



Description of graphic: RI State Seal an anchor in gold behind a blue wheelchair logo. Just below is a blue banner with the state motto "Hope". All are in the center of a ring of 8 blue stars, in groups of 2 separated by the logos for Braille, hearing aids, low vision and amplified phone.

# Governor's Commission on Disabilities Executive Committee

**Monday December 5, 2011 4-5:30 PM**

John O. Pastore Center, 41 Cherry Dale Court,  
Cranston, RI 02920-3049  
(voice) 401-462-0100 (fax) 462-0106 (tty) via RI Relay 711  
(e-mail) [disabilities@gcd.ri.gov](mailto:disabilities@gcd.ri.gov)  
(website) [www.disabilities.ri.gov](http://www.disabilities.ri.gov)

 meeting graphic	<b>Attendees:</b> Casey Gartland (EACvc); Bill Inlow (LCvc); & Ronald McMinn (ACvc) <b>Absentees:</b> Timothy Flynn (Chair); (LCc)Kate McCarthy-Barnett (Vice Chair/ACc); Andrew Argenbright (DBEvc); Rosemary Carmody (EACc); Judi Drew (HBc); Paul Harden (ECvc); Patricia Ryherd (ECc); Theresa Thoelke (DBEc) & Linda Ward
<b>Guests:</b>	Jessica Burrows & Courtney David
<b>Staff:</b>	Bob Cooper

	Agenda Topics	Moderator/Leader	Time
 Clock graphic	<b>Call to Order and Acceptance of the Minutes</b>	<b>Timothy Flynn, Chairperson</b>	<b>4:00</b>
Executive Secretary calls the meeting to order at 4:05, in the absence of the chair and vice chair. The minutes of the previous meeting were tabled.			

Action Items:			
 Interview graphic	Interview and Selection of Fellows		
<b>Purpose/Goal:</b> To select the Spring 2012 Semester Edward J. Schroeder Fellow Interviews are scheduled at: 4:10 Jessica Burrows, CCRJ student, resident of Jamestown 4:30 Courtney David, URI Student, resident of St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada			
<b>ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA</b>			
This program is designed for individuals with demonstrated leadership and expertise in policy and research affecting people with disabilities. Candidates must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Have completed at least 3 semesters of college-level study;</li> <li>◆ Be enrolled as a full or part-time student in an accredited college or university in Rhode Island;</li> <li>◆ Have leadership ability;</li> <li>◆ Have the endorsement of a current/former supervisor;</li> <li>◆ Have approval on the part of the college/university to receive credit for the fellowship if selected;</li> <li>◆ Have the ability to participate in the semester-long program in Rhode Island for at least two hundred and forty (240) hours during the semester; and</li> <li>◆ Demonstrate the ability to perform the duties of the fellowship (see list of duties on the attached pages).</li> </ul>			

Agenda Topics	Moderator/Leader	Time
---------------	------------------	------

**APPLICATION FORMAT**

- ❖ **Biographical data:** A listing of the following information on a single sheet or two:
  - Name, home & school addresses, email address, and day time telephone numbers;
  - Education data (including universities or colleges attended, major fields, degree(s) granted and dates);
  - Employment history for two most recent positions (including title and dates, name of employer, and description of duties), and
  - Life experience(s) related to people with disabilities
- ❖ **Indicate whether you are:**
  - A resident of Rhode Island with disabilities, enrolled in a Rhode Island college or university;
  - A resident of Rhode Island enrolled in a Rhode Island college or university's course of study in education and/or human services for persons with disabilities;
  - A non- resident of Rhode Island with disabilities, enrolled in a Rhode Island college or university; or
  - A non-resident of Rhode Island enrolled in a Rhode Island college or university's course of study in education and/or human services for persons with disabilities.
- ❖ **Narrative Statement:** A one-page typewritten description (ASCII disk or audiotape) identifying:
  - Which Fellowship(s) you are interested in;
  - Why you are applying for that (those) Fellowship(s);
  - What skills and experience you offer the Commission;
  - What you expect to gain and how will you use the knowledge and skills gained after you complete your fellowship; and
  - A description of your ability to perform the duties of the fellowship(s) [see list of duties on the attached pages]
- ❖ **Letter of Recommendation:** A letter of recommendation from a current or most recent supervisor (i.e. employer, teacher, counselor) describing your:
  - Skills and abilities as they relate to the duties of the fellowship(s);
  - Ability to work with groups; and
  - Relationship to the supervisor (i.e. employer/ employee, teacher/ student, counselor/ client).
- ❖ **College Credit:** A letter from your college/university stating that if you are selected, the college will award credit for the fellowship.

**EDWARD J. SCHROEDER LEGISLATIVE FELLOW**

The Fellow's duties include:

- ❖ Reviewing each bill introduced into the Rhode Island General Assembly to identify those that might impact on the quality of life of individuals with disabilities (children or adults).
- ❖ For each bill identified as impacting on the lives of individuals with disabilities, writing a summary that includes:
  1. a brief concise description of the intent of the bill,
  2. the names of the sponsors of the bill,
  3. the committee the bill has been assigned to,
  4. the date the bill was introduced,
  5. the area the bill is most likely to impact on [appropriation, civil rights, health care, social services, education, employment, independent living, etc.],
  6. the current laws to be amended by the bill.
- ❖ Tracking the movement of each bill, through hearings, amendments, votes, etc.
- ❖ Editing a weekly newsletter that includes the summaries of bills, and reports on any changes to the bills throughout the legislative session, including:
  1. dates of hearings,

	Agenda Topics	Moderator/Leader	Time
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. outcomes of the hearings,</li> <li>3. a description of how any amendment to a bill, changes the original description of the bill;</li> <li>4. dates for votes by the House or Senate,</li> <li>5. the number of votes for and against the bill,</li> <li>6. the committee the bill has been assigned to after passage by the House or Senate,</li> <li>7. the action of the Governor on bills passed by both House and Senate, and</li> <li>8. the effective date of any bills signed into law.</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Preparing a monthly status report on bills the Legislation Committee is interested in, and reporting to the Committee at their monthly meeting on bills.</li> <li>❖ Observing the rules of confidentiality regarding the privacy of the parties and cases before the Commission.</li> </ul>		
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Potential questions for the fellow applicants</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Concisely tell us about yourselves</li> <li>2. Example of Time management and meeting deadlines</li> <li>3. What attributes do you have that apply to the Commission's work</li> <li>4. Computer skills</li> <li>5. Time constraint</li> <li>6. Do you have any questions or of us or is there anything else you feel we should know about you?</li> <li>7. Tell us about your experiences with people with disabilities</li> <li>8. How do you expect to utilize what you acquire during this fellowship, in the future?</li> </ol>		
	<p style="text-align: center;">Jessica E Burrows</p> <p>Education  North Kingstown High School, graduated 2009  CCRI 2009-Present, General Studies/JAA Transfer program  RIC 2012 (expected transfer date)</p> <p>Employment  Direct Support Professional (PASS program), Perspectives Corporation Fall 2010-Present</p> <p>College Panel speaker, Southern Rhode Island Collaborative/Southern Rhode Island Transition Center Spring 2010-Present</p> <p>Experience  Person with a disability (Asperger's Syndrome)  Sibling of a person with a disability (Asperger's Syndrome)  Disability advocate since 2004,  PASS worker to a person with ASD since 2010.</p> <p>I am a resident of Rhode Island, have a disability, and I am enrolled at the Community College of Rhode Island. I am currently a general studies major and will transfer to Rhode Island College where I intend to major in Special Education/Early Elementary Education. I am interested in applying to the Edward J. Schroeder Legislative Fellowship as it is relevant to my future plans. At this time, I am considering a career involving assistive technology, possibly as a consultant. My future choices will be made as a person with a disability who will continue advocating for awareness and the understanding of the effects of</p>		

Agenda Topics	Moderator/Leader	Time
---------------	------------------	------

legislation within the disability community.

The strengths I offer are many. I understand disabilities from a first person standpoint, and a family standpoint. I am dedicated, hardworking, articulate, intelligent and personable. I have discovered and developed leadership skills, thanks in part to participation in the Rhode Island Youth Leadership Forum. As the daughter of a retired law enforcement officer, I have not only learned how laws are created, but how to read and understand the language and format that is utilized. I have a strong aptitude for writing and reading.

I expect to gain insight into possible careers or the viability of certain career options, and I also hope to continue building a network of contacts that I can collaborate with in the future. This opportunity will also help me build my resume and perhaps open the door to other opportunities.

To manage my schedule and stay in contact I utilize a Blackberry smartphone. I will be able to receive, read and respond to communications regarding legislation as it is introduced and moves through the legislative process. I have unlimited access to a reliable vehicle so I will have no problem attending meetings with the commission. To compensate for dysgraphia due to Asperger's Syndrome I have become a proficient typist and I am knowledgeable about assistive technology.

My current job offers flexibility, allowing me to make the time to commit to the fellowship. I have experience as a staff writer for two newspapers (The Current Wave and The Unfiltered Lens). I can read and process a large amount of information in a short time, allowing me to quickly understand bills as they are introduced.

Should you have any questions, or need further information I can be reached at the address above, email [jessica\\_burrows@ymail.com](mailto:jessica_burrows@ymail.com), or by phone at 401-864-5018.

Thank you for your consideration.

***SOUTHERN RHODE ISLAND  
TRANSITION CENTER***

[www.southc'rnriregionaltransitioncenter.wikispaces.com](http://www.southc'rnriregionaltransitioncenter.wikispaces.com)

***Telephone: (401) 269-1107  
Fax: (401) 348-2707***

***15 Highland Avenue  
Westerly, Rhode Island 02891***

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Joseph Walejko and I am the Regional Transition Coordinator at the Southern Rhode Island Transition Center. I am writing on behalf of Jessica Burrows.

In my role as a Regional Transition Coordinator, I organize and moderate a student panel made up of Rhode Island college students. The panel discusses their transition from high school to post-secondary education, the accommodations they use in college, their access to disability services and are prepared to take questions from students in the audience. Jessica has served as a member of the College Panel for the past year and a half.

As a member of the College Panel Jessica has proven to be a committed leader and is able to speak eloquently about the need to advocate for oneself. Jessica makes herself available for as many panel dates as she possibly can while balancing her classes, course work and another part-time job as a PASS worker. In the past year, Jessica has gone from a new panel member to a leader of the

Agenda Topics	Moderator/Leader	Time
<p>group. She has the ability to share her experiences regarding her transition from life in high school to life in college in a very candid and professional manner. She is the first one to answer questions from the audience and makes sure no one's questions go unanswered. In my absence, I am confident that Jessica will represent the College Panel and take on a leadership role.</p>		
<p>I feel that Jessica is a tremendous candidate for the Edward J. Schroeder Fellowship. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (401)269-1107 or <a href="mailto:jwalejko@nric-ri.org">jwalejko@nric-ri.org</a></p>		
<p>Regards,</p>		
<p>Joseph Walejko Regional Transition Coordinator</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>If special accommodations are needed call (401) 269-1107. The Southern Rhode Island Transition Center does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, color or disability in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.</i></p>		



Rhode Island Technical Assistance Project (RITAP)  
Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
255 Westminster Street  
Providence, RI 02903

December 1, 2011



Denise Achin  
*Medicaid in the Schools*

To whom it may concern,

Susan Constable  
*Autism Support Center*

It is with pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation for Jessica Burrows.

Barrie Grossi  
*Comprehensive System of Personal Development*

I first met Jessica when I was asked to offer support to her teachers when she was in middle school. It has been such a pleasure to watch Jess grow into a young woman who is such a strong advocate for individuals with autism

Alexis Moniz  
*Assistant to the Project Management Team*

Being a young woman with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Jess understands the strengths and challenges that individuals on the spectrum present with.

I first asked Jessica to speak about her own experiences at an Autism Awareness Day event at the Rhode Island State House in 2005. I was amazed at her ability to stand before the crowd and articulate her perspective when she was just 14 years old! Since that time, Jess has spoken at many public forums in Rhode Island. She spoke as part of a panel at Rhode Island College during Disability Awareness week last fall. She has been a guest speaker at my classes at both Rhode Island College and Providence College. My students have commented on how mature she is and how eloquently she delivers her thoughts and messages.

Jessica has a brother who is also on the autism spectrum. Jess has shared his strengths and challenges with me and has shared how she supports him in many areas of his life, from academics to sports interests to social relationships with his peers. He is so very lucky to have

sister who truly understands how he learns and how he feels.

It has been a pleasure to know Jessica. I highly recommend her for the Edward J. Schroder fellowship. Jessica is a diligent worker and would be an asset to this project.

Yours Truly,

Sue Constable  
Autism Support Center

## COURTNEY DAVID

### Education

University of Rhode Island (URI), Kingston, RI May 2012

Bachelor of Science: Biological Sciences, Minor: Women's Studies

Overall Grade Point Average: 3.91

### Employment History

URI, Kingston, RI Feb. 2011-Present

#### Tutor

- Instruct student athletes in Biology, Chemistry and Anatomy

Employer: Nicole Poloski, Academic Advisor/Learning Specialist

The St. Catharines Keg Steakhouse and Bar, Ontario, Canada 2006-Present

#### Server

- Requires cooperation and strong interpersonal communication skills with co-workers and customers
- Multi-task in fast paced environment while adhering to protocol
- Responsible for opening and closing duties
- Duties include: Greeting customers upon arrival; stocking and maintaining cleanliness of the restaurant; providing prompt service while taking orders; serving food; training new employees; processing cash, debit, and credit transactions

Employer: Michael Calihoo, General Manager

#### Volunteer / Community Work

**Autism Ontario:** Ontario, Canada July 2011

**The Niagara Peninsula Children's Centre:** Ontario, Canada Aug. 2009

- Worked with special needs individuals to make camp enjoyable, organized group activities, composed behavioral evaluations and assisted with trips away from the center

**Peer Advocate:** Violence Prevention and Advocacy Services, URI, Kingston, RI Current

- Editor of the Peer Advocate Newsletter
- Involved in a team of specially trained students who create and perform interactive workshops and programs to educate and increase awareness regarding partner violence, stalking, alcohol and drugs, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment
- Received the 2011 URI A. Robert Rainville Team Leadership Award for outstanding student

team leadership to the university community

### **Epilepsy Research Experience**

**URI, Dept. of Biological Sciences**, Kingston, RI 2010-2011

- Performed and analyzed experiments on hydra with different drug regimens to determine which had minimal side effects for epilepsy

I am a non-resident of Rhode Island enrolled in a Rhode Island college or university's course of study.

As a young child I spent nearly every weekend socializing with, helping, and learning from my grandmother who had Multiple Sclerosis. She is my motivation for applying to become a fellow for the Edward J. Schroeder Legislative Fellowship. I am a senior at the University of Rhode Island aspiring to obtain a career in special care dentistry. My aspirations to pursue this career began after I was fortunate enough to shadow a general dental practitioner in which I observed his skilled and caring treatment of patients, paying particular attention to those with special needs. This strengthened my decision to become a dentist because I have always wanted to be in a profession that included the care for individuals with physical, cognitive, medical, or developmental challenges. I grew up in a remarkable family, which included members with physical challenges that possessed tremendous amounts of courage in the face of adversity. Others have dedicated their lives and professions to individuals with a wide range of disabilities and I hope to follow in their footsteps.

There is very limited training existing at almost every dental school for treating individuals with disabilities. It requires extra effort on the students' part to obtain experience that enables them to become confident and comfortable in treating this population. The 2005 US Census Bureau indicated that nineteen percent of all Americans are afflicted with some degree of disability. Nineteen percent is equivalent to one in every five Americans, making it imperative to help eliminate the challenges these people face and increase their opportunities. In the summers of 2009 and 2011, I have had experience in making a difference in the lives of individuals with special needs. In the summer of 2009, I volunteered at The Niagara Peninsula Children's Centre and in the summer of 2011, I volunteered at Autism Ontario which both hold special needs camps that accommodate the unique needs of children with exceptionalities to ensure that they enjoy themselves. At both camps I was able to spend one-on-one time with the children and youth, organize group activities, compose behavioural evaluations and assist with trips away from the center. The time spent with these children and youth provided me with an invaluable experience in which I saw the clinical side of the human service system.

The knowledge and skills gained after completion of this fellowship will allow me to acquire a better understanding about the policy side of the human service system to accompany my present and future knowledge of the clinical side. I hope to apply this knowledge in my future dental career. Oral health care for patients with disabilities in North America continues to be a health service issue that needs to be addressed. By acquiring a better knowledge of national and state disability programs, policy issues and research and by meeting with decision makers, experts and critics in disability and related policy fields I will be able to help address this problem in a profound way. I am more than certain that I will be able to perform the duties of the fellowship in an efficient and professional manner. I am very passionate about bettering the lives of people with disabilities and my responsibility and loyalty will allow me to help make a difference at the Governor's Commission on Disabilities. I am a skilled writer and have obtained "A's" in all of my Writing and English courses. I know that tracking the movement of each bill, writing a weekly newsletter, and preparing a monthly status report are duties that I will look forward to completing. I am currently the editor of a newsletter for the Peer Advocacy Program at my school. I have also had experience adhering to confidentiality policies during my time volunteering at the two special needs summer camps and while job shadowing. I take this duty very seriously as the respect for privacy is a significant matter.

My leadership ability and passion for working with individuals with disabilities makes me a great candidate for this fellowship. I hope to obtain this opportunity to learn about the policy side of the human service system so that I can apply this in my future dental career.

November 28, 2011

Governor's Commission on Disabilities  
John O. Pastore Center  
41 Cherry Dale Court  
Cranston, RI 02920-3049

To Whom it May Concern:

I am delighted to write a letter of recommendation for Courtney David, who is applying for a position as an Edward J. Schroeder Legislative Fellow in the Governor's Commission on Disabilities for the Spring semester of 2013.

Courtney was my student in two English and writing courses at the University of Rhode Island. The first course explored various stylistic genres and required extensive writing and laborious revision in addition to close attention to detail and excellent time management. The second course traced short American fiction written throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and required considerable response writing and a firm grasp of interdisciplinary approaches to literature.

Courtney excelled in every aspect of each course; she showed enthusiasm for the writing process and crafted thoughtful, well-written papers that were a pleasure to read. Much of her writing course relied on peer collaboration and revision, and Courtney proved to be a sought-after partner due to her thorough, constructive, and empathic treatment of the work of her classmates. Both courses concerned themselves with self-inquiry in relation to inherited values, attitudes, and beliefs, and Courtney was an exceptionally skilled and engaged practitioner of reflective inquiry.

Courtney received an A on every paper, presentation, and exam she completed for my courses; moreover, her work, whether oral or written, was superior to that which I have seen produced by most undergraduate students and many first-year graduate students. Her high grades and consistent academic excellence are reflections of the self-efficacy, drive, and commitment that she brings to every academic goal.

Yet I do not believe it is merely Courtney's motivation to succeed academically that makes her an excellent candidate for a position as a legislative fellow. She is an extremely mature young woman who balances well the work that is required of her academically and the responsibilities of her activities in research, professional experience, community service, and athletics. She is capable of working independently and collaboratively with equal ease, and she exhibits the self-reliance and leadership that are too often lacking in young adults. Courtney is an exceptional student who is insightful, empathic, and committed to equity; I believe these personal traits will be as assistive to her in a governmental position as her lauded scholastic history.

Courtney would bring precisely the level of intelligence, maturity, and responsibility necessary for a legislative fellowship. Moreover, I am confident that she would excel in a commission dedicated to reviewing and tracking policies impacting the lives of people living with disabilities. Her desire to serve under-represented groups factors heavily into her future career aspirations as a dentist, and her commitment to service represents precisely the values we hope to see in our young adults. She is among the most promising undergraduate students I have taught at the University of Rhode Island.

As a former legislative and executive staff member in the U.S. Congress, as well as a college instructor, I enthusiastically give Courtney David my highest recommendation for this position; it has been a pleasure to teach her and I am certain she will succeed in every venture she undertakes. I have no reservations regarding her aptitude, character, or

potential for success. Should you require any additional information about this exceptional young woman, please do not hesitate to contact me at (518) 275-6598.

Sincerely,

Sara E. Murphy  
 Department of English  
 Program of Thanatology  
 University of Rhode Island



voting check off graphic

**MOTION:** To appoint as the Spring 2012 Semester Edward J. Schroeder Fellow, Jessica Burrows. If Jessica does not accept then an offer can be extended to Courtney David. RMcM/CG passed unanimously



Balancing Budget graphic

**Commission Operations and Budget**

5:15

Purpose/Goal: Brief the Executive Committee on the status of the Commission's revised budget requests.

The Executive Secretary explained the changes made to the Commission's Budget Requests.



Announcer graphic

**Announcements**

Tim Flynn

5:20



calendar graphic

**Agenda and Scheduling the Next Meeting**

Tim Flynn

5:25

Items to be placed on the next meeting's agenda:

Tabled



alarm clock graphic

**Adjournment**

Tim Flynn

5:30



voting check off graphic

**MOTION:** To adjourn at 4:50 PM RMcM/BI passed unanimously