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## Unity Through Diversity: Working Together to Create Social Change

Justin Frago  
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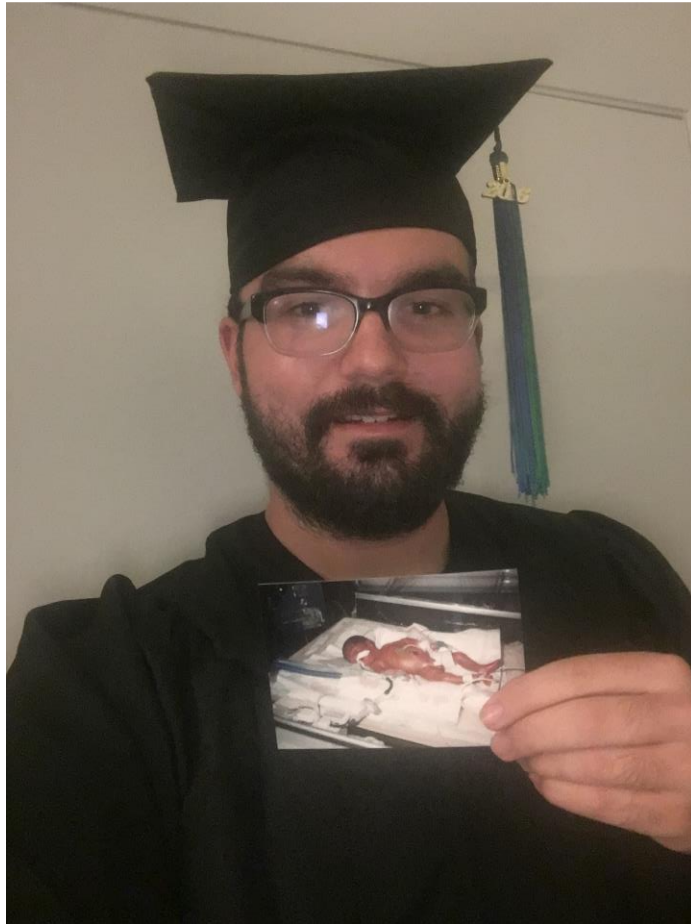
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Unity Through Diversity: Working Together to Create Social Change



Justin Frago  
Senior Capstone  
Division of Humanities and Communication  
Spring 2016

Unity Through Diversity: Working Together to Create Social Change

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Justin Frago

5/11/16

Senior Capstone

### **Senior Capstone Proposal**

**1. Provide your name and identify your area of concentration**

Justin Frago, American Multicultural Studies Concentration

**2. Focus: Identify the specific issue, problem, or question addressed in your essay. Be sure to frame as a question. Briefly explain why you chose this focus area.**

My Capstone essay aims to bring to fruition the neglected Disability Rights Movement history. I will also outline what I think our society needs to implement by 2050 (34 years from now) in order to be a more inclusive and equitable society.

I chose to focus on these questions because Disability Studies is not discussed in our classes, or our K-12 history books. I wanted to shed light on something that not very individuals know about.

**3. Alignment with Common Theme: Provide a concise overview of your project's direct alignment with this semester's shared theme of inquiry.**

This project aligns with the Capstone course theme of the year 2050 because in order to be an equitable society, in a constant changing fashion, disabilities need to be a part of the conversation.

**4. Purpose: What is your project's primary purpose? What do you hope to accomplish through this project?**

My primary purpose is to learn more about my own history as a person with a disability, and to teach others who may not be familiar with disability history.

**5. Capstone Title: What is your project's working title?**

Unity Through Diversity: Working Together to Create Social Change

**6. Working Summary: Provide a one-paragraph working summary of your project...**

As a person with two invisible disabilities, I have been wondering about my history for quite some time. I am perplexed as to why my communities' history is not represented in textbooks, nor is it a part of the discussion in 90 percent of my California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) classes. My Capstone essay aims to bring to fruition the neglected Disability Rights Movement history. I will also outline what I think our society needs to implement by 2050 (34 years from now) in order to be a more inclusive and equitable society.

**7. Sources: Address each of the following:**

➤ **In order to complete your project, what additional knowledge, insights, skills, understanding, and/or other resources and tools do you anticipate needing?**

I needed to learn more about the Section 504 protests, the content of the legislation, and I needed to learn about the Disability Rights Movement.

➤ **Describe the kinds of primary and/or secondary sources you intend to use for your inquiry. This could include collecting original oral histories, analyzing government statistics, consulting scholarly peer-reviewed articles, books, and websites, among others. If you have consulted sources to get started, list them here.**

I read journal articles, listened to oral histories, and read articles from credible sources, such as National Public Radio. Please see my completed annotated bibliography for more information.

**9. Timeline: Provide a detailed (and realistic) timeline for completion of each step required to meet the project's expectations.**

**\*\* (These dates are a rough estimate, due to having to re-design my proposal at the end of the Semester)\*\*.**

March 13 – March 14: Obtain approval from Dr. Robinson to change my project due to unforeseen circumstances

March 15-April 6: Conduct research for my project

April 6 – April 10: Write rough draft of paper

April 10-May 11: Make edits to my project, conduct additional research as necessary, and turn my draft into a final draft for submission

Justin Frago

Professor Sam Robinson

HCOM 475: Senior Capstone

May 11, 2016

### Unity Through Diversity: Working Together to Create Social Change

As a person with two invisible disabilities, I have been wondering about my history for quite some time. I am perplexed as to why my communities' history is not represented in textbooks, nor is it a part of the discussion in 90 percent of my California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) classes. My Capstone essay aims to bring to fruition the neglected Disability Rights Movement history. I will also outline what I think our society needs to implement by 2050 (34 years from now) in order to be a more inclusive and equitable society.

Our society has viewed people with disabilities as less than capable for decades because some able-bodied<sup>1</sup> people do not know how to handle things that are outside of the normal social constructs. One example of people with disabilities being oppressed early on was in 1935 during the Great Depression. This turbulent time pushed angry Americans into protesting for a better society, because their needs were not being met. However, a new form of protests started to occur: disability discrimination protests.

Five and a half years into the Great Depression, such protests were common. But this one presented something different. The six protesters and some supporting picketers had physical disabilities. They claimed that they and other handicapped job seekers suffered disability-based discrimination at the hands of work-relief

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<sup>1</sup> A person who does not have a disability.

agencies and the federal government's Works Progress Administration (WPA).  
(Longmore and Goldberger, 879)

People with disabilities were being discriminated against because they were not seen as capable, due to their functional limitations. They were starting to figure out their self-worth, and that they were being treated as second-class citizens. In my opinion, they had a right to protest because it was wrong for the employer to discriminate against people who want to work, but just need some assistance. These types of incidents led members of the Disability Community to continue to fight for their equity throughout the 1960's.

The 1960's were a very turbulent and discriminatory time for minority groups. For example, African Americans were deeply discriminated. "One man was James Meredith, who, escorted by U.S. marshals onto the campus of "Ole Miss" to protect him from an angry crowd of protesters, was photographed and shown in newspaper front pages and nightly news reports throughout the nation. Meredith's matriculation was yet another single, symbolic removal of a barrier to equal opportunity for African Americans." (McCarthy, 209) People with disabilities were no exception to discrimination in the United States.

There were no laws protecting people with disabilities from being discriminated in schools (K-12 and colleges and universities), the workplace, and our overall society. One brave man, named Ed Roberts, took a stand, and demanded that he be granted access to a college education.

The other collegian busting barriers that autumn was Ed Roberts, who, as a result of polio, had to rely on a power wheelchair, an iron lung, and a personal caregiver to assist him with most physical tasks of daily life. No one protested his enrollment at the University of California-Berkeley that day; indeed, probably



very few on campus, let alone around the nation, even knew or cared. In retrospect, it is perceived by many as the beginning of the Disability Rights Movement in the United States. (McCarthy, 209)

Roberts' views on life, and his perseverance to be granted access to a college education were very radical for 1962. He worked tirelessly to advocate for himself, so he could defy the odds, and make something for himself. His courage and determination encouraged others to advocate for themselves, and their rights. I will discuss some of Roberts' achievements later in my essay. Roberts was not the only person to contribute to the disability community.

Another prominent activist in the Disability Rights Movement was a man named Paul Longmore. He made a huge contribution to the Disability Rights Movement as a Professor of History and Disability Studies at San Francisco State University. (Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability at San Francisco State University) For example:

It wasn't the person with a disability who needed to overcome that disability, Longmore said. It was society that needed repair — whether it meant putting curb cuts at the end of the block, so someone like Longmore could get around in his power wheelchair, or changing Social Security laws so he could publish books and not lose the assistance that assured his accomplishment and independence.

. . . . Longmore taught that people with disabilities, themselves, had changed the way the world defined what it means to have a disability. "Previously, disability was defined as a set of limitations in the abilities of people with disabilities to function in society because of some pathology in us . . . ." "The disability rights movement redefined disability as a problem mainly out there in society—not just in our bodies and minds but in society." (Shapiro)

Longmore was another activist for the community, and helped to make the world a better place. He was able to embrace his disability, find employment, and become very successful. People like Roberts and Longmore make me appreciate this movement because I would not be where I am today without their contributions. While they both were able to overcome their disabilities, there was an opposite mentality on television.

People thought they could ‘help’ people with disabilities by giving money to charity telethons, such as the Muscular Dystrophy Association’s (MDA) annual telethon. This telethon was emceed by Jerry Lewis from 1966 to 2010. Many celebrities performed on the show to entice viewers to donate. (Oldenburg) As I have been writing my Capstone, I have been thinking a lot about the concept of charities, and how much our society buys into them. Human beings are generally programmed (by socialization) to feel sorry for people who appear to be weak and unable to support themselves. There may be some people who truly need around the clock support. However, I have met many people with disabilities who are very successful. All they need is a little assistance, such as (but not limited to) assistive technology, mobility devices (such as a cane or a wheelchair), or workplace accommodations.

Able-bodied people do not understand what they are doing when they donate to a charity like MDA. Every dollar you contribute tells the disability community that you are perpetuating the idea that people with disabilities cannot take care of themselves. This can trickle down to some people with disabilities losing their self-esteem, and eventually giving up. Able-bodied people would not fully understand any of this because they do not live with a disability. People who do not have disabilities do not live with society constantly breathing down your neck, waiting for the disabled person to screw up, so someone can rush in to save the day. Even though

this ableist<sup>2</sup> mindset exists, I am thankful that there are Independent Living Centers where people with disabilities can find support and resources.

For many years, there was no place in the community for people with disabilities to go for support, and to learn how to live independently. The launch of the Independent Living Movement in the 1960's was definitely ahead of its time. The first Independent Living Center (ILC) was created in 1972 by Ed Roberts, Hale Zukas, and Jan McEwan Brown in Berkeley, CA. (CIL Berkeley) The main goal of the ILC was to create a place in the community where Consumers<sup>3</sup> can gain the skills necessary to live independently. For example, Consumers can meet with an Independent Living Specialist (ILS) to develop an Independent Living Plan. Consumers can also learn about assistive technology options; and work with their ILS to find accessible, affordable housing. There are now ILC's across the country that serve thousands of Consumers each year. I am privileged to have the opportunity to serve on the Board of Directors for the Central Coast Center for Independent Living in Salinas, CA. I have the ability to help the board bring more services to the community. The success of the Berkeley ILC helped pave the way for what was coming next for the disability community.

At this point in history, there were many positive changes in our society that were geared toward people with disabilities. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was a major milestone for the society. However, there was a catch. One of the big debates at the time was Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. While the Rehabilitation Act, was signed into law in 1973, Section 504 (a clause in the Rehabilitation Act) was not implemented until 1977. People with disabilities had

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<sup>2</sup> Someone who puts someone down because of their ability level

<sup>3</sup> Individuals who utilize an Independent Living Center

waited for four years for Section 504 to be signed. They were tired of waiting. So, a group of protesters (with and without disabilities) took over the San Francisco Health Education and Welfare (HEW) Building for 26 days. Many of the protestors brought nothing with them; however, they did not care. They worked with the Black Panthers to obtain a hot meal every day. The Salvation Army helped the protestors have a bed to sleep on while in the building. Some protesters traveled, and took over the Washington D.C., Boston, Seattle, New York, Atlanta, Philadelphia, Chicago, Dallas, and Denver HEW offices as well. However, the San Francisco sit in was the most successful. (Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability at San Francisco State University) Protesters demanded that HEW Secretary Joseph Califano sign Section 504 into law because they were tired of being excluded and segregated from society. (Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability at San Francisco State University) Their dedication to civil rights for people with disabilities was paying off.

On April 28, 1977, HEW Secretary Joseph Califano Signed Section 504 into law, without any edits to the legislation. (Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability at San Francisco State University) The law says the following:

Section 504 states that no qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall be excluded from, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that either receives Federal financial assistance or is conducted by any Executive agency or the United States Postal Service. (United States Department of Labor)

This was the first piece of legislation that protected people with disabilities from discrimination in our society. While this was a milestone achievement for the disability community, it was a stepping stone to additional legislation: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

The ADA states that reasonable employment accommodations shall be granted for an employee or applicant with a disability. Public spaces must be equipped to accommodate people with disabilities, including restaurants, shopping entities, and public restrooms. These spaces must accommodate people who utilize service animals as an accommodation to be accepted into these public spaces. Public transportation options need to be accessible for people with disabilities, especially those who utilize wheelchairs. The ADA also says that telephone relay services must be available for people who are hearing impaired or deaf. (JAN: Job Accommodation Network)

This was the second instance when legislation was created to give people with disabilities the equity they deserve. I have a lot of admiration for both the ADA and Section 504, as both laws give me the opportunity to be employed without discrimination, to work with accommodations, and allow me to receive classroom accommodations when I was completing my K-12 education, and, in my current undergraduate education at CSUMB. These protesters are my heroes, because without them, I would not be here right now; and I would not be as successful in school, or in my employment. As I look toward the future, and the year 2050, I have a vision for what our society needs to do to become a more inclusive and equitable society.

First, we need to utilize an assets-based community development approach to solve the disability community's issues. This methodology utilizes a community's strengths to solve community issues, rather than focusing on the community's weaknesses. (Walker) The weaknesses are still important, but they are not the whole equation. We need to build people up, using positive reinforcement, instead of belittling them. I think it is especially important to show allies that they are just as necessary to this conversation as people with disabilities. We need to teach aspiring allies to not feel sorry for us, but rather help us bridge the gap between the

disabled and the able-bodied communities. This mentality would not only move us closer to a world of social justice, but it would inform individuals who have privilege in our society to create change for minority groups across the board.

Second, the oppressed minority groups need to work together to solve the inequities that exist. Even though each minority group may have different agendas, they all intersect with one another, because they all understand what it feels like to be oppressed. For example, The Black Panthers helped the Section 504 protesters obtain the necessary food supplies to be able to survive, while occupying the Health Education and Welfare Building in San Francisco. (Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability at San Francisco State University) This demonstrates that a unified group of people can accomplish more by working together, rather than working alone. The challenging part is trying to get other communities to see the intersectionalities that are often overlooked, because everyone is fixated on their own community's agenda. If we step back as a society, and realize that we have the power to create social change, as a collective group, we can make the world a better place. With that said, making the world a better place starts by reforming our institutions of education.

The next thing that is needed to be a more inclusive society by 2050 is to reform our K-12 education system. Growing up, I was never taught about my history as a disabled person, let alone be told I even had a disability until I was 17 years old. It continues to be frowned upon to bring up anything related to disability in the K-12 general education setting<sup>4</sup> because they do not want to out any students. I have a problem with this. If I had known about my disability earlier, I would have had more time to actively work on overcoming my disability. While I did do things

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<sup>4</sup> The regular classroom environment that people without disabilities are in, as well as students with disabilities who can succeed in the classroom with accommodations.

to overcome my disability, I did not really understand why I was doing things like Adaptive P.E., or going to Speech Therapy. I was told that I had an I.E.P.<sup>5</sup>, and that I needed extra help. Now that I am older, I have found that this mindset of not telling me about my disability (and the disability history) at a young age was really deplorable. As a result of this, I had to learn things, like making friends, and learning how to drive a car later than many neurotypicals.<sup>6</sup> While life is not a race, you are seen as odd if you are not ‘on schedule’ like everyone else. Having these obstacles are okay, because I have overcome many of them. As I sit here and reflect on my life thus far, pride is beaming from within. I have defied the odds, and will graduate from college, and start my teaching credential in the Fall. While many people would say I am successful, there are other folks in the disability community who would not be deemed ‘successful’ by our one size fits all society. Serving individuals with disabilities in a positive way starts with the parents.

We need to show parents that having a disability is not a bad thing. In fact, it can be a very beneficial. As I previously mentioned, outing people with disabilities is a big concern. However, we cannot move forward in the quest for social justice by 2050, if we do not talk about these issues! Some people with disabilities may just need accommodations in order to fully participate in our society. This is okay because it gives an individual access to a ‘normal’ and fulfilling life. Some parents are so obsessed with not giving their child a label—thinking that the label is a bad thing. If parents want to truly serve their children, they need to be comfortable with the label, because their child cannot receive Special Education services without it. In addition to having a frank conversation about the issues, we need to show parents that there are people who are products of the Special Education system—and who are successful in their life. As someone

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<sup>5</sup> Stands for Individual Education Plan. A document that specifies what a student’s goals are, and the appropriate accommodations that are being implemented to help meet those goals.

<sup>6</sup> People who do not have disabilities

who has participated in the Special Education system, I have the opportunity to educate parents, in addition to their children, by sharing my past experiences, and how they have impacted my life in both positive and negative ways. I feel so honored to go into Special Education as a career because I want to show parents that their child is capable of anything, they just need a teacher that understands them, and they need a good support system. I may have two labels attached to my name, but that has not stood in my way of achieving my goals. I want students with disabilities to be empowered by their disability, not feeling helpless. While I cannot teach every person with a disability, CSU Monterey Bay (CSUMB) specifically needs to change, so that graduates are prepared to adequately serve people with disabilities.

I feel that CSUMB marginalizes me, as well as my peer who have disabilities. I feel like the administration views us as second class members of the campus community. For example, look at Table 1 for a concrete example of the inequity that CSUMB places on students with disabilities:

**Table 1: An Excerpt of Some of the CSUMB Fall 2015 Enrollment Statistics (Institutional Assessment and Research)**

<b>Undergrads from under-represented groups</b>		
ADULT STUDENTS	1,055	16%
FIRST-GENERATION	3,704	55%
UNDER-REP MINORITY	3,080	46%
LOW-INCOME	2,314	34%

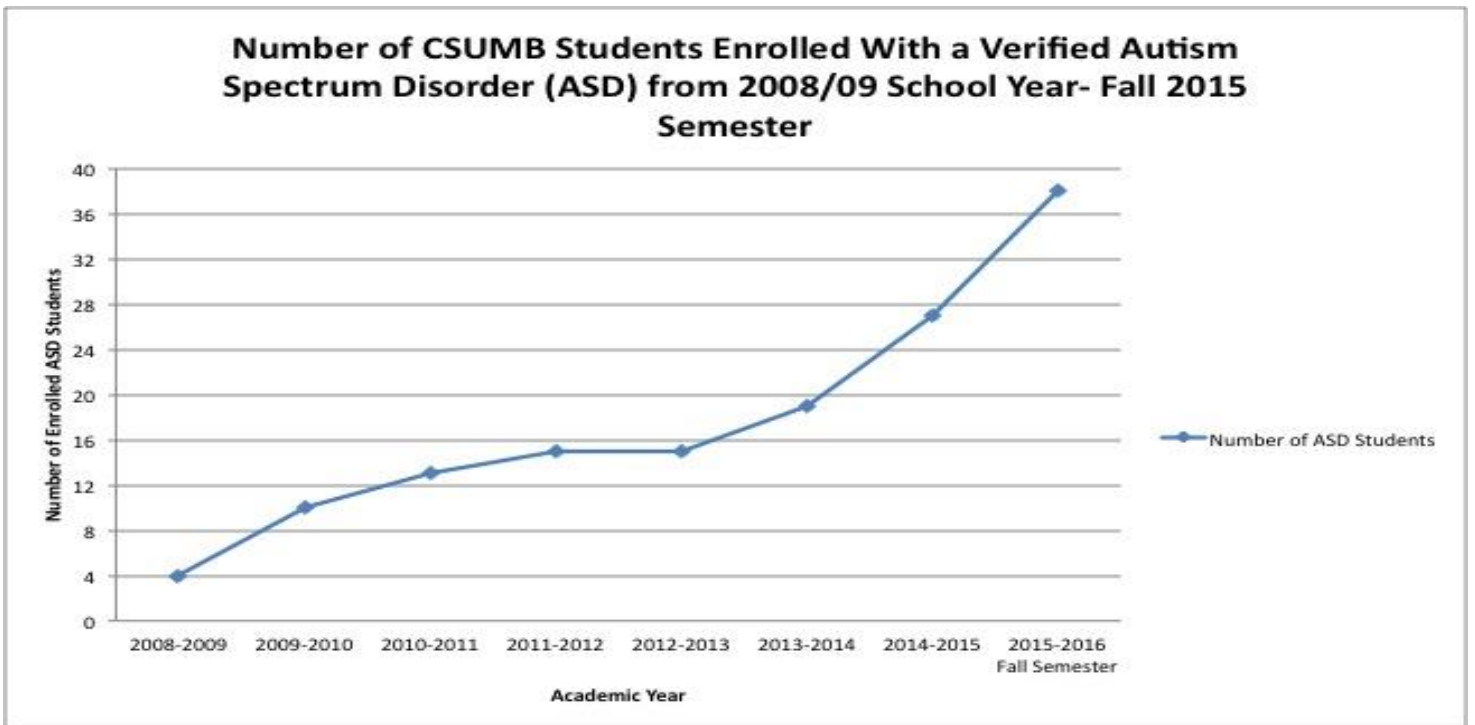
Where are students with disabilities represented in Table 1? Perhaps they identify with other under-represented groups, like myself, but that is not the case for every student with a disability. If our campus wants to advance forward, we need to have a fifth row in this chart. We are the one of the minorities on this campus, but we are not adequately represented. I would like



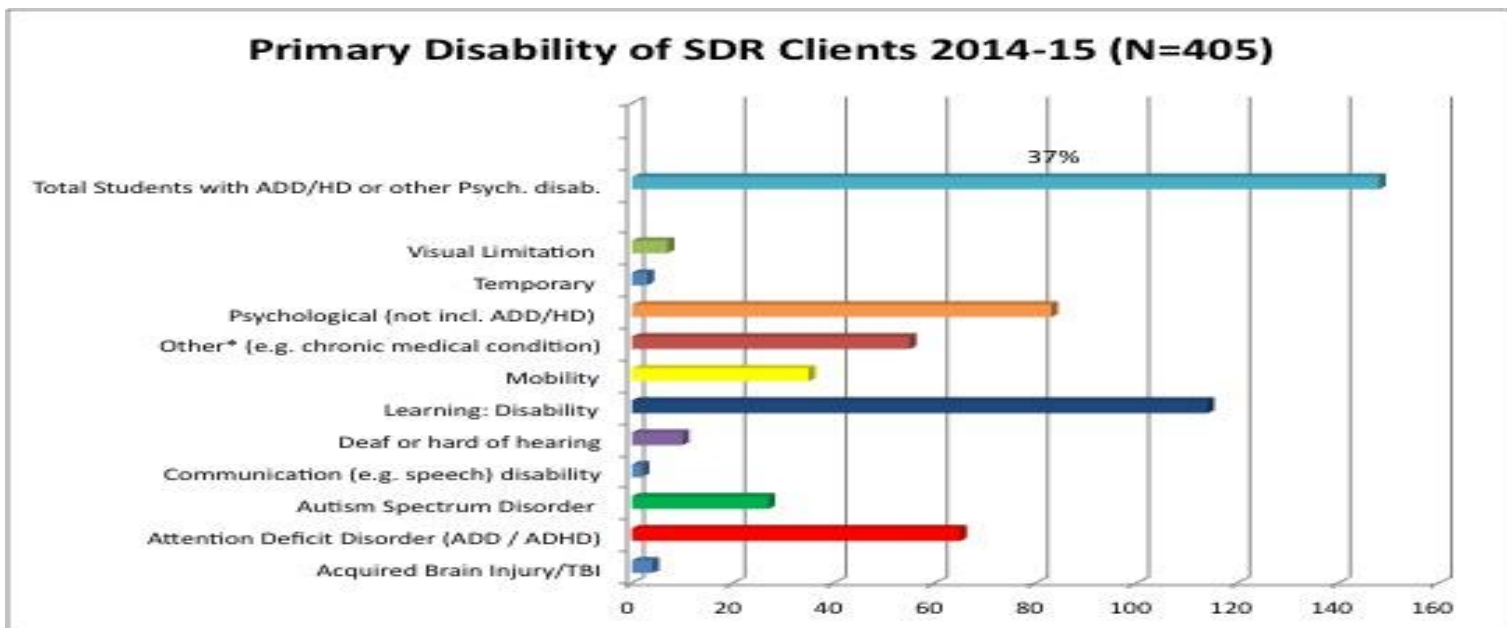
CSUMB to stop playing the pity card, and see us as a valid minority group in the same light as the other groups listed in Table 1.

In addition to disabilities as a whole being marginalized, students who attend CSUMB with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are extremely disadvantaged because the population with this particular label is small.

**Table 2: Number of CSUMB Students Enrolled with a Verified Autism Spectrum Disorder from 2008-09 School Year – Fall 2015 Semester**  
(the Office for Student Disability Resources at CSUMB)



**Table 3: Primary Disabilities of Student Disability Resources (SDR) Clients from the 2014-2015 School Year (the Office for Student Disability Resources at CSUMB)**



If you look at Table 2, ASD is on the rise at CSUMB. However, in comparison, Table 3 shows that students with ASD is one of the smallest populations of clients that the Student Disability Resources office serves. (Office for Student Disability Resources at CSUMB) ASD is an invisible disability. Like it says in the title, ASD is a spectrum, which means not every student will be the same; and their limitations will be different. For example, some students with ASD (like myself) may be very routine oriented, fixated on a particular subject, or they may be sensitive to noise or pressure when another person is touching them, to name a few. These are all things that are not noticeable, which in turn, marginalizes them even more because you cannot physically see ASD. You have to know the individual's personality well enough, in addition to the tendencies of ASD, in order to connect the dots. Some students may feel uncomfortable talking to folks on campus about their ASD because of how insecure it makes them feel. Thus, this population is almost nonexistent because many people do not know these students exist; or

some faculty members do not know how to handle them. I decided to work with another faculty member to try to fix the problem.

I worked with Sean Senechal, a CSUMB faculty member in the Psychology and Human Development departments, and representatives from the Teaching, Learning, and Assessment department on-campus to co-design and co-host three workshop sessions for faculty to learn about the ASD population. We need to talk about these issues, if we want to better our society in an equitable fashion by 2050. The first workshop was an overview of the ASD population, and what we can do as a learning community to learn more about them. The second workshop was a student panel of current CSUMB students with an ASD label, sharing their story, and their CSUMB experience. The final workshop was geared toward faculty, and giving them a chance to share examples of issues that have come up while working with students with ASD. As I co-presented each of these workshops, I noticed faculty members were very engaged, and they asked several authentic questions. This was wonderful to see because it shows that some faculty members are actually interested, they just do not have enough opportunities to have these conversations. One thing I noticed in all of the sessions was that there were no administrators present. While it would be wrong of me to assume that they are not interested in this population, it does prompt me to question if all of the administrators are truly committed to all of the students with disabilities? We are not accurately represented in CSUMB enrollment statistics. The campus is severely understaffed, as I feel like I am doing three people's jobs as a very part time Lead Access Assistant at Student Disability Resources. Through several observations during my tenure at this institution, I have noticed that some of the administrators (through their actions and attitude), forget that we have a Vision Statement. Here is an excerpt of the CSUMB Vision Statement that I think should be the heart and soul of this campus:

The campus will be distinctive in serving the diverse people of California, especially the working class and historically undereducated and low-income populations. The identity of the university will be framed by substantive commitment to multilingual, multicultural, gender-equitable learning. Our vision of the goals of California State University, Monterey Bay includes: a model pluralistic academic community where all learn and teach one another in an atmosphere of mutual respect and pursuit of excellence . . . . (CSUMB Vision Statement)

I see a huge discrepancy between what is actually happening, and what the Vision Statement says. We need to work together to create change, and the CSUMB administration is a big part of the discussion. I do not think the responsibility of trying to correct problems should be placed on the shoulders of our students and faculty all the time. For instance, I personally do not think it should be my job to find The Office of Inclusive Excellence's flyer accessibility errors. I should not have to remind clubs and organizations that their materials need to be accessible. The Office of Inclusive Excellence should be having these conversations with folks on-campus. I have found that if I am not being annoying, and advocating for students with disabilities, there is a very good chance that the students will not be heard, besides in the Student Disability Resources office. This brings to fruition the dysfunction of this institution, and that substantial changes needs to happen immediately.

First and foremost, we need to stop being afraid. As I have mentioned before, we cannot move forward as a socially aware society, if we do not discuss problems in a constructive way. We also need to stop being so worried about being politically correct. There is a way to be respectful, but we need to be honest and blunt about it. I personally think that if an administrator

does not like what is being said about CSUMB, then they should work together to fix the problems. I understand that some of them take time to correct, but many of them can be corrected in a short amount of time.

I would love to see the university take active steps to include people with disabilities in the conversation of university life. *All* students should be included, not just the student leaders. The university needs to actively give more financial resources to the campus for disability education, and additional resources (e.g. staff and financial resources) for Health and Wellness Services. I would also like the university administration to actively meet with students to find out what they can do to support students with disabilities. We need to develop a school culture where we strive for excellence, instead of ‘good enough’, just to push people through the system.

The second to last piece of my overall vision for creating an equitable society by 2050 is to create spaces in our living communities for people to talk about these issues of inequality in for the disability community. It is one thing to not be afraid of talking about these issues, but if we do not create community spaces to talk about these issues, we really are not moving forward. As a way to remedy this, I would love to see Independent Living Centers, non-profits, and schools begin to create spaces for community members to meet and discuss disability issues, while utilizing an assets-based community development approach. (Walker) If we create spaces that are inviting and emotionally safe for the community, we have the opportunity to yield authentic results that continue to bring social awareness to our communities.

Finally, by the year 2050, we need to change the way people with disabilities are portrayed in the media. I am tired of seeing television shows that make derogatory comments toward people with disabilities. Words like crippled, retarded, disabled, and freak, to name a few, should not be said in television shows, to be viewed as a source of entertainment. If we freely use

these words in our media (as well as in our daily life), we are perpetuating exclusion, and that it is acceptable. As Americans, we may have the freedom to say what we want, but we all have to be mindful of all of our audience members, and their needs. I do not mean being politically correct, but to be respectful of different communities. As I consider what life will be like in the year 2050, I hope that it filled with individuals who are authentically mindful of how their words can impact others.

As I look forward to the future, I am extremely excited about what is in store. I am pursuing my dreams, and have no regrets about my path, thus far. I have learned so much about myself, as well as the people around me, while I have been a student at CSU Monterey Bay. I have learned to embrace my disability for what it is. I have been seen as an equal by my peers, even if me and other disabled individuals have been marginalized by the people who make decisions at CSUMB. I have been able to advocate for my fellow peers with disabilities, and give them a voice, or speak on behalf of them, because some people do not feel comfortable speaking on their own. Having the opportunity to obtain an education means the world to me. While I know I am not perfect, I feel very powerful (in a humble way) because I have the knowledge to go out and make a difference in the community in an effective way. I know the changes I outlined throughout my essay can be implemented; it just takes a group of dedicated individuals who care enough to make a difference. I look forward to seeing people with disabilities receive all of the equity they deserve in our society.

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Justin Frago

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<<https://askjan.org/links/adasummary.htm>>.

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Longmore, Paul K, and David Goldberger. "The League of the Physically Handicapped and the Great Depression: A Case Study in the New Disability History." *The Journal of American History*, 87.3 (2000): 879.

This article describes what it was like to work in the workplace during WWII while having a disability. Federal employees with disabilities were not happy with how they were treated, so they protested, and demanded that they be heard.

McCarthy, Henry. "The Disability Rights Movement: Experiences and Perspectives of Selected Leaders in the Disability Community." *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 46.4 (2003): 209.

This article gives information about the two people with disabilities who broke stereotypes, and who were accepted admission to universities in 1962: Ed Roberts (UC Berkeley) and James Meredith (Ole Miss University). It also gives information about oral history interviews that were conducted by McCarthy about people with disabilities. This gives me great information for my research because it gives me research to add to my paper about the experiences of people with disabilities.

Office for Student Disability Resources at CSU Monterey Bay. Number of CSUMB Students Enrolled with a Verified Autism Spectrum Disorder from 2008-09 School Year – Fall 2015 Semester. N.d. Raw data. CSU Monterey Bay, Seaside.

## Annotated Bibliography

Justin Frago

A table showing the number of CSUMB students enrolled with a Verified Autism Spectrum Disorder from the 2008-09 School Year to the Fall 2015 Semester.

Office for Student Disability Resources at CSU Monterey Bay. Primary Disabilities of Student Disability Resources (SDR) Clients from the 2014-2015 School Year. N.d. Raw data. CSU Monterey Bay, Seaside.

A chart of primary disabilities of Student Disability Resources (SDR) Clients from the 2014-2015 School Year.

Oldenburg, Ann. "MDA Ends Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon." *USA Today*. Gannett, 01 May 2015. Web. 11 May 2016.

Article about Jerry Lewis ending his tenure as the emcee for the Muscular Dystrophy Association's annual telethon.

Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability. "About Paul K. Longmore." - *Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability*. Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability, n.d. Web. 11 May 2016.

Information about Paul Longmore, and his contributions to our society.

Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability. "April 1977: Day-by-Day." *Patient No More*. Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability at San Francisco State University, n.d. Web. 02 May 2016. <<https://sites7.sfsu.edu/longmoreinstitute/patient-no-more/april-1977-day-day>>.

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Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability. "Celebrating Success." - *Patient No More*. Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability, n.d. Web. 11 May 2016.

The section of the website that discusses the night HEW Secretary Joseph Califano signed Section 504 into law.

Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability. "Introduction." *Patient No More*. Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability at San Francisco State University, n.d. Web. 02 May 2016. <<https://sites7.sfsu.edu/longmoreinstitute/patient-no-more/introduction>>.

An introduction to the Section 504 protests, as well as the rationale for occupying the building in the first place.

Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability. "Protesting Across The US." - *Patient No More*. Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability, n.d. Web. 11 May 2016.

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## Annotated Bibliography

Justin Frago

Shapiro, Joseph. "Paul Longmore, Historian And Advocate For The Disabled, Dies." *NPR*. NPR, 11 Aug. 2010. Web. 11 May 2016.

A tribute to Paul after he passed away. It describes his life, and some of his greatest accomplishments.

"Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973." *United States Department of Labor*. United States Department of Labor, n.d. Web. 11 May 2016.

Text of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Walker, John E. "Building from Strength: Asset-Based Community Development." (Winter 2006): 25. *Bostenfed.org*. Bostenfed.org. Web. 11 May 2016.

This is an article about the Asset-based community development model ideology.

## Synthesis Essay

Justin Frago  
5/11/16

Capstone is over. I am about to submit one of the hardest assignments I have ever completed during my time at CSUMB. This Academic Year has been one of the hardest years I have ever had at CSUMB. However, it has been the most rewarding. My Capstone class, in particular, has been the most rewarding course this year. It has tested my patience, tested my critical thinking skills, and has taught me a history that I did not really know because no one has taken a lot of time to expose me to it.

I enjoyed the capstone seminar. The readings definitely tested my patience, as well as my critical thinking skills. However, I did not like that the same handful of people did the reading, and contributed to the discussion. I thought the reading was irrelevant and boring, at times. When I first started the readings, I did not like them. However, I liked the second book the most because I thought it was very applicable to our society today. I appreciated that the second book questioned our social frameworks, and it made us truly consider the future in the year 2050. I thought Professor Robinson's instruction was well put together. The student facilitators did a good job creating an environment that made it possible for thoughtful discussion.

I had several issues with the Capstone Guide. I thought it was way too rigid for HCOM. While I enjoyed the class theme, I do not think we should have a theme, and I do not think we should have to base a project around the theme. As HCOM Majors, we should have a little bit more flexibility with the projects. Granted, the 2050 theme was very broad, but it would be even better if I did not have to tie it back to a specific theme.

## Synthesis Essay

This class taught me about what it means to not give up. I have spent hours upon hours researching, writing, getting overstimulated, wanting to throw things because of how rigid and intense the project portion of Caption is on a graduating student. I am learning how to take things in pieces, and trying to manage the stress associated with Capstone. I can proudly say that I did it! I powered through, and I feel like I produced a high-quality research paper.

The second most difficult thing about this entire process was the internship procedures. I still cannot wrap my head around the fact that HCOM did not have a policy in place for students wanting to do internships on-campus. I found it extremely difficult to work with the HCOM Chair because I feel like he did not think getting me my paperwork was very urgent. I started to give up because I was getting tired of fighting unnecessary battles because this campus does not have things in order. In my case, I wanted to intern with Student Disability Resources. HCOM made me stall on starting my project, because they did not have the process, or the paperwork ready to go. This is extremely frustrating for me because I had to change my project mid-semester, and in turn play catch up, and starting at square one. I did not think it was fair to give me a month and a half to complete 40 hours of internship time, when other people started much earlier than I would have started. So, I changed my project to the paper option. Looking back on it, I am glad I did the paper, but I did not like that I had less time than everyone else. All in all, I got it finished, and that is what is important.

I am very proud of my paper because it is not just a culmination of my CSUMB career, but it is also a culmination of my life, thus far. I have been given the opportunity to learn about my history as a person with a disability. Having the chance to go in depth with the subject, and to

## Synthesis Essay

be able to confidently circle it back to the Capstone theme of the year 2050 was truly special for me. I have been able to connect missing dots for myself, and I now have the knowledge to make a difference in the community. I am thrilled about where I am headed because I cannot wait to start teaching. I can empower students and families to really understand that people with disabilities are just as capable of achieving their dreams as everyone else.

My senior project has specifically deepened my understanding of my class theme because if we do not start talking about issues related to disabilities, we will not move forward. Our society does not fully consider people with disabilities to be equal members of our society. The class theme has helped me to understand that I need to advocate even more for people with disabilities, because there are few individuals actually standing up against the power, from what I notice around me. This is frustrating because we need more people willing to step up, and advocate accordingly. I cannot do it all by myself, and I do not plan to. Luckily, I do know a few people with disabilities that are doing great things in our local community to give people with disabilities the equity they deserve.

All in all, I am glad that I took this class. It has made me more aware of my surroundings, and that we are all in this together. It is extremely important to look out for one another, and to realize that we truly do not know what the world will bring tomorrow; and we do not know how long we have on Earth, either. It has been a privilege to attend CSU Monterey Bay, and I am looking forward to starting my Special Education Moderate to Severe Credential program at in the Fall. I plan to bring these ideas into my own classroom, to teach my own students. I look forward to seeing their curiosity, and hearing what they have to say!

### **Summary of Skills**

- Effective time management skills
- Exceptional team player
- Able to work independently
- Excellent research skills
- Curriculum development
- Possesses a strong work ethic
- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
- Knowledge of various Assistive Technology tools such as Dragon Naturally Speak, Kurzweil 3000, and the Livescribe Pen

### **Education**

Bachelor of Arts, Human Communication with American Multicultural Studies Concentration  
California State University Monterey Bay, Expected Graduation May 2016, Cum Laude, 3.7 GPA

### **Work Experience**

**Board Member** **9/15-Present**

**Central Coast Center for Independent Living (CCCIL), Salinas, CA**

- Contribute ideas and insight regarding decisions that affect the CCCIL office and clients
- Provide recommendations to board colleagues to further the mission and well-being of the organization

**Chair** **9/14 - Present**

**Student Awareness for Disability Empowerment Club (S.A.D.E.) CSUMB, Seaside, CA**

- Lead effective and informative weekly meetings to discuss disability awareness issues at CSUMB
- Plan events and ensure that event details are satisfactorily completed
- Planned and executed the first ever CSU Monterey Bay Affinity graduation for students with disabilities

**Lead Alternative Testing, Special Projects, and Equipment Loan Access Assistant** **7/14 - Present**

**Student Disability Resources (SDR), CSUMB, Seaside, CA**

- Co-design a Peer-Support program for CSUMB Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Work to ensure clients' alternative testing paperwork is processed and serve as a test proctor
- Co-lead in the design and delivery of SDR New Student Group Orientations
- Manage an accurate Assistive Technology check out inventory

**Course Assistant** **5/14 - Present**

**CART 231: Rock and Roll Movie Mania! Cinematic Arts and Technology Department, CSUMB, Seaside, CA**

- Serve as test proctor for students who have authorized testing accommodations
- Meet with students one-on-one for clarification on assignments
- Set-up and break down classroom technology and classroom materials
- Grade papers and record scores into electronic grade book
- Distribute course flyers to new students

**Disability Awareness Commissioner** **9/13 - 5/14**

**Associated Students of CSUMB, Seaside, CA**

- During weekly meetings, address any concerns brought to the committee by students
- Work with the committee to create authentic events for the CSUMB community

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**New Student Orientation Leader**  
**CSUMB, Seaside, CA**

5/13 - 12/13

- Assist new students and their families with the physical and emotional transition to college and serve as a sounding board for any concerns they may have
- Answer any logistical questions and concerns that new students and their families raise during the orientation

**Intern**

1/11- 6/12

**Eureka Union School District, Granite Bay, CA**

- Launched the first ever Heritage Faire at Ridgeview Elementary School
- Planned and facilitated social skills lessons to students with special needs in grades 4th-6th
- Instituted a successful lunchtime social skills club for students

**Research Interests**

- Disability history
- Peer-Support as a way to address problems and find equitable solutions
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- The Charter School Movement

**Relevant Coursework**

- Introduction to Public Education Lower-Division Service Learning
- Ways of Knowing
- Leadership and Community
- Topics in Social Movements Upper-Division Service Learning
- Transnational Migrations
- Feminist Theories and Methods

**Authored Publications**

Frago, J., & Frishman, A. (2013, January 25). How High School Helped Me See Asperger Syndrome as One of My Greatest Strengths. Retrieved January 25, 2016, from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/justin-frago/how-high-school-helped-me\\_b\\_2536246.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/justin-frago/how-high-school-helped-me_b_2536246.html)

Frishman, A., & Frago, J. (2013, January 25). Finding a Way to Reach All Students. Retrieved January 30, 2016, from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andrew-frishman/finding-a-way-to-reach-students\\_b\\_2551140.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andrew-frishman/finding-a-way-to-reach-students_b_2551140.html)

**Publications Featuring Justin Frago**

MacDonald, L. (2015). Advocate for a Fresh Perspective. Retrieved January 25, 2016, from <https://csumb.edu/magazine/advocate-fresh-perspective>

McCartney, Z. (2016, January 28). Justin Frago Raises Awareness for Students with Disabilities On-Campus. *The Otter Realm*, p. 7.

Washor, E., & Mojkowski, C. (2013). *Leaving to Learn: How out-of-school learning increases student engagement and reduces dropout rates*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Publishing, p. 28.

**Certifications, Community Events, and Scholarships**

- CPR, First Aid, and AED Certified, Red Cross, valid 1/16-1/18
- Keynote Speaker, "Let's Talk About Autism", Monterey County Office of Education, 1/16
- Panelist, "Being Empowered by Living with a Disability", Student Awareness for Disability Empowerment Club, 12/15
- Attendee, Nonprofit Awards Celebration, Nonprofit Alliance of Monterey County, 12/15

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- Panelist, “Unhandicapping Our Language”, Student Awareness for Disability Empowerment Club, 2/15
- Attendee, 16<sup>th</sup> Employers Recognition and Seminar, Monterey County Committee for the Employment of People with Disabilities, 10/14
- Co-Presenter, “Create Connections Through Accessibility”, CSU Monterey Bay Student Activities and Leadership Development, 8/14
- Scholarship Recipient, “Associated Students Legacy Scholarship”, \$1,500, CSU Monterey Bay, 12/15
- Scholarship Recipient, “Krause Scholarship”, \$2,000, CSU Monterey Bay, 8/15
- Scholarship Recipient, “Jewell T. O’Connell Memorial Scholarship”, \$1,000, Sacramento City Unified School District, 6/12

### **Professional References**

- Margaret Keith, Manager, Student Disability Resources, 831-582-3672, [mkeith@csumb.edu](mailto:mkeith@csumb.edu)
- Ruthann Daniel-Harteis, Disability Resources Advisor, Student Disability Resources, 831-582-3672, [rdaniel-harteis@csumb.edu](mailto:rdaniel-harteis@csumb.edu)
- Karen Davis, Lecturer, Cinematic Arts and Technology Department, 510-459-8619, [kdavis@csumb.edu](mailto:kdavis@csumb.edu)
- Andrew Frishman, Co-Director of Big Picture Learning, 401-743-8136, [andrew@bigpicturelearning.org](mailto:andrew@bigpicturelearning.org)
- Patrice McCallum, Principal, Ridgeview Elementary School, 916-316 3094, [pmccallum@eurekausd.org](mailto:pmccallum@eurekausd.org)
- Monika Howard, School Counselor, Eureka Union School District, 530-368-7117, [mhoward@eurekausd.org](mailto:mhoward@eurekausd.org)