An alliance to increase the participation of individuals with disabilities in computing careers

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AccessComputing Partners

- UW: Dept of Computer Science & Engineering & DO-IT
- Regional Alliances for Access to STEM
- Gallaudet University
- Microsoft
- SIGACCESS of Association for Computing Machinery (ACM)
Objective 1

- to increase the number of **students with disabilities** successfully pursuing undergraduate & graduate degrees & careers in computing fields

- **Activities:** College transition & bridge programs; tutoring; high school, college, graduate internships; e-mentoring
Objective 2

- to increase the capacity of postsecondary computing departments to fully include students with disabilities in computing courses & programs

Activities: Communities of Practice (CoPs) & Capacity-Building Institutes of stakeholders/gatekeepers & Computing Department Accessibility Checklist
Communities of Practice:

- dscop@u.washington.edu for disability services
- compcop@u.washington.edu for computing faculty, administrators, employers
- bpcop@u.washington.edu for broadening participation alliances and projects
- dhh@u.washington.edu for deaf & hard of hearing individuals, service providers and advocates
CoP Members Collaborate with us to:

- Test Computing Dept Accessibility Checklist
- Work with us to make their projects accessible to people with disabilities (recruitment, support, etc.)
- Refer students with disabilities in their projects to us for mentoring, internships & other complimentary support
- Contribute questions, promising practices to KB
Objective 3

- to create a **nationwide resource** to help students with disabilities pursue computer fields and computing educators and employers, professional organizations, & other stakeholders develop more inclusive programs & share effective practices

- **Activities:** AccessComputing Knowledge Base (KB) of FAQs, case studies, promising practices; multimedia training; articles in scholarly journals & other periodicals
Activities since February, 2006

Gallaudet Summer College Transition Academy in Computing, July 9-August 6, 2006 - 7 students participated in math and computer science preparation courses and participated in computing industry field trips and campus workshops.
Activities since February, 2006

University of Southern Maine, June 19-20, 2006 - Hosted 9 high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors with disabilities in a two-day Summer Computing Institute. Designed to motivate high school students with disabilities to consider higher education courses and careers in computing fields.
Activities since February, 2006

University of Minnesota, Duluth, Aug. 31- Sep. 1, 2006 - Hosted a 2-day transition and introduction to computing and engineering fields event for 30 high school students. Program elements included meeting with college student mentors and an overview of adaptive technologies and transition preparation.
Activities since February, 2006

Florida State Equal and Accessible Technology Seminar, June 29, 2006 - 141 attendees – staff and faculty as well as employees from Florida state government agencies. Presented on accessible online learning and web accessibility. Panel discussion on improving technology accessibility at Florida State Univ.
Activities since February, 2006

Internships:

Seven college students with disabilities have participated in computing-related internships in Alaska, Florida, Arizona, New York, Wisconsin and Washington
The *AccessComputing* Knowledge Base

- 324 answers to common questions, case studies, and promising practices
- 78 articles specifically relevant to computing fields
- Many ways to search for articles
The *AccessComputing* Knowledge Base

Q&As:
- Are there web browsers that have been developed specifically for use by people with disabilities?
- How can I get started in making my distance learning course accessible to all students?
- How can I make my computing department more accessible to students with disabilities?
- How can people who are blind use computers?
Case Studies:

- Distance Learning: A Case Study on the Accessibility of an Online Course
- Universally Designed Web Pages: A Case Study on Access Issues for a Student with a Learning Disability
- Web Access: A Case Study on Making Content Accessible to a Student who is Blind
Promising Practices:

- Digital Frog International: A Promising Practice in Designing Accessible Educational Software
- The University of Washington: A Promising Practice in User Group Support for Web Accessibility
University of Washington Summer Academy

- 9-week program for 10 students who are deaf or hard of hearing, beginning with the 2007 summer term.
- Students will take UW courses for college credit (e.g. Introduction to Programming, Data Structures, Precalculus, Calculus)
- Group project in animation or related topic
- Activities in the deaf community and in local industry (e.g. Microsoft, Adobe, Google)
- Tuition, room/board and transportation is FREE
1. Do you think there is a problem with employment of people with disabilities in computing fields? If so, what are the key problems? How accommodations/accepting are employers? Are there certain disabilities that are viewed as more problematic than others? Are there pockets of resistance?
2. How can we encourage students with disabilities to pursue computing fields? Consider elementary school, middle school, high school, college, graduate school.
3. How can we convince computer science faculty that accessibility is an important issue to address? (e.g., promote adoption of the AccessComputing checklist)
4. How do we get more people with disabilities involved in computing research?
5. How can we get better data on the employment of people with disabilities in computing fields and who can get it?