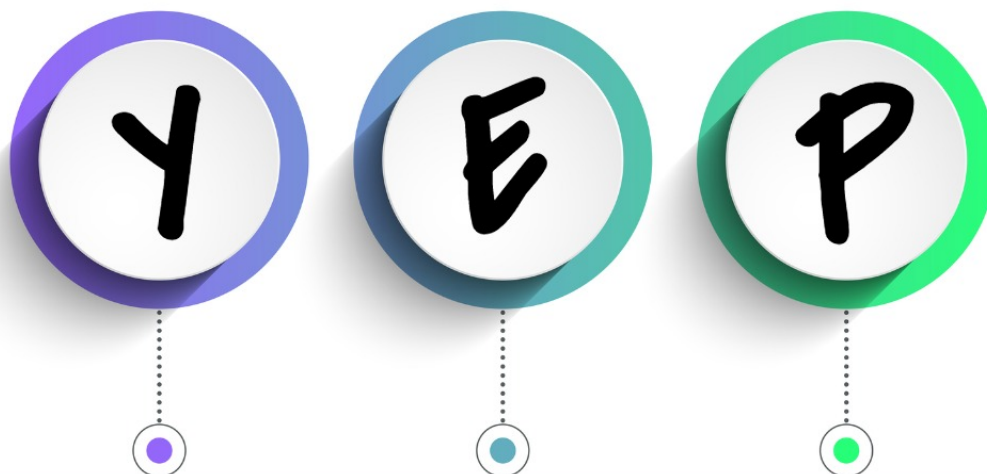


JULY 2021

SUMMER EDITION



YOUNG EXCEPTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

A Quarterly Publication Produced BY & FOR NC Youth with Disabilities

A Voice Raised with Time – Connecting to Confidence

by Billy Pickens, ECAC Youth Outreach Coordinator



I believe that more than ever, the past couple of years have increased the human appreciation for connection. Our inability to gather for events, hug our loved ones and other normal means of human connection have led us to emphasize the importance of community. In the last issue, I discussed the importance of people with disabilities embracing their individual journey and while that is of utmost importance in gaining one's confidence, none of us can fully embrace that journey alone.

All humans seek a sense of belonging but I believe this is especially true for people with disabilities, as we live in a world that can constantly make us feel like we don't fit in. I credit a great deal of my confidence as a self-advocate to the many groups and organizations I have had the pleasure of being in some way a part of. Examples include the Student Advisory Board for people with disabilities at UNC Charlotte, Disability IN, the SAVVY program at the Governor Morehead School for the Blind, the Helen Keller National

I would like to point out though that these organizations are more than names to me. They include groups of people, with and without visible disabilities, who listened to me, encouraged me, challenged me and most importantly, understood me. I would also like to point out that even as a person with a disability, you should not feel a need to limit yourself only to other groups of people with disabilities. Whether it is through social media groups, faith-based organizations, sports teams, gaming groups or any other shared passion, there is something for everyone out there. In either case, remember that you are not alone and find people who embrace who you are while also letting you know that your voice matters in making a difference in the world.

By Billy Pickens

ECAC Youth Outreach Coordinator

YAT Summer Updates

**ECAC's Youth Advisory Team Answers the Question:
What are you up to this summer?**

YAT Says:

MY SUMMER VACATION

by John



Since Covid-19 ruined our summer last year, my summer is a whole lot better than last year. The first thing that I did during my summer break is that I finally got to see my Mother, my Stepfather, and my half-siblings. I stayed with my Mother for 2 days in Roanoke Rapids at my Stepfather's parent's house. What we did at my

Stepfather's parents house is that we cooked on the grill, played the X-box with my brothers, visited my Great-Grandfather at the rest home, and watched scary movies. We've watched The Conjuring 3, and Spiral: The Book of Saw on HBO Max. On Sunday, my Mother, my Stepfather, and my two younger half-siblings had to go back to Florida. Even though I miss my Mother, she continues to

call me weekly to check on me if I need anything. The second thing I did during my summer vacation was that my Dad and I went to two retro game stores in Greensboro. The retro game store I went to was Matt's Game Exchange, and Lost Ark Video Games, and I bought 5 games and a memory card for my GameCube. What I really look forward to doing during my summer vacation is going to the beach, and visiting my uncle in Maryland.

MY TRIP

by Abbey



Hi everyone my name is Latisha but I go by Abbey. I'm 16 and I would like to be a labor and delivery nurse. Today I would like to talk to you about my trip to Vermont. Well where do I start? Well I was at my friend's house for 2 weeks and it was almost time for me to come home. Then it was a Saturday and I had got a call from my mom and she was like "we have to come and get you to bring your aunt and her kids

back to Vermont" and at first I didn't want to leave because I was having so much fun but then I was like "ok I will go". We got the car loaded up and then everyone got in the car. We were on our way to Vermont which is my hometown. We went through a lot of states and a lot of traffic, but on our way there we stopped to see my little sister which everyone say she is my twin. I had not seen her in a long time. Then we got on our way to my grandparents house. We had stay there for the night because there were no hotels that had a room. The next day we headed back on the road to NC. I hope everyone enjoys my story!

STAYCATION

by Terrell



I utilized my independent living skills while on staycation alone by making sure that I had to be responsible to practice, in order for me to become independent. While my aunt and my sister went to New York 4 weeks ago, I cleaned up the house, closed the doors to keep out intruders when I'm in or out of the house, cooked dinner, and used my money for needs

like going shopping. These skills can help me to learn how to be responsible as an adult and to make sure that it needs to be done. I also told my aunt that I have a problem which is a good thing to practice by advocating for myself and to use problem solving skills. For example, the back of the wheel came off when I was mowing the lawn and I told my aunt about it, then she came up with a solution and told her friend to come to the family house so he can see the problem. I helped him put the wheel back on and the lawn mower was then ready to cut some grass. Based on the skills I used when I was on staycation, it shows that I

proved to myself that I am an adult who learns how to be independent.



YEP's *"Nothing About Me Without Me"* column is intended to recognize youth in their roles as decision makers. Contributors are invited and encouraged to write about whatever they decide is important to tell others about.

HOW I CREATE MUSIC DESPITE HAVING AUTISM

by Thomas

Hello everyone, good morning, good afternoon, or good evening depending on when you're reading this. I am Officially Thomas and I will be discussing my music, me playing trumpet, my autism, and how autism affects me being a musician. I will also try to inspire other people with autism to be able to do whatever they want to do despite the obstacles.

[CLICK HERE TO READ
FULL STORY](#)

Officially Thomas How I Create Music Despite Having Autism:

By Officially Thomas



[CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE TO
OFFICIALLY THOMAS](#)

BIG CHANGES

by Kaitlyn



I want to talk about the struggles I had finding a job before I got hired at Crumbl Cookies. I also want to talk about the benefits of having a job.

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL STORY](#)

LEARNING NEW THINGS

by Kristy

I am on the Innovations Waiver and need someone to help me when my parents are at work. My caregiver Tashia, comes over to my house everyday to help me learn new things and practice things that are hard for me. She takes me into the community a lot and that is fun.

I am working on skills so I can live in my own house someday.

[CLICK HERE TO READ FULL STORY](#)



YEP's *Hot Topics* section covers current and/or controversial topics of discussion or things that people have many different opinions about.

SUMMER OLYMPICS

by Nicholas



With the summer games just around the corner, here are some fun facts to get you excited about the Summer Olympics, being held in Tokyo, Japan. Did you know that the modern Olympics started in 1896 in Athens, Greece, and have been held every 4 years except for the years during WWI and WWII? The US has hosted the Summer Olympics 4 times – 1904 St. Louis, 1932 Los Angeles, 1984 Los Angeles, and 1996 Atlanta, with the next one coming in 2028, once again in Los Angeles.



SUMMER OLYMPICS Held in 2021 due to pandemic

Opening Ceremony – July 23rd

17 Days
41 Sports
339 Events
206 Countries

Blue – Europe
Yellow – Africa
Black – Asia
Green – Oceania (Fiji, Australia, New Zealand)
Red – Americas

TOKYO 2020

GO TEAM USA

UNITED STATES OLYMPIC TEAM

Live on NBC -- Steam on Peacock -- NBCOlympics.com

North Carolina's Got Talent



[CLICK HERE FOR THE
NCGT ENTRY FORM](#)

YEP's NCGT column is here to put a spotlight on the many talents and abilities of NC Youth & Young Adults with Disabilities ages 5 to 25. The format of submissions can be a poem, artwork, blog, video, song, essay, article, presentation, an "About me" story, a feature for our "Entrepreneur's Corner", you name it!

Selected entries receive a \$25 Visa Gift Card!

Check out July's NCGT Winners Below!

I Love Playing the Violin and Performing

by Sabrina P

Sabrina, an talented 8 year old with autism from Alamance County shares:

"Hi! I sent a link to a video of me playing the



violin at the Dunleath PorchFest. I was one of two kids selected to perform as part of their kid's track of performers. I love playing the violin and performing!"

[CLICK HERE TO CHECK OUT SABRINA'S AMAZING PERFORMANCE!](#)

A Unique and Creative Form of Art

by Tucker Deck

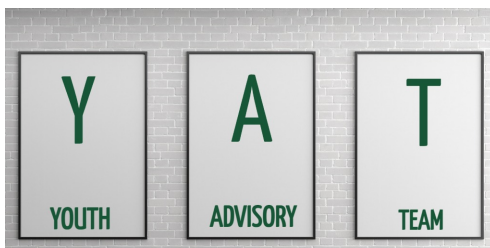


Tucker , a creative 9 year old with ADHD from Mecklenburg County shares:

"I submitted a picture and video of puppets I've made by hand. I hope it will be featured because puppet making is a unique and creative form of art. Maybe it will inspire others!"

[CLICK HERE to MEET TUCKER & SOME OF HIS CREATIONS](#)

JOIN OUR TEAM!



ECAC recognizes the power and value of the voice and ideas of young people, especially those with disabilities. Our **Youth Advisory Team (YAT)** helps us design projects, programs, and resources that are created for youth, by youth. ECAC works in partnership with the group to coordinate opportunities and trainings that support the interests and personal development of the YAT members.

[CLICK HERE FOR YAT APPLICATION](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR A GOOFY MESSAGE ABOUT YAT brought to you by Dallas](#)



FREE EVENT! LIMITED SEATS REMAINING!



WAZE TO ADULthood

STUDENT TRAINING

BUILDING SELF ADVOCACY SKILLS

KEEPING THE END IN MIND

FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AGE 12-22 WHO LIVE IN NORTH CAROLINA

Join us for one of these live zoom trainings to learn ways to use your self advocacy skills and to plan for the future you want!

Register today for ONE of our youth sessions:

- July 22 - 10:30am to 11:30am
- July 22 - 6:30pm to 7:30pm
- July 24 - 10:00am to 11:00am
- July 26 - 6:30pm to 7:30pm

<https://wazestudents.eventbrite.com>

Contact:
partners@peatc.org
800-869-6782

FREE EVENT for students with disabilities ages 12 to 22 who live in North Carolina!

WAZE to ADULthood

Building Self Advocacy Skills Keeping the End in Mind

Join us for one of these live zoom trainings to learn ways to use your self advocacy skills and to plan for the future you want!

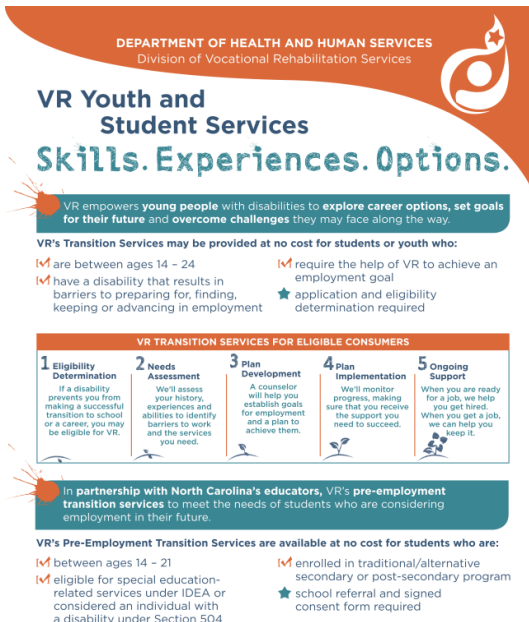
Remaining Available Dates:

- July 24: 10:00am–11:00am
- July 26: 6:30am – 7:30pm

**CLICK HERE TO REGISTER
for WAZE to ADULthood**

FEATURED RESOURCE

VR Youth and Student Services



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

VR Youth and Student Services

Skills. Experiences. Options.

VR empowers young people with disabilities to explore career options, set goals for their future and overcome challenges they may face along the way.

VR's Transition Services may be provided at no cost for students or youth who:

- ✓ are between ages 14 – 24
- ✓ have a disability that results in barriers to preparing for, finding, keeping or advancing in employment
- ✓ require the help of VR to achieve an employment goal
- ★ application and eligibility determination required

VR TRANSITION SERVICES FOR ELIGIBLE CONSUMERS				
1 Eligibility Determination If a disability prevents you from making a successful transition to school or a career, you may be eligible for VR.	2 Needs Assessment We'll assess your history, experiences and abilities to identify barriers to work and the services you need.	3 Plan Development A counselor will help you establish goals for employment and a plan to achieve them.	4 Plan Implementation We'll monitor progress, making sure that you receive the support you need to succeed.	5 Ongoing Support When you are ready for a job, we help you get hired. When you get a job, we can help you keep it.

In partnership with North Carolina's educators, VR's pre-employment transition services to meet the needs of students who are considering employment in their future.

VR's Pre-Employment Transition Services are available at no cost for students who are:

- ✓ between ages 14 – 21
- ✓ eligible for special education-related services under IDEA or considered an individual with a disability under Section 504
- ✓ enrolled in traditional/alternative secondary or post-secondary program
- ★ school referral and signed consent form required

NC Vocational Rehabilitation empowers young people with disabilities to explore career options, set goals for their future and overcome challenges they may face along the way. VR's Transition Services may be provided at no cost for students or youth who:

- are between ages 14 – 24
- have a disability that results in barriers to preparing for, finding, keeping or advancing in employment
- require the help of VR to achieve an employment goal
- have applied and been determined eligible

In partnership with educators and community organizations, VR also offers pre-employment transition services to meet the needs of students who are considering employment in their future.

VR's pre-employment transition services are available at no cost for students who:

- are between ages 14 – 21
- are eligible for special education-related services under IDEA or considered an individual with a disability under Section 504
- are enrolled in traditional/alternative secondary or post-secondary program
- have a school referral and signed consent form

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

Views Expressed Disclaimer

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Sign
Up



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