

*The United States Department of Education's*

*Rehabilitation Services Administration*

*and*

*the Council of State Administrators of  
Vocational Rehabilitation*

*announce the*

*2005 National Transition Conference*

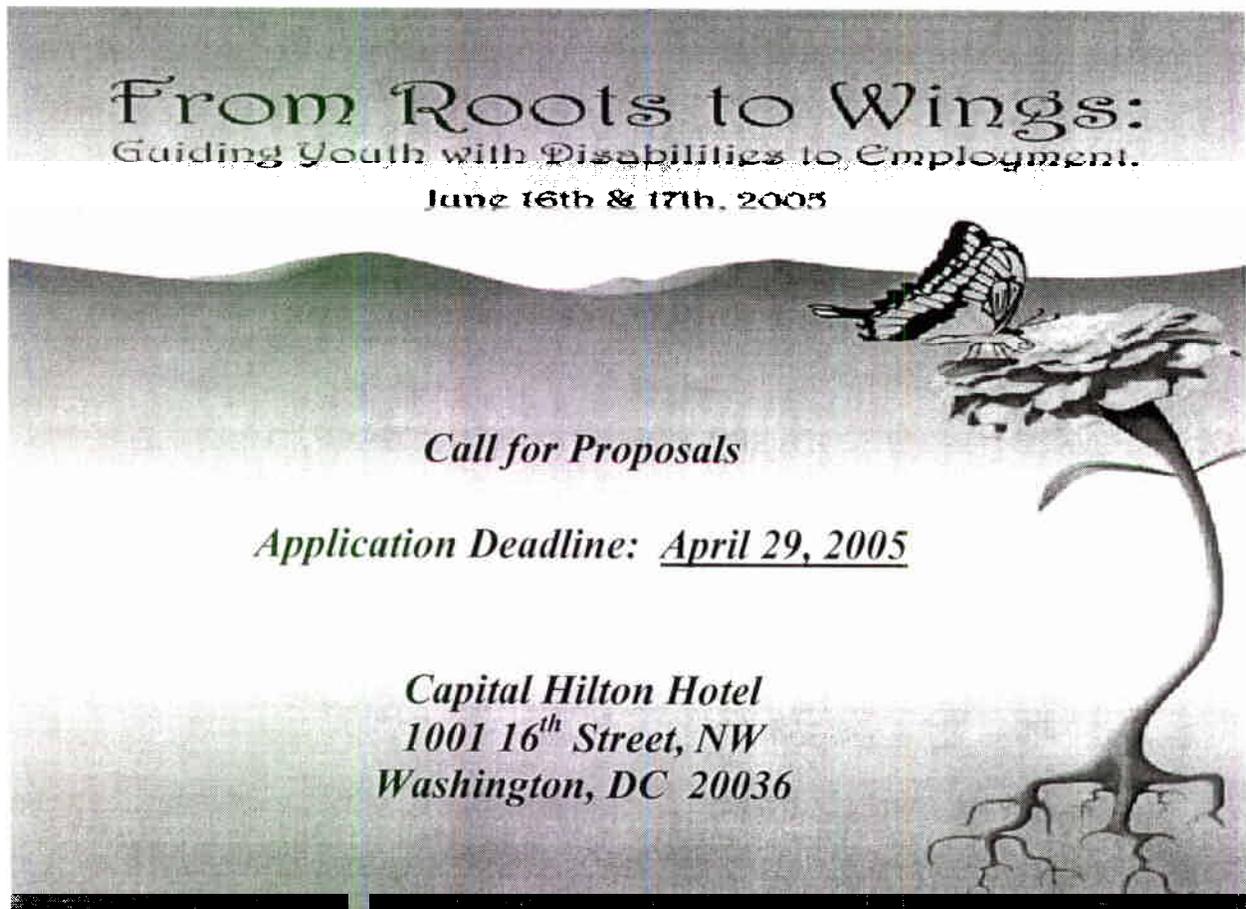
*From Roots to Wings:  
Guiding Youth with Disabilities to Employment.*

*June 16th & 17th, 2005*

*Call for Proposals*

*Application Deadline: April 29, 2005*

*Capital Hilton Hotel  
1001 16<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20036*



## Conference Background

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) funds and oversees the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services program (VR program), which provides services to individuals with disabilities to help them obtain, regain, and maintain employment. As such, the VR program plays a key role in facilitating the transition of youth with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of VR services provided by State VR agencies. RSA and its partners in the VR program are committed to the principles of high-quality employment, consumer-directed services and outcomes, and meaningful collaboration between partners in the transition process.

In order to enhance the transition services delivery system for youth with disabilities, RSA will conduct its first National Transition Conference. This national conference, *From Roots to Wings: Guiding Youth with Disabilities to Employment*, will bring together VR and education practitioners and policy makers and constituency groups for purposes of capacity-building, highlighting model programs, and developing strategies for improving transition services overall. The conference will be held at the:

Capital Hilton Hotel  
1001 16<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036-5701  
(202) 393-1000.

This groundbreaking conference will be the first of its kind for RSA. It will provide two levels of learning experiences. The first tier will concentrate on techniques and practices aimed at improving direct services to youth with disabilities. The second tier will provide technical assistance to VR and special education administrators to help them identify model methods of administration that can be jointly employed to increase collaboration and infuse innovative practices throughout a school system or VR agency to improve performance and increase successful outcomes. Five hundred participants are expected.

The conference will take place immediately after the 2005 National Leadership Summit on Improving Results for Youth conducted by the Office of Special Education Programs and the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition. This design is intended to foster continued collaboration and learning opportunities among school and VR personnel. To register or learn more about conference logistics, visit [www.dtiassociates.com/rsatransitions](http://www.dtiassociates.com/rsatransitions).

### Target Audience

**VR personnel including administrators, policy makers, transition coordinators, counselors, trainers; youth with disabilities; educators including state education agency directors, policy makers, transition coordinators, special education teachers and trainers; and other interested transition partners such as families/caregivers, employers, and staff from postsecondary education programs (including vocational and career schools, two- and four-year colleges and universities.) All presenters are encouraged to speak to this diverse audience. For the purposes of this call for proposals, youth with disabilities are individuals between the ages of 14 and 24.**

## Concurrent Workshop Strands

**Applicants should specifically address one of the following strands in their proposal. Applicants will be given 75 minutes for their presentation.**

### ❖ **Strand 1: Bridging the Service Gaps**

VR counselors, transition coordinators, school teachers, families of youth with disabilities and disability services coordinators within institutions of higher education among others invest daily in the transition of youth with disabilities to productive careers. Despite working in an environment of decreasing resources and increasing demand for outcomes, front-line personnel are challenged to develop and implement creative strategies to bridge service gaps and empower youth with disabilities to achieve their career goals. This strand is designed to provide guidance on how to improve the transition service delivery system for youth with disabilities to eliminate delays or interruptions of necessary support and services. This strand focuses on effective practices such as early transition planning, preparing youth with disabilities for post school settings and roles, aligning the services of the individualized education program with the services of the individualized plan for employment, improving outcomes by involving families, addressing the needs of youth with disabilities in rural communities and other underserved populations, using resources of the one –stop centers and providing effective supports in the college setting.

### ❖ **Strand 2: Building a Career**

In an effort to effectively facilitate the transition of youth with disabilities from secondary education to meaningful careers, many programs have implemented strategies and provided services such as VR consultation regarding work environments and labor market trends and needs, paid and unpaid work experiences while in school, mentoring to prepare for the world of work, addressing cultural diversity, and developing non-traditional career options for youth with disabilities. This strand targets presentations that describe vocational and educational practices, models and relationships that connect youth with disabilities to employers, service providers, one-stop partner programs or institutions of higher education in order to assist youth in their career exploration and development.

### ❖ **Strand 3: Making Life Choices**

This strand focuses on the importance of self-determination, informed choice and empowerment for youth with disabilities as they transition from the world of entitlement programs authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) into a different world of employment and adult services provided by, for example, VR agencies, technical schools, institutions of higher education, and independent living centers. Given the tools and techniques on how to share information, policy makers and practitioners may better support and counsel youth with disabilities in their decisions on how to choose, plan and advocate for their future goals. Proposals in

this strand might address topics such as resources and methods for informing youth with disabilities about their rights and responsibilities, developing self advocacy skills; the changing parent role, enabling youth with disabilities to use their strengths and skills to access necessary resources, culturally relevant services in decision making, techniques by which youth with disabilities can build relationships that empower youth with disabilities in their career development and exploring community resources such as those provided by Independent Living centers that promote self-determination, empowerment and informed choice.

❖ **Strand 4: Addressing the Leadership Challenge**

In an era of shifting public policies, increasing demands for services and diminishing resources, what practices and models work? How can we manage to sustain the best and change the rest? What are the critical tools and strategies to lead the way to creative solutions? This strand speaks to identifying and addressing systems issues and transition service gaps within and across systems, specifically for leaders in VR, secondary education, higher education and workforce development. Strategies considered may include data sharing, innovative and cost-effective methods to build resources, tools to align systems, elements of successful cooperative agreements and models for managers that involve youth with disabilities and their families.

❖ **Strand 5: Utilizing Federally Supported Transition Initiatives**

The successful transition from school to adult life for youth with disabilities encompasses a wide range of support systems and individualized services for youth with disabilities. Many federal programs and federally funded initiatives such as the Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights Center, National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, and the Community of Practice administered by the National Association of State Directors for Special Education have emerged to improve the transition of youth with disabilities from school to post-school activities. Specific initiatives and current achievements of federally funded programs will be highlighted in this strand. Detailed program descriptions and up-to-date accomplishments on transition initiatives conducted or funded by the following federal agencies will be provided: Department of Education: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services and the Office of Vocational and Adult Education; Social Security Administration; Department of Labor: Employment and Training Administration and the Office of Disability Employment Policy; and Health and Human Services.

**Proposal Submission Requirements – Deadline: April 29, 2005**

- ✓ **Proposal Submission form (located below): Excluding any information may cause your proposal to be disqualified.**
- ✓ **Proposal must be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word on this form.**
- ✓ **Abstract: Title and brief summary of the proposed presentation to be included in conference brochure, if selected (maximum 50 words).**
- ✓ **Proposal Description: Narrative of 300-500 words outlining nature of proposal, program, presentation format, and role of presenter(s).**
- ✓ **Session Objectives: Provide a brief statement indicating the knowledge, skills and abilities to be gained.**

**Selection Criteria**

The following criteria will be considered in selecting proposals:

- ❖ *Participation of **youth**, and/or adults with disabilities as presenters.*
- ❖ *Participation by **cross-systems teams** (i.e. interagency), including families/caregivers.*
- ❖ *Participation of **employers** and representatives from the business community.*
- ❖ *Indication of **evidence-based data collection and utilization** to support successful youth/young adult outcomes.*
- ❖ ***Clarity, organization, and feasibility** of presentation.*
- ❖ *Degree to which the proposal addresses the **purpose of the conference and workshop strand**.*
- ❖ *Demonstrated innovation of the model or practice preparing youth for adult life.*
- ❖ ***Potential to replicate and build capacity** of outcome-driven practices.*

**Notification**

- ❖ If selected, you will receive instructions regarding the submission of your material.
- ❖ If selected, you will be asked to provide 75 copies, along with five copies on CD or disk for distribution.
- ❖ Applicants selected for presentation will be notified no later than May 20, 2005.

**For Additional Information**

Contact: Melodie P. Johnson      Phone: (202) 245-7392      FAX: (202) 245-7590  
E-mail: Melodie.Johnson@ed.gov

Please forward **proposal** electronically in Microsoft Word on this form to: [melodie.Johnson@ed.gov](mailto:melodie.Johnson@ed.gov).

*2005 RSA National Transition Conference  
FROM ROOTS TO WINGS  
Guiding Youth with Disabilities to Employment*

**June 16 – 17, 2005  
Washington, D.C.**

***Presentation  
Proposal***

**Proposal Title** (should be brief, descriptive, lively and a maximum of eight words):

**Contact Person Name:**

**Contact Person Title:**

**Contact Telephone number:**

**Contact E-mail Address:**

**Workshop Strands:** Please select the one strand that most clearly matches your proposal:

- Strand 1-Bridging the Service Gaps
- Strand 2-Building a Career
- Strand 3-Making Life Choices
- Strand 4-Addressing the Leadership Challenge
- Strand 5-Utilizing Federally Supported Transition Initiatives

**Abstract:** (Title and brief summary of the proposed presentation to be included in conference brochure -maximum 50 words).

**Proposal Description:** (Narrative outlining nature of proposal, program, presentation format, and role of presenter(s) - 300-500 words). Please use a separate sheet for the proposal description.

**Technology Availability/Needs:**

*All rooms will be arranged theater-style. Please check the box below indicating the equipment that you will need for your presentation:*

- Flipchart(s) with markers     LCD projector     Overhead projector
- If you have a special request for room set-up, please describe.

**Presenter Information:**

**Lead Presenter**

Name				
Position/Title				
Affiliation				
Permanent Address				
City		State		ZIP
Office Phone		Home Phone		
Fax		E-mail		

**Co-Presenter**

Name				
Position/Title				
Affiliation				
Permanent Address				
City		State		ZIP
Office Phone		Home Phone		
Fax		E-mail		

**Co-Presenter**

Name				
Position/Title				
Affiliation				
Permanent Address				
City		State		ZIP
Office Phone		Home Phone		
Fax		E-mail		

**Please be mindful that a panel of more than a few presenters may have difficulty adhering to the 75-minute timeframe for concurrent sessions. To add more presenters, please follow the format above.**