

JUNE 2011

“Empowering Educators Series” Courses Receive High Marks

“VRS Curriculum Infusion,” “Interpreter and Language Mentoring” and “Collaborative Learning in the Classroom” are some of the classes offered this year by the VRS Interpreting Institute (VRSII) as part of its unique, Empowering Educators Series (EES). The EES courses are offered at no cost to IEP educators. Additionally, 1.5 RID CEUs are offered per course.



Dr. Carolyn Ball, Executive Director, VRSII

The VRS Curriculum Infusion course offers practical methods of implementing VRS training, terminology and corporate ethics into existing IEP curriculum. Participants study entry-to-practice competencies and their effects on VRS interpreting students and performance. The next course will be offered Oct. 14, 2011. If interested, contact Dr. Carolyn Ball at cball@sorenson.com.

Interpreter and Language Mentoring, taught in May by Cindy Farnham, provided information about creating a successful mentor relationship, the logistics of mentoring and the challenges mentors may face. One class participant stated, “This has helped my effectiveness as a mentor and has also given me an increased sense of belonging and purpose in my professional community.”

Collaborative Learning in the Classroom, held in March and again scheduled for June 24-26, teaches the benefits of planning and implementing collaborative learning throughout IEP curriculum. Educators leave the class with ideas and activities to engage students in an active way.

Upcoming VRSII Courses

June 2 – Sept. 2	School-to-Work Program
June 24 – 26	Collaboration Learning in the Classroom
Oct. 14 – 16	VRS Curriculum Infusion
Dec. 1 -4	Teaching in Collaboration

For further information visit

www.vrsii.com/curriculum or send an email to: vrsii@sorenson.com.

Young Artists Featured at the VRSII

During September 2010, the VRS Interpreting Institute (VRSII) cosponsored the “Young Artists Contest.” This contest encouraged deaf and hard-of-hearing children to submit works based on their sources of inspiration. Submissions were accepted from children age five to 18. Nearly 100 children submitted artwork with topics that ranged from mermaids, TV characters and personalities, to nature, sports and schools.

Submissions were divided into three age groups and were judged by artists of the De’VIA art consortium and by one VRSII faculty member. The first-place winner of each age group received an iPod touch®. The second-place winners of each age group received a Nikon® CoolPix®L22 camera. All contest entries were professionally framed and are displayed at the VRSII.



Three works of art form part of a permanent collection at the VRSII.

School-to-Work Summer Program Underway

The 2011 session of the School-to-Work Program kicked off on June 2, in Salt Lake City. The School-to-Work Program, offered at no cost to qualified participants, is a 13-week immersion program that offers professional internships and prepares students to take the National Interpreter Certification (NIC) Interview and Performance exam and successfully enter the interpreting field.



Carolyn Ball, Ph.D., and VRSII Executive Director, says the School-to-Work Program is unique in its mission and results. “The opportunity to gain valuable experience and knowledge beyond the classroom is vital in order to become a skilled practitioner,” says Ball.

The program provides an authentic environment in which IEP graduates work with renowned instructors and mentors, one-on-one.

School-to-Work 2010 graduates unanimously stated that they would refer other IEP graduates to the program. One student commented: “Participating in a supportive interpreting internship helped me to improve my skills and confidence as an interpreter. I felt more equipped and confident to go back home and start finding jobs related to my skills and experience.”

The next School-to-Work session will begin on Jan. 4, 2012. The application deadline is Aug. 19, 2011. School-to-Work application packets and information are now available online at www.vrsii.com/curriculum or by sending an email to the VRSII at vrsii@sorenson.com.

Meet the VRSII’s Newest Staff Member

Ann Pattenaude, the VRSII’s newest staff member, hails from Ontario, Canada, where her love for American Sign Language (ASL) began. The town where Pattenaude was raised is home to the province’s school for the Deaf as well as a large Deaf population. At age 14, Pattenaude began learning ASL to better communicate with her Deaf friends.

After high school, Pattenaude traveled to Mexico, where she worked at a Mexican school for the Deaf for a year. Pattenaude now resides in California, where she has worked as a freelance interpreter for the past three years.

In 2010, Pattenaude became a member of the VRSII’s first graduating School-to-Work Program class. Now, she is the Internship Coordinator for the program. Pattenaude says attending the School-to-Work Program was an “awesome” experience. “Being immersed in the language and profession with students from all over the country and with some of the best educators and mentors professionals in our profession, was amazing,” says Pattenaude. “I am very excited to now coordinate these opportunities for other students.”



Ann Pattenaude

“From new IEP graduates to IEP educators, the VRSII’s programs are making significant contributions to the field of interpreter education and service delivery.”

- Charlotte Toothman, MA, CPCC