

# 2019 National Forum on Issues in Vocational Evaluation and Assessment

## The Vocational Evaluation and Career Assessment Professionals Association ([VECAP](#))

### *Career Pathways: Building on the Foundation of Assessment*



#### **DAY 1: Monday, October 14, 2019**

7:30 - 8:30 am Registration, Exhibits, and Posters open

8:30 - 9:00 am Welcome/Introduction Joe Ashley, Steve Sligar, and Pam Leconte

9:00 - 10:30 am

#### **GENERAL SESSION 1**

*CEE-STEM: Exploring STEM Careers with Opportunity Youth,*

Dr. Tracey Hall, Senior Research Scientist/ Instructional Designer, CAST, Inc, Wakefield, MA

Guiding Question: How can youth benefit from a personalized digital tool to guide their exploration of STEM career pathways?

CAST, Inc. (<http://www.cast.org>), is the founding organization for the research and development of the universal design for learning (UDL) framework. CAST is designing a new STEM career exploration and portfolio tool for youth. The STEMFolio tool will provide youth, who have often struggled in traditional schools, with a personalized, universally designed way to build foundational knowledge, demonstrate their learning, and explore and engage in potential STEM career

pathways. CAST, in partnership with the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and YouthBuild USA, are building a web-based digital STEMfolio tool for youth ages 16-24 who are neither in school nor working. STEMfolio is a portable technology-based learning environment that promotes young people's agency and accompanies them through different learning and employment contexts. The theory of action is based on the understanding that opportunity youth may benefit from flexible educational models that provide scaffolds and supports so they can build STEM competencies and explore STEM careers. STEMfolio also supports young people in connecting classroom learning to relevant real-world skills (<http://www.cast.org/our-work/research-development/projects/exploring-stem-careers-opportunity-youth.html#.XN8GcVnKi3c>) Dr. Hall will be sharing this tool and more information about their ongoing work around UDL for workforce development.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Learn how the UDL framework and co-design process were used to develop an online portfolio to support expert learning and engagement in STEM.
- Discover what can happen when young people engaged in a co-design process develop a way to demonstrate STEM and career abilities and interests, and how to be supported in developing these abilities--growing expert learners from the beginning.
- Experience the environment that was built to create and organize multimedia evidence of STEM competencies.
- Gain insight into how connecting classroom learning with relevant real-world skills helps learners to assess and identify their STEM competencies and develop them further.

10:30 – 11:00 am **BREAK- Exhibits and Posters open**

11:00 – 12:30 pm

### **GENERAL SESSION 2**

*How can Bureau of Labor Statistics Data be used to identify requirements of jobs, pay, and working conditions?*

Dr. Kristen Monaco

Guiding Question: What is the Bureau of Labor Statistics new Occupational Requirements Survey (successor to the DOT) and how does it relate to the practice of vocational evaluation?

The Bureau of Labor Statistics produces a suite of data products on pay, employment, occupational outlook, and, most recently, the requirements of work. The Occupational Requirements Survey is collected by BLS for use in SSA's

disability adjudication process, but it provides a rich source of data on the physical, environmental, cognitive, and educational requirements of jobs that are valuable to many stakeholders. In this presentation we will provide an overview of BLS data products on pay, employment, and outlooks for jobs and a tutorial on how to use the Occupational Requirements Survey to filter and identify jobs by their underlying requirements.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Describe the new Occupational Requirements Survey, the successor to the Dictionary of Occupational Titles
- Review existing BLS pay, employment, and outlook products with a focus on data that is relevant for vocational evaluation and career assessment.
- Highlight statistics on employment for persons with disabilities available from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

### **12:30 – 2:00 LUNCHEON with Speaker**

#### *Morphic-Automated Personalization Computing Project*

Dr. Gregg Vanderheiden

Guiding Question: What if every computer you encounter could instantly change to present information and operate in the way that best fits your needs and preferences?" (<https://morphic.world>).

Enter the tool Morphic! Dr. Gregg Vanderheiden has been spearheading research on assistive technology since the Trace R&D Center was created in 1971. Trace is now developing and testing a new cloud-based resource that makes information and communication technologies easier for all users (especially those with disabilities). Vocational evaluators should be aware of how Morphic enables individuals who have difficulty using computers to discover easily specific options and special features to make computers easier to use in the workplace. Testing is currently underway in libraries, job centers, and community colleges, and Morphic should be available more widely next year. Dr. Vanderheiden will share information about this innovative tool and how it may have implications for expanding opportunities across a range of career pathways.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Articulate three components of the Morphic project;
- Discuss three applications for the morphic Project; and,
- Identify three ways the Morphic Project relates to vocational evaluation practice.

2:00 – 3:30 pm Concurrent **Sessions (1-6)**

## **Strand A (2 sessions @ 45 minutes each):**

### **Session 1**

#### *Computer-Interactive ADA Pre-employment Work Sample Methods to Reduce Worker Injury Loss-time in Heavy Manufacturing*

John Banks

Topic Area: Vocational Evaluation and Career Assessment in Private Practice and the Business Community

This presentation explores the methods used to establish an ADA pre-employment testing program in heavy manufacturing. A two-year study of work sample tested workers is detailed and compared to workers hired with only a medical examination. The results of the work reveal dramatic reduction in loss-time when using work sample assessment.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

- Provide an understanding on how work sample methods can be structured to meet the requirements of pre-employment testing as allowed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Identify methods for quantitative job standard analysis that allow criterion-based work samples to be used for employment job matching.
- Provide understanding of how isolated trait work samples are constructed.

### **Session 2**

#### *Strength Training: No Workout Required*

Penny Liles, MS

Topic Area: Tools of the Vocational Evaluator (Strategies)

Our mental health system is funded and driven by deficit-based language, limitations, and symptoms people experience in their everyday lives. The goal of this session is to understand and apply the strengths-based perspective in working with people who have mental health challenges in returning to work.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

- Learn about the strengths-based model.
- Develop insight into your own practices (i.e., where am I on the continuum of this perspective?).
- Apply the strengths-based perspective in the job search and supports provided.

## **Strand B (2 session @ 45 minutes each):**

### **Session 1**

*The Business is Your Customer Too; Serving the IWD in the Workforce by Meeting Their Employer's Needs*

Tonia Peterson

Topic Area: Vocational Evaluation in Private Practice

The presenter will address how Michigan's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program is meeting the challenge of both the business and Individuals with disabilities (IWD), by incorporating a multi-disciplinary approach with Occupational Therapists and Business Relations Consultants to provide job analysis and worksite evaluations/consultations to local businesses. The presenter will discuss the job analysis process and approaches used by VR to support the Return-to-Work process allowing business to retain and upskill their current employees with and acquired disabilities.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

- Learn different strategies and approaches of working collaboratively to benefit the dual customer.
- Understand how to reframe traditional VR tools such as job analysis to benefits businesses and individuals with disabilities.
- Understand how the Occupational Therapy professional is integrated in a vocational rehabilitation frame of reference and enhances service delivery to VR customers and business.

### **Session 2**

*An Online Suite of Assessments in American Sign Language*

Steve Sligar, EdD, CVE

Topic Area: Tools of Vocational Evaluation

Vocational evaluators use instruments to assess deaf & hard of hearing persons.

Through a grant funded project, 10 substance abuse and mental health instruments and a career screening tool were translated into ASL and standardized. Participants will learn how to access the online portal ASL-STAR and a demonstration of the O\*Net Interest Profiler will be provided. The Substance Abuse Resources and Disability Issues (SARDI) Program at Wright State University (WSU) received a five-year Disability and Rehabilitation Research Project (DRRP), funded through NIDILRR that supported this project.

## **Learning Objectives:**

- Describe the translation and validation process for the online suite of instruments being translated and validated in ASL.
- Explain psychometric results obtained for the instruments to date.
- Demonstrate and describe the training materials that detail how the ASL-STAR online portal application works and the importance of having culturally and linguistically appropriate tools for this population.
- Demonstrate the procedures to use the O\*Net Interest Profiler and interpret the results.

## **Strand C (2 sessions @ 45 minutes each):**

### **Session 1**

*Connecting the DOTs – Interrelationships among Government Occupational and Industry Data*

Jeffrey A. Truthan, President, Skill TRAN, LLC

Topic Area: Technology in Vocational Evaluation and Career Assessment

There are two core sources for occupational information (DOT and O\*NET). There is a new supplementary source emerging – Occupation Requirement Survey (ORS). How do these all inter-connect? What other government data resources inform vocational choice for employment numbers, wages, outlook, training, industries, labor markets, staffing patterns? Understand the big picture.

## **Learning Objectives:**

- Identify key resources defining occupations and their requirements
- Understand crucial surrounding data that influences vocational choice
- Select the right government resources to reveal relevant data

### **Session 2**

*Using Adolescent Neuroscience to Support the Importance of Career Assessment*

Dr. Bridget Greene, Cliff Oliech, & Dr. Pamela Leconte

Topic Area: Career Assessment in transition services; empowerment through vocational evaluation and career assessment

Career assessment and/or vocational evaluation are imperative to success for youth with disabilities transitioning to employment. The presenters will review adolescent neuroscience and how it can affect outcomes of vocational evaluation and the needs of youth with disabilities transitioning to employment. Also, differences between

chronological versus actual (neurological) age and how the latter can have an effect on assessment and career development will be discussed. Appropriateness of various career assessment methods (e.g., work sampling, testing) and how they align with adolescent brain development will be discussed.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Identify the role of the pre-frontal cortex in adolescent brain development.
- Describe how vocational evaluators should consider brain development in practice.
- Determine assessment methods which will assist adolescents to understand their relationships with the world of work.

3:30 – 4:00pm **BREAK- Exhibits and Posters open**

4:00 – 5:30 pm **Feature Sessions**

### **FEATURE Session A**

*Perceptions of the Vocational Evaluation Profession: A Past, Present, and Future Perspective*

Andrea Perkins Nerlich, Ph.D., CRC, CVE; Debra Homa, Ph.D., CRC, CVE, PVE; Paige Tidwell, Ed.S., CRC, CVE, LPC, PVE

Guiding Question: What are the key findings on the past, present, and future perceptions of vocational evaluation?

This interactive session presents the findings of a qualitative study of the past, present, and future perceptions of the state of vocational evaluation (VE) practice, as well as the responsibility of professional organizations to respond to the needs of the profession. The choice of open-ended questions to capture “voices of the field” and highlight best practices, concerns, future directions, and obstacles for the continuation and promotion of the profession. With changing economic times and a profession that is increasingly evidence-based, these findings can be parlayed into a vision for the profession and VE service provision to people with disabilities. Participants will be encouraged to provide their insights to enhance collaboration, create inclusion, and articulate the benefit of sustaining and strengthening our discipline.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Overview historical strengths of the VE profession
- Identify barriers and threats to the status of the VE profession
- Recognize asset points to capitalize upon for vocational evaluation.
- Collaborate to turn assets into actionable items and a future vision for the VE profession.

## **FEATURE Session B**

*Customized Employment and Discovery -Strategies for implementing an Employment first Model; Opportunity for Vocational Evaluation and Assessment*

Abby Cooper (invited speaker)

Guiding Question: “What is Discovery and how is it similar to and different from vocational assessment?”

The presenter will provide an overview of Discovery and how it fits into Employment First, including the history behind it. The presenter will explore the principles that both vocational assessment and Discovery share and how they differ. She will address the pros and cons of Discovery along with its effectiveness with different populations. The different skills required to conduct Discovery versus vocational assessment will be described and each step of Discovery will be explained, along with the consideration and rationale behind the steps. The decision points for practitioners in deciding to implement Discovery as an “aspect” of vocational assessment or as an alternative to vocational assessment will be explored. She will also discuss the average length of time to conduct Discovery as well as what the product should reveal. A report example will be provided.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Discuss the differences and similarities of Discovery and vocational assessment.
- Review the steps involved in Discovery and the skills required to implement the steps.
- Evaluate when to use Discovery versus vocational assessment.

## **FEATURE Session C:**

*Community-Based Transition Services and Assessment for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder*

Daniel Ernest Liles, MS, LPC, NCC

Guiding Question: What are some techniques that are helpful to work with and understand persons with autism?

The University of North Carolina TEACCH Autism Program (TEACCH) is a statewide program that creates and disseminates community-based services, training programs, and research to enhance the quality of life for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families across the lifespan. The rise in prevalence of ASD has made it increasingly important to meet the unique developmental, social, and emotional needs of this population. The presenter will provide an overview of the services offered by TEACCH followed by more detailed information regarding transition services and assessment. The presenter will cover

topics related to providing vocational assessments for individuals with ASD, including a discussion of assessment measures, key factors in interpreting assessment data, and the use of evaluation and assessment components in transition services.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Identify vocational assessments designed for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Determine key factors to consider when interpreting assessment data.
- Gain awareness of transition services offered by the UNC TEACCH Program.

**6:00 – 7:30 PM RECEPTION AWARDS CEREMONY**

**Hors d'oeuvres and drinks provided by BASES of Virginia**

**DAY 2: Tuesday October 15, 2019**

7:30 to 9:00 am     **Registration and Informal Networking**  
                          **Continental Breakfast**  
                          **Posters and Exhibit tables open**

9:00 to 10:30 am **Greetings, Housekeeping & Opening Remarks**

**General Session 3**

*The Power of Hands-On Career Exploration as a Foundation for Career Pathway Planning*

Chuck Gardner, Tish Harris, and a Program Graduate

Guiding Question: What does a hands-on career exploration process in robotics and cyber-security include and how do these open doors for related career pathways?

Career exploration is central to Pre-Employment Transition Services for youth with disabilities. The presenters will describe a partnership that created the Robotics/Coding and Cyber Security Career Exploration Academy that promotes confidence building and understanding in specific cyber and computer occupational areas. The presenters highlight the development of an accessible program from curriculum development to implementation. A graduate of the academy will provide a student's perspective on the power of this experience. In conclusion three years of academy outcome data will be reviewed.

**Learning Objectives:**

- What it takes (resources, content/curricula, personnel, etc.) to host a cyber academy in the topic areas of Robotics, Coding, or Cyber Security
- What funding opportunities are available to support the implementation of such an event
- What population(s) can be targeted for such an event

10:30 – 11:00 am **BREAK/ Posters and Exhibit tables open**

11:00 – 12:30 pm

#### **General Session 4**

*Assessment as a Business Engagement Strategy*

Victor Gray, Tonia Peterson, Kate Kaegi

Guiding Question: How are vocational evaluation techniques being employed in major companies to open career opportunities for individuals with disabilities?

A panel of executives from the Mississippi and Virginia Manufacturers Association, a vocational evaluator, and an occupational therapist will discuss how to incorporate vocational assessment techniques to engage businesses to increase their talent pipeline. Employers need qualified applicants. Vocational evaluators know how to conduct a job analysis with an eye toward talent with disabilities and use the results to identify applicants. Business knows what is needed and how to develop talent when the applicant is a match with the job. Each panelist will provide a different perspective on how businesses are engaged.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

- Describe how vocational assessment can be used as a business engagement strategy
- Identify assessment tools that can enhance employee selection
- Delineate assessment processes that can enhance access and employment opportunities for job seekers with disabilities

12:30 – 2:00 pm **Lunch: Box lunch for round table topic discussion**

Guiding Question: What vocational evaluation and career assessment strategies do you use?

- *The luncheon provides an opportunity to share the vocational evaluation and career assessment tools that you use and learn what others are using.*

What is Networking? It's not what you know, it's who you know. This is a common expression and is a foundation for understanding the importance of networking.

Everyone has a network, even if you don't realize it! You have family, friends, parents of friends, friends of friends, neighbors, coaches, teachers, bosses, and coworkers – all of these people are part of your personal network. When it comes time to search for jobs, your network is just as important as your skills and abilities.” Many people underestimate the power of their network. People in your network have their own network, which can become valuable when you are assisting others with their career exploration activities.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Interact with colleagues relating to field of vocational evaluation
- Discuss their different roles and responsibilities within vocational evaluation, and
- Share ideas and tools used (e.g., paper/pencil assessments, work samples, situational assessments) in their individual practices

### **2:00 – 3: 15 Feature Sessions**

#### **Feature Session A:**

*Innovative Employment Assessment – A Case Study of Hershey Boot Camps*  
Debby Hopkins, MBA - Chief Workforce Officer and Federal Grant Programs Director for the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board; Jim Leech, B.S., Senior Engineer for the Hershey Company (retired)

Guiding Question: How can vocational evaluation and assessment enhance business talent acquisition practices in a manufacturing setting?

In this workshop, attendees will gain an understanding of the impact of today's labor market dynamics on employer's talent acquisition strategies, and a detailed view of one collaborative solution in the Shenandoah Valley that is creating employment and apprenticeship avenues for vocational rehabilitation clients and individuals with no experience, while helping one business increase the quality of its hires, improve retention, expand the diversity of its employees, and live its commitment to “abilities first.” This session describes the Hershey Boot Camp, an innovative collaborative talent pipeline solution that creates employment and apprenticeship avenues for VR clients and individuals with no experience. This session will highlight the process of determining the job requirements, developing the training curriculum and highlight the assessments that would determine participant success.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Increase awareness of today's labor market dynamics and roles vocational evaluation and practical assessments can play in talent acquisition practices
- Explore the Hershey Boot Camp pre-employment model

- Consider benefits of similar applications of the boot camp model to benefit your clients

### **Session B: *Cyber Academy: A Hands-On Career Exploration Experience***

Chuck Gardner, Shawn L. Zimmerman, Tish Harris

Guiding Question: What does a hands-on career exploration process in robotics and cyber-security include and how do these open doors for related career pathways?

Career Exploration is central to Pre-Employment Transition Services for youth with disabilities. The presenters will describe a partnership that created the Robotics/Coding and Cyber Security Career Exploration Academy that promotes confidence building and understanding in specific cyber and computer occupational areas. The presenters will highlight the development of an accessible program from curriculum development to implementation. A graduate of the academy will provide a student's perspective on the power of this experience. In conclusion three years of academy outcome data will be reviewed.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

- What it takes (resources, content/curricula, personnel, etc.) to host a hands-on experiential opportunity for students
- What funding opportunities are available to support the implementation of such an event
- What population(s) can be targeted for such an event

### **Session C:**

*Threading the Pre-ETS Career Exploration Needle*

Dr. Maureen McGuire-Kultz

Guiding Question: What is Pre-ETS and how is it a fit with vocational evaluation?

Pre-Employment Transition Services are proving a challenge to implement for many vocational rehabilitation agencies. The problem is compounded for vocational evaluation professionals providing services for VR agencies who are trying to understand the Pre-ETS requirements and language as they move to provide career exploration services with a focus on career pathways. This session will provide a review of Pre-ETS requirements in law and regulation, and discuss implications for career services. Bring your questions as participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss strategies for new career-oriented services.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

- Identify of the Pre-Employment Transitions Services (Pre-ETS) requirements under WIOA

- Describe required services to students with disabilities under Pre-ETS.
- Discuss the role of the assessment professional under WIOA

3: 15 – 3:45 **BREAK/ Posters and Exhibit tables open**

3:45 – 5:15 pm Concurrent Sessions

**Concurrent Sessions (7-12)**

**Strand A (1 session @ 90 minutes)**

**Session 1:**

*Blindness: Why Traditional vocational Evaluations Just Won't Work*

Sandra M. Bullins, PhD, CRC

*Topic Area:* Universal design, universal design in learning, accessible educational materials, and assistive technology: Assessment opportunities that are expanded with these practices.

The purpose of this presentation is to examine how standard vocational evaluations are not a good fit for individuals who have a visual impairment. The hardships to both consumer and state agency are discussed, a live demonstration will be given, and dialogue encouraged throughout.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Recognize the major barriers to individuals with visual impairments or blindness when presented with standard vocational evaluations and assessments
- Understand both the tangible and nontangible costs to both the vocational rehabilitation consumer and the state agency
- Develop strategies for accommodating those limitations

**Strand B (2 sessions @ 45 minutes each):**

**Session 1:**

*Career Mapping – The Intersection of Vocational Assessment and Career Pathways*

Caren Phipps, M.S., CVE and Kate Kaegi, MA, CVE

**Topic Area: Career Assessment in Transition Services**

The presenters will share information about the Vocational Assessment process and how results can be used to provide students/youth with disabilities information that can be utilized to make informed decisions and access inclusive alternative training

and employment opportunities via Career Pathways, including the Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities program.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Describe the major barriers to individuals with visual impairments or blindness when presented with standard vocational evaluations and assessments
- Compare the tangible and nontangible costs to both the vocational rehabilitation consumer and the state agency
- Develop strategies for accommodating those limitations

**Session 2:**

*Life Care Planning: Potential to expand your evaluation practice*

Chris Reid, PhD, CRCC and Sandra Bullins, Ph.D, CRC

Topic Area: Vocational Evaluation and Career Assessment in Private Practice and the Business Community

This session addresses life care planning with people who have experienced catastrophic injuries. Vocational evaluators and career assessment professionals could expand their practices to include this evaluation service, or partner with life care planners to ensure that appropriate vocational and career planning services are included in life care plans.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Describe what life care planning services are, and who can benefit from them.
- Identify specific assessment processes used in life care planning practice.
- Become aware of educational and certification requirements for life care planning practice, for further pursuit if they wish to incorporate this area of services into their assessment practices.

**Strand C (2 sessions @ 45 minutes each):**

**Session 1:**

*The Critical Skill of Reading: Assessment, Accommodation and Recommendations for Low Readers*

Lynn R. Dowd, Ed.S., CVE

Topic Area: Tools of the Vocational Evaluator

Many individuals receiving career assessment services lack effective reading - a critical skill for work and independent living. The presenter addresses the components of effective reading and how they are measured. Accommodations for low readers as

well as methods for determining when adult literacy services may prove beneficial will be discussed.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Recognize the major barriers to individuals with visual impairments or blindness when presented with standard vocational evaluations and assessments
- Understand both the tangible and nontangible costs to both the vocational rehabilitation consumer and the state agency
- Develop strategies for accommodating those limitations

**Session 2:**

*Progressive Employment – Assessment Practices for Upskilling/Backfilling Individuals Within Career Pathways*

Janet Drudik and Kelly Haines

Topic Area: Trend and Research-Based Assessment Practices

In this presentation we will describe the PE model as a strategy for conducting vocational evaluation and assessment in a work-based setting. We will discuss how this tool can meet the needs of both jobseekers and business as a dual-customer strategy and promote advancement along career pathways in high-growth/high-demand industries.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Describe the Progressive Employment (PE) Model in Evaluation/Assessment.
- Discuss the benefits of Progressive Employment in the Dual-Customer Approach
- Apply PE strategies while assisting individuals to upskill within a career pathway

DINNER ON YOUR OWN

**Day 3: Wednesday October 16, 2019**

8:00 – 9:00am      **Registration and Informal Networking**  
**Continental Breakfast**  
**Posters and Exhibits open**

9:00 – 10:30 pm

**Greetings & Housekeeping**

**General Session 5:**

*Vocational Evaluation Certification in North America VE Credentialing in Canada and the new International Certified Vocational Evaluator (ICVE)*

Janice Ray, Thea Aldrich, and Jennifer Griffiths

Guiding Question: How can I become credentialed as a vocational evaluator?

This panel presentation will describe the certification process and requirements presently in place in Canada and will introduce the new ICVE credential, which is now available to American VE professionals. This will include the VE education and knowledge domains and draft Standards of Practice. In addition, common practices, tools, and techniques used in service delivery will be discussed.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Describe the certification process of vocational evaluators in Canada and the United States
- Identify vocational evaluation service delivery in Canada and the US.
- Discuss common *tools and techniques with those used in both countries.*

10:30 – 11:00am **BREAK/ Posters and Exhibit tables open**

11:00 – 12:30 PM

**General Session 6:**

**Work Samples Make a Difference**

Carla Thimons, Lenape Technical School, Ford City, PA; Lindsay Harris, Phillips Programs, Laurel, MD and Northern VA; Wendy Cullen-Lawhorne, Woodrow Workforce Rehabilitation Center, Fishersville, VA

Guiding Question: How can a work sample be used as a part of career pathways?

“Work, real or simulated” forms the core of vocational evaluation services. It is one aspect that differentiates vocational evaluation from all other assessment services. Members of the panel will share how Career Technical Education and Vocational Rehabilitation are using requirements of contemporary career pathways and programs to develop and provide work sampling to a variety of youth and adults.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Identify use of work samples as current authentic, non-discriminatory vocational evaluation
- Describe the benefits and reasons for using work sampling
- Discuss different types of work samples used in various settings.

12:30 – 12:45 PM **Closing Remarks**

1:00 PM – 4:30 PM

## **POST CONFERENCE TRAINING OPPORTUNITY**

*Introduction to Vocational Evaluation*

(3.5 CVE/CRC \*\*Available only by self submission to CRCC\*\*)

Steven R. Sligar, EdD, CVE, PVE

### **Note: Box lunch provided**

Vocational Evaluation is a dynamic profession rooted in the belief that people, especially those with disabilities can work and have a career. This workshop will include three basic philosophies of vocational evaluation, three types of tools, behavioral observation and recording, and the critical elements in a VE report. This material is for new vocational evaluators.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Describe three basic theories that underpin vocational evaluation: theory of work adjustment, trait factor, and Holland codes.
- Discuss the three tools used in vocational evaluation: instruments (work samples and tests / surveys), techniques (situational & ecological assessment, on-the-job evaluation), and strategies (accommodations, modifications, and learning preferences).
- Practice writing behavioral observations.
- Examine data from the VE and how that is reported.

See you in 2021—check the [VECAP Website](#) for an announcement of time and place.

## **Presenter Bios**

**Thea Aldrich**, CVE, RRP, CVRP, CCVE(D) is currently President of the College of Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals. With over 20 years of related experience, she has been accepted as Expert Witness by arbitration boards and courts of law. In addition to her 20+ years in Vocational Assessment and Rehabilitation, she has worked as a part-time Instructor at Seneca College from 2014 - 2016, developing the course curriculum, assignments and examinations, and delivering the Assessment Approaches course.

**John Banks** has worked as a vocational evaluator in the public, non-profit, for-profit and industrial arenas for over 45 years and has continued to conduct independent research and develop vocational assessment tools and systems for use throughout North America, Europe, Asia and Australia. This project reveals how computer-interactive isolated trait work sample testing can reduce lost time by reducing injury rates of workers in heavy manufacturing.

For the past 19 years, **Dr. Sandra Bullins** has been closely associated with state vocational rehabilitation agencies in 3 different capacities. She has served as a consumer with a visual disability (total blindness) in the state of Tennessee, an intern with the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (transitions and vocational evaluation, and as an educator and researcher at the University of Arkansas and at Virginia Commonwealth University. As a consumer with a visual disability, she underwent vocational evaluation and understands the struggles, in accessibilities, and frustration associated with the vocational evaluation process. As an intern with MdRS, she learned how standard vocational evaluations were given, results reported, and recommendations given to counselors and the feedback given to the consumer. She also developed an understanding of the limitations those same assessments had on the consumer with a visual impairment and how the state agency addressed those limitations. While pursuing her doctorate at the University of Arkansas, she completed several research projects on vocational evaluation alternatives for consumers with visual impairments. She is now a Post-Doctoral Fellow within the Department of Rehabilitation and Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Virginia Commonwealth University. Her research is focused on universal accessibility, employment discrimination for people with disabilities, and the procedures for conducting a needs assessment for the residents of Virginia who are Deaf, Hard-of-hearing, or Deaf-Blind. Her unique roles for the past 19 years as a consumer, student, and now educator and researcher, who also has a visual disability, have given her a diversified wealth of knowledge and qualifications.

**Abby Cooper's** experience covers a wide gamut of local, state and federal services to expand employment options for individuals with significant disabilities. In 1980 she

created the first community-based supported employment program in Washington State. She has designed and administered supported and customized employment programs for individuals with chronic mental illness and individuals with multiple physical and cognitive disabilities. She is a certified training in Discovery. She ran one of the seven RSA national informed choice grants. She has trained parents and teachers of transition age students on obtaining employment after graduation. When she was a statewide administrator for Washington State's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) she coordinated their partnership with the Workforce system to further employment outcomes for people with disabilities. She created VR's benefits planning unit, coordinated their financial literacy efforts and implemented Ticket to Work. She has provided consultation on WOIA to numerous states, and been actively involved with employer engagement with both, Public and Private Employers.

She is national Subject Matter Expert for Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP) administered by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. Through EFSLMP, she has provided technical assistance in systems change to several U.S. states including Arkansas, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Hawaii, Colorado, Oregon, Tennessee, Maine, Rhode Island, Delaware, Pennsylvania North Carolina, Maryland, Iowa, New York, Utah, and Missouri. She also serves as a consultant with Marc Gold and Associates where she focuses on Customized Employment for individuals with significant disabilities and has provided training and technical assistance on implementing Customized Employment and Discovery to 12 states.

She has published numerous articles ranging in topics from integrated employment for people with severe physical and cognitive disabilities, entrepreneurship and rehabilitation, informed choice, economic self-sufficiency, supported employment services and its relationship to a broader employment policy.

**Wendy Cullen-Lawthorne** is the Assistant Director of the Career and Workforce Development Division at the Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center in Fishersville, VA. With over 23 years in rehabilitation services, Wendy has spent the past 19 years in vocational evaluation. Specializing in comprehensive career explorations, Wendy manages the Center's Vocational Evaluation Department, serving over 1100 clients a year

**Jennifer Griffiths** With over 20 years experience and a keen focus on career counselling, employability support, and vocational assessment, Jennifer has gained acute insight and expertise into assisting adults with disabilities in career transition. She has worked on projects concentrating on vocational assessment and employment potential in both Canada and International markets. With a focus is on current employment trends, employability requirements and technology skills for employment, Jennifer has successfully implemented comprehensive resource tools for key

customers. Target areas include identifying alternate occupations and utilizing vocational characteristics to assist in determining disability status.

With a Master's degree in Counselling and several professional qualifications in the vocational assessment and rehabilitation field, Jennifer's focal point throughout her career has been assisting individuals with barriers to successfully integrate into the workforce. This approach soundly highlights her core belief that work is healthy. Jennifer has demonstrated her skills as a coach, assessor, trainer and manager in her longstanding role in the vocational assessment field and is regularly sought out as a vocational expert by customers and peers. She has participated in professional development initiatives as well as been a volunteer member with various vocational rehabilitation professional associations.

**Lynn Dowd**, Ed. S., CVE, PVE is a career assessment specialist in private practice. Through her company, Careerworks, Inc., she provides career assessment and planning services to individuals with disabilities and training and consultation services to businesses, educational programs and non-profit agencies. Lynn is a CVE with over 30 years of experience in the field. She previously taught distance learning classes in career assessment for The George Washington University where she achieved both her Master's and her Education Specialist degrees. Lynn served as President of the International Vocational Evaluation and Career Assessment Professionals Association and co-authored the organization's Blueprint for the Future. She has authored numerous papers in her field and has provided training at state, regional, and national conferences. Lynn is the author of *Work Preference Match: A Career Exploration Tool* which was published by JIST Publishers in 2006 and its revision, *Career Priorities Profile* published in 2010. A third edition of the *Career Priorities Profile* was published by Careeworks, Inc. in 2017.

**Janet Drudik**, MS, CRC is the Project Director for the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities (CPID) grant for Nebraska VR. She has also worked in the capacities of Program Director for Vocational Evaluation, VR Office Director, Vocational Counselor and Vocational Evaluator. Since 2015 she has been the Nebraska Lead for the Progressive Employment Model. In her role as Project Director she is responsible for the daily activities of the CPID grant and the Progressive Employment model. Ms. Drudik works closely with CPID staff on a state and national level to implement grants, write and implement policies. This includes data to the ICI team for evaluation purposes. Ms. Drudik has a master's degree in Agency Counseling and a bachelor's degree in Community Service Counseling and Sociology.

**Dr. Bridget Green** received her doctorate from George Washington University analyzing how typical and atypical brain development may cause disabilities. Her

dissertation focused on adolescent brain development and bullying of students with disabilities in a college setting. She currently teaches undergraduate and graduate students in special education at Duquesne University.

**Dr. Chuck Garder** is the Director of Curriculum for the National Integrated Cyber Education Research Center (NICERC) and a former classroom teacher, Dr. Gardner has intimate knowledge of teaching cyber education and robotics to middle school and high school students. He has experience with not only making content relevant to students across all subjects, but also worked hand-in-hand with Virginia's Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) and Department for Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) to adapt the content so that it is accessible to all students, including those with disabilities.

**Victor Gray, Ed. D.**, is the Executive Director of the Manufacturing Skills Institute, the Workforce Solutions Division of the Virginia Manufacturers Association. MSI is the workforce solutions organization consisting of the nationally recognized Manufacturing Skills Institute and the three-time national award-winning Dream It Do It Virginia Network – an industry skills and career education resource for advanced technology occupations serving over 16,000 people annually. MSI partners with workforce agencies and training institutions nationwide to provide needed credentials and certifications to provide skills in manufacturing for the long-term unemployed, diverse worker, disabled workers and young workers. Educator, consultant, entrepreneur, speaker and facilitator, Dr. Gray has many capabilities. With over 40 years of manufacturing experience, Dr. Gray has been widely regarded as one of the world's leading experts in quality training. He has worked directly with senior executives, has provided direct support to working teams and has provided direct support at the project level. His contributions have included assistance to leadership with the creation of corporate vision and goals, as well as, communication of leadership's vision throughout the organization. In addition to executive guidance, Dr. Gray has also provided tactical support which has included training development and application of Lean and Six Sigma techniques, Voice of the Customer, 8D Problem Solving, SPC, Kaizen Design of Experiments, Quality and Environmental Management Systems (ISO/TS/AS), Failure Mode Effects Analysis, Team Development, Measurement System Analysis, system audits and the solution of particularly troublesome quality problems. Dr. Gray was elected a Fellow of the American Society for Quality (ASQ) for his work in developing training programs for manufacturing and his many publications. He is an ASQ Certified Quality Engineer. In addition, he is the Manufacturing Technician Level 1 Master Trainer for the Manufacturing Skills Institute. He is certified as a Lead Auditor and trainer by BSI. Dr. Gray is also a Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt and trainer. He holds a Doctor of Education Degree in Adult Education from the University of Mississippi.

**Kelly Haines**, MA, Co-PI, is a Senior Research Associate/Program Manager at the Institute for Community Inclusion. She conducts research and evaluation as part of multiple national centers and model demonstration projects related to disability and employment. In this role Ms. Haines is responsible for overseeing the implementation of research and evaluation activities, data collection, analysis, product development, management of subcontracts and independent consultants, and supervision of junior research staff including graduate students across projects. Ms. Haines leads the evaluation of the Nebraska Career Pathways Advancement Project model demonstration and is the project director for the ongoing Progressive Employment research studies funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research and the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Ms. Haines holds a master's degree from the University of Chicago program of Social Sciences, with a concentration in Disability Studies.

**Dr. Tracey Hall** conducts research on instructional interventions in reading, writing, literacy in the content areas, assessment and most recently workforce education. Her work includes the design and evaluation of instructional approaches and assessment tools. These experiences are applied to the development and implementation of the Universal Design for Learning framework into projects, collaborative partnerships, and professional presentations. Tracey brings to her work at CAST experience in the areas of curriculum-based measurement, teacher professional development, instruction and curriculum design, and formative assessments using progress monitoring, and data-based decision making for instruction. She directs CAST's initiatives to create and evaluate digital supported environments across content areas. She is also co- and principal investigator on several federal and foundation-funded grants. Dr. Hall is a frequent presenter and educational consultant at the national and international level. She has taught university courses in special education reading and writing, learning disabilities, assessment and behavior management. She has been a special education teacher, consultant, administrator and university professor. With colleagues at CAST, Tracey organized a group to make quilts for newborns to members of our CAST of Characters.

**Lindsay Harris** has over 30 years of experience in the field of special education and holds an Ed.S. degree from George Washington University in Transition Special Education. In both of her roles as Director of Career Partners at PHILLIPS Programs and as a former Adjunct Professor at George Washington University, she brings expertise in the area of educational leadership, workforce development and knowledge of evidence-based practices to support those with behavioral health needs to become the persons that they desire to be.

**Tish Harris**, MBA, CWDP brings a diverse array of business, higher education, workforce and non-profit experience to the Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities Project, where she serves as a Project Coordinator for the Virginia

Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired. After serving as the Director of Operations for her family business and a member of their Board of Directors, she turned her efforts to youth non-profits and higher education, where she specialized in resource development and volunteer outreach. She has since served as a Grant Director and Director of Operations for the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board and as a Program Manager for Blue Ridge Community College's Workforce and Continuing Education group. Tish has taught Business at the college level for 18 years. As a member of the CPID team, Tish has delivered innovative programming, including hands on career exploration, and developed business relationships to move the CPID project forward.

**Dr. Debra Homa** is a Professor in the Department of Rehabilitation and Counseling at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. She teaches both undergraduate and graduate courses in vocational assessment/evaluation and other vocational rehabilitation content areas. Dr. Homa has over 25 years of experience working as a vocational evaluator and rehabilitation counselor in a variety of settings including private rehabilitation agencies, non-profit community-based rehabilitation agencies, and hospital-based programs.

**Debby Hopkins**, MBA from Lehigh University with credentials in project management (PMP), Human Resources (SHRM-SCP and SPHR), and Workforce Development (CWDB:BS). Chief Workforce Officer and Federal Grant Programs Director for the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board. Experience includes 10 years in workforce development managing federal workforce grants and collaborating with business and workforce partners to help solve regional talent pipeline challenges. Experience also includes 20 years in executive Human Resources leading global workforce initiatives as chief Human Resources officer for high technology manufacturing and research companies. National speaker currently serving on a USDOL ODEP presentation team presenting six sessions at national workforce conferences in the past year on developing inclusive apprenticeship models to build a talent pipeline for individuals with disabilities and the future of work. Helped develop the existing 16-week Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) Manufacturing Technology Training program into a pre-apprenticeship program leading to registered apprenticeship opportunities for WWRC graduates.

**Kate Kaegi** is the DARS Virginia Manufacturing Association Liaison with the Career Pathways for individuals with Disability Grant. She brings to this position over 15 years of experience working with individuals with disabilities to help them with their career choices, training options and employment. She has been a vocational evaluator working with consumers and businesses with Division of Rehabilitation Services, Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center, and VA Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired. Additional experience includes working as a career coach in the community colleges, adjunct instructor with VCU and Sergeant in the US Army

Reserves. Kate received her Master's in Vocational Evaluation and Rehabilitation Counseling from East Carolina University. She can be reached at [Kate.Kaegi@dars.virginia.gov](mailto:Kate.Kaegi@dars.virginia.gov)

**Jim Leech**, B.S. Industrial Engineering, Senior Engineer for the Hershey Company (retired), Program Head for Manufacturing Engineering Technology (retired) at Blue Ridge Community College, Owner Margin Development Training Consulting and a retired Manufacturing Technician Training instructor for the MT1 (Manufacturing Technician 1) VMA certification program at WWRC for manufacturing training for those citizens of Virginia having disabilities. Held positions at all levels in manufacturing plants for 35 years with responsibilities including new product development, project management, process systems design, financial cost analysis for ROR and ROI for capital expenditures, automation and process controls development, and curriculum development with authoring three text book materials on Principles of Industrial Technology-165, Automated Manufacturing Systems-251, Engineering Economics-211 for Blue Ridge Community College-Weyers Cave, VA.

**Daniel Liles**, MS, LPC, NCC; lives in Winterville, NC. Earned Masters in Counselor Education from East Carolina University (ECU). He is currently a doctoral student in ECU's Department of Addictions and Rehabilitation Studies and works full-time for the UNC TEACCH Autism Program as an Autism Specialist/Clinical Instructor. He provides outpatient psychotherapy services for individuals with ASD across the spectrum and age range with a specialization in the adolescent and adult population. He is also an Instructor for the TEACCH School Transition to Employment and Post-Secondary Education Program (TSTEP) summer session at Pitt Community College.

**Penny Liles** has a Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling with a certificate in Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment from North Carolina A&T State University. While at NC A&T, she received an RSA scholarship for Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment and graduated with a 4.0 GPA. She is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor and a Licensed Professional Counselor in North Carolina as well as a Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) with the Association of People Supporting Employment (APSE). She has worked in mental health for 8 years providing employment services to individuals diagnosed with a Severe Mental Illness (SMI) and/or Substance Use Disorders using the evidence-based model of supported employment, Individual Placement and Support (IPS). Using the Career Profile, she assesses for an individual's strengths and applies them to job search and job supports people need to maintain employment. Research shows that focusing on an individual's strengths leads to better outcomes. As an IPS Trainer, she teaches IPS teams how to use the Career Profile to assess for strengths and strategize how to use them in the job search and follow along support plans.

**Pam Leconte** began her career as a vocational evaluator after graduating from college. Her areas of expertise are career assessment, vocational evaluation, transition services, disability policy, and legal issues. She has provided vocational evaluation and vocational support services in public schools and rehabilitation and has trained transition personnel and vocational evaluators as a professor at George Washington University.

**Maureen McGuire-Kuletz**, EdD, CRC is an Associate Professor in the Rehabilitation Counseling Program and Co-Director of the GW Center for Rehabilitation Counseling Research and Education. She has more than 20 years of experience working for state VR agencies (blind and general) as well as in private non-profit and private for-profit rehabilitation counseling agencies. She has presented at national, state and regional conferences and has actively served on the boards of the National Council of Rehabilitation Educators (NCRE), the National Rehabilitation Association (NRA), the US Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Advisory Committee and the Vocational Evaluation and Career Assessment Professional National Association. Her research interests include ethics, distance education, disability and poverty, and services to veterans with disabilities. GW CRCRE is a partner with San Diego State University on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC).

**Kristen Monaco**, PhD, is Associate Commissioner of the Office of Compensation and Working Conditions at the U.S. Department of Labor. She oversees BLS's programs that produce statistics on the pay, benefits, safety, and occupational requirements of U.S. jobs. Prior to joining the federal workforce, Dr. Monaco was on the faculty in the department of economics at California State University Long Beach and the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in American Public Affairs and Economics from Michigan State University and a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Dr. Monaco is the author of many publications covering wages and working conditions.

**Dr. Andrea Nerlich** is an associate professor and graduate director of the Rehabilitation Counseling Programs at Hofstra University. She teaches courses for students in rehabilitation counseling and mental health counseling related to medical aspects of disability, psychosocial response to disability, assessment, transition services, and career development. She serves as editor of the Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association (VEWAA) Journal and on the national board of directors for VEWAA and the Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association (RCEA). In her 20 years in the field, she has worked in the private non-profit and for-profit systems as a case manager, program coordinator, and vocational evaluator, prior to becoming an educator.

**Cliff Oliech** is a doctoral student at Duquesne University. His interests are in the field of transition, job development, and career readiness.

**Tonia Peterson** is Program Manager in the Disability Management Section of the Business Network Division. Her professional interests focus on reasonable accommodation evaluations, job analyses, assistive technology and work-risk assessments to retain and obtain employment. Her current projects include educating and empowering metro Detroit businesses by providing them with disability awareness training and hiring incentives to assist in diversifying their workforce with people with different abilities. She was honored with the MRS Champion Award – Employee in September 2016. Tonia earned her bachelor's degrees in psychology and occupational therapy and a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling and community inclusion from Wayne State University.

**Caren Phipps** is the Director of Services for Children and Youth with the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired. All of her work experience has been in the field of Rehabilitation and Workforce Development, both in the public and private sector. Ms. Phipps has extensive experience in the field of career development and vocational assessment and prior to her employment with DBVI she functioned in an assessment capacity for the Veteran's Administration, John Tyler Community College, Richmond Public Schools, and DARS. She has a MS in Rehabilitation Counseling from VCU and is a Certified Vocational Evaluator (CVE). Ms. Phipps is also a Licensed Professional Counselor and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and has a private practice in Richmond. Caren can be reached at [Caren.Phipps@dbvi.virginia.gov](mailto:Caren.Phipps@dbvi.virginia.gov)

**Janice Ray**, BSc Kin., R. Kin, retired; CVRP(F) Registrar, College of Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals, Janice graduated from the University of Waterloo in 1976, Co-op Kinesiology and had practiced for over 40 years as a Kinesiologist in the field of Vocational Rehabilitation with a specialization in functional return to work and ergonomics. She opened Ray Rehabilitation Consultants Inc. in 1990 and ErgonoWorks Unlimited Inc. in 1996 to address changing employer markets. She achieved the following credentials: Canadian Certified Rehabilitation Counsellor (CCRC) in 1992; Certified Kinesiologist in 1995; Certified Return to Work Coordinator (CRTWC) in 2007; Certified Vocational Rehabilitation Professional (CVRP) in 2010; Regulated Kinesiologist (2013) under the Ontario Regulated Health Professionals Act. Janice was a Director of the Board of Directors of VRA Canada, Ontario Society from 1995 to 2010 predominantly as the Treasurer and the Chair of the Regulation Committee, when she assumed the position of Registrar for the self-regulated College of Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals. She was elected to the Board of Directors of the Ontario Kinesiology Association in 2006 and held the positions of Director, Treasurer, President-Elect, President, Past President and Chair of Government Relations until

leaving Ontario to re-locate to Alberta in August 2018. She has also held the position of Education Director for the RCDM Branch of IARP and is presently a Director on the Board of Directors for IARP Canada.

**Chris Reid**, PhD, CRC Chris Reid is a full professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Counseling at Virginia Commonwealth University. She earned her PhD. in Rehabilitation Psychology from the Illinois Institute of Technology. Dr. Reid has over 30 years of experience as a rehabilitation counseling educator, researcher and service provider. Most of her research has focused on life care planning, deafness and deafblindness, or developing and validating assessment instruments relevant to rehabilitation. She was recently presented a Lifetime Achievement Award by the sponsoring organizations of the International Symposium on Life Care Planning.

**Steven R. Sligar**, EdD, CVE, PVE, serves as professor and coordinator of the Graduate Certificate in Vocational Evaluation at East Carolina University. He has over 45 years of experience in higher education and vocational rehabilitation with both state and private agencies and this includes work with special populations of persons who were deaf and/or blind. He has a Masters in Rehabilitation and Special Education with a specialization in vocational evaluation from Auburn University and Doctorate in Adult Education and Human Resource Development from Northern Illinois University. He has 52 articles and book chapters and conducted over 300 presentations in the areas of evaluation, administration, and accessibility for persons with disabilities. At present he serves as a co-editor of the Vocational Evaluation and Career Assessment Professionals Journal and on the editorial review boards of the Journal of Rehabilitation, American Deafness and Rehabilitation Journal, and New Horizons in Adult Education Journal. He is the President of the NC chapter of the Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Professionals.

**Paige Tidwell** is a project manager and vocational specialist at the University of Georgia's Institute on Human Development and Disability (IHDD) where she works on projects related to employment best practices, assistive technology and program evaluation. She also provides transition assessment consultation services and is a vocational expert for SSA's Office of Hearing Operations. Ms. Tidwell has been in the counseling profession for over 25 years, with the last 15 years specializing in vocational rehabilitation counseling, vocational evaluation and transition. She serves on the Board of Directors for the National Rehabilitation Association, the Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association, the Registry of Professional Vocational Evaluators, and the Georgia Rehabilitation Association

**Carla Thimons** has worked in Career in Technical Education for 28 years. After working as a high school learning support teacher for 5 years in Clarion Pa, she was the Assistant Director/Principal at Lenape Technical School in Ford City Pa, and for the last 15 years has served as the Special Programs Coordinator at Lenape Technical School.

Carla has been an advocate for students in career and technical education, and has presented at local and state conferences, as well as the PA Inspired Leadership Program (PIL). She was the Past President of the Pennsylvania Association for Career and Technical Education Special Populations (PACTE- SP), and currently serves as a Western Region Board Member. She also serves on the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Career and Technical Personnel Preparation Advisory Committee. She was awarded the Direct Career and Technical Special Needs Support Person of the Year by PACTE-SP and continues to focus on vocational assessment and transition in career and technical education.

In his lengthy career serving the rehabilitation and disability management industry, **Jeff Truthan** has led the design and development of many projects for Internet-based and Windows-based products, launching multiple commercial software applications, including product design, specifications, quality assurance, marketing plan, collateral material, packaging, advertising, and rollout. He has designed multiple corporate web sites and authored help files and user documentation in written and video formats. Jeff has published technical works in trade journals and developed strategic marketing, business planning, press releases, industry guides, marketing materials, sales literature and tools, competitive market analysis, professional presentations, customer guides, product packaging, detailed technical requests for proposal, trademark application, etc. Jeff has recently launched a national survey of Social Security Vocational Experts about the continued existence of “Sedentary, Unskilled” occupations as defined in the 1991 DOT. Jeff gains many of his insights from great ideas, questions, and suggestions of his diverse national customer base. He is committed to the continued evolution of comprehensive transferable skills technology and a multi-year development effort for a defensible, extensively revised and extended, industry context methodology for estimating employment numbers at a more precise level than previously available. This popular new methodology is a key building block for a new range of rehabilitation and forensic products. In 2010, Jeff acquired a prior, friendly competitor - VERTEK OIS, Inc. to expand the range of markets, customers, and delivery methods. In 2018, he launched a series of new web-based products integrating transferability of skills with a wide range of labor market information. Jeff's software solutions are widely used in the vocational rehabilitation and other sectors for transferable skills analysis and labor market information. The products also help to build and support vocational expert opinions in Social Security Disability hearings, worker compensation, personal injury, medical malpractice, and other counseling and forensic venues.

**Gregg Vanderheiden, PhD**, is a Professor in the iSchool and Director of Trace R&D Center at the University of Maryland – College Park. He directs the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Universal Interface and Information Technology Access (NIDILRR/ACL) and co-directs Raising the Floor, an international consortium of companies and organizations building the Global Public Inclusive Infrastructure (GPII).

Has worked in technology and disability for over 48 years; was a pioneer in Augmentative Communication (a term taken from his writings in 1979), and in cross-disability access to ICT of all types. His work is found in computers, phones, Automated Postal Stations, Amtrak ticket machines, and airport terminals. 9 of the first 10 access features in Windows were licensed royalty free from Trace and most of the initial access features in Apple operating systems came from the work of his center as well.

He co-chaired both WCAG 1.0 and 2.0 working groups, and has worked with over 50 companies and numerous government advisory & planning committees including FCC, NSF, NIH, GSA, NCD, Access Board and White House. He has received over 30 awards for his work on technology and disability. He is a past President of RESNA and a Founding Fellow of the American Institute of Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE).

**Dr. Vanderheiden** holds degrees in electrical engineering and biomedical engineering. He received his PhD. in Technology in Communication Rehabilitation and Child Development, an interdisciplinary degree between the departments of Electrical Engineering, Communicative Disorders, Rehabilitation Psychology & Special Education and Educational Psychology, from the University of Wisconsin - Madison.

**Shawn Zimmerman**, M.S. CRC, CVE, PVE has worked in the field of Vocational Evaluation for 13 years with experience in community-based assessments and traditional paper-pencil assessments to assist consumers with determining appropriate employment opportunities. Shawn has had to familiarize herself with the labor markets in the areas she covers to give recommendations that are relevant to the consumer and the areas they live in. Shawn was asked to volunteer as an instructor for the CPID Cyber Security Analyst Academy. She assisted with development of training related to Cyber Security and introduced the students to real-world scenarios from Dr. Gardner's work. Shawn also used her expertise as a Certified Vocational Evaluator to determine who would be appropriate for the academy and address any issues that may arise within the academy itself to ensure the success of the student's experiences and the program itself.