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Disability and Accessibility Concerns @ UM

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Problem Statement or Objective

- Disability issues: accessibility, universal design; ADA accommodations, etiquette, special parking, individual problems, stigma, etc. to be focused on and addressed to make UM become a disability-friendly campus. Need for institution of best practices.

Improvement

- Accessible website for Council; regular Council meetings to discuss both individual and general needs; improved annual week in October with various events highlighting disability issues. Final event heavily advertised resulting in an audience of over 500 for wheelchair basketball game.

- Process of deciding on events was improved by having weekly meetings of Investing in Ability Committee and including additional members to provide a variety of ideas and input.

- Invitations issued to various presenters (e.g., representative of Down Syndrome Support Group, public schools' transition specialist; director of low vision club, representative of student disability committee, etc.).

- ADA regulations presented, publicized and promoted by ADA coordinator.

Disability and Accessibility Concerns @ UM

Disability, part of diversity, on everyone's radar, will make UM a disability-friendly campus

Goals

Raise campus awareness of both visible and hidden disabilities

Provide accessible websites campuswide

Promote universal design in new campus construction

Provide a friendly, welcoming atmosphere for all

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Results

- UM Community members are now more conversant with etiquette for the individuals with challenges.

- What is the impact? Since most people either will have-- or will know someone with-- a disability, by raising consciousness about accessibility, universal design, and the possibility of accommodations, stigma has been reduced.

- M-Library is incorporating disability information on websites of each individual library. Accessibility of other campus websites is being improved as a work in progress by our accessibility webmaster.

- Disability librarian position established unofficially.

Future Development

- More people aware of issues spreading word further

- A timeline of planned activities.

- Communication with other units to disseminate information about disability issues

- Because of heightened awareness, other units will make use of accessible websites, universal design will be employed in constructing campus buildings