts.htm to learn about new career opportunities in the arts.