



“BUILDING A VISION–DISABILITY NOT INABILITY”

By: Lia Pelenato

The Tofamamao Resort in Apia was the destination of the Pacific Deaf & Disability Forum on November 24-28, 2011. The theme for this forum was “Building a Vision—Disability NOT Inability”. The registration and opening ceremony brought together individuals with developmental disabilities (DD) as well as service providers who represented their respective countries from various island countries of the South Pacific. Samoa’s Prime Minister Tui-la’epa Lupesoli’ai Sa’ilele Malielegaoi was the keynote speaker who spoke of the importance of equality of services for individuals with DD in

Samoa as well as the South Pacific. American Samoa was represented by three individuals who are involved with the DD community. Mr. Hofeni Fitiao, a teacher for the Special Education (SpEd) specializing in the deaf program, Mr. Micheal Pelenatino is a deaf student who recently graduated from Poly Tech high school and will be attending American Samoa Community College in the 2012 Spring semester and finally, UCEDD staff Paulia Pelenato. The Deaf & Disability Forum was hosted by the Loto Taumafai School for disabilities and was also supported by members of the newly formed Apia Disability Taskforce and New Zea-

land representative Mr. David Loving-Molloy. Mr. Loving-Molloy is a Deaf Minister and also a guest speaker for the forum. The forum covered topics such as a policy perspective of women with disabilities, education, rehabilitation, mainstream services, appropriate languages, private sector programs, government influence and involvement as well as equality of services and/or employment. The Forum held a closing ceremony which featured the Loto Taumafai deaf student dancing group. The deaf students performed various Samoan traditional dance. The next Deaf & Disability Forum is scheduled to be held in Suva, Fiji in 2014.



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NEED SOME HELP WITH YOUR INTERVIEW?

By: Ernie Seiuli

On December 08, 2011, UCEDD trainer Paulia Pa'o-Pelenato provided a training for the Department of Public Safety (DPS), Criminal Investigation Division (CID) in Fagatogo. The presentation was entitled "Interviewing a Child with Developmental Disability" and more than fifteen officers attended. It was geared specifically for police officers from the CID who conduct interviews of victims of abuse



Lia Pelenato presenting to the CID officers during the training at the DPS main station.

who are identified to have developmental disabilities (DD). Mrs. Pa'o-Pelenato discussed various ways and techniques of how to interview an individual with DD, and ways to conduct a child-centered and truth seeking interview in various steps. The steps are to obtain the truth from a child by earning trust through building rapport. Children with DD are more likely to be sexually or physically abused than children without a disability.

Information included using simple language, short questions, making eye contact, attention span, and the interviewer being aware of their own notions and/or issues in working with a person with DD. The presenter stressed the importance of understanding a child's disability to facilitate the direction and length of the interview process. The training ended with questions and answers by the participants on how to conduct an interview of a child with DD. Mrs. Pa'o-Pelenato continues to work with the officers of the CID for future preparation and/or any information pertaining to assisting a victim with DD.

ELEI GALORE ON THE BEACH

By: Lia Pelenato

The Pua Center Adult Mental Health program which is under the American Samoa Department of Human and Social Services held an early morning Elei galore event at Utulei Beach on Friday, Dec. 2, 2011. The materials sold consisted of bed sheets, pillow cases, sarongs, and 5-yard materials that were painted with elei designs in various colors and styles. The materials were prepared

by the program's clients and staff members and showcased for the first time to family members and friends as items for purchase. The preparation of elei materials was a program designed to develop the clients' skills and also to prepare the clients for self employment. All

the materials were sold at a very low price and refreshments were also served



to members of the public that stopped by to shop. The money raised from the Elei Galore event will help pay for the Pua Center family and friends Christmas and end of the year picnic party and gifts.

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK OR TWITTER

By: Jake Fano

The National Disaster Preparedness Training Center hosted the Social Media Training on Wednesday, December 14, 2011 from 10a.m to 7p.m. The training was conducted through a video conference from the University of Hawaii which involved American Samoa, Guam, Saipan and various representatives within Hawaii. The purpose of the training was to discuss the pros and cons of social media, identify the

significance of communication and information as well as the necessary steps on how to use twitter and Facebook in case of a disaster. UCEDD Director Tafaimamao Tupuola and Jacob Fano joined the training and the first hours were dedicated to the introduction of different types of social media, and how to locate them on the world wide web. Information such as updates are provided through social media breaking

news and also on tweets and statuses posted on famous individual Facebook and Twitter profiles. Information such as media history, user and followers can help identify the number of users that is informed through information from social media websites. Different unknown social media types were also discussed and have been a significant source of valuable information in case of a disaster.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a deadly disease that has no boundaries on its victims. It knows no race, gender, age of its victims. December is AIDS awareness month and the theme for 2011 is “Getting to Zero”. There is a need for universal access to treatment of AIDS for individuals diagnosed with this disease. After 30 years of the global fight against AIDS, this year the global community has committed to focusing on achieving three targets which are (1) Zero new HIV infections, (2) Zero discrimination, and finally (3) Zero AIDS-

related deaths. Last year, there were 2.7 million new HIV infections and 1.8 million individuals died from AIDS. In 2011, people living with HIV were still subject to restrictions on their travel or stay in 47 countries, territories, and areas. AVERT.org shows that the global HIV epidemic is extremely diverse, with both similarities and differences between regions, countries, and communities. However, in order to meet the challenge of ‘Getting to Zero’ the global community must work together to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment and care.

The AIDS/HIV program is under the American Samoa Department of Health (DOH) and it functions to facilitate and advocate for the social and economic development of people infected and affected by HIV and/or AIDS. On December 1, 2011 DOH and members of the community joined in on the “Getting to Zero” awareness walk that ended with Zumba fitness and light refreshments at Utulei Beach. Overall, AIDS awareness provides an opportunity for all of us – individuals, communities and political leaders – to take on the challenge of getting to ZERO!

FYI CORNER: DID YOU HEAR?

WHERE DO ADOLESCENTS FIT?

Barely a decade old, the medical home model is expanding rapidly throughout the primary care system. The emerging medical home model, which emphasizes comprehensive, accessible and continuous care coordinated by the primary care provider, could substantially benefit adolescents. Medical home innovations present a model of how the medical home

has addressed adolescents (ages 12 to 21) and how their unique health care needs are—and are not—being incorporated into transformation activities. The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health interviewed senior leaders from 12 medical home programs across the country, focusing on how the model has benefitted adolescents thus far. These interviews

provide further evidence that the concept of the medical home is continuing to spread throughout the health care system. The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health provides education, research, policy analysis, and technical assistance to achieve fundamental improvements in the way that adolescent health care is structured in the United States.

SPORTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Inclusive Fitness Coalition and the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities at Georgetown University hosted the Physical Activity and Sport for People with disabilities Symposium and Strategic planning meeting this past summer. The meeting brought together key stakeholders to create a community blueprint for action.

Experts in the field of fitness and sports as well as people with disabilities collaborated and developed a plan on how to expand physical activity, fitness, and sports for people with disabilities and advance the forthcoming policy recommendations on education, specifically for students with disabilities. The plan includes various organization and the following platforms:

1. Legal consultation and research
2. Community organizing and program development
3. Education and technical assistance
4. Advocacy of national and state policy

For more information, please visit:

www.aucd.org

ACRONYMS/MEANINGS

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASCC: American Samoa Community College
AUCD: Association of University Centers on Disabilities
CID: Criminal Investigative Division
DD: Developmental Disabilities
DHSS: Department of Human & Social Services
DOH: Department of Health
DPS: Department of Public Safety
SpEd: Special Education
UCEDD: University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities



MISSION STATEMENT

The University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) assures that individuals with developmental disabilities of all ages and their families participate fully in activities that will design and promote self determination, independence, integration and inclusion in all facets of life in American Samoa. The UCEDD will ensure the delivery and purpose of the Developmental Disabilities Act through culturally competent activities.

We are on the web!

<http://asucedd.org>



SEND US YOUR COMMENTS

We would love to hear from you if you have comments about our newsletter, or if you would like to be added to our newsletter list!

Drop us a line at: ucedd@amsamoa.edu

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KEEP IT GREEN & KEEP IT ON THE LINK

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