

# **Eight Annual Tools for Life: Secondary Transition and Technology Fair**

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March 5-6, 2012

Wallace High School – Wallace, ID



## **POST-CONFERENCE REPORT**

*Tools for Life is sponsored by:  
The Idaho State Department of Education  
The Idaho Assistive Technology Project  
The Center on Disabilities and Human Development  
The Interagency Council on Secondary Transition  
The Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities*

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## Introduction

Almost three years ago, the small historic mining town of Wallace, Idaho, nestled in the Silver Valley, began vying for the opportunity to host the **8<sup>th</sup> Annual Tools for Life: Secondary Transition and Technology Fair**. After a year of planning, the town proposed the use of the Wallace Junior/Senior High School to hold the event and local hotels and restaurants to provide lodging and food. In these hard economic times and with a shrinking conference budget, the deal was too good to pass up and planning moved forward.



Planning for the Tools for Life Fair is provided by members of The Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition (IICST), made up of representatives from the State Department of Education, higher education, Disability Rights Idaho, Idaho Parents Unlimited, Vocational Rehabilitation, Juvenile Justice System, Idaho Assistive Technology Project, Medicaid, Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities, self-advocates, Idaho Department of Labor, and Local Educational Agencies. The Tools for Life Fair is an activity of the IICST and the Idaho Assistive Technology Project, through the Assistive Technology Technical Assistance Project, is the lead agency in securing funding and organizing the event.



All agencies on the IICST have a strong commitment and federal mandate to improve the outcomes of students with disabilities after high school. The Tools for Life Fair is designed to give students, families, educators, and service providers the knowledge, skills, and resources to prepare students for life beyond high school. The town of Wallace was at the top of the list of those committed to secondary transition this year. The Wallace School District, local businesses, and residents rolled out the red carpet and 320 attendees gathered in the snowy valley to obtain information, skills, and resources on assistive technology, self-advocacy, self-direction, higher education, employment, recreation, voting, rights, and community living.

## Funding

It takes a lot of financial, organizational, and physical help to put on the Tools for Life conference. The previous Fairs (2009-CDA, 2010-Boise, 2011-Idaho Falls) averaged \$64,000.00 each for expenses. This year's Fair expenses totaled approximately \$49,000.00. Financial sponsors included the Idaho State Department of Education, Idaho Assistive Technology Project, Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities, Key Bank, Mountain West Bank, Schweitzer Engineering, Zions Bank, and Stepping Stones of Latah County. See attached budget breakdown.



## Highlights

### Keynotes and Dignitaries

The Kellogg School District Color Guard, National Anthem singers Jillian Waters and Roxanne Uriostegui, Miss Deaf Idaho Chelsea Newberry, and Wallace City Councilman Chase Sanborn welcomed attendees with style. Morning and lunch keynote speakers set the tone and inspired attendees to get the most out of the Fair. Keynote speakers have overcome many obstacles to accomplish all that they have. Keynote speakers included Roberto Rivera, Chicago, Fulfill the Dream Program; Michael Beers, Comedian, Missoula, Montana; Logan and Laurie Olson, *Logan Magazine*; and self-advocate panel, Steve Birkby, Todd DeVries, Chelsea Newberry, Chelsea Paulson, and Brenda Kotewa.



Attendees learned from information and demonstrations provided by vendors, agencies, and organization exhibitors. In addition, over 50 breakout sessions were offered to attendees. Breakout sessions are listed below:

## Employment

*Visual Resumes: A Tool to Help you Get a Job*, Ellen Condon, University of Montana Rural Institute  
*How Do We Prepare Youth for Work Through Work Experiences – Especially in Rural Areas*, Ellen Condon  
*Your Job Your Way: Self Employment via the Internet*, Krista Kramer, Disability Action Center  
*Life After School*, Theresa Varela, Disability Rights Idaho  
*Why IDVR?*, Ann Flannery, Steve Birkby, Chelsea Paulson, IESDB  
*Transitioning SSI Benefits*, Andrea Herboldt, SSA  
*Solving the Employment Puzzle*, Lorisa Wellock, Idaho Parents Unlimited (IPUL)  
*Getting and Keeping the First Job*, Lana Gonzales, IPUL  
*Social Security Benefits and a Job...You Can Have Both*, Scott Hoover, Disability Rights Idaho  
*Project SEARCH at Kootenai Health – A High School Transition Program*, Theresa Kirchner, Linda Kunkel, Ashton Bowling, John Nickerson, Coeur d' Alene School District

## Self-Advocacy/Self-Determination

*Your Rights and Transitioning to Life After 18!*, Lisa Shultz, C.K. Quade Law, PLLC  
*Hip-Hop(e) Education Workshop*, Roberto Rivera, Fulfill the Dream Program  
*You're at Tools for Life! Now What?* Beth Eloë-Reep and Irene Jones, Idaho Falls Community Transition Team  
*Your Voice, Your Story & Your Legislator*, Mel Leviton, Disability Rights Idaho  
*My Documentary Film: Days with Marley*, Tadd Mansfield, Self-Advocate  
*Successes and Failures: Redo*, Chelsea Newberry, Miss Deaf Idaho  
*You! Me?*, Chelsea Paulson, Self-Advocate  
*Legal Planning for Life After 18!*, Lisa Shultz, C.K. Quade Law, PLLC  
*Skills for Effective Parent Advocacy*, Lana Gonzales, IPUL



*A Kind of Minds: What it is Like to Experience the Label of Learning Disability*, Jim Winn, Sugar Salem High School  
*Improving Money Management Skills with Virtual Worlds*, Karen Richel and KD Hatheway-Dial, UI Extension



*Live your Prosperity Quest*, Karen Richel and KD Hatheway-Dial, UI Extension  
*Go Vote!*, Mel Leviton, Disability Rights Idaho  
*Self and Systems Change - Advocacy and YOU!*, Patrick Blum, Disability Action Center NW  
*Returning to My Scandinavian Roots: Rug Weaving in Mullan, ID*, Peder Johansen, Self-Advocate, Johansen Textiles, LLC  
*Sexuality – Enabling Communication for Parents and Caregivers*, Conny Kirchoff, UI Child Youth Study Center  
*Learning to Paint*, Toby Schultz, Self-Advocate  
*Sexuality and Sexual Boundaries for Youth*, Girwan Khadka, UI Child and Youth Study Center

## Assistive Technology

*Memory Aids for Independent Living*, Kathy Griffin, ATP  
*Using Assistive Technology to Aid Vocational Rehabilitation*, Dan Dyer, Idaho Assistive Technology Project  
*Capture and Conquer College Lectures with C-Print Captioning and the Pulse Smartpen!*, Teresa Davi, UI Disability Student Supports  
*A Smorgasbord of Assistive technology software and Resources*, Dan Dyer, IATP, Ed Chilgren, Wallace School District  
*Video Modeling*, Andrew Scheef, Moscow School District  
*Apps for Transition*, Mike Mann, Idaho Assistive Technology Project  
*Introducing WYNN 6*, Steve Boyle, Freedom Scientific  
*Telecommunications Technology for Students with Hearing Loss*, Russell Patterson, Idaho Relay

## Post Secondary Education

*College Services, SSS/DSS, What's the Difference?* Gloria Jensen, Angela Schweigert, Jerry Galloway, UI Student/Disability Support Services

*SPARC: An Idaho Secondary Transition Program*, Michelle Doty, Lewis/Clark State College, Kelley Arnett, Lewiston School District

*Wallace High School Students in Transition Program*, Nancy McGee, Wallace HS Transition Program

*Parents: Your Child is Going to College*, Brenda Kotewa, M.Ed., LPC, Doctoral Candidate, Self-Advocate

*Hard and Soft Skills at Work and in College*, Steve Birkby, Ann Flannery, IESDB

## Community Living

*Be a Transition Video Star*, Kelly Hall, Boise State University

*Planning for Healthy Transitions*, Jennifer Zielinski, IPUL

*Next Chapter Book Club*, Kelly Hall, Boise State University

*Working for Change*, Jennifer Zielinski, IPUL

*PSR, Service Coordination and Life Coaching*, Scott Miller, Tori Sheppard, and Blake Miller, ACES

*Buddy Club*, Dalene Banks, Parent Advocate, Cory Singleton, Moscow School District

*S.A.I.L. Accessible Sailing and Recreation*, Miles Moore, SAIL



## Social

Making new friends and creating a sense of belonging is a big part of the Tools for Life Fair. The pizza social and dance are always a huge hit, and this year was no exception. Kelly Hall, SDE, organized an iPad Garage Band where students could find their inner rock star as they waited for the dance to begin. Keynote speaker, Roberto Rivera, spontaneously took the microphone and accompanied the iPad Garage Band with some hip hop. The dancing was immediately underway. Students were up, moving, and ready for the featured band, The Country Boys, lead singer Chase Doty. Everyone enjoyed a wonderful evening, making friends and memories to last a lifetime!



## Attendees

The overall number of attendees was down somewhat this year due to the conference organizers making a decision to save on the cost of the conference by eliminating bringing students in from South and Southeast Idaho, and instead focused on Regions I and II. A breakdown of attendees is as follows:

- 124 students
- 52 family members
- 33 educators
- 79 professionals
- 11 vendors
- 13 college mentors
- 8 self-advocate adults
- Total Attendees 320



Students from the following high schools were represented: Aberdeen, Carey, Coeur d' Alene, Deary, Genesee, Grangeville, Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind, Idaho Virtual Academy, Kamiah, Kellogg, Kootenai Bridge Academy, Kootenai, Lake City, Lakeland, Lakeside, Lapwai, Lewiston, Moscow, Mullan, Post Falls, Riverglen, Rocky Mountain, Salmon, Sandpoint, Tammany Alternative, Timberlake, Wallace, and Wood River.

## Measuring Success

In an attempt to measure the knowledge and skills students gained from the Tools for Life Fair, a survey was created to help organizers establish a baseline, measure outcomes, and provide useful data to improve future events. The survey consisted of three types of self-reported data. The first asked for attendees' overall satisfaction. The second consisted of qualitative data to ascertain the most important thing attendees learned from the Tools for Life Fair, how they will use the information and skills acquired, topics they would like to see included in the future, and general comments. The third piece of data was quantitative responses to a series of statements measuring the knowledge and skills before and after the Fair on a Likert scale where 1=not at all, 2=a little, 3=quite a lot, and 4=a lot. The knowledge and skills statements were:

1. I know what I am going to do after high school graduation.
2. I know how to get a job.
3. I know what technology can help me in school or work.
4. I know how Vocational Rehabilitation can help me.
5. I know how to vote in the next election.
6. I know the skills I need to live on my own.
7. I know how to use the *Moving On Binder*.
8. I know what supports are available to me in college.

### Results

#### Overall Satisfaction

Survey Respondents: 96 (30% of total attendees)

Highly Satisfied	63	66%
Satisfied	29	30%
Satisfied Somewhat	2	2%
Not Satisfied	2	2%

#### Rating Scale Data

Scale: 1 = Not at all 2=A little 3=Quite a lot 4=A lot

#### 1. I know what I am going to do after high school graduation.

	1	2	3	4
Before	3	8	<b>11</b>	9
After	1	4	9	<b>17</b>

#### 2. I know how to get a job.

	1	2	3	4
Before	7	<b>13</b>	7	5
After	2	3	<b>14</b>	13

#### 3. I know what technology can help me in school or work.

	1	2	3	4
Before	5	11	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>
After	2	3	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>

4. I know how VR can help me.

	1	2	3	4
Before	8	<b>10</b>	4	9
After	5	5	8	<b>13</b>

5. I know how to vote in the next election.

	1	2	3	4
Before	<b>12</b>	10	4	4
After	7	6	<b>10</b>	7

6. I know the skills I need to live on my own.

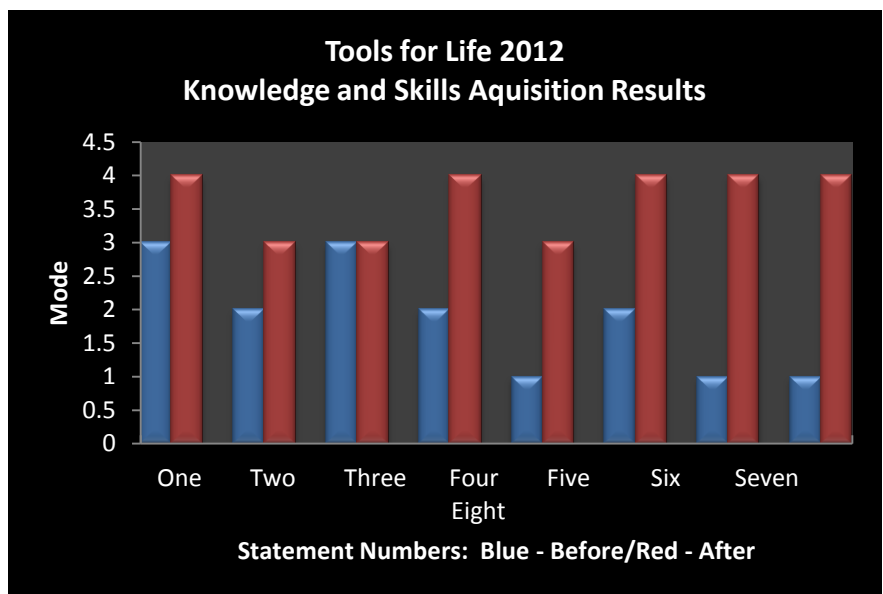
	1	2	3	4
Before	7	<b>9</b>	8	7
After	1	8	10	<b>12</b>

7. I know how to use the *Moving On Binder*.

	1	2	3	4
Before	<b>10</b>	8	5	8
After	5	4	10	<b>12</b>

8. I know what supports are available to me in college.

	1	2	3	4
Before	<b>12</b>	5	7	6
After	4	3	9	<b>14</b>



For students, gains in knowledge and skills were seen in all of the measured areas. The largest increase in knowledge and skills was using the *Moving On Binder* in their transition and learning what supports are available to them in college. Although question three shows a mode of 3 before and after Tools for Life, it is important to note, that there was significant increase in the number of lower ratings, of a 1 or 2, to the upper ratings of a 3 or 4. This again indicates an increase in knowledge and skills. This trend was also true for all 8 questions.

### Qualitative Responses

The most impressive responses to the qualitative questions were the answer to the question of what the **most important thing learned from Tools for Life**. Below are the responses of students, educators, and parents.

### Student Responses

- I learned more about what I can do.
- Learned how to get help
- Sexuality and communication
- How to cope with the disabilities I have
- I learned I can advocate for myself.
- The help that I can receive in college
- I learned that kids with disabilities can do things.
- About working in a job and meeting new friends
- How to manage money and what others lives were like
- I learned a lot about college.
- That I will be able to get a job and keep it
- I learned how to transition from high school and work. Also, I learned that people with disabilities aren't so much different from people whom don't.
- AT/IT
- The various interactive tools availability and ease of use
- How to meet new people
- I have learned a lot and I will use this during high school.
- I will use all the information through high school and in my community.
- I learned that I could go to college.
- About some stories
- I learned how kids aren't the problem they're the solution, Roberto Rivera's speech. I also learned how blind and deaf people can learn and communicate.
- I learned to start college early and study a lot.
- There are a lot of people like me, need to get to know them
- That even though I have a disability I can still go and do things that other people can do.
- That I am an important person
- It's okay to be the real you.
- What things are available to me after high school and during high school
- About getting and keeping a job and learning the requirements for a job that I am applying to
- I learned more about college and how to succeed in the world after high school.
- To be my best
- I love learning
- I learned how just because you were born different doesn't mean you are different.
- How to manage my money and how to deal with how to find a job

## **Educator Responses**

- The importance of teaching self-advocacy and seeing my students shine
- I like what Michael Beers had to say but I also like the one working in rural areas.
- Networking- Spark, Roberto Rivera's presentation
- 18-21 year old programs
- The tools vendors had software, technology, and current info from many agencies that will be helpful for my students
- Accommodations are to make things as difficult/hard for students- not easier, visual resumes are amazing! Speak to what the students/people can do!
- There is so much info and options out there.
- The vast amount of resources available for a wide range of disabilities
- Resources for finding jobs for students in rural areas
- Getting kids together to learn about different resources available to them after high school
- Importance of transition planning
- School has a responsibility to prepare students to be able to live independently after they graduate.
- New ideas for teaching job skills- I need to start now. There's lots of help available.
- Learning about SSI Benefit
- Helping kids succeed
- I learned what it's like to be around and communicate with disabled people.
- I appreciated the history lesson from Mr. Beers and also each class. I learned something from each one. I am better educated now and feel more hopeful. Thank you for Tools for Life.
- Students were able to hear success stories from others like them.
- I still definitely want to be a teacher. The next chapter book club is really neat and something I will share with students and friends.
- Students with disabilities need to advocate for themselves and need to have the right to succeed.
- Perspective and views of people with disabilities.

## **Family Responses**

- Everyone is unique! Everyone learns in their own way! All students have a voice and we as parents and educators need to learn to listen and respect each other. We need to encourage our children to follow and pursue their dreams and help them get the tools they need.
- Just more info to help my kids and also that even with different disabilities, they all seem to have the same experience
- Employment – career planning. Love to see people with disabilities who have their own business – more please!
- That there are affordable tools out that are not cumbersome. We are not invisible people.
- Friendships made – not alone
- My daughter will be able to get a job and will be fine in her transition to college.
- Friendship
- There are many options out there to help my child in her future.
- That it is possible for my child to go on to college if she chooses.
- To not give up!
- Opportunities and programs available
- The many sources of information and assistance available to the handicapped
- Nice to know that there are other resources out in the state to assist my daughter—learned about her rights
- How to access different resources
- Personally: Social Security and job information for my child. Professionally: That sometimes socializing and being in a different environment can have a huge impact on a youth's life now and in the future.



## Family Responses – Continued

- Continue to foster independence and capitalizing on strengths/talents with needed supports for students with disabilities
- How to find information I need and contacts for help
- That I need to check on conservatorship and a trust now before my grandson turns 18.
- To be the best I can be
- I like the awareness this has made me of all the tools available to help my son become more independent.
- Memory tools
- That it is other parents who have the best/most current/most accurate information regarding state services, etc. That technology is unpredictable – for a conference focused on AT, there were multiple problems with the AV equipment.
- Where to find services for our child both online and in person, also who advocates for our child.
- Watching my daughter interact with peers was an eye opener for me. I realize now she can be more self-sufficient than I thought. The social was a wonderful outlet for her!

Respondents to the qualitative questions also had concrete ways they were going to use the information and skills gained by passing on the information to others, using it to be more independent and self-advocate, and to be more successful in school and employment. Attendees were also able to give feedback and ideas for future sessions including stress management, highlight more self-advocate entrepreneurs, more hands-on sessions for students, employers, interviewing skills, etc.

By every measure, the Tools for Life Fair continues to be a success and highly valuable experience. Everyone walked a little taller and prouder on the way out of the Tools for Life: Secondary Transition and Technology Fair.

## Tools for Life 2013

Tools for Life 2013 will be held at the Doubletree Riverside Hotel, Boise, March 7-8, 2013 subject to funding commitments.

Tools for Life 2012 Budget			
Income	Detail	Amount	
SDE		20,000.00	
Registration		5,980.00	
IATP		6,582.33	
DD Council		5,000.00	
Idaho Impact (from 2011)		4,235.00	
Key Bank		2,500.00	
Mountain West Bank		2,000.00	
Schweitzer Engineering		750.00	
Zions Bank		1,000.00	
Stepping Stones		3,418.00	
<b>Total Income</b>			51,465.33
Expenses	Detail	Amount	
Wallace Inn		9,339.44	
Stardust Hotel		1,005.90	

<b>Expenses Con't</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Amount</b>	
Brooks Hotel		770.00	
Wallace School District	Facility, custodial	1,200.00	
	Accessible Bus		
	\$3.91 per mi., driver \$16.59 per hour (20 hrs.)	500.00	
Rental Equipment	Table cloths	600.00	
Food	Breakfasts - 320 x \$7.50 1313 Club	2,400.00	
	Breakfasts - 320 x \$7.50 Brooks	2,400.00	
	Lunches - 320 x \$10.50 Smokehouse BBQ	3,360.00	
	Lunches - 320 x \$10.50 Wallace Inn	3,360.00	
	One break - 320 x \$5.00 D&G Bakery	1,600.00	
	Pizza (50 pizzas plus drinks, plates napkins)	1,400.00	
	Snacks and drinks for dance - Tech Club	500.00	
Country Boys		250.00	
Supplies		600.00	
Printing	Registration Packet	0.00	
	Program and Scavenger Hunt Cards	3,000.00	
	In-house printing	500.00	
Keynote Speakers	Roberto Rivera	3,000.00	
	Travel	1,000.00	
	Michael Beers	1,500.00	
	Logan Olson	500.00	
	travel Mike and Logan	500.00	
Interpreters		0.00	
Campers Insurance		150.00	
Charter Buses Reg I and II		4,070.00	
IATPCDHD staff Travel		2,671.80	
Giveaways (iPod Touch Grandprize and others)		500.00	
Table moving fees		350.00	
Indirect	Idaho Impact (5%)	445.90	
	University of Idaho EDK186 (8%)	1,600.00	
<b>Total</b>			<b>49,073.04</b>
Difference to be used for Tools 2013			2,392.29