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Personal Reflections from ePortfolio: AHRC New York City

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by [Md Alam](#)



My Biography - What I Am Bringing to AHRC New York City

MD J Alam, I am a senior student at Lubin Business School, majoring in Public Accounting, minor in Economics. My expected graduation date is Dec 2013. By the time I graduate, I will have done 150 credits, which will qualify me to sit for the CPA exam and pass the exam—a goal to be achieved after graduation. I've received another degree in Associate of Science from LaGuardia Community College in 2011. I was always announced to be on the Deans' list while pursuing my degree in Business Administration at LaGuardia. Since I transferred to Pace University, I have as well been granted the Deans' scholarships based on my satisfactory GPA at Pace. I have been an international member of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) and a national member of Beta Alpha Psi (BAP). Hopefully, I will pursue another degree in MBA at NYU or at Columbia University in the near future. After Graduation, my objective will be to work for a CPA firm as an auditor.

My Biography in Graphic Representation (Optional)

Working
Friendly^{Game} Devotional^{Big}
Hard^{of} Teaching^{Cricket} Fan^{NYC}
Ethical Helpful
Learning

(News Story) of 1/31/13

Description of the conditions: Autism, Cerebral Palsy, or Down Syndrome.

Autism: It is a mental disorder, which makes people unable to communicate properly and to form relationships.

Cerebral Palsy: It is a disease caused by damage to the brain before or during the birth that results in difficulties of movement and speech of an individual.

Down Syndrome: It also another disorder existing from birth that is caused by a defect chromosome results in intellectual impairment and physical abnormalities including short stature and a broad facial profile.

“Waiter Hailed as Hero After Standing Up for Boy with Down Syndrome.”

Discussion: This story took place at a restaurant called Lorenzo’s Prime Rib in Houston.

The waiter, Michael Garcia, who stood up for a boy Milo with Down Syndrome when a regular customer of the restaurant made a very offensive comment regarding Milo’s illness. Showing a great care for this little boy Milo didn’t stop Michael instantly thinking of not serving his regular customer or losing his job because the customer said, “special needs children need to be special somewhere else.” Michael personal feelings took over his providing service to this regular customer because he knew Milo coming to this restaurant with his mom ever since he was born, and he would take care of Milo by hugging him—as soon as he saw Milo was at the door, entering the restaurant, as if Milo were one of Michael’s family members. Michael’s sympathy for Milo has spread across the country today as an example, which should always remind us about our personal feelings toward those individuals with a disability who sole want to be a normal human being as we do.

Evaluation of the three web sites’ feature functionalities.

Evaluation: Out of the three web sites, two of them I have found very useful and informative are the Google and the MSN news. The reason I say these two sources are better than the one of the three is that when I watched the news, I literally heard the waiter saying to the reporters what happened at the restaurant, how he felt at the moment when this customer was making an offensive comment to Milo’s illness, and how he wanted to react to that comment. Secondly, reading this article from a Google source was more elaborative and made it a very thoughtful story, which can turn an individual’s misbehaving attitude into a sympathetic behaving attitude towards an individual with a disability.

Sources:

<http://www.today.com/moms/waiter-hailed-hero-after-standing-boy-down-syndrome-1B8038223>

<http://www.nbcnews.com/id/50538910/t/heroic-waiter-stands-boy-downsyndrome/#.UQx8PY4hGaA>

<http://www.buzzfeed.com/ryanhatesthis/houston-waiter-stands-up-for-little-boy-with-down>

Blog (and News Story) of 2/7/13

Determination of fairness for individuals with disabilities to compete with individuals without disabilities in sports.

I think it is fair for individuals without disabilities to allow individuals with disabilities to be contesting in sports because of the following reasons listed below.

- Learning about teamwork and leadership
- Experiencing feelings of belonging, and a sense of growth and accomplishment
- Sharing authentic peer interaction
- Building an understanding of one’s own capabilities

- Working towards goals
- Learning to cope with disappointment and to celebrate success
- Building skills and attitudes that foster healthy living

Two stories of individuals with disability and their success in sports

Article: *Three triathletes rise above pain, obstacles, and disability*

Arnel Aba, who is one-legged and hops out of the water with the two stunned and best-known triathletes swimmers—Noy Jopson and Fred Uytensu, of the country. At the end of the 1.5 km of the open swim, Aba was one of the three differently athletes who was able to place himself as a second swimmer in the competition. From Aba’s point of view, his competing with the other two champion swimmers will be an inspiration for the individuals with disabilities.

Article: *The boy who never gave up: inspirational story of how paralyzed rugby player overcame his disability to win the job at top legal firm*

Matt King, 22, who was left paralyzed after suffering a spinal injury during a rugby match. Matt thought that was the end of his life when he certainly knew that his neck was broken by a hard push from an opposite team player and couldn’t move his toes at that point. When he was placed into a wheel chair, he thought of his age only 22. Matt never wanted to give up what he wanted to become a lawyer. He thought about his age was 22 at which he could still attend a college and get a degree in legal studies, which he did and finally got a job at a top legal firm in London.

Sources:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1232501/The-boy-gave-Story-paralysed-rugby-player-overcame-disabilities-win-job-legal-firm.html#axzz2K33WiSRk>

<http://sports.inquirer.net/51663/3-triathletes-rise-above-pain-obstacles-disability>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/16/sports/disabled-athletes-suit-up-raising-questions-of-logistics-and-fairness.html>

Blog (and News Story) of 2/21/13

Evaluation of experiences with my partner

The date of today was February 21, 2013. It was one of the special days for me. It was a special day because I was given an opportunity to introduce myself to an individual with a disability for the first time to work with throughout the semester. This individual’s name is David, who is my partner I will be working with. David can’t speak, which is his disability. I will be working on a project with him called “Travel Training.” During the course of this project, my objective is to train David how to travel around independently from his home to school or some certain places that he always visits. Today, I taught him creating folders in an electronic device that he uses to communicate with people. This device contains vocabulary chosen by me that David will use to express his thoughts when he needs to communicate with people for his travel. For example: I created three folders in his device that he uses, which contains (Folder # 1) I take the number one train, (Folder # 2) I take M4 bus as well, and (Folder # 3) sometime, I take BX6 bus. What I have created in his device is by using these there folders, David will be able to communicate his message to the person whom he expects to get help from if he doesn’t know where each one of these transportations are around. That’s how I finished my first day with David, and I really enjoyed helping David. I am very hopeful that I will be able to accomplish my objective training David to learn how to travel on his own—without anybody’s help.

Evaluation of three stories:

Story # 1: “Md. man with Down syndrome who died in police custody loved law enforcement.” Robert Ethan Saylor—who has Down syndrome, died last month in the custody of off-duty Frederick County sheriff’s

deputies after he refused to leave a movie theater. The county is investigating, and parents of other children with Down syndrome have voiced concern. Saylor cursed at the deputies, who weren't wearing uniforms, and began hitting and kicking them. The deputies restrained him using three sets of handcuffs linked together and escorted him from the theater. At some point, Saylor ended up on the ground and began showing signs of medical distress. A short while later, he was pronounced dead at a local hospital. *(This is not an encouraging story for my partner David).*

Story # 2: "Millions In Disability Housing Aid On Way." This is a very good news for my partner David and encouraging. Nearly \$98 million in rental assistance is budgeted for individuals with a disability. The federal money is going to fund 3,530 housing units in 13 states for those people who require long-term services and supports to live independently. Therefore, David may be eligible for this opportunity since he is an individual with a disability and wants to live independently. *(This is an encouraging story for David).*

Story # 3: "Obama Warns Of Cuts To Special Education." President Barack Obama is calling on lawmakers to pass a short-term budget deal to stop the automatic spending cuts scheduled to impact nearly all government programs coming on March 1st. The result can be a huge blow to middle-class families and our economy as a whole. Obama said in his weekly radio address Saturday in which he cited Americans with disabilities as one group that would be impacted by the cuts. What we can infer from the president Obama's statement is that he is going to make sure that there is no budget cuts for the individuals with a disability. Therefore, this is a very hopeful statement for David that he is still going to be given the same opportunity, as the one he has now to afford to attend a college, and the president of the United States will always make sure that there are always special programs for individuals with disabilities to be educated and become productive. *(This is another encouraging story for David).*

[Blog \(and News Story\) of 3/14/13](#)

Disability Cuts Could Be Here To Stay

The sweeping federal budget cuts has been clearly set for those are benefiting from special education and other disability programs.

President Barack Obama issued an order last Friday instituting what's known as sequestration—a process of deep spending cutbacks that was triggered when Congress failed to reach a budget deal in 2011. Accordingly, \$85 billion will be taken out from this year's federal budget. Funding will be reduced for numerous initiatives benefiting those with disabilities including special education, housing assistance, employment supports, mental health services and research.

In the case of special education, Obama administration projections show that about \$600 million will be cut from the program this year, putting the jobs of 7,200 teachers.

EVALUATION: Considering my partner David—who has a disability, is an obvious example, being affected by this budget cut. If the teachers who are—trained for those need special education, losing their jobs, there will be many individuals with disabilities left for no longer having an opportunity to find themselves to act in a way as if they were normal human beings, getting education to live on their own and to have a better future. Cutting back the budgets for special education will result in overall number of people getting less educated every year or have no education at all in this country and will result in number of teachers losing their jobs.

PARTNER PROGRESS: Today, David and I were going over the phrases that I have put into his new device. I was having him practice all the phrases he had to say depending on his situation he would be in while traveling. I also added new phrases for David to introduce himself at the beginning of his presentation. We were working on his i-pad to download an application, which was an i-movie app to film our entire course work for David's "Travel Training" for the rest of the semester.

Accessible New York

Summary: John Robinson, who was visiting New York City and couldn't find an accessible parking spot for individuals with a disability. While Mr. Robinson was having his meals at a restaurant on the Upper-West side, he saw a NYC official parking patrol standing at the parking spot where he parked his car on and processing a ticket. By the time he went outside the restaurant to stop the official from giving him a ticket, the official had already processed the ticket of \$60. That's why he wrote to Mayor Bloomberg to have accessible parking kiosks for individuals with disabilities, so that there will be more tourists of those individuals with disabilities coming to the city.

Partner progress:

First of all, As far as the partner progress is concerned, I have the first video done for David in which it shows how he walked across to a subway station along two other people, and it also shows his determination for taking a step. For example: the video shows when David stops at a STOP sign and watches the street to his right and left for the cars to slow down, so he can cross the street safely. Secondly, I put the phrases that I created in his new device for him to introduce himself at the beginning of the presentation and to conclude the presentation by saying closing-up phrases.

Phrases That I have created for Introduction and conclusion are:

Introduction:

Hello, my name is David. I used to use my hands to speak up until a few months ago. When the Pace-project started, I received an i-pad and a Saltillo device from the program. The objective for me in this semester was to learn how to travel independently. MD and Dan helped me how to travel on my own. Using the Saltillo device enabled me to communicate with people while I was traveling. I hope you will enjoy my story.

Conclusion:

Thank you for watching and listening to my new voice using the advanced technology. I appreciate MD's and Dan's work for helping me travel independently in this semester. I wish every one of you to have a good summer break.



Helping David use the phrases

My Mid-Term Reflection Journal on [Book] Miracle Boy and on My Project

Ben Mattlin was born in New York in 1962 with spinal muscular atrophy, a congenital muscle-wasting disease. He graduated from Harvard in 1984 and is an NPR commentator and frequent contributor to many different financial magazines. He has written on disability and other topics for *The New York Times*, *Self* magazine, *USA Today*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. He has also appeared on CNN, ABC's *Prime Time Live*, Entertainment Network, and among other venues, to discuss his disability-related writings. He currently lives in Los Angeles.

For Ben, it was a miracle because he was expected to die when he was 2-year old due to a congenital muscle-wasting disease. However, his miracle life has been a great history for individuals with disabilities. His confidence and not feeling sorry for his disability has always inspired him to advance his career as if he were a normal human being. Despite the fact that he was from an affluent family, his being born with a disability and with a possibility of dying soon put a huge burden on his parents. Although it was thought of very unfortunate child of his parents born with a disability, his parents' efforts that were put into his everyday's building up confidence that he could always do better in his life than what the other people thought of him. Mattlin would always think that he could exceptionally be different from those individuals with similar or different kinds of disabilities.

His father attended Harvard and his mom was a broadcaster. They always believed in his dreams would come true one day, and it did come true when Mattlin graduated from Harvard in 1984 and became a professional writer. Ben was eventually able to form a relationship and got married to a beautiful lady. He now has two daughters as well. Ben uses the advanced technologies nowadays to write about related-disability articles and so on. He made the corner of his living room as his office room where he works everyday. He uses his mouth to command the computer to automatically type what he wants it to. That's how Mattlin has been writing his articles and becoming popular and successful. In his point of view, Mattlin's writing stories about his life is to inspire all the individuals with disabilities, so they can be self-motivated and do the best of their abilities.

As far as my Partner David is concerned and his disability, he can't speak up. Therefore, he cannot communicate with people. He uses an electronic device, which speaks up for him using the created phrases in his device. In this semester, his goal is learn how to travel independently using the phrases I have put into his device by which he will be able to communicate with people while he is traveling. What I have seen in David exceptionally is that he is friendlier with people than I am although he is not able to verbally communicate, whereas I am. He likes socializing with even a stranger right away that I noticed him doing it on the first day of class with every single one he saw on his way and felt very comfortable communicating with the stranger. Watching him socializing with people was really unusual to me to see it for the first time ever. I was really surprised by David's attitude, but I also felt sorry for him when he couldn't express his thoughts by verbally communicating with the people he was greeting on his way. This semester, I am trying to put as many phrases as possible into his device, so David will be able to effectively communicate with people and express what he has to say to them whenever he needs to.

My Final Reflection Journal on My Project

This "Wed Designing for Nonprofit Organization" course was very much different from the other courses I took this semester. In all the other courses, I learned about rules, regulations, standards, and computations of math; however, in this particular course, I learned about understanding lives of those who are left behind due to their disabilities.

In the case of David, his disability was that he couldn't speak up although he was able to listen to people. In this semester, his objective was to learn how to travel independently using a communication device that was provided to him by AHRC at the beginning of the semester. From the first day starting the project until the last day finishing up the project and presenting it, we had to work together throughout the semester. As we planned

starting off the semester to get this project done, we created and put all the necessary phrases in his device that David would need to use while he was traveling on his own.

On the first day of class, what I learned about David is that he was very social and tried to make other people his friends those were in class. His behavior was very different from what I expected of him sitting down, being quiet in class and not talking to people because he couldn't speak. His friendly behavior absolutely impressed me and got me deeply involved in working with his for the rest of the semester. As we got to know each other, we became friends and worked at our best efforts to make the project as effective as possible, and we finally did make a good project, which was integrated with an introduction part, an i-movie, and a conclusion part.

In the introduction part, David talked about himself using the device that was given to him. Introducing him using the device, it showed the audience in class that David was able to communicate with people on his way if he ever got lost and would be able to communicate with strangers for help on his traveling in the future. Secondly, the i-movie contained the whole objective of how David traveled on his own from his house to a music class on a day after he had been trained. Third, the conclusion part was about David's satisfaction of what he had learned traveling independently and being thankful and grateful to those of us who helped him throughout the semester accomplish his objective.

Throughout the semester, I learned about working on a project from the planning steps to the steps of implementation and getting the project done on time—time management, organization, collaboration, and communicating any major issues to the person is supposed to be held responsible for if I came across. Two impacts I want to mention that our project had on both of us are: for David, knowing how to travel independently; for me, understanding lives of individuals who have disabilities and their daily lives especially getting to know David's daily life throughout the semester and articles I read about individuals with different kinds of disabilities.

One of the impacts that was on David's knowing how to travel independently. Traveling on his own was very challenging for David, and he finally managed to overcome that challenge during the semester of a twelve-week session. Noticeably, David was a fast learner. He would find his own ways to learn quickly. He was absolutely focused on how he would travel one day on his own, and this was the consequence that came out of the project for David. The other impact that I think was on me, it was to learn about individuals who have a disability and understanding daily lives of these individuals in relation to David's daily life and his disability. Before this semester started, I had a very little knowledge of individuals with a disability who could be the most successful one in the world, such as Stephen Hawkins. Now, I think that there is no difference between a normal individual and an individual with a disability. What makes individuals with a disability different from individuals with no disabilities, it is the availability of opportunities provided and the level of acceptance for individuals with disabilities.