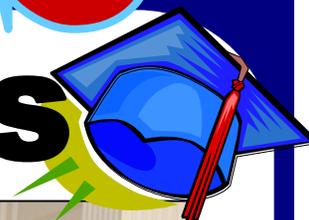


# YLF NEWS

## Congratulations



### **Eighth Annual YLF graduated 21 adults from across Oklahoma!**

Meeting in Chickasha, the 21 delegates discussed ways to better advocate for themselves and others. The photo above shows the 2011 Graduating Class during "YLF Capitol Day."

Several legislators visited on Capitol Day. They're pictured below: ODDC Chair and former Representative Mark Liotta; Senator Johnson, Representative Nelson, Representative Pittman, Representative Dank, and Motivational Speaker Michael Allen.



OKLAHOMA DEVELOPMENTAL

**ODDC**  
DISABILITIES COUNCIL

# Accommodations in College

**Do you know about Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973?** You should! In 1973, Congress passed Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), a law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of physical or mental disability. The act states:

“No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance . . . .”

The Section 504 regulation contains a requirement relating to a postsecondary school's obligation to provide auxiliary aids (accommodations) to qualified students who have disabilities. It states that a public entity shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, a service, program, or activity conducted by a public entity. It is, therefore, the school's responsibility to provide these auxiliary aids and services in a timely manner to ensure effective participation by students with disabilities.

## **So...what are YOUR responsibilities relating to this act?**

A postsecondary student with a disability who is in need of auxiliary aids is obligated to provide notice of the nature of the disabling condition to the college and to assist it in identifying appropriate and effective auxiliary aids. This means YOU must identify the need for an accommodation and give adequate notice of the need. You must notify the appropriate representative of the college. To find correct person, ask for the “disability support services” department. Be prepared to provide supporting diagnostic test results and professional prescriptions for the accommodations. A college also may obtain its own professional determination of whether specific requested auxiliary aids are necessary.

**Some** (not all) of the various types of accommodations that can be requested are shown in the table:

- Recorded version of textbook/materials
- Note takers
- interpreters
- readers
- videotext displays
- television enlargers
- talking calculators
- electronic readers
- Braille calculators, printers, or typewriters
- telephone handset amplifiers
- closed caption decoders
- open and closed captioning
- voice synthesizers
- specialized gym equipment
- calculators or keyboards with large buttons
- reaching device for library use
- raised-line drawing kits
- assistive listening devices
- assistive listening systems
- telecommunications devices for deaf persons.

Please know that colleges are not required to provide the newest technological accommodations available; however, the aids provided must effectively meet the needs of a student with a disability. The institution has flexibility in choosing the specific aid or service it provides to the student, as long as it is effective. These aids should be selected after consultation **WITH** you.

**How much will these accommodations cost?** Postsecondary schools receiving federal financial assistance must provide effective auxiliary aids to students who have a disability. If an accommodation is necessary for classroom or other appropriate (non-personal) use, the institution must make it available, unless provision of the aid would cause undue burden. A student with a disability may not be required to pay part or all of the costs of that aid or service.

**Important:** The issue of personal aids and services often gets confusing. Personal attendants and individually prescribed devices are the responsibility of the student who has a disability and not of the institution. For example, readers may be provided for classroom use but institutions are not required to provide readers for personal use or for help during individual study time.

**For more information, check out:**

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

# Ask Brian!



Communication is the key to building any sort of good relationship. People can communicate with words and body language. To build good relationships people usually need frequent interaction with another person. The more time you spend together, the better you'll get to know a person and develop a good relationship with them. There are often barriers for people with disabilities when it comes to communication. I know growing up that my cerebral palsy prevented me from doing certain things that would allow me to interact with other children my age. It also forced me to sacrifice certain things such as going over to a friend's house when instead I needed to go to physical therapy to stay limber. Even today I sacrifice certain things due to my disability, but with the invention of social media it allows me to stay up with certain things that I miss. It's also a great resource tool to market or promote oneself when looking for a job or certain position.

## facebook

**Facebook** is one of the most well-known social media sites. You can write messages, upload photos and videos, and you can even raise money for a cause on it. I challenge each and every one of you to take the same tools that you use on your personal Facebook page and apply them to a goal you have. For example, if you're interested in starting your own business, look for a group started by entrepreneurs. (I know there's plenty out there I've looked!). You can find a group with a lot of fans or people who like the page and you can ask a question you have about starting a small business on the fan page wall. You will be amazed on how people will respond with words or links providing you an answer to your question. Before you know it, you will be engaged in a conversation that helps you think about things that have never crossed your mind. It can help your business idea grow and evolve.

**YouTube** can be a very useful tool for you to learn how to do things. It is amazing the number of videos you can find on this website. Sure you can find music and comic rou-



**Did you know YLF has a facebook page? You can find us by searching for "Oklahoma Youth Leadership Forum"!**

tines, but you can also find solutions to certain problems. For example, there are videos on how to jumpstart a car, write a resume, complete a task in a certain program, or even how to make the perfect chocolate chip cookies. There are videos out there to help people with disabilities, ranging from "ending the R word" to a video about how to drive a car with one hand. If you're struggling in a certain area, check YouTube and odds are you'll find something that can help you.



When looking for a job or looking for professional networks, **LinkedIn** is the social media site to use. This is a great way to find out who you need to talk to, to get into a particular field or even an area of study. These days with the job market being so competitive it's important to get every advantage you can. LinkedIn allows you to search companies and professionals. It allows you to put your resume out on the web so professionals can easily find your resume, look at your summary (the description about yourself) and get a better sense of who you are. This will give you a better chance of getting a job, rather than just turning in your resume, which is one piece of hundreds of papers.

It all comes down to building relationships, making those connections and helping people realize that you are not just a person with a disability, you are an individual with talents and you are an can be asset to someone whether it is developing a friendship, broadening your skills, or trying to find a job so you can become independent. Social media is a new way to give people with disabilities a chance to be on a level playing field.

**About Brian:** Brian graduated from the first YLF in Oklahoma in 2004. Since then, he has graduated from the University of Kansas in 2010 with a degree in Public Relations. He is now employed at Dale Rogers Training Center in Oklahoma City, working as a Research & Advertising Assistant and Staff Writer! He's involved with the KU Alumni Association, Bricktown Rotary, as well as the Oklahoma Self-Advocacy Network.

**Got a question for Brian? You can e-mail him! [Brian-h-smith@hotmail.com](mailto:Brian-h-smith@hotmail.com)**



## Oklahoma House of Representatives Page Program



The Oklahoma House of Representatives is proud to host one of the finest legislative programs for young people in the United States. The program is open to young people, **age 14 through 18 in high school**. The experience of serving as a House Page is a fun and rewarding one. Many Pages value their service as one of the most positive experiences of their lives. This type of service is also a good reference item for college entrance, scholarship applications and resumes.

Each legislative week, a new group of young adults from across Oklahoma arrive at the Capitol. Each legislator is allowed to sponsor up to four teenagers per yearly session from their respective district for Page Service. Each young person, selected by his/her legislator, serves one legislative week. A legislative service week is Monday through Thursday, from the first Monday in February through the last Friday in May. The final two weeks of Session are normally Monday through Friday.

For Pages living outside of Oklahoma County, the House of Representatives provides lodging at the Wyndham Garden Hotel. Each Page checks in at the hotel on Sunday evening, is assigned a roommate, and receives hotel rules and regulations by the Page Program Hotel Chaperones. This is a dedicated couple who has served the House of Representatives Page Program for over six years. During the legislative session, their number one priority is the safety and security of the Pages. They bring them to and from the Capitol each day in a bus the House provides and are with them during evening activities as well as thru the nighttime hours.

There is a breakfast buffet at the hotel that is provided for the hotel Pages. All other meals such as lunches and snacks may be purchased by the Pages in one of the two capitol snack bars. Most lunches do not exceed \$5. In the evenings,

**"We can do anything we want if we stick to it long enough."**

the House transports the hotel Pages to one of the local, popular restaurants. As well as lunches and snacks, each Page is responsible for paying for his own dinner, which average \$10-15.

Local Pages who do not lodge at the hotel are to arrive daily at the Capitol at 8:00 a.m. and are released at 4:30. All Pages are closely supervised while they are at the Capitol.

Each Page will receive a small service stipend to be mailed to his/her home after their service week. This is to assist in defraying a portion of the cost incurred by serving as a House Page.

Monday morning begins with an Orientation process. This includes instruction of duties and a tour of the capitol. Pages are also given the opportunity for various roles in the legislature on Monday. On Tuesday night, after dinner, the Pages return to the Capitol for a Mock Legislature. The Mock Legislature gives the Pages a fun and hands-on experience with their State government processes. Two bills are discussed, taken through the committee process, debated on the House floor and voted upon by the Pages in the Mock Legislature. Wednesday morning a continental breakfast is provided at the Capitol. This is an extra opportunity to for Pages to meet and speak with their sponsoring Representative.

During the service day, Pages run errands between the various offices of the Capitol building. Each Page takes his/her turn serving in the House Chamber, during Daily Session. All Pages are encouraged to wear **comfortable shoes** and appropriate dress.

**If you would like to serve as a Page, the process begins by contacting your local Representative.** If you are unsure who your House member is, fill out the form on this website:

<http://www.oklegislature.gov/FindMyLegislature.aspx>

**“Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.” - Emerson**



Hannah Fields, YLF Alumni from 2009, returned to YLF this summer as an Alumni Mentor. She is looking forward to her freshman year at Rogers State. Check out the poems that she wrote this summer at YLF.

### Magic

Magic is real

I can see it in you

It's that spark that's hidden deep  
inside.

It's the kind of thing only you  
can feel.

Magic is who you are.

-Hannah Fields, YLF Alumni '09

### YLF

It's the best place I've been in my life.

It's called YLF.

It's the only place I've felt real

After so much judgement and people breaking  
me down,

YLF said to me

**YOU CAN MAKE IT IN LIFE!**

-Hannah Fields, YLF Alumni '09

# Youth Advisory Board Openings



## ABOUT

Thirty students, ages 17-20, from across the United States and Canada comprise the State Farm Youth Advisory Board. They are charged with helping State Farm design and implement a \$5 million-a-year signature service-learning initiative to address issues important to State Farm and communities across the United States and Canada.

## PROJECTS

The Youth Advisory Board and State Farm embark on several service-learning projects each year countrywide. Find out which projects are in your area!

**Apply to be on the Board here: <http://www.statefarmyab.com/>**

**"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." - John Quincy Adams**

# Q & A



**1. What is your full name?** Brett Cunningham.

**2. When did you attend/work YLF?** I attended Oklahoma's YLF in 2005 and have returned as a mentor and staff ever since.

**3. What are you doing now?** I'm serving as the Vice Chair of the Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council (the agency that funds the YLF). I also serve on the Governor's Advisory Committee to the Office of Disability Concerns and am on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities.

**4. What reality show are you currently watching?** I'm waiting for the next season of Big Brother to start.

**5. What is your favorite T.V. Show? Movie?** The Transformers series (The movies).

**6. What is your favorite book?** Decision Points.

**7. What was your favorite childhood toy?** My toy cars.

**8. What would people be surprised to learn about you?** I'm living my dream.

**9. What is your proudest accomplishment?** Graduating college in December 2011!

**10. What is your favorite moment at YLF?** Seeing the change in everyone when we leave at the end of the week.

**11. Anything else you would like to say to YLF Alumni?** Keep your heads up and follow your dreams.



**1. What is your full name?** Mary Rose McAdam.

**2. When did you attend/work YLF?** I attended Virginia's YLF in 2004 and was staff during 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011.

**3. What are you doing now?** I am currently a college student studying to receive an interdisciplinary degree in Special Education.

**5. What is your favorite T.V. show? Movie?** enjoy several TV series some of which are Drop Dead Diva, Black Butler, The Crow series (from the '90s), and the Monk.

**6. What is your favorite book?** I enjoy poems by Langston Hughes and also enjoy classics such as Jane Eyre. I am also into the Sookie Stackhouse series by Charlaine Harris.

**7. What was your favorite childhood toy?** My power rangers and my stuffed monkey named Amy.

**8. What would people be surprised to learn about you?** I'm a Vegan....Oh yea, when I was little I thoroughly enjoyed showing off insects and snakes that I found around my house.

**9. What is your proudest accomplishment?** That despite numerous setbacks I have maintained a high GPA and am now in a four year school and recently received a scholarship. Also, I have been able to gradually improve my mobility and have gone from heavily relying on mobility devices to now using them only when having to walk for extremely long distances.

**10. What is your favorite moment at YLF?** Seeing the progress that delegates make throughout the week. I love seeing the transition. It's wonderful to see some delegates gradually blossom during the week as they become exposed to the possibilities that YLF presents them with.

**11. Anything else you would like to say to YLF Alumni?** There are many type of leaders and the YLF gives you the tools to help you on your path to utilize your talents and your strengths. So, develop those... figure out where your strengths can do the most good and utilize those tools whether it be in your community, your church, your school, your state, the country, or the world.

**"Nothing happens unless first we dream."**



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

## July Birthdays

Ellie Williams YLF'11  
 Bijan Ghassemi YLF'10  
 Chase Miller YLF'10  
 Patrick Lueker YLF'10  
 Sheyenne Nicholas YLF '09  
 Joey Keller YLF '08  
 Rosy McCann YLF '07  
 Heather McCracken YLF '06  
 Derrick Gant YLF '06  
 Lauren Allison YLF '05  
 Brittany Elrod YLF '05  
 Jennifer Baker YLF '04  
 Amanda Yuen staff  
 Martin Kennedy staff  
 Sarah Brown staff

## August Birthdays

Austin Rasor YLF'11  
 Hubie Graham YLF'10  
 Sarah Murrell YLF'10  
 Kara Patterson YLF'10  
 Andria Lewis YLF'10  
 Aaron Bullock YLF'10  
 Justin Goldsberry YLF '09  
 Lauren Morrison YLF '09  
 Rachael Crist YLF '08  
 Tiffany Roe YLF '07

Kay Heffron YLF '07

Michelle Oakley YLF '06

Billie Schoonover YLF '04

Chad Beery staff

Kethzia Martinez staff

## September Birthdays

Asher Ward YLF'11

Nakea Stovall YLF'11

Alejandra Saldana YLF'11

Ciara Murphy YLF'11

Brittney Ducre YLF'11

Holly Davis YLF'11

Carly Barnes YLF'11

Jamie Woolman YLF'10

Duane Stephens YLF'10

Nikolas Mihelic YLF '09

Jacob Lindsey YLF '08

Anthony Taylor YLF '08

Sarah Martin YLF '07

Justin Freeze YLF '05

Brian Smith YLF '04

Ann Trudgeon staff

Jennifer Kauder staff

Brad Mays staff

Chelita DuBois staff

Blake Evans staff

Laura Frazier staff

**“It is more important to know where you are going than to get there quickly.  
 Do not mistake activity for achievement.”**

# NEWSLETTER CONTEST!

Can you identify 7 of the organization logos and give a short description (1-2 sentences) of what they do?

Send your answers to Jen by September 1, 2011! The 1st person to send in correct answers will receive tickets to the Oklahoma City Zoo!

Answers can be sent through e-mail: [jenifer.randle@okdhs.org](mailto:jenifer.randle@okdhs.org) **or** US Mail:

Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council  
Attention: YLF Newsletter Contest  
2401 NW 23rd Street, Suite 74  
Oklahoma City, OK 73107



Do you know these resources?

**“You Lead for u.”**

**YLF ALUMNI INVOLVEMENT & ACHIEVEMENT CARDS  
“BLUE CARDS”**

Congratulations to those Alumni who have sent in one or many “BLUE CARDS”! Since the last newsletter, the number of blue cards continues to increase! Continue to share! I love bragging on the things you’re doing! Here are our blue cards turned in by YLF Alumni, as of June ‘11

YLF 2004: **0** Blue Cards  
YLF 2005: **2** Blue Cards  
YLF 2006: **0** Blue Cards  
YLF 2007: **0** Blue Cards  
YLF 2008: **0** Blue Cards  
YLF 2009: **7** Blue Cards  
YLF 2010: **16** Blue Cards  
YLF 2011: **36** Blue Cards

Remember: If you  
need more blue  
cards, let me know!  
I’ll send them to you!

You never know who is watching you or who you may touch by your actions. You do make a difference!



# Writers Needed!

Since experiences are a great way to learn, we are collecting stories from YOU! I’m looking for stories about your school experiences.

1. Write about your aspirations and dreams;
2. How does your school help or has helped you get ready to be an ‘adult’?
3. What agencies have helped you? Did they help you get a job? What could be changed about how they help?
4. What could be changed to help high school students before graduation? Give specific suggestions.

Please e-mail your submissions to: [jenifer.randle@okdhs.org](mailto:jenifer.randle@okdhs.org).

**Until next time, see ya! - Jen**