

D.S. News

Disability Services * Division of Student Affairs * Bowling Green State University * Fall 2005

RSC Funding Changes Impact Students with Disabilities

By Rob Cunningham, Director

The Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (RSC) is the designated state agency for providing vocational rehabilitation and other services to people with disabilities. RSC has recently instituted changes specifying how the agency will pay for college training for its consumers. The proposed changes should allow RSC to continue to provide college training to consumers while controlling costs incurred for this service. The changes include:

- Post-secondary educational expenses will be authorized based upon financial need.
- RSC will provide training services at the educational institution offering the least-cost instruction that the consumer needs to reach his or her vocational goal. For example, a consumer seeking a four-year degree may be able to complete his or her freshman and sophomore years at a two-year, state-supported institution and then transfer to a four-year college or university to complete the degree.
- A consumer will have a maximum of 18 consecutive months to complete each academic year of post-secondary educational training, as defined by the degree program.

For additional information, please contact RSC at 1-877-291-0219 or www.rsc.ohio.gov, or Disability Services at 372-8495.



Murderball Movie

By Irene Scott, Graduate Assistant

Murderball (2005), a documentary film following the lives of six quadriplegic rugby players, has been the talk of the summer. It's the winner of the Documentary Audience Award and a Special Jury Prize for Editing at the 2005 Sundance Film Festivals. In celebration of National Disability Awareness Month, the Office of Disability Services presented the film twice in the Bowen-Thompson Student Union Multi-Purpose Room on October 31st. Several students with

majors under the College of Education and Human Development took advantage of the earlier showing. By the end of the night, close to 200 students, faculty and staff members had viewed the film.

The film focuses on the rivalry between the Canadian and American national quad rugby teams on the road to the 2004 Paralympics in Athens, Greece. *Murderball*, a.k.a. wheelchair rugby or quad rugby, originated in Canada. The goal of the game is for the player to get the ball across the court and into the end zone. Since the players are quadriplegics and have different degrees of mobility, a point value is assigned to each player. A team can only have players that equal up to 8 point value on the court at one time. There is a higher point value (2 or 3) for players who have partial to full use of their arms and a lower point value (1 or 2) for players who don't have forearms.

The players profiled had limited use of their arms or legs for different reasons. Whether by car wreck, fist fight, gun shot, polio, or childhood meningitis, the players are candid about their conditions and every aspect of their lives. The film sends a strong message that quadriplegics go about their lives just like everyone else. Some of the scenes captured the players playing cards, acting goofy on and off the court, going shopping, interacting with their family and their significant others, and enjoying nightlife. In a nutshell, life doesn't stop when a spine or limb gets crushed it continues on. For the full-story and a movie trailer, please visit the movie website at <http://www.murderballmovie.com>.

DS Office Exam Proctoring

Providing academic accommodations to students with disabilities is a campus wide responsibility. It is important to remember that all requests must be based on recent documentation that clearly indicates the student's eligibility for specific accommodations. Our office has the responsibility for determining if a student's documentation supports a need for exam accommodations. Students with disabilities have the responsibility of presenting their instructors with a letter from our office to request specific accommodations. This letter will indicate the student's specific needs, i.e. extended time, separate testing environment, reader, scribe, computer access, etc.

We believe providing for a student's accommodation needs should be a shared responsibility between our office and the faculty. Proctoring/monitoring of exams constitutes a significant part of our service to faculty and students, but the Disability Services Office maintains regular business hours of 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. As it is essential for students taking evening classes to receive appropriate accommodation, there are two options that exist for the faculty and students.

1) Offer the exam at an alternate time, within our office testing area.

This option would eliminate the need for the faculty member to find a relatively quiet room, or provide a reader, scribe, or computer accommodation that the student may require. It would also eliminate the need for the faculty member to stay later into the evening, should a student be entitled to extra time in which to complete the exam.

2) Offer the exam at the same time and arrange for all necessary accommodations.

This option would require the faculty member to make arrangements for the provision of needed accommodations. As mentioned above, these may include finding a relatively quiet room, or providing a reader, scribe, or computer access.

Additionally, it is important to realize that accommodations need to be provided for exams, tests, scheduled quizzes, pop quizzes, and online quizzes/tests. Please contact our office if you need assistance in determining how the accommodations can be provided. With some creativity and flexibility, we can work together to ensure students receive the exam accommodations to which they are legally entitled.

If a student is taking an exam in our office, it is his/her responsibility to make an appointment with our office 3 days in advance and provide us with the following information: name, course, instructor's name, accommodations needed, how the test is getting to our office, and how the test is being returned. This, of course, is after he/she has made arrangements with the professor.



Our staff members do not pick up and return exams, but for the convenience of faculty we offer several options:

- Students can pick up and return the exam using a sealed envelope
- Professor or teaching assistant can pick up and return
- Fax: 419-372-8496
- Email: dss@bgsu.edu
- Campus mail (our office makes a photocopy first before returning just in case it is lost in the mail)

Please contact our office with any questions or concerns regarding Disability Services exam proctoring.

Scholarships for Students with Disabilities

By Lea Anne Kessler, Coordinator



The Disability Services Office awards several scholarships for students with different types of disabilities. More information on the Disability Services Office scholarships can be found on our website at www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/disability.

Applications for 2006-2007 will be available in the Disability Services Office, 413 South Hall, in January 2006. The deadline for applications will be **May 5, 2006**, and winners will be contacted in July 2006. Below is a brief excerpt on the scholarships available through our office:

- **Jerry Dale Conrad Scholarship** – for students with *Physical or Mental Disabilities*
Applicants for this award must be students with disabilities (mental or physical) at BGSU. Selection will be based on financial need, extent of disability, involvement in extracurricular activities, and involvement in community. Preference will be given first to Otsego High School graduates, second to Wood County graduates, then any other high school in Ohio.
- **Julie and Richard Crossen Scholarship** – for students who are *Deaf or Hard of Hearing*
Applicant(s) will be undergraduate or graduate students in good standing at Bowling Green State University, will be documented as deaf or hard of hearing by the Disability Services Office, will have a minimum GPA of 3.0, display leadership ability, and be fluent in American Sign Language. Funds are not to be used for interpreting services.
- **Lois Jean Steel Stiffler Scholarship** – for students with *Learning Disabilities*
Students must be a Sophomore or above to apply for the scholarship, must be in good academic standing with the University (minimum of 2.0 GPA), must have a documented learning disability confirmed by the Disability Services Office, and must be successfully progressing towards an academic degree. Special consideration will be given to a student who is involved in at least one extra-curricular activity on campus (ex. clubs, UAO, Hall Council, Resident Advisor, intramural sports, etc.).
- **Ohio Lions Foundation/Helen Keller Scholarship** – for students with *Visual Impairments*
Applicant(s) will be undergraduate or graduate students at BGSU, will have a visual impairment, must be an Ohio resident, and will be enrolled full time or part-time showing substantial progress toward a degree. Selection will be based on financial need and academic ability. The selected recipient agrees that his/her name may be used for scholarship promotional purposes by the Ohio Lions Foundation.

For information on other scholarship opportunities at BGSU, please visit the Financial Aid Searchable Scholarship Guide at www.bgsu.edu/offices/sfa.

ASL Practice Group

The Office of Disability Services sponsors two weekly American Sign Language (ASL) practice group sessions. The group is designed to allow people who are interested in ASL to practice their skills in an informal setting. Two meeting times are offered each week per semester to accommodate schedules and provide options for attendance. If you are interested in being a part of the group for spring semester, or would like to learn more about ASL at BGSU, please contact Irene Scott at 2-8495 or iscott@bgsu.edu.

Adaptive Technology Update

By Peggy Dennis, Associate Director & Lea Anne Kessler, Coordinator

Disability Services is pleased to announce that the screen-reader program Jaws is now available at many more locations across campus for student and faculty use. Individuals can access this software in the computer labs at Jerome Library, Education Building, and 128 Hayes Hall.

The Disability Services Office adaptive computer lab offers a wide array of technology for students with disabilities, including Jaws screen-reader software, Wynn software, Open Book software, CCTV, scanner, Braille output, and Dragon Naturally Speaking voice input software. Our lab is open Monday – Friday 8:00am – 5:00pm.



Have you visited our website lately? Please visit us at
www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/disability

If you would like to receive this publication in an alternative format (e.g. large print, cassette, or in Braille) please contact Disability Services at (419) 372-8495, TTY (419) 372-9455, or dss@bgsu.edu.