



RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

ANNOUNCES

\$3,450 FELLOWSHIPS

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 Spring semester

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 Spring (and non-election year summer & fall) semesters

JOHN MACDONALD COMMUNICATIONS FELLOWSHIP  
 Spring semester

PATRICIA RYHERD EMPLOYMENT POLICY FELLOWSHIP  
Spring and fall semesters

DATES FOR SPRING 2015	Spring 2015
Deadline for applications (to be in the GCD Office by 4 PM)	Dec 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Interviews of Applicants 5 - 6:30 PM on:	Dec 9 <sup>th</sup>
Notification of selection on	Dec 10 <sup>th</sup>
Fellow's orientation meeting week of	TBD
Fellowship completed by the end of	May

If communication assistance (readers/interpreters/captioners), or any other accommodation is needed to ensure equal participation, please contact the Commission at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting so arrangements can be made to provide such assistance at no cost to the person requesting it.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Governor's Commission on Disabilities' (GCD) Fellowships provide semester long part-time placements with the Commission in Cranston, RI, working on disability policy and research. The Fellow will assist one of the committees and, through individualized learning experiences, become familiar with procedures used to design and implement disability policy. Mentor experiences will introduce the Fellow to disability policy issues and actions at the local, state, and federal levels. The Governor's Commission on Disabilities is an independent state agency responsible for reviewing all state laws, programs, and policies concerning children and adults with disabilities and making policy recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly.

## **THE FELLOWSHIP OFFERS**

As a GCD Fellow, you will be assigned to a specific placement, providing assistance to the Commission in disability policy. The fellowship offers you a unique opportunity to:

- ◆ Gain perspective on the role and responsibility of the Commission;
- ◆ Expand your knowledge of national/state disability programs, policy issues and research;
- ◆ Meet with decision makers, experts and critics in disability and related policy fields and;
- ◆ Develop networks with local, regional, and national based experts, and researchers who can assist in career development and future endeavors.

The Commission will provide a living expense stipend of \$3,450 during the semester and reimbursement for authorized travel.

## **WHAT YOU OFFER THE FELLOWSHIP**

As a GCD Fellow, you will provide assistance to the Commission as it relates to disability policy and / or the formulation of legislation. At least one GCD Fellowship is available each semester. Students wanting to see the "policy" side as opposed to the "clinical" side of the human service system would find the fellowships a worthwhile experience. A complete description of each of the fellowships is below.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

This program is designed for individuals with demonstrated leadership and expertise in policy and research affecting people with disabilities. Candidates must:

- ◆ Have completed at least 3 semesters of college-level study;
- ◆ Be enrolled as a full or part-time student in an accredited college or university in Rhode Island;
- ◆ Have leadership ability;
- ◆ Have the endorsement of a current/former supervisor;
- ◆ Have approval on the part of the college/university to receive credit for the fellowship if selected;
- ◆ Have the ability to participate in the semester-long program in Rhode Island for at least two hundred and forty (240) hours during the semester; and
- ◆ Demonstrate the ability to perform the duties of the fellowship (see list of duties on the attached pages).

## **APPLICATION PERIODS**

The Commission accepts applications in May or September for the Fall Semester, December for the Spring Semester, and May for the Summer Semester. See the front cover for the deadline for the coming semester or contact Alyssa Gleason at (401) 462-0100 [voice] 462-0106 [fax], tty via 711, or e-mail at [Alyssa.Gleason@gcd.ri.gov](mailto:Alyssa.Gleason@gcd.ri.gov).

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The Commission urges college students with disabilities, from minority groups, and those enrolled in a course of study in education or human services for persons with disabilities to apply. The Commission gives preference in its selection of fellows to Rhode Island residents who are: (1) College students with disabilities, then (2) College students enrolled in a course of study in education and/or human services for persons with disabilities, and finally (3) Non-residents.

## HOW TO APPLY

To be considered by the selection panel applicants must be eligible and submit all the requested information to the:

Fellowship Selection Committee  
Governor's Commission on Disabilities  
John O. Pastore Center  
41 Cherry Dale Court  
Cranston, RI 02920-3049

Applicants will only be considered if all the information requested (see next page) has arrived at the Commission's office by the deadline listed on the cover. Please submit all the information together in one envelope/folder. The only information that may be submitted late is the approval to receive credit from the college.

## APPLICATION FORMAT

- ❖ **Biographical data:** A listing of the following information on a single sheet or two:
  - Name, home & school addresses, email address, and day time telephone numbers;
  - Education data (including universities or colleges attended, major fields, degree(s) granted and dates);
  - Employment history for two most recent positions (including title and dates, name of employer, and description of duties), and
  - Life experience(s) related to people with disabilities
- ❖ **Indicate whether you are:**
  - A resident of Rhode Island with disabilities, enrolled in a Rhode Island college or university;
  - A resident of Rhode Island enrolled in a Rhode Island college or university's course of study in education and/or human services for persons with disabilities;
  - A non- resident of Rhode Island with disabilities, enrolled in a Rhode Island college or university; or
  - A non-resident of Rhode Island enrolled in a Rhode Island college or university's course of study in education and/or human services for persons with disabilities.
- ❖ **Narrative Statement:** A one-page typewritten description (ASCII disk or audiotape) identifying:
  - Which Fellowship(s) you are interested in;
  - Why you are applying for that (those) Fellowship(s);
  - What skills and experience you offer the Commission;
  - What you expect to gain and how will you use the knowledge and skills gained after you complete your fellowship; and
  - A description of your ability to perform the duties of the fellowship(s) [see list of duties on the attached pages]
- ❖ **Letter of Recommendation:** A letter of recommendation from a current or most recent supervisor (i.e. employer, teacher, counselor) describing your:
  - Skills and abilities as they relate to the duties of the fellowship(s);
  - Ability to work with groups; and

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- Relationship to the supervisor (i.e. employer/ employee, teacher/ student, counselor/ client).
- ❖ **College Credit:** A letter from your college/university stating that if you are selected, the college will award credit for the fellowship.

**INCOMPLETE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED**

The only information that may be submitted beyond the deadline is the letter from the college / university-indicating credit would be awarded for completion of this fellowship.

**FELLOWSHIP DESCRIPTIONS**  
**EDWARD J. SCHROEDER LEGISLATIVE FELLOWSHIP**  
**Spring Semester**

The Fellow's duties include:

1. Reviewing each bill introduced into the Rhode Island General Assembly to identify those that might impact on the quality of life of individuals with disabilities (children or adults).
2. For each bill identified as impacting on the lives of individuals with disabilities, writing a summary that includes:
  - a) a brief concise description of the intent of the bill,
  - b) the names of the sponsors of the bill,
  - c) the committee the bill has been assigned to,
  - d) the date the bill was introduced,
  - e) the area the bill is most likely to impact on [appropriation, civil rights, health care, social services, education, employment, independent living, etc.],
  - f) the current laws to be amended by the bill.
3. Tracking the movement of each bill, through hearings, amendments, votes, etc.
4. Editing a weekly newsletter that includes the summaries of bills, and reports on any changes to the bills throughout the legislative session, including:
  - a) dates of hearings,
  - b) outcomes of the hearings,
  - c) a description of how any amendment to a bill, changes the original description of the bill;
  - d) dates for votes by the House or Senate,
  - e) the number of votes for and against the bill,
  - f) the committee the bill has been assigned to after passage by the House or Senate,
  - g) the action of the Governor on bills passed by both House and Senate, and
  - h) the effective date of any bills signed into law.
5. Preparing a monthly status report on bills the Legislation Committee is interested in, and reporting to the Committee at their monthly meeting on bills.
6. Observing the rules of confidentiality regarding the privacy of the parties and cases before the Commission.

## G. FRANK HANAWAY ARCHITECTURAL ACCESSIBILITY FELLOWSHIP<sup>1</sup>

### Spring (and Non-Election Year Summer and Fall) Semesters

The Fellow's duties include:

- 1) Assisting the Commission's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II State and Local Government Services, Title III Public Accommodations and Commercial Facilities, and Public Transportation technical assistance activities including:
  - a) Training
  - b) Technical assistance
  - c) Information dissemination
  - d) Outreach
    - i) Target population: The profile of disability has changed over the years in terms of types of conditions for children and adults, cultural and socio-economic patterns of disability, and the implications of an aging society. In addition to our existing target populations, we intend to broaden our reach to populations that include emergency management personnel in the public and private sectors, youth especially those within the spectrum of prevalent learning, developmental, mental health and chronic health conditions, veterans and older workers, increasingly likely to remain in the workforce into their '70s, people with disabilities from multi-cultural communities and low income communities
  - e) Capacity building
    - i) The Commission is expand the "State ADA Coalition" to include new target population: emergency management personnel, youth (college students under age 30), older workers, veterans and people with disabilities for m multi-cultural communities.
- 2) A special emphasis of this fellowship is out reach to the following populations:
  - a) Disabled Veterans. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have resulted in proportions of well over 20% collecting disability benefits. For many, the injuries are at a level of severity that would not have been survivable in previous conflicts. Of the 1M troops who've left active duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, 46% have pursued VA services and 48% of them have pursued mental health care (USDVA). Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is routinely referenced as the signature disability of these wars.
  - b) Youth with Disabilities. The priority to reach youth in transition and college students with disabilities demands additional TA products that align with their appetites as well as needs. Young people with disabilities, specifically those who are higher education students, are often hard to reach.
  - c) Older Workers. The demographic tsunami of aging is hitting the US now as the 78M Baby Boom generation shift to being mostly over 55 with profound implications for workplaces for the foreseeable future. Given the incidence of disability in older cohorts, making this new reality work is a pervasive challenge. Recognizing that the generation that has reinvented everything over the course of their lives warrants special attention in designing an approach to them and in the design of Technical Assistance materials.
  - d) Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security - A strong investment in building capacity in this area in the region will require orchestrating a set of interlocking activities and resources, some available through the various national initiatives on this topic in the last decade and some to supplement those.
- 3) Observing the rules of confidentiality regarding the privacy of the parties and cases before the Commission.

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<sup>1</sup> This fellowship is funded through a grant from the New England ADA Center at the Institute for Human Centered Design NIDRR Grant # H133A110028.

## JOHN MACDONALD COMMUNICATIONS FELLOWSHIP

### Spring Semester

The website content fellow will be responsible improving the Commission's online presence. The website content fellow will also be responsible for constructing site promotions, email newsletters, and online outreach campaigns, in Adobe DreamWeaver and Photoshop.

The content fellow will work closely with technical and marketing members of the Commission, so strong communication skills are needed. The ideal candidate will also have experience managing online marketing and outreach campaigns. Tasks require a strong attention to detail and ability to work under tight deadlines.

#### Responsibilities

- Create, develop and manage content for Commission's web presence (requires working with content management software);
- Working with a cross-departmental team, maintain and develop the master content calendar for all web properties;
- Copyedit and proofread all web content;
- Assure web-based information is archived for future needs and reference; and
- Track and report on all site metrics.

## MARY BRENNAN PUBLIC POLICY FELLOWSHIP

### Summer and Fall Semesters

The focus of the fellowship is a series of Public Forums on the Concerns of People with Disabilities and their Families are held annually during the week the anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities (July 26th). The purpose of the forums is to ensure the State Government and the sponsoring organizations hear from people with disabilities and their families, their concerns and ideas from improving the lives of all Rhode Islanders with disabilities.

- 1) The Summer Fellow manages the logistics of running 5 - 7 forums throughout the state.
  - a) Securing the rooms for each forum;
  - b) Securing a host organization for each forum;
  - c) Soliciting sponsors of the forums;
  - d) Lining up panelists to listen to the testimony at each forum;
  - e) Arranging for CART transcription service at each forum , interpreters, and other accommodations;
  - f) Sending invitations to local & state elected officials;
  - g) Sending press releases to the local media;
  - h) Placing newspaper advertisements;
  - i) Putting together a forum brochure describing the sponsoring organizations mission and contact information, leading up to the forums; and
  - j) Recording attendance at each forum.
- 2) The Fall Fellow:

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- a) Reviews the transcripts from each of the forums;
  - b) Identifies common concerns and issues;
  - c) Tags the transcript with hyperlinks for easy retrieval of testimony by those themes;
  - d) Assists in setting up working groups to review the testimony, and develop recommendations to address the concerns raised at the forums; and
  - e) Compiles the findings and recommendations and edits the final report for submission to the Commission for its adoption and creating of the Commission's legislative agenda for the next General Assembly session.
- 3) The fellows must observe the rules of confidentiality regarding the privacy of the parties and cases before the Commission.

## PATRICIA RYHERD EMPLOYMENT POLICY FELLOWSHIP<sup>2</sup>

### Spring Semester

The Fellow's duties include:

- 1) Assisting the Commission's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title I Employment Rights of Workers with Disabilities technical assistance activities including:
  - a) Training
  - b) Technical assistance
  - c) Information dissemination
  - d) Outreach
    - i) Target population: The profile of disability has changed over the years in terms of types of conditions for children and adults, cultural and socio-economic patterns of disability, and the implications of an aging society. In addition to our existing target populations, we intend to broaden our reach to populations that include emergency management personnel in the public and private sectors, youth especially those within the spectrum of prevalent learning, developmental, mental health and chronic health conditions, veterans and older workers, increasingly likely to remain in the workforce into their '70s, people with disabilities from multi-cultural communities and low income communities
  - e) Capacity building
    - i) The Commission is expand the "State ADA Coalition" to include new target population: emergency management personnel, youth (college students under age 30), older workers, veterans and people with disabilities for m multi-cultural communities.
- 2) A special emphasis of this fellowship is out reach to the following populations:
  - a) *Disabled Veterans*. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have resulted in proportions of well over 20% collecting disability benefits. For many, the injuries are at a level of severity that would not have been survivable in previous conflicts. Of the 1M troops who've left active duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, 46% have pursued VA services and 48% of them have pursued mental health care (USDVA). Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is routinely referenced as the signature disability of these wars.
  - b) *Youth with Disabilities*. The priority to reach youth in transition and college students with disabilities demands additional TA products that align with their appetites as well as needs. Young people with disabilities, specifically those who are higher education students, are often hard to reach.

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- c) *Older Workers*. The demographic tsunami of aging is hitting the US now as the 78M Baby Boom generation shift to being mostly over 55 with profound implications for workplaces for the foreseeable future. Given the incidence of disability in older cohorts, making this new reality work is a pervasive challenge. Recognizing that the generation that has reinvented everything over the course of their lives warrants special attention in designing an approach to them and in the design of Technical Assistance materials.
  - d) *Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security* - A strong investment in building capacity in this area in the region will require orchestrating a set of interlocking activities and resources, some available through the various national initiatives on this topic in the last decade and some to supplement those.
- 2) Observing the rules of confidentiality regarding the privacy of the parties and cases before the Commission.

## EDMUND BECK ACCESSIBLE ELECTION FELLOWSHIP<sup>3</sup>

### Election Year Summer and Fall Semesters

The Fellow's duties include:

1. Assisting the Commission's voting rights enforcement and technical assistance activities including:
  - a) **Conducting on site accessibility surveys to ensure that polling places are accessible**, including the path of travel, entrances, exits, and voting areas of each polling facility, accessible to individuals with the full range of disabilities (e.g., visual impairments, including blindness; hearing impairments, including deafness; the full range of mobility impairments, including gross and fine motor impairments, emotional impairments, and intellectual impairments).
    - i) Identifying solutions that can be quickly installed, even on a temporary basis to eliminate all barriers to voting.
    - ii) Conducting spot checks on Election Day to ensure compliance with the Voting Rights Acts.
  - b) **Assisting state and local election officials and poll workers to provide the same opportunity for access and participation** (including privacy and independence) to individuals with the full range of disabilities.
    - i) Recruiting people with disabilities to be poll workers
    - ii) Conducting voter registration drives
    - iii) Setting up transportation to polling places for voters who are dependent on accessible transportation (wheelchair lift equipped vehicles) on Election Day.
  - c) **Developing disability voting rights training material for election officials, poll workers, and election volunteers** on how best to promote the access and participation of individuals with the full range of disabilities in elections for Federal office
  - d) **Creating outreach and awareness tools that provide individuals with the full range of disabilities with information about the accessibility of polling places.**
2. Observing the rules of confidentiality regarding the privacy of the parties and cases before the Commission.

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<sup>3</sup> This fellowship is funded through the Help America Vote Act - Election Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Grant.