NARRATIVES OF DIRECTORS OF DISABILITY SERVICES:

FORMS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN PRACTICE

DISSERTATION

by

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DEDICATION

To my past: My grandparents, Al & Freda Breslow and Isadore & Libby Bader,

and Aunt and Uncle, Sammy & Shirley Bader

To my present: My wife, Lori Breslow and two daughters, Chaya Breslow and Carissa

Beene

To my future: Killian, Asher, and Charlotte

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Okay. Let's go!

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AHEAD	Association for Higher Education and Disabilities
CART	Communication Access Real Time Translation
d/Deaf	deaf="medically" deaf; Deaf = culturally deaf
DS	Disability Services
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
Pepnet2	Postsecondary Education Programs Network
PL-94-142	Public Law 94-142
TSI	Texas Success Initiative

ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study examines the journeys of four directors of disability services. The voices of disability service providers in higher education remain relatively silent in the extant literature. Therefore, this research focused on: (1) What are the participants' journeys into becoming directors of disability services? (2) How does the directors' ontology manifest in the supports they provide to students with disabilities? (3) What are the capitals that manifest in the work that these directors are doing? (4) What impact do the capitals-in-use have on services, students, and the institution? Data for the study were generated through in-depth interviews, artifacts, and the analytical researcher journal. Yin's five-phase cycle was employed to analyze the data: Compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding. From the data, it became evident that all of the directors exhibit human capital and social capital in the work they do. For all but one of the participants, resistant capital was present. Far from suggesting that resistant capital is absent from their practice, the data illustrate that resistant capital was portrayed more prominently by three of four directors of DS services. In addition, all of the directors in this study possess different manifestations of cultural capital. The participants' stories may inspire directors and providers of disability services in higher education to appreciate the value of and application of human capital, social capital, resistant, and cultural capital in their daily work. Study findings may also be informative to the national AHEAD organization as they revisit their Program Standards. University and college administrators are also considered as an important audience for this study,

given the need to be aware of the multiple fronts and challenges participants and others in

the field face and the value of human, social, and resistant capital in their practice. In

short, participants in this study revealed their value as "institutional agents," rather than

simply being caretakers and "service providers."

I. A STUDY OF DISABILITY SERVICES DIRECTORS

I have a passion for my work as a director of disability services! I enjoy what I do and I take my work seriously in ensuring equal access for students with disabilities. (Calvin)

I take great pleasure and satisfaction in talking with students with disabilities and their families. They need to have a road map for understanding college. That's what I give them. (Jill)

One aspect of my job is to make sure that our department is recognized and that our students are considered when big policy decisions are being made. My responsibility is to make sure that people don't just decide, "Oh! Let's do this and let's do that!" It's my job to remind people of their responsibilities. (Ben)

I never planned on having this job, but I have been here for a number of years. It gives me great pleasure in thinking outside of the box to be able to provide the best supports we can for our students. I love the people part of my job! (Kim)

The voices above are those of four individuals whose stories tell of their becoming and being directors of disability services (DS). Their individual stories are unique, yet they are bound collectively by many common experiences. By documenting their stories, this study brings and gives *life* to the actors and to the field of disability services, thereby adding to extant research of DS directors and providers (e.g., Blosser, 1984; Dukes III & Shaw, 2004; Harbour, 2004, 2008; Kasnitz, 2013). Accordingly, this dissertation is borne of their words about their career paths and experiences that led them

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to and guided them in their current position. Later on their stories are analyzed using different forms of capital to demonstrate their semblance of agency in their work.

Statement of the Problem

In the sea of faculty and disabled students' voices, the voices of disability service providers—namely directors of DS offices—remain relatively silent in the discourse regarding disability services in higher education. There have been some studies that have included DS directors, but DS directors were not the unit of analyses. For example, Blosser (1984) was the first to examine DS directors' perceived job functions and training needs. Also, Madaus (1998) was compelled to revisit the topic, "since the profession has evolved and changed, due to such factors as the increasing number of students served, the passages of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the advances in technology and medicine" (p. 3). Both Blosser and Madaus surveyed the directors of DS using quantitative methods.

DS are at the epicenter of accommodations oversight, delivery, resources, and support for students with disabilities. As Saur (1992) noted, the disability service office on higher education campuses "serves as a link to the academic community, providing resources to the teaching faculty" (p. 99). DS departments engage in a myriad of activities in order to support students with disabilities on higher education campuses. For instance, they offer scheduling support in order to assist students with developing a schedule that takes into consideration students' mental, physical, sensory, linguistic, or emotional needs (Wilson, Getzel, & Brown, 2000). In addition, DS provide a menu of accommodation options for students to fit their learning and social needs (Cory, 2011; Stodden, Whelley, Chang, & Harding, 2001).

Beyond the direct services provided to individual students, disability service providers can make recommendations regarding curriculum implementation and utilization in order to maximize involvement of students with disabilities and others as part of a social or universal design (Cory, 2011). For those students who are on academic probation or are at risk, DS provides support by analyzing and resolving problems leading to academic difficulties (Saur, 1992). Furthermore, the DS office helps students with disabilities by identifying additional campus and community resources for students to benefit from; they also can assist in making appropriate test accommodations.

A number of studies have evaluated the support DS provides from the perspectives of both faculty and students. For example, Bourke, Strehorn, and Silver (2000) and Leyser, Greensberger, Sharoni, and Vogel (2011) conducted studies examining faculty provision of accommodations. The study by Bourke et al. (2000) showed that the greater the level of helpfulness on the part of the Learning Disability Support Services (LDSS), the more likely the faculty were to be comfortable with providing accommodations. There was also a positive relationship noted between the level of support faculty felt they had received from LDSS and the perceived academic benefits reaped by students. Leyser et al., (2011) found that staff had become more familiar and had more contact with DS on their campuses than a previous study that was conducted in 2006 (Vogel, Leyser, Burgstahler, Sligar, & Zecker, 2006). Still, about half of the staff participating in the study reported having little to no knowledge of DS services. The findings were compatible with other studies noting lack of familiarity with the DS office on the part of faculty.

Students' attitudes and perceptions regarding disability services on higher education campuses have also been investigated. Disabled college students expressed the feeling that support services should be better coordinated by disability services, as they have encountered difficulties in obtaining basic accommodations and support (Dowrick, Anderson, Heyer, & Acosta, 2005). In a Canadian study, the majority of students were pleased with the services received from the DS office, yet more than 30% of the remaining students stated their needs were not adequately met. A quarter of the students cited the lack of services from the DS office as the source of their difficulties (Hill, 1996). Kurth and Mellard (2006) found that students were critical of the "menu of services" made available by DS office.

There remains a knowledge gap in the literature in which first-person voices of disability service administrators need to be documented. Directors of DS are responsible for performing a number of functions, including, but not limited to: overseeing their respective departments and departmental budgets, serving as recruiter, ensuring that policies and processes are followed, advising students, providing trainings, educating others about disabilities and disability services, serving as architectural specialist, and networking with other campus departments (Blosser, 1984; Guzman, 2009). Hence, a looking glass has been cast upon their departments' support services. There is a need to learn what directors of DS offices see when they peer out of the looking glass.

Research Questions

This study documented the stories from the very individuals who are charged with overseeing disability service programs on their campuses and their perceived sense of agency and capital working with students with disabilities. Therefore, the research questions guiding the study include:

1. What are the participants' journeys into becoming directors of disability services?

2. How do the directors' ontology manifest themselves in the supports they provide to students with disabilities?

3. What are the capitals that manifest in the work that DS directors are doing?

4. What impact do the capitals-in-use have on services, students, and the institution?

The assumption here is that lived experiences inform DS directors' ontology relative to the services they provide to students with disabilities. This is an essential starting point in order to better understand and support the work they do. Thus, this qualitative research attends to the experiences that DS office directors have had, their actions, perspectives, and viewpoints about the world and the people around them.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to document the stories of DS directors as they recounted their professional journeys and experiences in their work with students with disabilities. The study is a means to giving voice to higher education disability service professionals responsible for overseeing departments that play a role in ensuring institutional compliance with federal laws that mandate a discrimination-free and educationally accessible environment for students with disabilities. Another purpose of the study was to identify the forms of capital employed in the directors' work servicing

students with disabilities and to ascertain how these capitals impact the participants'
work.

In light of study findings, I hope that the stories of the four participants inspire
other disability service directors and providers to appreciate the value and application of
the forms of capital in their practice. Moreover, the expectation is that professional
organizations which cater to higher education DS professionals consider the findings as
they develop strategies for promoting their members' growth in alignment with the
professional standards for practice. The desired outcome is that administrators and policy
makers gain a greater understanding of some of the forms of capital that administrators of
DS tap into in order to perform key functions of their job.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework "allows us to see in new and different ways what
seems to be ordinary and familiar" (Merriam, 2002, p. 66). Capital, according to Lin
(2001) is an "investment of resources with expected returns in the workplace (p. 3)." To
generate a profit, one must first make an investment of or mobilize one's own resources.
In short, capital is "any resource that can be exchanged for another resource" (Flora et al.,
2015, p. 219).

Thus, the study draws on the different forms of social capital (Bourdieu, 1977;
Colman, 1988; Flora, Flora, & Gasteyer, 2015; Lin, 2001; Lesser & Prusak, 1999;
Putnam, 2000; Yosso, 2005). Social capital involves the capacity to network with others;
through relationships and a merging of resources, there is a multiplied effect on the
capital individuals possess (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Flora, Flora, & Gasteyer,
2015). Furthermore, social capital is bolstered by one's standing within the community or

cultural capital (Yosso, 2005). Social capital is a phenomenon whereby actors connect with each other to derive benefit from one another and for each other. Central to social capital are the interpersonal dynamics between individuals and groups. This relational dimension addresses issues around trust, shared norms and values, obligations, and expectations that are critical in developing social capital among members of a group (Lesser & Prusak, 1999). This dynamic is central to the development of social capital between people and groups (Putnam, 2000). These attributes are central to the development and exchange of social capital.

This framework supports my assumptions as a researcher that social capital is bolstered by the level of trust that each person has in one another in a given relationship dynamic, and each actor has the capacity to reciprocate resources. As this framework relates to DS directors, social capital is integral to accomplishing institutional and departmental objectives on behalf of students with disabilities. Directors must be resourceful in identifying and accessing outside bodies of knowledge; this requires interfacing with others (e.g., colleagues, administration, faculty, students, and academic organizations).

Directors of DS bring to their jobs their own ontological perspectives regarding disabilities—whether the disability is medically situated, socially situated, or environmentally situated. Their respective views may influence their disposition of capital—their practice, their decision making process such as where to look for knowledge and professional advice, and/or how to proceed when providing services for students with disabilities.

Social capital is the cohesive hub for other forms of capital. In other words, other capitals are dependent on the presence of social capital. For example, to have political capital, one must have social capital. To acquire human capital, one must have interacted with another to gain access to new knowledge and skills. Drawing from the forms of capital as the framework for this study implies an asset-based approach to providing services to students with disabilities, the faculty, and administration. The expectation is that DS directors recognize that each stakeholder possesses resources for promoting accessibility to disabled students.

History of Disability Services in Higher Education

Students with disabilities in higher education are a relatively new phenomenon in America. Thus, the evolution of postsecondary disability services begins with an introduction to the history of disabled student involvement in higher education.

19th Century

The first higher education setting identified as addressing the educational needs of "disabled" students in the United States was the Columbia Institute for the Deaf and Dumb (Madaus, 2011), which has since become known as Gallaudet University. Abraham Lincoln signed a bill in 1864 that authorized the establishment of the college. The first class graduated in 1869. Edward Miner Gallaudet, the first president of the college noted, "The graduation of the first bachelor of arts in a college for the deaf-mutes, from what could be justly claimed to be a regular college course of study, excited unusual interest in the educational world" (Gallaudet, 1983, p. 100).

20ᵗʰ Century

Between World War I and post-World War II, there was an increase in the number of individuals with disabilities seeking postsecondary education, namely veterans returning home. A number of universities set up satellite campuses near Veterans Administration hospitals to facilitate attendance (Madaus, 2011). By 1962, it was no longer unusual for students with disabilities to be a part of the campus community and to attend classes and other events on college campuses (Rusalem, 1962, as cited in Madaus, 2011).

Services to students with disabilities expanded in response to "the civil rights movement and legislation, as well as education legislation at the K-12 level" (Madaus, 2011, p. 9). Until the 1960s, much of the attention was centered on individuals needing support for physical disabilities, as many of the individuals with disabilities were veterans returning home from World War II and the Korean War. Madaus (2011) states that this view of disability-as-physical neglected other areas where disability was not easily identified by some physical manifestation (i.e., emotional, cognitive, sensory, speech, and medical.). At this same time, in the early 1960s, Dr. Samuel Kirk introduced the term "learning disability," which became recognized by the federal government to be applied in K-12 education (Kavale, 2001).

Since the 1960s, colleges and universities have experienced an influx of students with disabilities. By 2008, two- and four-year colleges reported enrolling "707,000 students with disabilities in the 12-month 2008–09 academic year, with about half of these students reported enrolled in public two-year institutions" (Rae & Lewis, 2011, p. 3). According to some estimates, the number of students with disabilities enrolling in

colleges has tripled, if not, quadrupled over the past 25 years (Barnard-Brak, Lechtenberger, & Lan, 2010; Olney, Kennedy, Brockelman, & Newsom, 2004; Palombi, 2000). While students with disabilities remain underrepresented in higher education, their numbers have increased noticeably (Barnard-Brak et al., 2010; Beilke & Yssel, 1999; Shevlin, Kenny, & McNeela, 2004). Legislation and advances in assistive technology are largely credited with the influx of students with disabilities on college campuses (Barnard-Brak et al., 2010; Konur, 2006; O'Day & Goldstein, 2005; Rocco, 2002).

Three Federal Laws

Three major legislative initiatives provided impetus for the accelerated enrollment of students with disabilities. The first of the three federal laws that were implemented which changed the educational landscape is Public Law 94-142 (Education of All Handicapped Children Act), followed by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

In 1975, Congress passed Public Law 94-142, which grants access to all students with disabilities in K-12 programs to a public education which had formerly been privileged to students without disabilities. Among the catalysts spurring the passage of PL 94-142 were two court cases: *Pennsylvania Association of Retarded Citizens* (*PARC)* and *Mills* cases (Melnick, 1995 as cited in Itkonen, 2007). Up until that point in time, schools could refuse to educate children whose abilities were different and "... students with disabilities were systematically denied access to education for a variety of reasons . . ." (Itkonen, 2007, p. 7). Public Law 94-142 is a federally-funded programmatic statute, which is prescriptive in its delineation of what the schools must do for each child determined to have a disability (deBettencourt, 2002, p. 16). Public Law 94-142 was

amended in 1997 and has since become referred to as the Individuals with Disabilities

Education Act (IDEA) (U.S. Department of Education, 2007).

Institutions of higher learning were not immune from the sweeping changes

supporting equal access and rights for students with disabilities. In 1977, the Vocational

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, Subpart E, went into effect, opening doors to all

agencies that receive federal funding, specifically, institutions of higher learning. Within

Subpart E is the directive to colleges,

> No otherwise qualified handicapped person shall on the basis of handicap, be
>
> excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be
>
> subjected to discrimination under any academic ... or other postsecondary
>
> education program receiving federal financial assistance.

A person with a disability, according to the law, is defined as someone who has a

"physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life

activities" (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2006).

Unlike Public Law 94-142, Section 504 is a civil rights law that carries no such

prescriptive requirements and no funding. In fact, the wording for the law was borrowed

from the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Shapiro, 1994). Yet, its implications are far-reaching,

making it "illegal for any federal agency, public university, defense or other federal

contractor, or any other institution or activity that received federal funding to

discriminate against anyone 'solely by reason of … handicap'" (Shapiro, 1994, p. 65).

The latest enacted law that attends to the rights of individuals with disabilities is

the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The ADA extended Section 504

outlawing discrimination and making environments and activities accessible. What is

unique about the ADA is that in sharp contrast to the two other laws which were the byproducts of lawsuits, parent and professional (e.g., doctors, therapists, etc.,) motivations, this particular law was the brainchild of individuals with disabilities. Shapiro wrote, "Disabled people would optimistically argue that all they needed was integration and an equal opportunity to achieve" (1994, p. 104).

The ADA consists of five separate "title" areas where non-discrimination is mandated: Title I: Employment; Title II: Public Services, including state and local government and transportation; Title III: Public Accommodations; Title IV: Telecommunications Relay Services; and Title V: Miscellaneous Provisions. Postsecondary institutions fall under Title I given that they likely employ 15 or more people. All *public* higher education institutions would be held accountable under Title II. Private colleges also must honor ADA via Title III, unless they are a religious institution that is fully self-supporting. Title IV applies to higher education institutions, as well, since this section of the law regulates telecommunications systems with which students, staff, and faculty may use (Brinckerhoff, Shaw, & McGuire,1993). The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) did not change the Titles of the original act, but it did delineate with more specificity the definitions of "disability," "substantially limits," and "major life activities" in order to "restore the integrity of the original ADA" (AHEAD, 2015).

A person with a disability was broadened in the amended language to include any disability and that medication should not be a mitigating factor in the determination (AHEAD, 2015). ADAAA was designed to broaden what constitutes a disability, as the Supreme Court's narrow interpretation had previously denied ADA protection for

individuals with cancer, diabetes, and epilepsy, among other disabilities (ADA.gov, 2014). Furthermore, the ADAAA forces the courts' hands in inquiring, "Has there been discrimination or a reasonable accommodation request?" rather than, "Is the individual disabled?" shifting the burden away from the person with a disability to the institution. The phrase "substantially limits" removes the mitigating factors in determining whether or not a disability is present (e.g., medication, prosthetics, assistive technology, accommodations) (AHEAD, 2015).

Both Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADAAA have impacted institutions of higher learning. The effect of Section 504 on postsecondary institutions was such that it improved the availability and access of programs and facilities on campus and disallowed advisors from pigeonholing students into more restrictive career paths and majors (Bailey, 1979; Scales, 1986 as cited in Madaus, 2011). The ADAAA broadened access for students with disabilities into higher education and influenced the development of more programs on campuses (Madaus, 2011). "Once disability is established, it is incumbent on the entity to consider reasonable accommodations and modifications to ensure equal access" (Shaw, Keenan, Madaus, & Banerjee, p. 145, 2010).

Because of the growing demands to have a centralized office on campuses to coordinate the provision of services (and the increased importance of disability services as a profession in need of continuing education), in 1975, the Federal Bureau of Education for the Handicapped provided funding to 14 model postsecondary programs to serve students with disabilities (Scales, 1986). Two years later, the Bureau sponsored the first ever disability service professionals' conference, "Disabled Students on American

Campuses: Services and State of the Art" Conference" (Scales, 1986). Scales (1986) reported, "This meeting was the first attempt to bring together service providers on a national scale to discuss the problems and challenges of serving disabled students in higher education" (p. 22). An outgrowth of the conference was the creation of the Association on Handicapped Student Service Programs in Postsecondary Education (AHSSPPE), a national professional organization for DS professionals (Scales, 1986). In 1992, the organization changed its name to the "Association of Higher Education and Disabilities (AHEAD)" (Madaus, 2011). The organization expanded from 32 members in attendance at the first conference to 2,500 by 2010, with members representing eleven countries (Madaus, 2011).

In summary, both Section 504 and the ADAAA open doors for students with disabilities in search of equal postsecondary educational opportunities. Specifically, universities and colleges who receive federal money for programs and activities in which students with disabilities are enrolled are prohibited from discriminating against individuals with disabilities (West, Kregel, Getzel, Zhu, Ipsen, & Martin, 1993). Moreover, students with disabilities must be afforded equal opportunities on campus that are regularly available to students who do not have a disability (Frank & Wade, 1993 as cited in Doña & Edmister, 2001).

In spite of the laws that dictate the need to provide equal educational opportunities for all students, regardless of mental, physical, or in the case of deaf, linguistic differences, inequities remain. There continue to be many barriers and inconsistencies in the delivery of accommodations for students with disabilities, in terms of providing full access to the wide range of services and supports that would enable

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them to have an equal chance of graduating (West et al., 1993; Wilson et al., 2000). West

et al. (1993) note there is not a guarantee that the accommodations will be available or

designed to fit the needs of students with disabilities, or there will not be "service-type"

barriers, such as problems with note-takers, tutors, and sign language interpreters, as well

as material-related barriers (e.g., lack of captioned media). Additionally, many students

have expressed a concern that the accommodations are too late or too little (West et al.,

1993).

Disability Services

The vast majority of DS programs have been in existence since the passage of the

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, with 86.5% being instituted since 1978 (Dukes III & Shaw,

2004). The authors in the study observed that since 1993--three short years after the

passage of the ADA--at least 17% of the programs had been established. Still, for many

colleges and universities, the ADA served as a "wake-up call regarding compliance

mandates and issues that they generally had not paid any particular and/or concentrated

attention under section 504" (Heyward, 1998, p. 1:5 as cited in Madaus, 2000, p. 15).

Since the wake-up call, institutions have been faced with increased need to adapt and

adjust their programs and facilities demands institutions to meet the demands (Jarrow,

1991); since the passage of the ADA, at least 118 institutions had responded by

establishing programs (Madaus, 1998).

Many postsecondary institution offices refer to themselves along the lines of

disability services (e.g., Disability Support Services, Office of Disability Services).

Others are identified as some variation of *access services* (e.g., Access Services, Student

Access Services), or a hybrid of both (e.g., Access Services for Students with Disabilities, Disability Access Services).

Most DS offices are situated under their campus' Department of Student Affairs or the Department of Academic Affairs (Harbour, 2009). The two departments typically have diverse missions and philosophies towards the students they serve. Student Affairs are more concerned with multiculturalism and diversity (under which disabilities fall) and have been mindful of diverse learning needs (Engstrom & Tinto, 2000; Hall & Belch, 2000). However, there are some who criticize the mindset of "built on helping" mentality (Harbour, 2009), which may be perceived as patronizing or pathologizing disability (Harbour, 2009; Linton, 1998).

Academic Affairs Departments, on the other hand, traditionally attend to the curricular aspects of postsecondary institutions. Harbour (2009) concludes that the decision to organizationally position disability services under the Department of Academic Affairs is often based on the belief that disability services "needs to be involved in the facets of university administration that academic affairs oversees. It is important for disability services to be involved with institutional policy-making and long-range planning" (Harbour, 2009; Van Meter, 1993).

Nevertheless, faculty biases, misperceptions of disability services work, or other attitudinal barriers in academic affairs may in fact become barriers to service delivery and continued growth of disability services offices, making student affairs a better "home base" for disability service offices. Findlen (2000), on the other hand, asserts disability services positioned in academic affairs are better equipped to work closely with academic

deans regarding legislation and students with disabilities, in order to facilitate providing accommodations without sacrificing academic standards (Findlen, 2000a, 2000b).

DS staff at one university referenced that their responsibilities extend beyond direct services to students. There are a myriad of additional activities and supports provided to faculty and administrators, which requires time and energy and, as a result, affects the planning capacity, as well as implementing and coordinating specialized programs, and at the same time, provide individual counseling and advising supports to students (Wilson et al., 2000).

Shaw and Scott (2003) iterate the job of the DS coordinator or director has become more complex and "the Office for Students with Disabilities is faced with providing quality service that is appropriate for the individual student and cost effective, as well as adhering to legal mandates" (p. 4). A number of steps have been taken to facilitate supports to DS office providers. AHEAD, the professional organization for DS office providers, has established three standards: Professional Standards governing responsibilities (Shaw, McGuire, & Madaus, 1997), Standards for Code of Ethics (Price, 1997, as cited in Shaw & Scott, 2003), and Program Standards (Shaw & Dukes, III, 2001) in order to promote quality programming and supports for students with disabilities.

Moreover, because of the increased enrollment of deaf and hard of hearing students attending mainstream colleges and universities rather than Gallaudet University or the National Technical Institution for the Deaf, which are specifically designated for deaf and hard of hearing students (Billies, Buckoski, Kolvitz, Sanders, & Walter, 2003, Laue & Lewis, 2011; Marschark, Richardson, Sapere, Sarchet, 2010; Schroedel, Watson, & Ashmore, 2003), federal funding has been channeled towards providing technical

assistance and outreach support to mainstream colleges and universities. This technical

assistance and outreach support program is administered by Postsecondary Education

Programs Network (PEPNet). PEPNet was restructured in 1996 with the expectation that

four regional centers would provide technical assistance to colleges and universities

serving deaf and hard of hearing students. In 2011, PEPNet was streamlined to one

national center, providing technical assistance, disseminating materials and resources to

DS office providers, and personnel development and was renamed, "pepnet2 (pn2)"

(Pepnet2, 2015).

DS offices have experienced steady growth, to be sure, however, there have been

attempts to stymie the advancement of DS. A case in point, and one that has significance

is the Guckenberger et al. v. Trustees of Boston University (1997). Boston University

(BU) officials early in 1995 began a series of steps to undermine the existing and well-

respected Learning Disabilities and Support Services (LDSS) program, which ultimately

led to its dissolution (Madaus, 2000). BU administration challenged the need for

accommodations for students diagnosed with learning disabilities (LD) and expressed

concerns that foreign language course substitutions would substantially alter minimal

standards. The court determined that BU could determine what comprised essential

components of a plan of study, however, it was ruled that the administration's

documentation requirements was unreasonable and discriminated against students with

LD (Guckenberger et al. v. Trustees of Boston University, 1997).

Another barrier faced in meeting the needs of students with disabilities emanate

from the students, themselves! There are a variety of contributing factors leading to

students with disabilities' under-utilization of disability services. To illustrate, being able

to access disability supports and services falls on students with disabilities; this is a departure from the special education model used in K-12, in which a committee of parents and teachers (and sometimes, students) make *programming* decisions, including accommodations, *for* students with disabilities. Wolanin and Steele (2004) state,

> . . . for students with disabilities in secondary school IDEA [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act] places the burden on the school to find and serve the student through an IEP [Individual Education Plan]. In higher education the burden is on the student, not the school, to find the appropriate services and navigate through higher education to a successful outcome (p. 27).

The process is burdensome, according to Getzel (2008), since the responsibility falls on the student with a disability to gather and supply documentation of their own disability, provide it to the DS office, and explain to faculty their needs in order to be able to participate in the classroom environment. This is an added adjustment for students who previously had the supports and resources bestowed upon them by a committee of adults (i.e., parent(s) and teachers) in their K-12 program as part of their Individual Education Plans (IEP) (Getzel, 2008; Karp & Bork, 2012). As a result, many students with disabilities are not mentally, cognitively, and/or emotionally prepared to disclose their disability or they lack awareness that such a department exists on campus (Getzel, 2008).

Furthermore, outside of special education nest, many students with disabilities are ill-prepared to reveal their disability and/or do not know how to go about securing supports, nor do they know who to ask (Brinkerhoff et al., 2002; Getzel, 2008; Karp & Bork, 2012; Kurth & Mellard, 2006; McManus, 2005; Wagner et al., 2005). Accordingly,

a considerable number of students with disabilities are not taking advantage of the resources and services made available by DS (Burgstahler & Moore, 2009; Newman & Madaus, 2015, 2015b).

There are other contributing factors to the reluctance of students to seek and receive disability services. Their reasons for not disclosing include: simply not wanting to be labeled (Burgstahler & Doe, 2006; Getzel, 2008); not believing that they have a disability (Karp & Bork, 2012); wanting to have a new beginning and not be labeled and/or choose to wait until they face academic difficulties, or they feel that they are not worthy of a college degree if they require services (Getzel, 2008; Lightner, Kipps-Vaughn, Schulte, & Trice, 2012); and/or not possessing self-advocacy skills (Hadley, 2006).

Others—particularly those with psychiatric disabilities—choose not to disclose given fears of the stigma felt, discrimination, or negative experiences with faculty (Burgstahler & Doe, 2006; Kurth & Mellard, 2006; Martin, 2010; Salzer, Wick, & Rogers, 2008). Additionally, students have shared that they are uncertain of their own disability status or are unaware their psychiatric illness may be considered a disability (Megivern, 2002). Martin (2010) found that while the majority of students with psychiatric disabilities elected not to disclose due to fears of stigmatization and discrimination, those who did disclose reported improved academic outcomes. Regardless of the nature of the disability, even after being enrolled at a postsecondary institution, students with disabilities are unaware of their rights and the process for requesting services (Karp & Bork, 2012; Lightner et al., 2012; Megivern, 2002; Salzer et

al., 2008). Focus group participants in Kurth and Mellard's (2006) study reported they did not know that they could request resources and services during the school term.

DS Office Personnel

The demographic composition of DS providers in higher education has remained constant over the years, since Blosser's (1984) survey DS administrators. Most of the providers are women, representing more than three-fourths of all providers (Blosser, 1984; Dukes III & Shaw, 2004; Harbour, 2008; Kasnitz, 2013; Madaus, 1998). DS providers in higher education typically have Masters Degrees (Blosser, 1984; Kasnitz, 2013; Madaus, 1998; Whelley, 2002) and generally come from helping profession fields, such as special education, vocational rehabilitation, counseling (Blosser, 1984; Harbour, 2008; Kasnitz, 2013; Whelley, 2002), since programs that provide specific training to become disability support service providers are far and few between (Bossler, 1984; Dukes III & Shaw, 2004; Madaus, 1998; Whelley, 2002).

Nearly three-fourths of the survey respondents in Dukes III & Shaw's (2004) study had 10 or fewer years of experience in DS office programming and approximately half of DS office personnel have been in the field less than 5 years, which is consistent with Blosser's (1984) and Harbour's (2008) findings.

In terms of longevity in their current position, the figures are comparable between Dukes III and Shaw's (2004) and Kasnitz's (2013) studies. Respectively, approximately one-fourth of the respondents have been in the field for 2 years or less; another fourth of the respondents in the respective studies reported being in the field 3-5 years. About 20% of Kasnitz's (2013) sample reported having 6 to 10 years DS experience, compared to 30% in Dukes III and Shaw's (2004) sample. More than two-thirds of the participants in

the respective studies indicated that they have been in the position for less than 10 years (Dukes III & Shaw, 2004; Kasnitz, 2013).

The majority of the respondents in Dukes III and Shaw's (2004) study indicated that their titles were either as a director, coordinator, or manager of a DS office or Learning Disability program. The remaining 6% of the participants in the same study held multiple responsibilities, such as Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Associate Dean of Student Life, Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Development, Student Services Specialist, Student Affairs Officer, and Disability Counselor.

Hence, providers are busy learning as they go on the job. The government recognized the need for professional development, as many services were based on the backgrounds of the providers (Dukes III & Shaw, 2004). For example, if one had a rehabilitation background, then physical accommodations may be more of a focus; if one came from a counseling background, then more counseling supports would be offered (Dukes III, & Shaw, 2004). As a result, the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education (US Department of Education, 2002) recommended supporting ''higher education faculty, administrators and auxiliary service providers to more effectively provide and help post-secondary students with disabilities to complete a high quality post-secondary education'' (p. 43).

Institutional Commitment

Kolvitz, Cederbaum, Clark, and Durham (2000) assert that the level of institutional commitment to students with disabilities students is manifested in the degree at which services are made available. For example, "the consistency of the service, and how it is provided, help define the institution's level of commitment to students who are

deaf or hard of hearing" (p. 1). Furthermore, upper level administration sets the tone for the level of commitment beyond policies; commitment also entails the institution's culture and atmosphere (Kolvitz et al., 2000). "Whatever approach the institution chooses to use in providing support services to students . . ., the service delivery system should develop a vision and a mission that are congruent with those of the institution itself" (Kolvitz et al., 2000, p. 2).

Indeed, students interviewed by Wilson and colleagues (2000) "overwhelmingly felt that there was little or no university commitment to them" (p. 44). Their reasoning was based on the following impressions: (1) insufficient qualified disability services staff, (2) the facilities and structural arrangements were inadequate , and (3) few, if any long-term support programs were in place to address the changing needs of students with disabilities as they matriculate. Interestingly, disability service providers at one large university also agreed with student perceptions regarding the lack of sufficient staff to manage, direct, coordinate, and provide services and resources to a burgeoning caseload of students with disabilities (Wilson et al., 2000). In another study, however, students with disabilities who participated in a series of focus groups, shared that the disability service providers are "committed, supportive and sometimes offering guidance beyond their job descriptions" (Whelley, 2002).

In their quantitative study of disability service offices' worldview of disability, Guzman and Balcazar (2010) attended to the relationship between the disability paradigm and nature/type of accommodations. Their survey investigated 430 postsecondary institutions to understand postsecondary disability service providers' mindsets and

approaches toward service delivery—whether they employed an individual/medical, social, universal, or hybrid approach or philosophy.

Provision of services from the *individual/medical* approach sees people with disabilities as individuals who need help and thus, provide strategies that will compensate for the disability. The individual/medical view of disability holds the value that the impairment, defect, or failure of some bodily function or part—a pathology—can be ameliorated by way of a "cure," a treatment protocol, or specialized equipment. This is the most widely held viewpoint taken by service providers, since they attend primarily to the needs of the student with the "disability" by singling out the individual rather than assessing and addressing the environmental conditions that may affect others as well (Guzman & Balcazar, 2010). The medical model attends to the "physical" limitations of the individual and proposes avenues for repairing the limitation, or at least minimizes the perceived adverse effects of the hearing loss (e.g., Scotch, 1997; Padden & Humphries, 1989).

In contrast, the social model analyzes disability from the vantage point that a disability is a *construct* informed by the social milieu. The "problem" (i.e., disability) resides not in the individual, but the circumstances/environment around the individual. Each individual has a shared responsibility in finding ways to increase access and inclusion through political, economic, social, and policy systems (Olkin, 2002). The social model likens the experiences of individuals with disabilities to that of other minority groups' "experiences of prejudice, stigma, discrimination, and oppression" (Olkin, 2002, p. 134). Disability service providers who utilize a *social* approach examine the environment and seek strategies to remove barriers that exist in that space.

Finally, those directors/disability service providers who evaluate the overall

curriculum design and the physical environment to avail instructional and social benefits

to the most people at once (whether or not they have a disability) utilize what is referred

to as a *universal* approach. According to Mace (2008), universal design refers to "the

design of products and environments to be usable by all people to the greatest extent

possible, without need for adaptation or specialized design." In short, rather than

modifying programs, services, tools, and/or facilities, universal design makes each

available and accessible to as many students as possible, while being mindful of different

abilities as well as disabilities (DO-IT, 2014).

According to both Guzman (2009) and Guzman and Balcazar (2010), Association

of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) member universities predominantly hold a

deficit worldview (i.e., individualistic approach). In other words, services are

recommended on the basis of the student-focused "limitations." This is consistent with

the medical or functional model, which points to the "problem" resting with the students

with disabilities. Hence, rather than operate from a paradigm in which the model of

delivery endorses a socially-inclusive ("universal") mentality, the individualistic service

paradigm "singles out and makes the individual responsible for not fitting into an

academic setting . . ." (Guzman & Balcazar, 2010, p. 56).

Guzman (2009) and Guzman and Balcazar (2010) identified key variables in

association with the service-delivery model utilized by disability service providers.

Taking into consideration the role gender plays in the type of support provided, Guzman

and Balcazar (2010) also found that male disability service coordinators were more

inclined to assume the role of *advocate* (which is an individually-based approach) for

students with disabilities than female coordinators. On the other hand, female disability service coordinators were more likely to adopt universal design approaches to meeting the needs of students with disabilities, providing access to the campus community, providing academic accommodations, and their role as disability professional.

Theory on Forms of Capital

Human Capital

A theory of the forms of capital is incomplete until human capital is considered, as people are resources in the production of labor. People are their own greatest assets and they have agency to employ their own assets to their advantage; employees are not purely tools or devices on behalf of business owners. Schultz (1961 in Lin, 2001) recognized this and pronounced it during his address as president of the American Economic Association in 1960. In his "Investment in Human Capital" lecture, he denounced "the failure to treat human resources as a form of capital, as a produced means of production" and merely as a product of investment, which has fostered the traditional notion of labor as merely an instrument to do the work without the need for knowledge or skills (Lin, 2001).

Becker (2008, para. 1) provides a contemporary and easily understood view of human capital:

> To most people, capital means a bank account, a hundred shares of IBM stock, assembly lines, or steel plants in the Chicago area. These are all forms of capital in the sense that they are assets that yield income and other useful outputs over long periods of time. But these tangible forms of capital are not the only ones. Schooling, computer skills, a healthy lifestyle, and the virtues of punctuality and

honesty are also capital. That is because they raise earnings, improve health, or

add to a person's habits over much of a person's lifetime. Therefore, economists

regard expenditures on education, training, medical care, and so on as investments

in human capital. They are called "human capital" because people cannot be

separated from their knowledge, skills, health, or values the way they can be

separated from their financial and physical assets.

Thus, human capital consists of value-added attributes (i.e., education, acquired

knowledge, skills, and other personal assets) that enable individuals to contribute to and

in whatever space they may be operating in (Lin, 2001). Each person has the capacity to

use themselves as a resource, both in acquiring capital and in sharing human capital.

According to Lin (2001) education, acquired knowledge, skills, and other personal assets

are value-added elements that a person brings to their production capabilities. Lin also

explains that Human capital is added value that is embedded in individual worker,

himself/herself.

Social Capital

In order to exchange capital, one must possess social capital. Social capital is,

according to Bourdieu (1986), a network of institutionalized relationships in which some

individuals or groups are beneficiaries of the connections made. Coleman (1988) adds

that social capital is defined more by its function and is a product of various entities,

"with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and

they facilitate certain actions of actors--whether persons or corporate actors-within the

structure" (p. S98). Brown and Davis (2001) rejoin, ". . . social capital is a type of

resource that is socially reproduced, such as the possession of knowledge,

accomplishments, or formal and informal relations and networks" (p. 41). With social

capital, one gains social rewards, including personal, professional, and/or organizational

privileges and/or status (Bourdieu, 1977).

Not only is social capital found within individuals and their social/communal

circles, but in organizations and institutions of higher learning. White (2013) noted

fittingly, as it relates to this study, that institutions of higher education serve as economic,

social, and cultural capital "hubs." He goes on to say,

> The college degree that students earn will potentially allow them to make a larger
>
> salary and have more economic capital. The student will learn about themselves
>
> and their cultural capital. They will also learn about the culture of the institution.
>
> The networking and the relationships made while in college can increase the
>
> student's social capital (p. 36).

Within the college or university setting, social capital refers to the "members as

individuals who have an employment relationship with the firm" (Leana & Van Buren,

1999, p. 538).

Cultural Capital

One resource that can be passed down, shared, and exchanged are symbols and

values of a particular culture and society at-large (Bourdieu, 1986; Flora et al., 2015). As

Flora et al. (2015) state: "Cultural capital is how we see the world and what we value. It

links the seen to the unseen, making meaning of our collective and individual lives" (p.

73). We inherit values from our parents, our schooling experiences, and the community

within which we live. Cultural capital provides us our identity, but it also informs us

about who the "other" is (Flora et al., 2015).

Put another way, cultural capital, per Bourdieu (1986), is a reflection of attributes--cultural wherewithal, language, education, and mannerisms imparted through one's family and formal education. Cultural capital can be converted to economic capital, and is institutionalized in the manner of educational qualifications. Cultural capital cannot be conceptualized as a singular concept, for there are three forms of cultural capital: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized (Bourdieu, 1986; Monkman, Ronald & Théramène, 2005). Bourdieu (1986) iterates that cultural capital exists in three forms:

> in the *embodied* state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and
> body; in the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books,
> dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.); and in the *institutionalized* state, a form
> of objectification which must be set apart because, as will be seen in the case of
> educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural
> capital which it is presumed to guarantee (p. 243).

One of the facets of the embodied state that was investigated was the directors' ontology. In other words, the study shed light on the values and viewpoints directors of disability services hold for students with disabilities.

Tangible objects or those artifacts considered cultural in nature are reflective of the objectified source of cultural capital: e.g., dictionaries, machines, pictures, literature, historical locations, course syllabi, and texts are among some examples (Monkman et al., 2005; Olneck, 2000). Material goods at the disposal of the directors of disability services – e.g., documents and forms (e.g., admission forms, accommodation forms), written policies and regulations governing the practice of disability services, and the physical location of the office on campus, as well as organizational location—constitute the

objectified state of cultural capital. Finally, when speaking of the institutionalized state of cultural capital, one is referring to credentials and qualifications. The institutionalized state "signif(ies) one's cultural distinction" (Monkman et al., 2005, p. 11) and is institutionalized in form of educational qualifications (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986).

Economic Capital

Another capital—and one that is found in Bourdieu's (1986) three guises of capital—is economic capital. Economic capital is akin to the popular saying, "The one with the gold makes the rules." Having economic capital means possessing financial means and assets to purchase or acquire material goods and services that will yield a return for some profit. The object that is purchased does not possess capital, unless it yields a financial return in some form. Flora et al. (2015) use the example of buying a car. A car by itself does not have economic capital; on the other hand, if one is using the car as a service to reap financial gains, then it becomes a source of economic capital.

Economic capital is equated to financial resources and other assets, which may be institutionalized as property rights (Bourdieu, 1986). Furthermore, Bourdieu (1986) indicates that social and cultural capital are convertible and in the end, are reducible to economic capital. Illustrating the fungibility of the forms of capital in relations to economic capital, Portes (1998, p. 4) explains,

> Through social capital, actors can gain direct access to economic resources (subsidized loans, investment tips, protected markets); they can increase their cultural capital through contacts with experts or individuals of refinement (i.e. embodied cultural capital); or, alternatively, they can affiliate with institutions that confer valued credentials (i.e. institutionalized cultural capital).

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There is not, however, a guarantee that economic capital will be a beneficiary of the different forms of human capital or any of the other capitals, as suggested by Bourdieu. For instance, Stewart (2003) argues there is an assumption that laborers desire to earn higher wages and the means to accomplish this is by means of inculcation of skills and knowledge, which would sustain the process of production, and ultimately increase economic capital; this thinking disregards individual characteristics that would be conducive or prohibitive to the learning process. Not only is there an assumption that the labors *desire* to earn higher wages, there is an additional assumption that labor is accessible to everyone. Rather, social-structural barriers remain for for indivduals with disabilities, despite acquiring the qualifications assumed to create access to economic capital.

Resistant Capital

In the higher education arena, a site of potential privilege, students with disabilities are often marginalized in spite of legal protections availed by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (2008). At the core of this phenomenon is the predominantly held view of disabilities as a medical condition that needs to be "fixed." Policies instituted are driven by the medical worldview of disability and by:

> Emphasizing deficits and differences, it isolates, marginalizes, and alienates students, affecting sense of self. Perceiving people with disabilities as victims, it leaves the student in need of assistance and support (Fine & Asch, 1988), placing the onus of change on the student rather than on the "disabling" environment (, p. 52).

Michalko (2002) adds, "There remains an overriding sense of disability as an individual matter requiring individual attention (p.161).

Rather than be viewed as passive victims to oppression and microaggressive policies and practices, Delgado-Bernal (1997) sought to highlight marginalized individuals' and groups' capacity to overcome adverse conditions. Accordingly, she formulated a theory of resistance that merges the notion of *agency* (at the micro level) and *structures* (at the macro level). Agency is described as the capacity to act and make a difference. Individuals are not merely a product of their structures any more than they are tools to be used at the whim of their employers. Individuals are capable of negotiating, struggling, and making their own meaning and do so based on having an awareness of socially oppressive conditions and motivated to the cause of social justice (Delgado-Bernal, 1997; Giddens, 1984).

Accordingly, Yosso (2005) incorporated the theory of resistance into her Community of Cultural Wealth (CCW) theoretical framework to demonstrate that resistance is culturally transmitted. Indeed, oppressed people are not without agency, for they have the capacity to interrupt structural patterns. Peoples' agency is their resistant capital—their resource for affecting change. However, resistance is not a fly-by-night phenomenon. On the contrary, parents, communities, and historical legacies serve as conduits for inculcating social justice.

These theorists hold that individuals from minority cultures have means by which the dominant cultural values can be countered. Resistant capital relates to finding a way to express one's own voice, literally and figuratively, to shed the oppressive blanket that often suffocates minority groups. In summary, the various form of capital described in

the literature are useful in understanding the capitals that the directors utilize in their positions as heads of DS offices.

Dissertation Overview

Immediately, the reader is drawn to four DS directors' quotes illustrating the passion they hold for their job. This dissertation is about *them*. What follows in Chapter 1 are a statement of the problem explaining the need for research that captures first-person stories of directors of DS; up until this point, extant research has been primarily quantitative and from perspectives *other than* directors of DS, themselves. Moreover, in Chapter 1, a set of research questions serve as guideposts for this study and the theoretical framework through which the data were collected and analyzed. Chapter 2's Methodology and Overall Study Design includes my role as a researcher, the design of the narrative-inquiry based study, and the details on data collection and analysis. Chapter 3 and 4 present the study findings. More specifically, Chapter 3, Journeys to Disability Directordom, presents four directors of DS' stories, while Chapter 4, Forms of Capital in Practice, provides an analysis of the four directors of DS' practice using theory on the forms of capital. As will be seen, various forms of social capital in practice are illuminated from the participants' narratives, revealing a variety of ways in which resources are acquired and shared. Lastly, Chapter 5—Taking a Step Back to Look Ahead—spotlights key takeaways from the study and provides recommendations for practice and considerations for future research.

II. METHODOLOGY AND OVERALL STUDY DESIGN

The study's goal was to document first-hand stories of administrators of DS as they recounted their professional journeys, and reflected on their work as directors of DS. Another goal of the study was to identify the forms of capitals DS directors utilized in their work and to ascertain the capitals' impact on the participants work.

The methodology to arrive at gaining a better understanding of the participants is detailed herewith. Of importance to the reader is an awareness of my role as the researcher, the theoretical framework, the study's design, the settings in which the study transpired, the participants, data collection methods, data analysis, trustworthiness as well as ethical considerations.

Because the study's objective was to collect and document firsthand stories from directors of DS, a qualitative research methodology was a more natural fit for this research endeavor, for "the aim of qualitative research is to understand and represent the experiences and actions of people as they encounter, engage, and live through situations" (Elliott, Fischer, & Rennie, 1999, p. 216). Telling stories is a sense-making activity to which Wolcott (2009) observed, "our efforts at sense-making, a human activity that includes intuition, past experience, emotion—personal attributes of human researchers . . . can be argued endlessly, but neither proved nor disproved to the satisfaction of all" (p. 30).

Researchers suggest that humans understand each other better through the stories that are shared (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Fetterman, 2010; Guajardo & Guajardo, 2010). "Stories allow us to put a face to a place, ground values and history in context, and has assisted in the construction of an identity of people and community" (Guajardo &

Guajardo, 2010, p. 89). Up until this point, important discussions have taken place in the literature regarding best practices, attitudes possessed by students and faculty related to DS services and/or resources, higher education institutional climates towards students with disabilities, and so on. However, none of the literature identified so far in my search efforts have attended to the personal stories of the individuals given the task of overseeing accessibility for students with disabilities on higher education campuses.

For the purposes of maintaining the study's focus, four research questions guided the collection and analysis of the data:

1. What are the participants' journeys into becoming directors of disability services?

2. How do the directors' ontology manifest themselves in the supports they provide to students with disabilities?

3. What are the capitals that manifest in the work that DS directors are doing?

4. What impact do the capitals-in-use have on services, students, and the institution?

Hence, this study records the lived experiences as personally shared by directors of DS beginning with their professional journeys and learning from them their experiences serving as directors of DS on their respective campuses. In documenting the stories of the directors of services for students with disabilities, the study also sheds light on the forms of capital that the directors of DS employ and impact their work.

As a human services professional, I was most interested in understanding participants' perspectives and their experiences (Yin, 2011). Qualitative research, according to Yin (2011), has the advantage of studying an ongoing event, rather than collecting static data. Therefore, this qualitative study invited the participants to share their *emic perspectives*, so that they may share what constitutes their "reality" (Yin,

2011). As a conscientious qualitative researcher, I tried to do my best to represent the views and perspectives of the participants (Yin, 2011). Steps to achieving trustworthiness were undertaken in order to honor the emic perspective of the participating directors.

The Researcher's Motivations and Roles

Qualitative researchers are most interested in the manner in which people interpret and construct their experiences, their worldviews, and the meaning they ascribed to their lived experiences (Merriam, 2009). As a researcher, I assumed multiple roles—researcher as learner, researcher as researcher, and researcher as professional.

Researcher as Learner

In December of 2012, a year and a half into the doctoral program, a personal experience propelled me to explore the challenges faced by directors of disability services. d/Deaf students, like myself who rely on American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters became disoriented by the abrupt announcement that the University would no longer contract directly with ASL interpreters. At once, I lost one of my direct-contract interpreters. I knew this was nothing personal, directed towards me, as twenty-some other interpreters were no longer on the University's payroll. I also knew that such a decision had to have involved multiple layers.

This incident impelled me to learn more about the individuals who oversee and direct disability services to students with disabilities on their campuses. I wondered about directors' sense of agency in addressing the legal obligation of the institution and its faculty, and addressing the needs of the students for whom the laws were written.

Hence, this study was undertaken to learn more about directors of disability services from *their* perspective. As the reader, you will notice references to the specific

population of d/Deaf and hard of hearing students, since the original intention was to learn more about directors' in their work with this population. However, through the course of the study, it became clear that the focus needed to be broadened to the larger population of students with disabilities.

I learned by attending to the study with an open mind, precluding an attitude of expert or air of authority. Glesne (2011) points out that reflecting on the research process and findings frames the researcher as one who creates the space for welcoming new information from sundry places during the research process. This runs counter to the notion of expert, as one who is expected to talk; a learner is expected to listen. "The difference between these two roles is enormous," (Glesne, 2011, p. 60). Being in the space as a learner was all the more important since narrative inquiry was the methodology for gathering and analyzing data from the participants, instead of having approached the interviews as someone who had a priori knowledge of what it was like to be an DS office director. Being a narrative researcher as learner places the investigator in a position to be constantly open to new thoughts and new ways of looking at the data. It was necessary for me as the researcher to reside in the researcher-as-learner role in order to create and maintain open communication with the participants.

Researcher as a Researcher

My intention for this study extended beyond merely satisfying the requirements for an advanced degree; this study was undertaken with the objective of contributing to body of literature related to disability services. Being a novice researcher, I have had to heed to Glesne's (2011) caution, particularly to new-to-the-field researchers, "All of the places in which you present yourself communicates to others how a researcher acts" (p.

59). Hence, I commenced behaving as a researcher at the moment of this writing, for I was thinking of the readers of this manuscript—professors, and fellow researchers before I began the project (Booth, Colomb, & Williams, 2003). I introduced myself to the study participants as a researcher and as a learner. I let them know that I was conducting research taking notes and recording their responses and anything I see as a learning opportunity during my interaction with them. Fetterman (2010) admits that the researcher enters the field with an open mind. Equally, he asserts that researchers are not tabula rasas; they enter into the research with biases and preconceived notions regarding how people behave and what they think (Fetterman, 2010). I was mindful of this possibility.

In addition, Merriam (2009) explains that the "…researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis" (p. 15). Merriam acknowledges the "human" condition of the researcher in terms of his/her strengths and weaknesses gathering and analyzing data. The purpose of research is to understand, and its realization is readily achieved, given that researchers are adaptable and responsive, according to Merriam (2009). It is suggested that researchers-as-primary-instruments have their limitations as personal judgments and biases may adversely affect the study. On the other hand, acknowledging the shortcomings and continually reflecting on one's subjectivity while collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data can strengthen the study. One's subjectivity "can be seen as virtuous, for it is the basis of researchers making a distinctive contribution, one that results from the unique configuration of their personal qualities joined to the data they have collected" (Peshkin, 1988, p. 18).

My task, therefore, as a researcher is to hold at bay my own personal thoughts and biases as a Deaf researcher in as much as possible, for this study is centered on the stories

shared by four postsecondary directors of disability services. The task before me was to be a careful and reflective researcher, constantly monitoring my thoughts and actions throughout the duration of the study—from data collection to interpretation—so as to honor the stories of the disability service directors, themselves.

Researcher as Professional

Having been a school psychologist for many years at the K-12 level, I am familiar with the role of being a provider of resources and services to students with disabilities and their families. As a researcher I had maintained a keen awareness of my professional role, having been in the field for more than 25 years. As a result, I approached this study knowing that the findings obtained in this study had the capacity to impact my own work, in addition to the work of professionals in higher education who work with disabled students. Furthermore, as an adult educator, my hope is that the results yield postsecondary education fruits of knowledge for stakeholders associated with students with disabilities.

<center>**Study Design**</center>

Case study

This qualitative case study examines the experiences and work of four directors of DS. Merriam (1998) defines a case study as "an examination of a specific phenomenon such as a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution, or a social group" (p. 9). Since there were four directors--each being a mini case—their respect "case studies may be layered and nested within the overall, primary case approach" (Patton, 2002, p. 298). The layered approach lends to a richer understanding of the complexity of the phenomenon where the sum of the units makes the whole. Thus, the need to recruit

participants from several locations who are representative of the population focus of the study.

Accordingly, this multi-layered case study (Patton, 2002) examined the journeys and practices of the study participants within four different universities and colleges. Even though these are four different programs and four different directors, their concern and focus is the same, providing accessibility services to students with disabilities. Because case studies look intensely at an individual or small participant pool, conclusions can only be drawn about that participant or group and only in that specific context (Merriam, 2009). Generalizations to other directors and providers of disabilities cannot be made to other directors.

Participant Selection

Participants responded to an electronic message that was sent out by a member of the Association of Higher Education and Disabilities (AHEAD). The email requested participation of directors who worked with deaf and hard of hearing students. Another element was the need for the participants to be members of AHEAD. This is a membership organization of 2,700 providers of services to students with disabilities from the United States, Canada, and elsewhere around the world (AHEAD.org). As a result, four individuals replied to the solicitation of research participants: Calvin, Kit, Ben, and Jill (pseudonyms). Later, during the data collection process, I discovered that the percentage of deaf and hard of hearing students served by the respective institutions where the participants worked was very low (less than 10%). This would change the course of the study to focus on students with disabilities in general, not just DS directors' services and supports to deaf and hard of hearing students. Another realization was that

one of the participants had a designation different than that of "director" at the department where s/he worked.

Data Collection Sources

There are many qualitative data collection tools, such as interviews, observations, artifacts, and documents (Charmaz, 2006; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). For this study, data were generated using open ended interviews, specifically, Seidman's (2006) three-interview series model. Artifacts, documents, field notes, and the researcher's journal (see Table 1) were also part of the data collection process.

Table 1. Sources of Data

Interviews	Artifacts	Documents	Field Notes and Researcher's Journal
Two 90-minute interviews	Collected during interview sessions	Participant campus' websites	Notes taken while in the field and enhanced afterwards with observation
Flexibility Seidman's model (past, present, and future)	Office objects such as a mug, diplomas, a mural, inspirational quotes provided by the directors	Mission and core values' statements	Description of time, place and setting for rich description Extra information in the field and reflections on the research process Facts about institution and department
Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART)	Photographs	Laptop	Laptop and mobile devices

Setting

Four public institutions of varying sizes and locations in Texas served as settings for the study. Two of the institutions were community colleges and the other two were university settings. The offices of the directors were generally located in close proximity to other student support services buildings. One of the participants' offices was more isolated in comparison to the others. All four of the offices were easily accessible to students with disabilities. Three of the participants' offices had a department that included several staff members.

Seidman's Three-Interview Series

Seidman (2006) explains that in-depth interviews enable researchers to "understand the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (p. 9). This researcher proposes to implement a series of interviews looking at present, past, and future as related to a phenomenon or experience from the point of view of the individual who lived that experience. More specifically, the three-stage interview process captures the depth and breadth of the interviewees' stories as they reflected on where they have been, where they are in the moment, and what they envision for themselves in the future. With that in mind, the directors' were able to reflect on what they have accomplished, the challenges they have faced, and the lessons they have learned or want to learn as a result of their experiences.

Hence, Seidman (2006) recommends a three-series interview protocol with the first interview providing a contextual background of participants' lived experience. The first interview is also a time for the researcher and the participant to become comfortable with one another, setting the stage for the next two interviews. The second interview

frames the participants' current lived experiences within their existing context. The third

and final phase of the three-interview seeks reflection from the participants on the

meaning they have made from their lived experiences and what the future holds for them,

as a result. In short, the three-stage process enables me to make meaning of the directors'

experiences by understanding what it was like to become a director of disability services,

their experiences in becoming a director and how they came to know what they know

about their position and in working with students with disabilities, and what they

anticipate in the future. All three phases of the interviews took place on the respective

campuses where the directors of disability service worked.

CART Services

In studies involving interviews, the typical practice is for the researcher to audio

record the dialogue, however, because I am deaf, I used Communication Access Realtime

Translation (CART) services to capture the interviews. The National Court Reporters

Association (NCRA) explains that CART involves "…the instant translation of the

spoken word into English text using a stenotype machine, notebook computer, and

realtime software. The text appears on a computer monitor or display" (NCRA, 2015). To

be a provider of CART services, one must have passed the Certified Realtime Reporter

test typing, at minimum, 180 words per minute, with a Total Accuracy Rate not less than

98% (NCRA, 2015).

I chose to utilize CART services as the medium for recording participant

narratives, because I consider it advantageous over a sign language interpreter. This

allowed me to attend to the participant more fully and to respond immediately to what

was said by the participant. In addition, instantly, I was able to check with the transcript

to ensure that I fully understood what was being said to me. There were a number of times I had to refer back to the transcript to correct misunderstandings on my part. I am unable to write and watch an interpreter at the same time with ease, nor with pen and paper would I have been able to capture verbatim what was said by the participants and sign language interpreter.

Specifically, I used what is referred to as *Remote CART* (NCRA, 2015). Remote CART allowed me to interview the participants without the added on-site, physical presence of the CART writer. Instead, the CART provider was given the phone number of the participant and called at the agreed upon time. Conversations took place on speaker phone, so the CART writer could listen to the dialogue taking place. Each word typed by the CART writer appeared on my laptop screen as the participant spoke. At times, the reporter had a hard time hearing and would type, "Ken, you are very low" or "His/Her voice is getting lower" to gain my attention.

These services enabled me to follow what was being said in the interview and the data became immediately usable for review. Therefore, I was able to read the transcripts right away and plan for follow up probing questions or clarification questions, which I had to ask while onsite in some cases. Once I was done with the interviewing process, I reread the transcript provided by CART and made appropriate adjustments cleaning the transcript for mistakes (e.g., spelling, punctuation, missing words, etc.).

Artifacts

Unlike documents, artifacts are described as "things or objects in the environment" (Merriam, 2009, p. 139). For this study, the directors of disability service were asked to bring with them to the first interview an artifact that represented who they

were as DS office directors, and to explain any relationship the artifact had to their

position. Moreover, I took photographs of the campus, building, and directors' offices to

trigger my memory of the interactions I had with the people I visited.

Field Notes and Researcher's Journal

Field notes are written accounts of what is observed (Glesne, 2011; Merriam,

2009). Field notes "include descriptions of people, paces, events, activities, and

conversations" (Glesne, 2011, p. 71). Field notes contributed to rich descriptions

important for understanding dynamics and context, but also essential to the rigor and

systematic nature of the study. In partnership with field notes, the researcher's journal is a

tool for documenting personal impressions. Glesne (2011) iterates this journal

"…becomes a place for ideas, reflections, hunches, and notes about patterns that seem to

be emerging" (p. 71). I maintained an electronic journal in order to document impressions

before going into an interviews and afterwards. I used this journal as a tool to reflect on

preliminary study findings and make decisions about the next step(s) in the research

process.

<div align="center">

Data Analysis

</div>

Narrative inquiry, according to Yin (2011) consists of "constructing a narrative

rendition of the findings from a real-world setting and participants, to accentuate a sense

of 'being there'" (p. 17). The primary intent was to get firsthand stories from the directors

of DS—capture *their experiences.* Savin-Baden and Niekerk (2007) note narrative

inquiry is a challenging and useful method that can be employed in a variety of contexts

and disciplines. Patton (2002) sums up narrative inquiry with the central questions that

are germane to this process of gathering and analyzing data: "What does this narrative or

story reveal about the person and world from which it came? How can this narrative be interpreted to understand and illuminate the life and culture that created it?" (p. 133).

I used Yin's (2011) five-phase cycle to analyze the data, which encompasses: Compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding. The first phase involved *compiling* the data, in which I sorted through various data individually and collectively. The process was non-sequential and non-linear. Yin (2011) states that becoming familiar with the data is essential. Consequently, I read and re-read each transcribed interview to become thoroughly familiar with the content and then perform open coding.

Data obtained from the interviews were analyzed in light of the theory on the forms of capital. By assessing the data through the forms of capital, insight was gleaned from gaining an understanding and appreciation of the directors' efforts to perform their jobs, and how the forms of capital have impacted them. Inherent in the analytical process as described is the danger that the stories may be constricted by the analytical process. I had to heed Gergen's (2004) caution about the analytical method of deconstructing stories into coded piles having potential to undermine the aims of the research. In other words, it was important to listen to the participants' narratives in their raw state rather than become mired in research technicalities.

The second phase involved *disassembling* the data. During this phase, I shifted back and forth between what my initial analysis to the data as they appeared before me. I felt comfortable doing so, knowing the process is recursive and iterative. Saldaña (2012) specified: "Whenever *anything* [sic] related to and significant about the coding or analysis of the data comes to mind, stop whatever you're doing and write a memo about it

immediately" (p. 33). I did this using the *comment feature* in Microsoft Word as I was reading the transcripts.

Following the disassembling phase, I *reassembled* the data, the third step in Yin's 5-phase cycle (2011) At this juncture; I looked for patterns and organized the codes into themes. To accomplish this, I highlighted patterns and then organized them into a matrix format, which also aided the organization of the material. First, the participants' professional journeys were captured to provide an overview of their work experiences leading up to their current positions. Moving from a global view of their work history to their personal stories, each participant's artifact served as the foundation for their stories. Having laid the groundwork for introducing the participants, the next step in the reassembling phase was to lay out their stories as they shared firsthand.

Upon completion of the disassembling and reassembling phase, I continued to *interpret* the data. Yin (2011) explains that "interpreting may be considered the craft of giving your own meaning to your own reassembled data and data arrays" (p. 207). I viewed the information obtained from the directors of DS from various vantage points, utilizing the literature on forms of capital to be able to identify which ones were being reported. Thus, the concluding phase speaks to the researcher's ability to highlight relevant findings. This is evident in both Chapters 3 and 4.

Building Trustworthiness

Bazeley (2013), in agreement with Maxwell (2005) and Yin (2011), notes that there are no absolute standards that are agreed upon by all qualitative researchers; however, this does not mean that "…anything goes. An absolute claim to accuracy of representation may not be necessary for . . . research to be useful, but it does have to be

credible" (p. 402). Therefore, I used some strategies to build trustworthiness for the study, including transparency of the product and process, triangulation, member checks, and consulting with my community of practice. For a study to be transparent it must be accessible to allow others to review and understand how the study was conducted and how the researcher arrived at the stated conclusion. What is most important about transparency is the need to *describe the process*, rather than simply *name* it, since then, the reader can retrace the steps I have taken to be able to analyze my results and interpretation. From my part, I engaged in perpetual critical self-reflection, according to Bazeley (2013). In other words, I asked myself *what"* and "*so what"* questions as I proceeded in my own journey as a researcher.

Triangulation entails cross-checking of data and locating connections between sources and methods with the intent of strengthening this study's validity (Yin, 2011). The manner in which this was accomplished was by collecting data using different data sources and cross-referencing comments made that emerged in other forms. For example, I examined potential data convergence between the participants' artifacts and the narratives that reinforced the findings.

The member checks strategy was another way to build trustworthiness (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2011). The study participants received an email message with their respective profiles to solicit their input and opinion on the accuracy of my interpretation and the representation of their stories. Each of the participants suggested changes. Among the recommended changes were repair of year(s) of education and/or service, job title corrections, work experience history, word choice, and clarification of some ideas.

Regarding my community of practice, I consulted with individuals who understand the internal workings of this research endeavor (i.e., my colleagues, my advisor, and committee members). Their feedback assisted me in identifying blind spots and engaging in further critical reflection and analysis. For example, I discussed my frustration about not being able to find all the forms of capital in the data for each participant. I was reminded that such phenomenon was not uncommon and that representation of the forms of capital did not need to be symmetrical across participants given the uniqueness of each individual's journey.

Ethical Considerations

Closely aligned with *trustworthiness* is the importance of conducting ethical research. Thus, the study was implemented in accordance with Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines; the participants were aware of the nature of the study and what their participation would entail. Each participant was asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix C) to ensure that they knew the purpose of the study and their rights to participate and stop participating at any time. All information and data collected were kept confidential and secure, regardless of the documentation source (e.g., interviews, photographs, and journal entries). In my daily practice as a school psychologist, I understand the importance of confidentiality. Confidentiality is paramount, since the field of disability services is small and the directors may know one another. To ensure confidentiality, I masked participants' identities by using pseudonyms—of the directors' names and the colleges in which they work—as I collect and report on the data. Furthermore, data were kept secure in my home office, and were backed up in a safe electronic file.

Despite following protocol to ensuring ethical abidance, there were some ethical conundrums. A key issue was finding ways to maintain the integrity of what the participants said and not disclose their identities. A way that I counter-balanced myself on this tightrope was by checking in with the participants for accuracy in what I was reporting in this dissertation document as well as strove to maintain the participants' anonymity.

Another ethical issue relates to the decision not to include the campus where I was enrolled in doctoral studies. The primary catalyst for the study was the abrupt changes that were brought about with regards to the delivery of interpreting services, which had a direct effect on me. This was a very delicate issue and I did not want to cloud the focus of the study with the internal politics, nor did I feel comfortable as a user of DS putting myself or the director with whom I am personally acquainted, in the middle of the dynamics.

My use of CART services may be considered by some as troublesome or "an easy way out" of having to do the analytical legwork. Though the accommodation was provided at no cost to me, there was no less a responsibility on my part to ensure the accuracy of the transcription. If I had audio recorded the interviews and not used CART, it would have been difficult for me to pay attention to the participant and ask follow-up questions during the interviews. Being able to read what the participants were saying while they were talking enabled me to participate fully in the interview and check for understanding. Following the interviews, I still had the task of reading and re-reading the documents for correctness, and revising mistakes.

III. JOURNEYS TO DISABILITY DIRECTORDOM

One of the outstanding needs reflected in the review of the literature is the need to give voice to directors and coordinators of disability services (hereafter referred to as directors). Accordingly, this study's purpose is to document stories of directors as they recount their professional journeys. This chapter profiles four directors who volunteered to be research partners—Calvin, Jill, Ben, and Kit. Their names were changed to protect their identities and places of work. Table 2 briefly illustrates the four disability services administrators' journeys until the time of this study—their degrees, number of years as years as providers and administrators, and the jobs they have held along the way.

All were interviewed at their respective work sites using Seidman's (2006) three-stage interview protocol capturing past, present, and future aspects of their journey. Their stories are documented in a similar fashion chronologically—from past, to the present, and anticipated future, with the following research questions in mind:

1. What are the participants' journeys into becoming directors of disability services?
2. How do the directors' ontology manifest themselves in the supports they provide to students with disabilities?

Table 2. Participant Profiles

Participant	Education Background	Experience as a service:		Trajectory Past to Present
		Provider	**Director**	
Calvin	BA: Psychology MA: Student Affairs	3	8	Director of Compliance Coordinator of Disability Services Director of Disability Services
Jill	BA: Spanish & Speech MA: Public Administration	0	8	Coordinator: Communities in School College Enrollment Specialist/Recruiter Special Populations Outreach Specialist: Single Parent Program Special Populations Specialist: Disability Services
Ben	BA: Psychology MA: Counseling Psychology MA: Customer Intelligence & Analytics	3	5	Employed: Private sector Disability Services Associate Director of Disability Services
Kit	BA: Education-Composite Social Studies MA: Student Personnel & Guidance MA: Public Administration	7	12	K-12 Teacher Assistant Director: Housing K-12 teacher EMS Office Manager Regional health educator Alcohol/Drug Abuse Acting Director Adjunct instructor Counselor-Vocational Program Counselor - Disability Services Director of Disability Services

At the beginning of each profile there is a statement by each participant that captures the

essence of who they are as directors, followed by an artifact they have chosen that

illustrates their journey to becoming and being a director. Next, a timeline graphic for

each participant portrays their journey starting with when they were in college, followed

by first-person narrative accounts. After each profile, each participant's story will be summarized from the researcher's perspective, revealing themes that surfaced from their stories.

The participants' journeys are unique paint strokes on the larger canvas depicting the life of a director of disability services on higher education campuses, including their roles and responsibilities in providing services to their respective institutions and to students with disabilities, including deaf and hard of hearing students. The four directors' offices vary in the number of students their departments serve, their levels of responsibility, and their experiences with deaf and hard of hearing students, and students with disabilities in general.

Calvin

You can't go to school and say, "I want to major in Disability Services provisions." This is something that I've found, along with a lot of my colleagues – that we either stumble into this as a career or those responsibilities are thrown upon us.
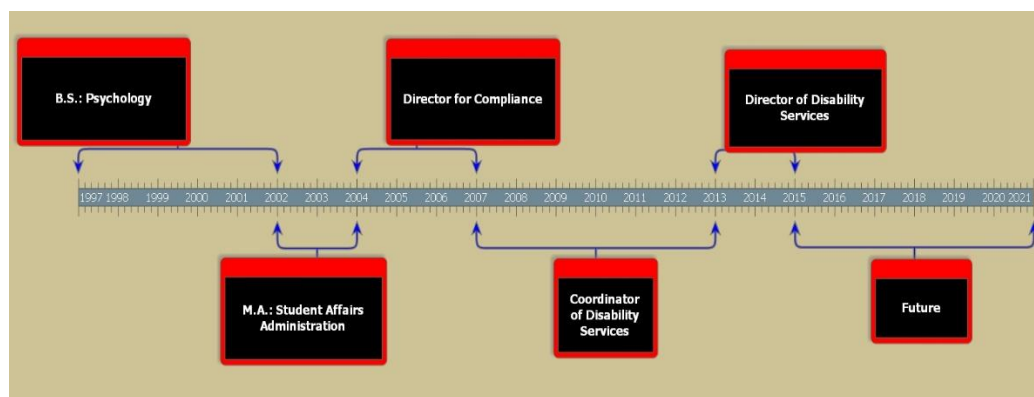
Figure 1. Calvin's Professional Trajectory

Calvin's timeline (see Figure 1) illustrates his progression from being a student to being a director. Each job he has held after receiving his Master's Degree in Student Affairs has linearly connected to his current position. Below, Calvin tells his own story.

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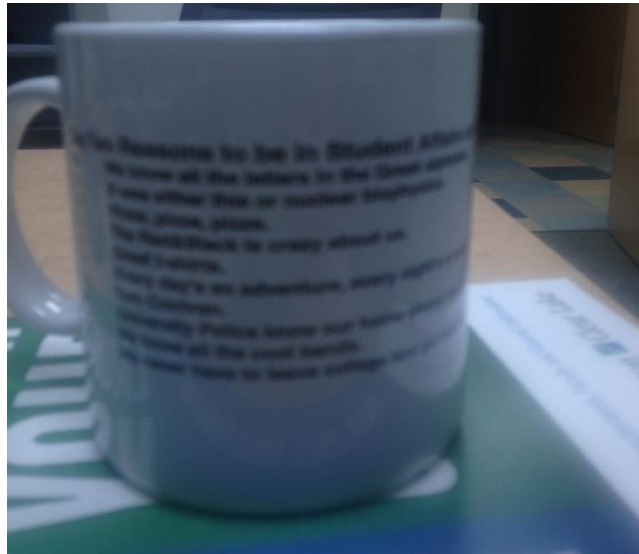
Figure 2. Calvin's Artifact: "Top 10 Reasons to be in Student Affairs" mug

     One thing that I will always hold onto since my days as a graduate student is a coffee mug with ten reasons to be in student affairs. It had pretty crazy ideas . . . like you could eat all the free pizza you wanted, it was either this or nuclear bio physics, you never have to leave college to get a real job, and so on. Even though the sayings were funny there was some truth in them. I tell students all the time: "You have to do what you love and love what you do. If you see your career as a job, you won't enjoy it! Find something you are passionate about, something you enjoy doing each and every day."

     Calvin's artifact (see Figure 2) depicts the top ten reasons to have a job in student affairs modeled after David Letterman's "Top Ten" lists which spoke to a particular topic. The mug reflects a sense of pride in his profession. His demeanor during the interview and his story told the commitment and love that Calvin holds for his position as director of disability services.

Calvin's Story

     When I was born, the umbilical cord was around my neck, cutting off air flow in

my brain. I sustained a lesion in the occipital lobe in the back part of the parietal lobe. I was in the intensive care unit for a good portion when I was first born, and I had some seizures while in NICU, but once I was released, the seizures subsided and did not reemerge until I was 13 years old. That is when I was diagnosed. So, I've had seizures almost all of my life.

I attended public schools without having received any special education services or Section 504 services, largely, because my family did not know that such options existed and none of the schools I had attended ever told my parents that I might qualify for such supports or services. At the time I was growing up, my father was in the Army and we lived mostly in southern states: Texas, Louisiana, Virginia, South Carolina, and North Carolina.

Currently my seizures are under control. But when I was in undergraduate school, I was having seizures maybe two, three, four times a week! Since I had never received accommodations growing up, I was not really familiar with the disability laws that applied to either Kindergarten through 12th grade schooling or higher education.

As an undergraduate student, I began as a chemistry major. It took me three years to figure out that I didn't know what I was doing. I got into one semester in chemistry where I was taking organic chemistry, physical chemistry and vector calculus all in the same semester. Then, I realized that it was too much for me and my parents could have easily stepped in at any point during those three years and said, "You're in the wrong field. You need to rethink this." However, they allowed me to figure that out on my own; it was a hard lesson to learn, but I'm glad they let me learn it on my own. I got my degree in psychology.

While I was in undergraduate school, I had a meeting with the disability services director at the university where I was enrolled and she informed me that I could receive accommodations. So, that's how I started to become familiar with this as a possible area of employment. I started to interact a lot with the graduate students that were in the Disability Services Office. I had learned over time that these graduate students were seeking careers in higher education administration. That is what prompted me to also do the same.

Upon graduating with a bachelor's in psychology, I enrolled in a master's program for college student affairs administration. There, I was fortunate enough to get an assistantship working in their disability resource center. The Assistant director, who was my supervisor at that time, also oversaw all of the interpreting services for all of the students that were deaf at the university. So I was able to gain some knowledge of the deaf culture. That was really my first experience working with students who were deaf and hard of hearing. I helped my supervisor lead a student organization for students who were deaf and hard of hearing, so I really got to learn more about deaf culture. After that I went to a land-grant, public university in the Midwest, where I was an assistant director. My roles included the responsibilities of an ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Coordinator, as well as overseeing the faculty hiring process to make sure they were abiding by all of the necessary federal equal employment opportunity laws. I spent three years there.

I moved to the Southwest to assume the position of Coordinator of Disability Services at a small, private, liberal arts institution. I remained in the position for six years. Because it is a small institution, I was a one-person shop. I got to do a little bit of

everything. However, I didn't interact very much with students who were deaf or hard of hearing, because it being a private university, I know that a lot of students who are deaf or hard of hearing in the state of Texas were going to go the route of public education due to the deaf tuition waiver. So, I did not see very many deaf or hard of hearing students while I was there. I think there was maybe one student that we provided CART (Communication Access Real-Time Translation) services to.

Also, while I was working there, I met my wife—we have been married now for four years. We have a two-year-old son and we're expecting another in January. She teaches special education for children in Kindergarten through third grade. So, we get to talk about how she gets to see students with disabilities when they first enter education and I get to see them on the tail end in higher education. I've been thankful that she's been supportive of me! She knows that with my career it is a fairly narrow field. Sometimes I have to go where the job takes me. She is a native Texan. I think if we were to move somewhere above the Mason Dixon line, it might be a little bit too cold for her, but, you know, she has been very supportive of me. She realizes that in order for me to advance in my professional career, there may be times when we will have to physically move to a new location. She has been aware of this since we were dating, when we were engaged, and still to this day she recognizes and supports that.

I have been the Director of Disability Services here for about a year and a half. Being in my current position is new territory for me, given that previous to this, I was a coordinator or assistant director. I think the biggest changes for me relate to the responsibilities of budgeting, managing staff, and having to do some of those types of supervisory roles that I have never had to do in the past. The other responsibilities that I

have are similar to what the coordinator and my program assistant will also do. I meet

with students who are either new to the university and requesting services or returning

students who are requesting services for the upcoming semester. And this ranges from

all types of disabilities: ADHD, learning disabilities, deaf and hard of hearing, visual

impairments, chronic medical conditions, neurological conditions. You name it. I've had

experience with all sorts of different types of disabilities!

The new coordinator we plan to hire and I will split caseloads. They will handle

two of our four schools—the school of business and the school of science and computer

engineering. I then will assume the responsibilities of overseeing all of the school of

education and human services and humanities, which is the largest of the four. Because

it is so large, it would not be possible for one person to take on that by itself, so I will

have about half of those students and the coordinator will have the other half. The new

coordinator will also help me go through our student rosters looking at

accommodations, troubleshooting with professors and students if they have any issues

that come up along the way.

I will continue to assume the responsibility of coordinating all of the deaf and

hard of hearing services. The other area—which is my weakness--is assistive

technology. I'm going to be very happy once we get this new coordinator here so that I

can give her this type of stuff to do, because I have plenty of other things to keep me

busy.

With the different responsibilities, this means that I need to make myself more

visible at times so that I don't become siloed—so people recognize this office is meant to

be a source for the entire campus. I am trying to do more than just sit inside my little

office here and take care of the day to day stuff. I am trying to get out there and make myself more visible so that the campus realizes that this office has more to offer, and that we can be a resource for people who have questions.

As you can see, we are not only here to provide services for students with disabilities. We are here to promote disability awareness education so that the faculty who are creating new online classes know what to do and how to do it. When it comes to just being more mindful about etiquette, interacting with people with disabilities, do things like use person to person language. For the month of October, one event we had was the R-word campaign in which we were trying to promote education for people with intellectual disabilities and not use the word 'retarded' in some of their day to day speech, and recognize that that word is seen as a derogatory term and to dissuade people from using the R-word. Not only are we trying to provide services to students with disabilities, but also conduct outreach to the overall campus community and to educate them more about disabilities. We also did another activity in which we talked about the differences between service and emotional support animals.

Our office has departed from its historical past; until recently this department was part of Health Services. A little over a year-and-a-half ago, Disability Services was removed from under the umbrella of Health Services, because we recognized that that separation was needed and to branch away from the medical model of disabilities.

When our office was under Health Services, we had reported to the Dean of Students. Now, we report to the Executive Director of the Student Success Center. This person oversees not only the Student Success Center and Disability Services but also the Writing Center and the Math Center. We make up what is known as the Academic

Support Services cluster. This model makes a lot of sense because a lot of the students

that I see might also need assistance in writing or math or tutoring, or might need

academic coaching if they're having difficulty with time management, study skills,

organization, knowing what to read or how to read it, and so on. I like this new

structure because I think that it will create more collaboration within these four areas

that already see a lot of overlap to begin with.

Another responsibility is overseeing the budget for the office, and parts of the

budget involve general operating expenses or what we call 'M and O' for maintenance

and operations. We also have a budget set aside for interpreters and CART providers;

we have about $100,000 annually that we have in a contract that has been set aside for

those services. In analyzing our records, every year for the last six years, we have

exceeded the amount of money that we've had in that budget.

A project I help oversee, which I'm really excited about, is a group that we have

called the Accessibility Support Team. This is a pilot project created by some people

who work with electronic information and resources. The purpose is to help faculty

members create accessible Word documents, PowerPoints, and PDFs that they can use

in their classes. We recognize that faculty are not trained on how to create accessible

documents and we also recognize that they may not have the time to learn. So we are

trying to extend an invitation to them saying: If you bring your documents to us, we will

help you create accessible documents that you can then use for this semester and in

future semesters. That budget is about $40,000 each year. Again, it's right now a pilot

project, but we're hoping to have this as a full-fledged program later in the future. I

actually see this program expanding so that it not only addresses Word documents,

PowerPoints and PDFs, but can also address multi-media, captions and transcripts since more and more professors are using those in their classes. I can see this as a stand-alone office that would be fully staffed by people who do nothing but document conversions in accessible formats. I'm really excited about this project! I'm glad the university is willing to provide funding so we can get it off the ground and moved forward.

We currently provide resources and services to approximately 125 students. Of them, I would say 100 are who I consider 'active,' meaning that they requested services this semester. When you compare our numbers to some other campuses, our numbers will be pretty small. I think only one or two percent of our population that is enrolled at the university is registered with our office. I think the national average is somewhere around ten percent? I speculate that we are dealing with a lot of nontraditional age students who may have either been able to find a way to cope with their condition on their own or maybe because of generational differences on the perspective of disability, they might be hesitant to disclose. But, again, we are trying to get our name out there so that students are aware of that, we are a resource here, we want them to register.

My philosophy with accommodations is that it is better to have the accommodation and not need it than to need it and not have it. I want students to step forward and say, "I have a disability." At least, they will be in the system; because that way, it will cut down on the turnaround time on the accommodations review process. The sooner they tell us, the better.

When I've been at other universities, the population I saw the most of generally were those with learning disabilities and/or ADHD. Interestingly, this year, our greatest

number have been those with mental health conditions. We have a lot of students with

bipolar or major depression, some type of anxiety, whether it be generalized or Post-

Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). We have nine deaf and hard of hearing students

who are registered with our office—three of whom rely on American Sign Language and

the remaining six utilize CART services.

So the coordinator and I then will go through each semester looking at

accommodations, troubleshooting with professors and students if they have any issues

that come up along the way. The coordinator will take over the responsibilities of

document production and assistive technology.

We will be doing three different assessments this year. One assessment will be on

note taker services. Those surveys will only go out to those students who requested note

takers. We will do another survey that will be a combination satisfaction and learning

outcomes assessment that will go out to all of the students who are registered with us.

The third assessment will consist of asking first-year students to report on their

perceptions of their self-advocacy abilities.

In looking at our note-taking processing, I particularly like pepnet's note taker

module that talks to students about how to take good notes. That module is something

that I would like for us to consider when we are looking at how we do notetaking. Our

note takers are volunteer-based students, so a student with a disability has to reach out

to a classmate of theirs and say, "I need a copy of your notes, you can give them to

me?" This is a system we have had, even before my presence. Over the time I have been

here, I have learned over the year and a half that I've been here that that system was

not productive for the students. A lot of the incoming students don't know their

classmates. Asking them to find a note taker on their own doesn't seem like a good idea,

being among students they don't know. We changed our note taker process so that this

office is more proactive in this approach, so we would assume the responsibility of

locating a note-taker. Hopefully, a student would step forward and we could partner the

note taker with the student with a disability. This is a process that has had mixed

reviews. Anyway, we are still dealing with classes where we haven't been able to find

note takers for the class in large part I think because it is a new process and people are

trying to figure out all the ins and outs.

The other survey of note is the one dealing with perceptions of self-advocacy of

first-year students, utilizing the model proposed by Merchant and Gajar (1997) *that*

looks at four areas of knowledge the student needs to have to advocate for themselves:

knowledge of themselves, knowledge of laws that apply to them as a person with

disability; knowledge of the accommodations that they need; and knowledge of how to

effectively communicate those needs to others. A common exchange goes like this

between me and the student:

Calvin*: Have you spoken to your professor about the issues that you are having?*

Student*: No.*

Calvin*: Have you e-mailed your professor?*

Student*: No.*

Calvin*: So, why did you come to me now that we are three months into the semester to*

let me know you are having problems?

Student*: I never thought about it at that time.*

So, what I hear from the students in the self-report is that they are good self-

advocates, but in my interactions with them, I might have a very different picture. That's

why I want to do some different methods of assessment to see what the student's

perception of their advocacy are and what my perceptions of their self-advocacy are.

The other thing we have been busy with during the time I have been here is create

a number of online forms to address the growing needs of our student body. We are a

commuter campus and about one-fifth of our classes are online, with one-fourth of our

classes being offered at regional sites. On top of that, about 75% of our classes use

Blackboard platform in some shape or form. In other words, the old paper pencil

application forms as a way of getting information to us was not really meeting the needs

of all of the students. Some of our students live outside a normal commute range and are

only taking online classes. The availability of online forms address not only the needs of

those individuals who are not physically here on campus, but also those students who

might have issues with communicating by phone.

Summary

Calvin's journey begins with his having grown up with a disability. However, neither Calvin nor his family were aware of his rights to have access to disability services during his K-12 education, nor was he aware of the availability of disability services until he had been well into his undergraduate career.

Calvin's experiences as a person with a disability and having grown up without any knowledge of disability services until much later have shaped his views regarding persons with disabilities and the various social and institutional spheres in which they may navigate. Such spheres (or "fields") include, but are not limited to: education, social, political, religious, culture, etc. (Navarro, 2006).

In addition to his own experiences as a person with a disability, he calls on his student affairs background to emphasize the value of equality, diversity, and differences in addition to providing support to students with disabilities—i.e., their educational and extracurricular needs, aspirations, and issues (Engstrom & Tinto, 2000; Hall & Belch, 2000; Harbour, 2009).

Consequently, as director of disability services, Calvin works with and on behalf of students with disabilities. He views himself as a strong resource and advocate for students with disabilities. He spoke of serving as a role model for students with disabilities and providing a representative disability voice in administrative circles. He has made a concerted and conscientious effort as a director to ensure that students with disabilities are informed of their rights to secure accessibility. That said, he does not wish to coddle those with disabilities, but rather, instruct them on how to navigate college life as a person with a disability and in spite of being a person with a disability.

Jill

In my work, I appreciate having the opportunity to help students open doors, help them become aware of different options and just being someone who is here to help others. And the neat thing about being in this position is that not only am I able to assist students who are already enrolled here, but also prospective students in the community, as well as families who are seeking resources for their child.
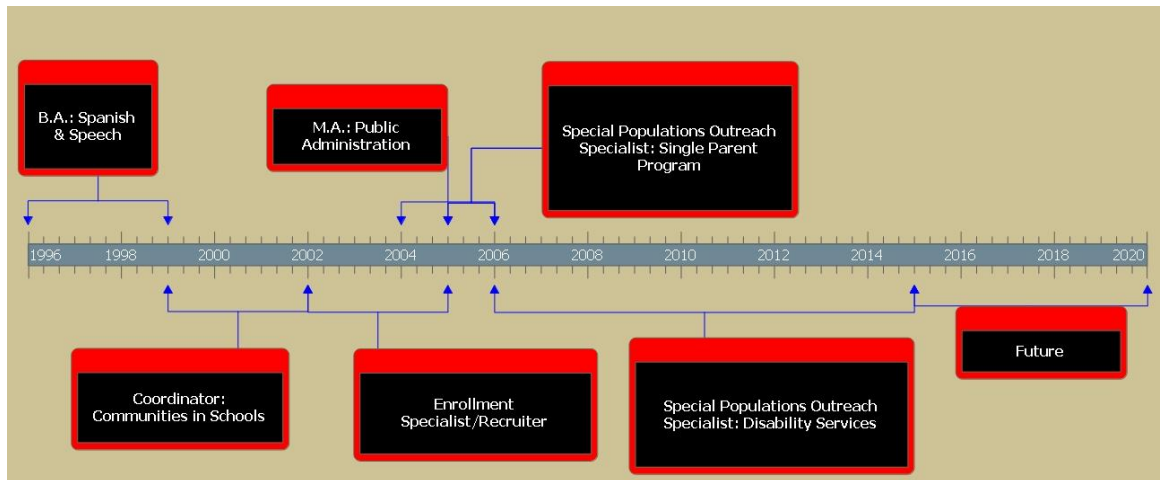
Figure 3. Jill's Professional Trajectory

Jill has held a multitude of positions (see Figure 3), but has eight years of experience being in charge of disability services on her campus. Jill had not had any prior experience dealing with students with disabilities.

Currently, Jill is a one-woman department that oversees services to students with disabilities at the community college where she works at in a small, but growing rural town in Texas. The college is a public two-year college that caters to students who seek general degrees: Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, or Associate of Arts-General Studies. Even though her title is "Special Populations Outreach Specialist," she is responsible for managing and coordinating disability services for all students with disabilities registered on her campus.

Figure 4. Jill's Artifacts

     My two artifacts are emblematic of my practice as a director of disability services. One of the artifacts is the quote, "Knowledge is the power that gives us wings to soar." I believe that only in my sharing with parents and prospective students what I know from my own experiences and education can others know what options lay ahead for them. In turn, they can be better prepared for life after high school. My other artifact contains the phrase, "Believe in yourself." This holds special meaning to me, since I did something nobody in my family had done before me. I graduated from high school and I earned college degrees; I believed in myself, even if few others did.

     As will be seen from her story, Jill's artifact (see Figure 4) is indicative of the value she places on being informed and possessing agency in her own affairs. In turn, she makes an effort to impart what she knows to others, so they, in turn, can be self-determined.

Jill's Story

     I was born and raised here. When I was ten years old, my family went to live in Puerto Rico where my father went to work. We lived there for seven

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years. Living in Puerto Rico was a rich period in my life. Around when I was

18, I moved back here to graduate from high school, then went away for a

year before coming back. I had hoped I would go out of state, but I ended up

just staying here, got married, and started a family. My family has been a big

and joyful part of my life!

In my own family, I am the first to graduate from high school, from junior

college, and university, where I graduated with undergraduate degrees in Spanish and

Speech. At one point, though, I thought I wanted to be a nurse, since I had worked in

various capacities with several physicians here in town.

I've always had a desire to help people in different ways. After I graduated with

my Bachelor's, I got a job with Communities in Schools. It's a national nonprofit

organization whose mission is to help young men and women stay in school. I enjoyed

being a part of that organization; I was the first campus coordinator to be hired when

the program started in this area. Part of my role was to connect families with resources

and services.

After that job, I began to work at this college as a recruiter. As you can see, the

two things that are really important to me are being able to help people and getting an

education. Drawing from my own experiences in not having information or support in

the beginning about college and not having a role model that I could turn to or depend

on, being a recruiter was meaningful to me. I was able to reach out to young men and

women who were considering going to college, but didn't really know how to go about it

or didn't think that it was even possible. You know, it was a way for me to share with

them a little bit of my own story and maybe help open doors for them too. I traveled all

around this area, covering a wide area here, doing presentations in both English and

Spanish, getting the message out that going to college is truly a possibility.

Then, things changed at the college. There was an opportunity to work with

single parents who wanted to go to college. So, it was yet another chance for me to help

individuals who needed help pursuing additional education with the hopes of bettering

their future. Unfortunately, the funding dried up after a year and a half and the program

went away. A position had opened up working with students with disabilities. Given my

experience and desire to work with people, they asked if I would be interested. I really

did not know exactly what it all involved, but I decided to take a chance and said, "Sure!

I'll do it!"

While I was working with Communities in Schools, I went back to school for a

master's in Public Administration. I'd missed qualifying for entrance into a Master's in

Public Health program by one grade-point-average point, not to mention there was also

the problem of logistics in terms of distance I would have had to travel. The master's in

Public Administration was a new program at the local university, so it worked out in the

long run, especially since I enjoy the not-for-profit and public service sector.

After I got my master's, I started in this position; I have been here for about eight

years now. I am by myself in this department. There are student workers, but they're

really not involved in what I do here. I'm the one that handles getting and reviewing

documentation, applications, maintaining files, and connecting with students.

When I first arrived in this position, I found files for each of the students all well,

but there were no brochures about the department—no handouts, no handbooks, nor any

other essential information available for students and their families about this

department! To me, it seemed like this office did not have an identity! It did not seem important. I saw a need and had the freedom to do what I felt was important. So, I developed a brochure of information about the department along with a comprehensive handbook that provides information on the services that we provide here, the types of documentation needed to receive services, as well as an application form for our services. The four-page application form in the packet is coupled with resources and websites containing information about different disabilities, available scholarships and so on. Along with information for students related to the college, itself, I created a brochure that lists of a few partner agencies that we refer to and work with.

One of the agencies I work closely with is DARS (Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services). We have a good working relationship in seeing to it that prospective deaf and hard of hearing students take advantage of the tuition waiver available to them.

At the moment, the number of students with disabilities who receive our services makes up a little over one percent of the total population. There are students who may have disabilities, but they've chosen not to disclose or request accommodations for whatever reason. For a number of students, I may have documentation of their having a disability, but they don't have any active accommodations at this time. I am concerned, though, because I think there are more students that need help, but have either chosen not to or have gotten comfortable enough that they're managing without the accommodations.

The remaining students are "connected." That is, they have the recommended accommodations for their classes. The most common accommodations include:

extended time during tests, testing either in the Testing Center, or in a quiet place

without distractions in the area of their instructors, being able to have simple and clear

instructions for any handouts or tests, students that may need their textbooks in an

alternate format, having any printed material on colored paper, asking the instructors to

check for understanding during tests, and/or making sure the student with disabilities

uses the Student Success Center for tutoring or the Math Lab for tutoring.

Among the total number of students with disabilities registered, we have two or

three hard of hearing students who use accommodations. I was expecting more, but they

chose not to come in this semester. Even though they had contacted me, had come in to

visit, and inquired about services, they did not enroll.

When a student does express an interest in coming to the college and have

disclosed that they have a disability, several things happen. One is the student may need

to take a placement test to find out their reading, writing, and math skill levels. If the

inquiring student is not sure if they want to enroll in college, but still wants to work on,

say a Level I Certificate program, I will work with the student after they have registered,

and encourage them to make use of all the resources we offer, including tutoring,

proofreading, and working with their instructors. We also have Success Coaches whose

purpose is to help students with study skills and being successful. Unless a student

discloses that they have a disability and want accommodations, they're not directed to

my office.

However, we do more than simply provide accommodations. I have intervened in

situations and I have advocated on behalf of students, and I have provided guidance.

One situation involved a hard of hearing student who did not pass the state board test,

so she came back. In reviewing her academic records, transcripts and everything, it seemed like she was lacking in her reading skills, which may explain why she did not pass the state test. Anyway, I encouraged her to improve her reading skills and to work with our reading department.

I had another situation where a hard of hearing student was planning to transfer to another school, when I learned from his mother that his instructor had not been responding to the student's emails in a timely manner. I asked the student to please hold from making the decision to transfer. "Let me connect with the instructor and see what's going on! Let's see if we can fix this." I connected with the teacher, and things improved; the student finished the semester and has since remained here. Unfortunately, the student, for whatever reason, had not communicated to me that he had been having problems with the teacher and that he was ready to withdraw and transfer to another school. Those kinds of things are a big concern. I think it's important that the students know we're here to help and it's a matter of opening up and making sure that that communication is happening.

Also, I have advocated on behalf of students and others when they have faced barriers to accessibility. There was an instance in which one of our students had to go to the bookstore, but it is located across the street. When I assisted the student in getting to the bookstore, we both found out the timing at the intersection for someone using a wheelchair was not safe. I made some phone calls, as did the student, and we sent an email to the city traffic department. After about three to four days, the timing for pedestrians to cross the street was increased, and a concrete slab was redone so someone in a wheelchair could have access to the button for crossing the intersection.

I've come to understand the challenges individuals with disabilities face in their home communities and in schools. Sometimes, individuals with disabilities are not seen as capable of attending college or continuing their education at some level after graduating from high school either by teachers, counselors, or even their family! Without that information, students and families are unable to make well-informed decisions about future possibilities. I've had students who've just graduated high school having received Section 504 supports or special education services yet were never informed about services, including Department of Assistive Rehabilitative Services or other programs specific to their disability! It's really sad, you know. There have even been a number of deaf and hard of hearing students who have come in not knowing that they could qualify for a tuition waiver!

In addition, I have encountered a number of prospective students who were not prepared for the rigors of college. I've had students who have graduated from high school, come up here with a desire to go to college, but they're really not ready—not because they're not capable, but because of a language barrier. They'd been mislabeled "Special Ed" because they couldn't communicate. Yet, their inability to communicate had nothing to do with having a disability! It was just that English is not their primary language, and that shouldn't be reason for them to be labeled Special Education!

Anyway, they get here and … I'm not one to diagnose or to say "yes" or 'no, you cannot" … but we need information from someone that is qualified to tell us, "Yes, this student is capable of doing a technical program." Based on the documentation I have regarding the student's learning and language needs, I will provide guidance related to the appropriateness of academic coursework versus ESOL (English for Speakers of

Other Languages) classes at the beginning. I don't want to shut the door on anybody, but I'm also going to be realistic.

We're trying to ensure that we are providing the necessary services to the students. Certainly, it's important to comply with the law, but I think more importantly, we have to make sure that we're meeting the needs of the students who choose to disclose that they have a disability! That being said, as an academic setting, this form of continuing education is not for everyone. In those cases, I work with families and students to identify other avenues for those wanting to pursue post-secondary educational opportunities.

Particular to meeting the needs of deaf or hard of hearing students is making sure that we have qualified interpreters, since we are in a part of the state that does not have a critical mass of interpreters available. When I started, we had perhaps two good strong interpreter referral agencies, but with time the availability of sign interpreters has really diminished. We're providing a lot more CART services and taking advantage of remote video interpreting, because of a shortage of qualified sign language interpreters available to us in the area. Since there is a shortage of interpreters in the area, I encourage students to let us know early in the registration process to facilitate securing what they need in the way of interpreters. We also have F.M. (Frequency Modulation) systems available upon request.

One of the resources I rely on as I work with deaf or hard of hearing students is pepnet2. Pepnet2 has a wealth of information that they put out on the web. There have webinars that I can listen to and they also have a really neat program for high school students that guides them in developing their portfolio as they get ready to graduate.

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Another go-to resource I rely on for information is the Texas AHEAD's listserv, where challenging situations are submitted to get input from other disability service providers. I also subscribe to "Disability Compliance in Higher Education," a professional journal. It is a great resource! The journal has a component called, "Quick Study," which involves different situations that have come up at different institutions to gauge your understanding of the issues and their legal implications.

There are a few people I connect with for information. I have a counterpart in a nearby college who is their disability service coordinator; he's been a good resource to connect with. He's been in that position for quite a long time.

Another person who I rely on is the director of the local DARS office. She has been in her position for many years, helping individuals and students with disabilities in a variety of ways. Also, in this region, we have two hearing loss resource specialists who are immensely helpful. If there's ever a challenge with a situation involving a deaf or hard of hearing student, the resource specialists have been very good about helping identify ways to meet their needs.

Looking back, being in this position over time has given me an opportunity to learn about different services that might be available as well as programs and other options for individuals with different disabilities. I have used the resources in this role to share with students and families.

Down the road, I don't anticipate changes as far as having more personnel, or having specialized offices within this department. Services are being provided. To that end, my goal is to work closer with our local school district students currently in the high schools to help them be better prepared as they transition out of high school. I

believe more needs to be done to help high school students who receive special

education services understand their rights as they prepare for higher education, and to

give them the tools to be able to advocate for themselves as young adults!

Summary

Jill's ontology as it influences her work in disability services relates to four

themes that surfaced in her narrative: The value of education, persistence, her

experiences working in the health industry, and helping others. She referred to the

importance of furthering oneself by gaining an education, though she offered that

education at the college level may not be for everyone. She indicated the paramount

nature of sharing what lies ahead with prospective students and their parents as they

pursue post-secondary options. The sense of commitment to this endeavor is fueled by

the experience of having been left to her own devices as she pursued her own education.

Jill's narrative reveals a woman who has taken the road less traveled. She was the

first to graduate from high school and college in her family. In her quest to get a degree,

she felt alone, feeling that no one believed in what she could accomplish. Nevertheless,

she remained steadfast in her determination to acquire an education. Her drive and

persistence manifests in her work with students with disabilities. She has coached

students to stay in school and she would offer support and advocate on their behalf.

Moreover, she views that it is her role to educate high school students and prospective

students with disabilities about college life. She wants to be sure that the road is "paved"

for others in ways that were not when she was seeking to complete her degrees.

Additionally, Jill's experiences in the health field having worked in several

doctors' offices and wanting to be a nurse has informed her position regarding the

manner in which accommodations for students with disabilities should be considered. Accordingly, she ascribes to the individual/medical model. However, the individual model also manifests in her use the word, "help," 76 times. Jill articulated that it is her nature to help others, which coincides with the medical mindset that targets addressing individuals' needs.

Ben

I think a lot of people don't see people with disabilities as an aspect of diversity in the same was as if someone was African-American or someone was Latino or someone was LGBT or whatever it is. It's just one thing that makes people different. I think most people see it as like it's this medical condition that you have. People don't get the bigger picture as they would if the saw someone of color, for instance.
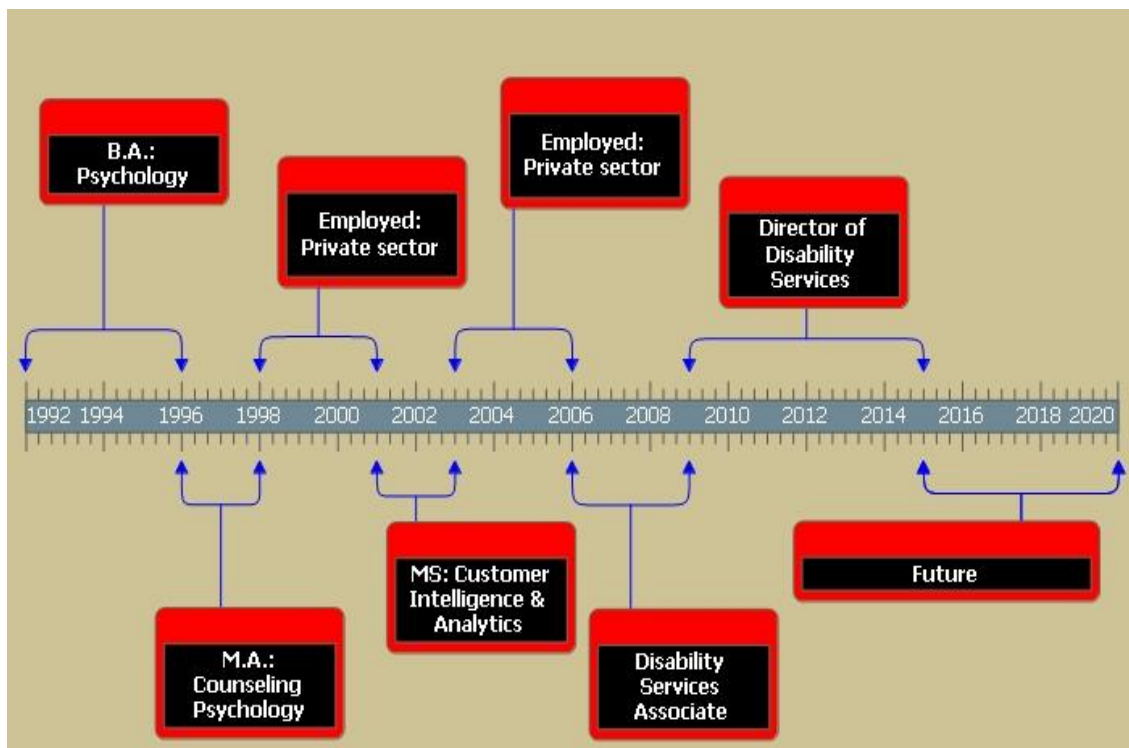
Figure 5. Ben's Professional Trajectory

Along the way (see Figure 5), Ben has acquired a variety of skills he depends on in his current position as director of disability services.
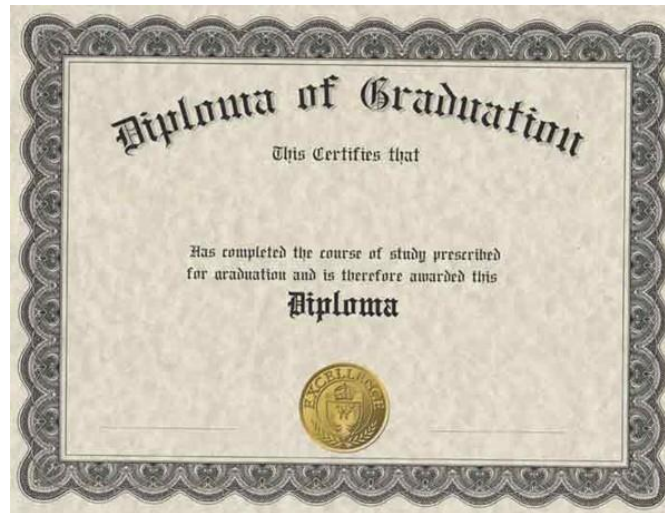
Figure 6. Ben's Artifact (Generic diploma to maintain anonymity)

My advanced degrees in Counseling Psychology and Customer Intelligence and Analytics have been very instrumental in my role as a director, and I believe having the two degrees is unique in this field. My background in addressing and analyzing consumer behavior from a marketing perspective has helped me in my interactions outside of this department; my counseling psychology background has been useful on a personal level, in connection with having face-to-face interactions with individuals. Having the background helps me navigate some of the bigger political things that transpire. In this position, I find myself having to separate myself from just thinking only about the social component and advocacy part of my job. I have to think differently about things. Yet, they're not mutually exclusive.

Ben's artifact (see Figure 6) illustrates the value of having skills germane to his position as director. He recognizes that his degrees have opened doors to experiences

and access to knowledge that enables him to interact and negotiate at both the individual level and institutional level.

Ben's Story

I took a circuitous route to be in the position that I am in. After I earned my undergraduate degree in psychology, I went straight to graduate school for my Master's in counseling. My connection with people with disabilities originated in my internship experiences at both the bachelor's and master's level. Prior to that, I'd not had any prior direct dealings or intentions in working with individuals with disabilities. Internship experiences exposed me to this population.

As it turned out, just by chance, I ended up going into a field completely unrelated to psychology or anything like that. I ended up doing marketing-related kinds of things; I made the decision to get a Master's in Customer Intelligence and Analytics back in 2001.

Yet, I was more interested in the applying my counseling background. I continued that job for about five years, but I wanted to make a change, since I was traveling a lot. I missed my family. I and my wife decided we wanted the situation to be where I was going to be more available. With the stress I was having, I was feeling like, "Do you know what?! I would like to go back to what I was originally interested in—doing psychological work!"

Back when I was getting my master's in counseling psychology, my experience in the field was working in a counseling center. I had worked with a lot of people with psychological diagnoses, suicide attempts, drug addiction, that type of thing. The clinical aspect is definitely my interest. At that point, I just started applying for jobs and

I got a position here as an Associate. That was in 2005. I worked with all students, with special attention to students with mental health challenges. We don't do therapy here, but a lot of the students that we see have severe psychological disabilities. There's a separate counseling department on campus that does that. Ironically, getting into the disabilities field wasn't particularly anything I was looking for.

Then, in 2009, the director position opened up, and I applied for it. For me, it seemed like a natural move up. The position seemed like a great fit and it worked well with my other goals in my personal life!

This department for which I the director am the face of was established around the time that disability laws were passed and resides in the department of Multicultural Student Affairs. The division, itself, was established in 2000, shortly before I got here. What I appreciate with our department being under the division that deals with diversity is that people with disabilities are seen as an aspect of diversity just as students of color or gender, or LGBT issues, for example. Even within the department as a whole, though, I feel like our group, our own department, is misunderstood.

Part of my task then, as the face of the department, is to see the bigger picture. One of the committees that relate to seeing and working with the big picture is the Multicultural Student Affairs committee. I have to look at many more details most of the other staff members don't see. I have to consider everything in relations to the bigger scope of the college's mission as a whole rather than just our department's mission. With that in mind, it makes sense that I am on a lot of committees. This is particularly important where there are a lot of departments and forces at work. Sometimes, policies on the table for discussion may actually be to the detriment of certain groups of

students—be it students of color, students with limited financial resources, or students with disabilities.

I remember getting a call one time from administration, saying, "Hey, you need to come talk to us!" It can be a little nerve wracking, but that's the reality – you get top campus officials calling you saying, "Hey, this is going on . . ." So, not only am I the face and voice of the department to the campus as a whole as part of the big-picture policy dynamics, I have to be responsive to the special requests that come our way.

*We are a compliance office, but I don't think people are aware that we **have** to be here, legally. It's a federal law and our job is not just to give out accommodations! Our job is to protect professors and the university from discrimination lawsuits. It's a balancing act, because our department needs to maintain relationships with the different colleges and with the faculty. We have to make sure that we don't anger an instructor, even if they're yelling at us. We have to keep our composure, since we want to maintain good relationships.*

At the same time, we have to make sure that our students' voices are represented. So when someone is calling and saying, "Hey, we're thinking of taking this or that away," we have to respond with, "No, you can't; our students need this because of XYZ." So, as an advocate, we have to not be afraid to say that to someone in the upper echelon or wherever it might be.

Of course, we also need to be available for our students. I have to find a way to balance my being a direct service provider with being involved in administrative and higher level meetings. I maintain caseload half of what the other associates do because of the other responsibilities that come with managing and overseeing this office. I do

prospective student interviews as well as deal with current students that are registered

with our office. Obviously, I don't see all of them all the time. I have some who come in

all the time, and I have ones I hear from once a semester, and there are others whom I

see the first day they're here and they do everything they're supposed to do and I never

hear from them again until they announce that they've graduated.

Our caseloads, vary, however. For someone who is deaf or hard of hearing, then

they would go on our deaf specialist's caseload. One of the deaf specialist's desires is to

focus on recruiting and attracting more deaf and hard of hearing students. Usually, the

number of students lost through graduation is made up by the number of students

coming in, but that was not the case this year.

Anyway, the specialist for deaf students has relationships with interpreters, as

well as providers of CART and TypeWell services. He coordinates all of the services, not

just the campus and our students, but also other departments. He is such a valuable

asset that we joke that when he is out or sick or whatever it is, it is someone will call our

department to request an interpreter, and we'd be wishing that he was here to handle

requests such as that. He's training one of our other associates to help with that because

he has such a command of the issues and needs.

Having him facilitate all of the programming for individuals who are deaf is a

big advantage. For example, we recently had a call from one of the departments on

campus that had hired a deaf employee and the department needed interpreting services

in order to provide training. Even though it was not a student, he provided assistance,

because of his know-how. Recently, the performing arts center had some questions about

interpreting versus using captioning for the performances. Our deaf specialist was also

involved in those conversations, explaining to them that while one service is cheaper,

there was a need for the other service and he explained why. So, the services he provides

extend beyond the bounds of simply supporting students.

If faculty accommodations are needed, then for the most part, they are handled

by a different department. Thus, anyone with, say, a psychological, medical, mobility, or

other disability who is employed by the university would go to the other department to

get their accommodation. We make exceptions for deaf employees, though they still need

to have documentation from the department that deals with faculty and staff prior to

securing our services. If there is an event where deaf community members are coming

and they need an interpreter or captioning services, the requests are facilitated by our

deaf specialist.

One of the areas we wish to create more awareness is on invisible disabilities,

because it is not uncommon for professors to say, "I understand because, this person is

deaf, but I don't understand why this person needs anything because I don't see anything

wrong with this person." Just because you don't see it doesn't mean the disability is not

there. We have had students report that their professor had asked why they needed to

provide a certain accommodation, when they couldn't tell that a disability even existed—

they couldn't see anything obvious. Getting the word out and doing outreach focusing on

mental health disabilities has been my main focus, especially since it is our fastest

growing population. As part of doing outreach, we are providing training to up-and-

coming educators, such as teacher assistants and graduates going into the education

field. We're doing it for others, but we are targeting the lesser-experienced educators,

who seem to be more accessible than those who have more established ways of teaching.

The training we provide, though, is not mandatory. I wish they were! Anyway, we go to departmental orientations and trainings, but – and I've heard this is true at almost every college – getting faculty to listen to something and actually doing something is not easy. We have even sent out a survey to all of the faculty. What we have found that most don't understand what accommodations are. Some do, but the majority don't. The challenge for us is that even though almost of the people who returned the survey said that they would like more information and training about accommodations, only 10% said that they would actually be willing to attend a training to that affect. So, they know they need it, but they don't want it. This is a familiar refrain from year to year. "We want it, but we don't need it." It doesn't make sense.

Another thing that comes out of the survey are questions and comments about tutoring accommodations. We don't have a tutoring/testing center of our own, but we get a lot of request to support students in an environment where they would benefit from instructional support—tutoring support, proctoring tests, and what have you. It would be nice if we had a one-stop shop. We have some computer stations where students can utilize and have more individualized guidance from one of our staff tutors, but we've a short supply compared to the number of students who are registered with us. As a result, the responsibility to provide such supports for students falls on faculty for the most part.

We recognize that the instructors and faculty don't have time between the number of classes and students involved. No matter what, accommodations have to be provided. We tell the professors, "Talk to your department chairs and deans! Just try to find space, because we don't have it either!" What we get from the surveys is, "We see

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that y'all are making us do this." We're trying to get information out to the faculty that we're in the same boat as them, because we don't have a lab, either.

*We are trying our hardest to try to get the information out there that this institution needs a, what I call, Total Access Center, to provide instructional and tesing support that is available for **every** student, not just students who are registered with the DS! Yet, I think the number of students knowing that they can request support services is underrepresented. I hear a lot of times from students when they come in, "Oh! I wish I had known I could do this." In my experience, it's usually a student with a psychological disability. Often, they didn't know they could register as a student with a psychological disability, because no one ever told them, or they might have been suffering from depression starting as a freshman and not until they were a junior that someone tells them, "Hey, why don't you go to the DS? They may be able to help you." Unfortunately, by that time they've had drops, they've had medical withdrawals, or perhaps failed some classes. We hear that a lot!*

Another group of underserved students who those with undiagnosed learning disabilities, but either high school was very easy for them or their parents or their family didn't have the financial means to get them tested privately. By the same token, I also believe there are many individuals with depression, anxiety, medical conditions, and so on, who are managing and don't need academic accommodations and don't come to us, because they don't need our services. Definitely, though, the number of students who could benefit from our department's services are underrepresented.

I will say this, our associates are doing such a great job at trying to manage the service with the demand, but it's getting to the point where our numbers are growing so

fast that without additional resources, it has gotten to the point that something has to be done on a larger scale. I'm engaged in conversations in an attempt to at least get the issue on the radar.

Also on our plate is the challenge to ensure that students are graduating in time before their financial aid runs out. The state is really pushing that. I didn't realize the impact of the decision until it started happening and it dawned on me that everyone is affected. What this means is that they changed financial aid requirements; that means they've changed how many hours they're telling students to register for. Students with disabilities are affected as well, since their disability may affect their ability to take the required minimum number of hours per semester. Policy changes like these have an effect on our students, increases their stress, and we're starting to hear that a lot. That's just one example of a big picture item that trickles down to every department, including ours, and it's my job to make sure our department is represented and our voice is heard, based on what I hear from our students and what I hear from my staff.

My other challenge is to keep on top of all of the paperwork. We're working on a new database that will be of immense help. Our current database is antiquated, and we have been keeping paper files, but the process is laborious. Once we go live with the new database program, we won't be using the old one anymore. Right now, the new database is having a lot of problems with calendars and syncing up. Anyway, once that is up and running, all of the paperwork and emails that we have now will all be integrated and streamlined into one database; our time will be freed up in order for us to focus so much more on providing services and meeting the objectives of our larger mission goals.

This project has taken time, from issuing RFPs, identifying a vendor, and getting the system up and running. This, being one of the biggest projects I have, has taken up most of my time, since there are so many different parts to it. One of the more time-consuming aspects is having to transfer the information from the old database onto a thousand-page spreadsheet to ultimately be migrated into the new database system. The task is further complicated by the fact that our old database is so old, that it doesn't pull data easily. That adds to the time and stress factor. Once it's in place, though, the time it will free up, the stress—not just for me, but for everybody—will be alleviated. It's been a long, hard process. I anticipate that it will be a big game-changer once the new system is in place, impacting what our staff are able to focus more of their energy on, because right now, a lot of the energy expended is concentrated on documents, emails, printing, and making notes.

*On a broader scale, we have as a goal to continue to expand our outreach. We want to advocate for a special lab for **all** students, not just the students we serve. We want more awareness on campus, as a whole. I think that's one of our big goals as a staff. We have to get the correct information out there, because before, meeting the needs of students has always been on a case-by-case basis. A professor calls. You work it out. With our student population growing, I anticipate that we will witness more problems, unless we can reach more faculty through our outreach and training efforts. Needless to say, we want to be ahead of the curve if at all possible.*

Another goal is to maintain, if not increase our visibility as a national model. We hear from other schools that our disabilities office is a model for other schools; schools contact us all the time when we present at AHEAD or at other venues. We are

approached about how we do things. Recently, my colleague was just interviewed by the

Disability and Higher Education newsletter. I also get emails all the time from other

schools asking me about what we have done in certain situations and we are frequently

asked to share our processes, procedures, and asked for input. A case in point is our

outreach programs are well-respected and have been used by other disability services

departments as a model for reaching and educating the campus and community.

It's funny to think even though we consider ourselves small, but we're pretty big

compared to a number of one-man shops that are at other schools. What's interesting is

that we have a lot of the same problems that the other schools have, but I think a lot of

times, they assume we have more resources, and I guess technically we probably do, but

we're still asked how we do things.

Summary

The path that Ben followed to arrive at his current position as director is unique

insofar as having a Master's in Counseling Psychology, which is not uncommon among

directors, but he also has a degree in Customer Intelligence, which is less common

(Harbour, 2004). He credits his unique graduate and work experiences with preparing

him for the job as director of disability services. Ben's background in marketing and

counseling psychology are ontological manifestations of his belief that the world is

complicated and requires both human and entrepreneurial savvy. Thus, he uses these

skills to help him negotiate the spaces between his work with students, faculty, and the

institution as a whole.

Just as he strove to further his own understanding of people and enterprise, he

seeks to foster a greater understanding and awareness amongst faculty and

administration of the laws related to meeting the educational needs of students with disabilities. Ben believes that the success of the department in meeting the collective needs of students and keeping in the institution in good standing is contingent on faculty and administration being educated.

Ben posits that everyone has something to contribute towards addressing the social, emotional, academic, physical, and communicative needs of students with disabilities. He referred to collaborating with other departments and with his own staff in a comprehensive effort to meet disabled students on campus' needs. He recognizes the collective and individual contributions that have been made to the department's standing, both at the college level and with other disability service providers.

Of importance is that being disabled is, in Ben's mind, an identity no different than race, creed, gender (identity), or nationality. This view parallels the view maintained by those who espouse the social model of disability. As a result, he spends time educating others to help them understand that people with disabilities are on equal footing with diverse groups and should be considered when making decisions.

Kit

Kit is the Director for the Center for Students with Disabilities at the community college where she works. Her department is next to the traffic and police chief's office on the second floor above the cafeteria/food court and bookstore (*at the time of this document's publication, the Center for Students with Disabilities gained occupancy of the office to operate Project HIGHER). On the third floor is the library and the fourth floor consists of other offices.
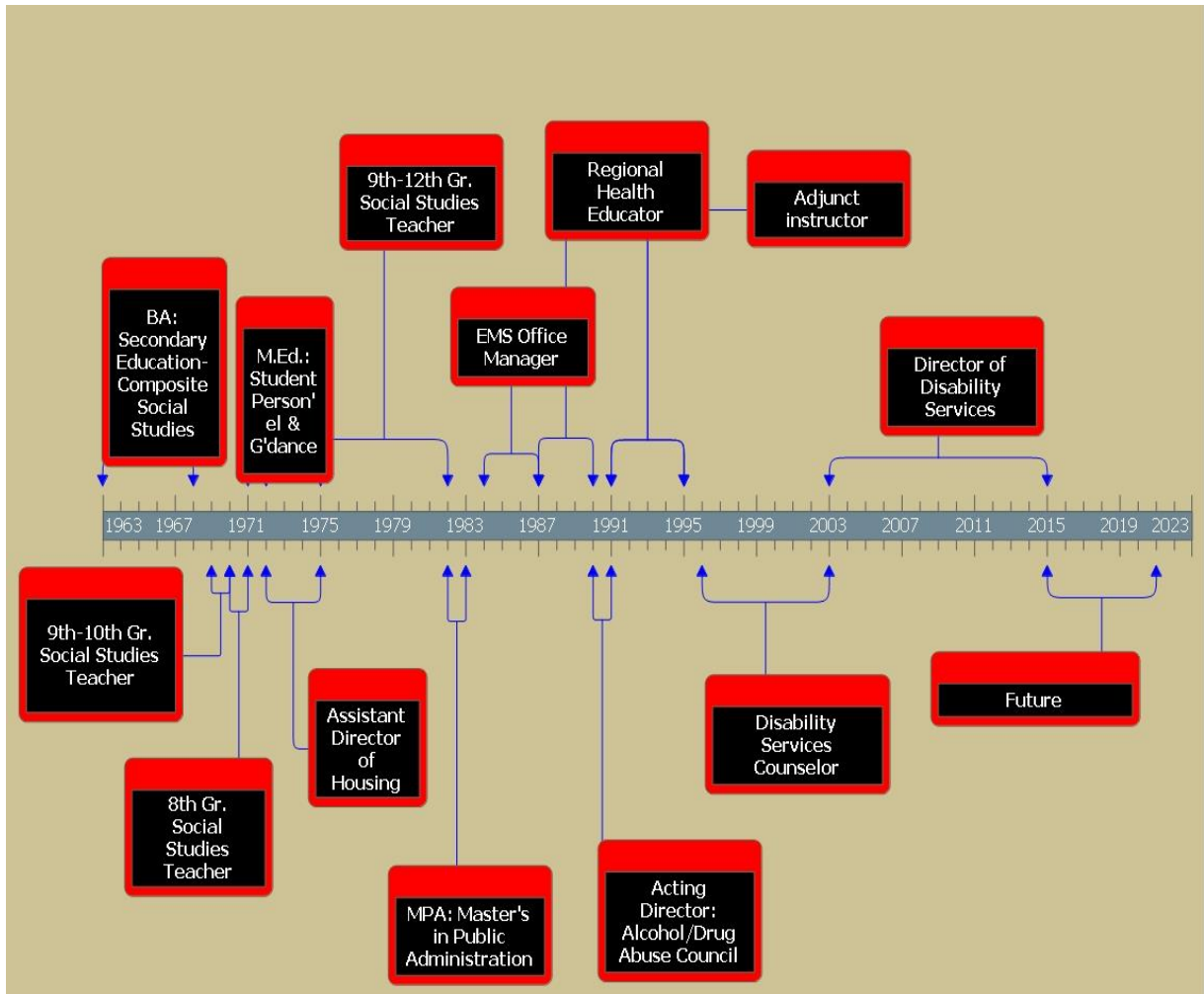
Figure 7. *Kit's Professional Trajectory*

Kit has had a variety of experiences along the way (see Figure 7). She has worked
in educational settings, primarily. Her longest tenured job has been as the director of
disability services, where she has worked since 2003.

Figure 8. Kit's Artifact: Apple Tree Mural

A former Developmental Instructor, now retired, wanted a way of displaying pictures of our staff to show the students with whom they were going to be working. We have a poster in the back of the office with a picture of a large tree. I got to thinking, "We should have a tree with staff pictures on it." Then, I got to thinking, "why not an apple tree, because apples are traditionally symbolic of education?" We got two artists to paint the mural—one a staff member and the other, a former student with a disability who uses a wheelchair and has the use of only one hand. She painted the bottom part of two murals while our clerk painted the top part. Both individuals are wonderful artists. The murals were dedicated by our Vice President of Student Affairs and President on 8-6-04. It's hard to believe it's been over 10 years since they were painted and they still retain their original beauty!

Kit's artifact (see Figure 8) reflects her values in involving others in activities that would bring attention to the department. She believes that every individual, regardless of ability or disability should be given an opportunity to be highlighted in their educational experiences. In addition, the apples might well resemble her belief in creativity as well as collaboration.

Kit's Story

I had a pretty darn good childhood. I have to think some of the most unique experiences were from my having gone out with my dad, who was a game warden in New Mexico. Back in the '50s, I could go with him, when he went out and checked on hunters and fishermen; I used to keep his log for him. He also took me fishing and hunting as a kid. I killed deer and also a javelina. When he went out on weekends, I frequently went with him and stayed overnight. It was a special time in my life.

Not only was I really an outdoors person in my younger years, I also raised a number of young wild animals--a couple of eagles, javelin, deer and antelope fawns, and two coyotes, which were like dogs. How many children can ever say they had such wonderful experiences as they were growing up? We raised two javelinas, who stayed in the house until they got big enough to go on their own--and yes, I held them when I fed them. Subsequently, they went to the wilderness park in Carlsbad, New Mexico. One time, daddy even brought home an albino porcupine, which we had for a while.

After I graduated from high school, I had planned on becoming a zoologist, but I could not handle the chemistry or the math. That was way above my head. So, with my love for history, I chose, instead, to get my bachelor's degree in Education-Composite Social Studies.

Following college, I taught for a little while, one year in Los Angeles, then one year in Fort Worth. When in Fort Worth, I enrolled in a Master's program in Student Personnel and Guidance at Texas Christian University, finishing in 1972. My husband started in the program at the same time.

After completing our masters, my husband and I then moved to work at a university in the western part of Texas, where he assumed the responsibilities of overseeing housing and I ran the two major dormitories. We did that for three years. He went onto other things and I ended up teaching for seven years at a private school in town. During my experience in student teaching, I vowed I would never ever teach in public school, as a result, all my lower level teaching was in two parochial and one private school.

After completing my second master's degree, I went to work for the City/ Health Department as an Administrative Technician, office manager, for the Emergency Medical System. I worked there for three years.

When a position became available with the Texas Department of Health I became the Regional Health Educator for three years. From there, I went to work at the community college where I taught GED, U.S. Government, Texas State and Local Government, and Introduction to Psychology courses at the local federal penitentiary. In the meantime I started working as a part-time counselor under a grant program for a year.

A full-time counseling position came up, both in general counseling and in the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD). My dad had just died and I didn't do well on my interview for the general counseling position. The interview committee made an allowance for me to come back several days later, so that I could do my interview again for CSD. I had had no prior experiences in dealing with people with disabilities, except for my father prior to his passing away. They asked me the question—and I will remember this as long as I live—"What do you know about disabilities?" I was honest. I

said, "I really don't know anything about disability, but I am eager to learn! I'm a fast

learner!" I was hired for the position and I was astonished that I got hired! I have a very

strong belief the good Lord led me here, because they had other people that were

probably more qualified, from what I heard later, but I got the job! For eight years, I

served as a counselor in this department—this is where I grew in my understanding of

disabilities.

In my role as a counselor, I was strictly dealing on a day-to-day basis with

students and the academic end of it the job. The director decided to retire and move on.

We had another director, but he didn't stay long; he and his wife had gotten jobs back

east. The Assistant Director became the Interim Director while the director position was

posted.

I had such an itch, and I can't tell you anything more than using the word,

"itch," that I wanted to do things-- I could see there were things that needed to

be done here that weren't getting done. I was told by the previous directors,

"stick to counseling!" So, I just did my counseling job as told, but when the

position was posted, I fidgeted with whether or not to apply. When I was with the

city, I had managed a couple of people, but I didn't like being in management. I

loved counseling and teaching.

Management is about having to make personnel decisions, which is not

my cup of tea—I do not like that. Hence, I really wrestled with the question of,

"Do I really want to be a director of an entire department with all of the staff?"

(At that time there was 15 full-time and over 50 part-time staff) I went back and

forth before the surge was stronger for me to apply. You are not going to be able

to do anything if you don't apply. It just kept nagging at me, so, I said, "Okay,

Lord," to myself, "now is the time; if it is the right thing, I will get the job; if it is

not, then I won't and that will be ok." I got the job! That's how I ended up being

in the disability field and counseling all at once, and after 7 years becoming the

director of the department.

My job responsibilities range from within-department responsibilities to

interacting with entities outside of the college, itself—public schools and other

institutions of higher education. I oversee the hiring of staff, handle staff and student

issues; manage the budget, network closely within the college, network in the community

and with state and local entities, educate others about our department and disability

issue, endeavor to keep track of changes in federal and state laws and keep the staff

updated. On a given day, you will see me reading e-mails and passing out information,

which is a focus of mine. Even with doing that, I try to go around the office to speak with

staff and students. One of the things I do every morning when I come in is to go around

to say "hello" to everybody--you know, just visit with them for a few minutes. I try to do

that with the staff when I have a question or something to share. I do not e-mail them or

call them. I like the personal, face-to-face encounters rather than by way of

communication that is impersonal.

An aspect of my job that I find to be especially satisfying is talking with the

students—asking them how they are doing, about their grades, and in some cases I will

do some casual advising/counseling, like, "Why don't you try this?" or "Have you

thought about that?" I spend a lot of time doing that here in this office. I talk to about

half a dozen students or more throughout the day, even if it is nothing more than just see

how they are feeling and how the classes are doing and what is happening with them. I

think that is important. I guess I just do not like sitting behind the desk all day; I like to

move around and interact with people.

I don't believe in sitting on top of people-micromanaging. Of course, being in this

position, I have had to intervene, but I will generally leave it up to the staff. That is their

bailiwick. I like to use people's skills, letting them go so they can do their job. If

something comes up, then I have to step in, but, overall, I feel this department is one you

leave alone. Let them do their job! If anybody has a problem with a member of my staff

or a student, they will come and talk with either me or the Assistant Director. Otherwise,

they handle it, and work with the counselors on their respective campuses. Since we

have offices on five campuses scattered throughout the District, with 20 full-time and

nearly 100 part-time staff, I have to rely on the Assistant Director, the Counselors, the

Campus Representatives, the Technology Specialist and, the Testing Administrator to

handle the day-to-day operations of their areas.

Since the Vice President of Student Services also does not micromanage, I have

the freedom that others might not have. She and I have one-to-one meetings about every

three weeks. Every other week, we have Leadership meetings, which consist of about

thirteen of us representing different departments. The Academic Affairs Division stands

alone and all of the Deans and faculty report to him. Even though we are not part of that

division, the college philosophy, overall, is customer service, and we are pushed real

hard to ensure that we are providing quality customer service. Periodic reminders

regarding customer service delivery are sent to all staff. In fact, we even had a college-

wide reminder by the president at a faculty development gathering about a year ago! As

for the president, you know, I've never sat down with him; that is one of those no-no

things, since you have to go through the chain of command.

My desire is to get out there, talk to people, let them know what we do, bring

them in, and let them see what we do. I want them see the lab, in particular, because that

is a big thing! I just want people out there talking and making sure that we get known. I

am very proud, and I think a lot of people are learning about us, both on campus and out

in the community.

Our pattern of growth and attrition mirrors what the college as a whole

has seen. At one time, our program went from about 400 students to nearly 700

students now. In terms of the number of deaf and hard of hearing students, we

have had as high as 40 deaf students one semester! For a long time our semester

average, hovered closer to around 26 to 28 students. Now we are averaging 18. I

think the decline can be attributed to changes in the financial aid rules, in terms

of the number of hours a student must complete within a specified time.

Regardless, we've added another staff interpreter, to go from three to

four, with one of the positions designated for the lead interpreter or coordinator.

At a time when we didn't have the additional position, one staff stepped up and

took on the responsibility of coordinating without anyone even asking!

I do regret, however, that I am not able to do more when it comes to deaf

students coming out of high school—they face a very difficult time. They are not

coming out of high school well prepared in reading and writing. Consequently,

the vast majority end up in developmental classes. As we get further into the

Texas Success Initiative (TSI) process, the floor will go up in terms of what they

need to be able to do to enroll in college courses. As it is, they are supposed to be able to come in at tenth grade level and these kids are not going to be ready! Our challenges are compounded by the fact that we have deaf students coming from Mexico whose first language is Mexican Sign Language.

We had a continuing education English class one spring semester in which two of the seven deaf students were from Mexico. The students were ready to go on to the next level, but because of a shortage of funding available to students in the program, they were not able to continue. Financial aid or tuition waiver normally granted to deaf and hard of hearing college students are not available to students taking continuing education classes. We managed to secure some money through a foundation, so we did not have to charge tuition, but the funding source was soft. This is one of my big bucket list items that would I like to have up and running, and sustained before I leave, but I don't know. This really should not fall on me or our department, but should come out of the academic division. They are the ones that have to certify the faculty and find the funding and everything. At any rate, I will keep searching and talking and nagging. I am a good nagger.

I am also concerned about the requirements under the Texas Success Initiative (TSI). My greatest concern is that, while still in high school, students in special education are generally not taking the TSI with accommodations. My feeling is that the schools don't want to give them the extra time to take the exam -- and many kids are told since they are not going to college, they didn't need to take the TSI. So, after they graduate and decide they are going to come here, they end up having to pay to take the

TSI out of their own pocket. They are also not prepared sufficiently with the level of academic rigor to do well. Consequently, many end up in developmental classes. Therefore, in the future we will not be an open college, because the only developmental classes will be at the highest level and the other students will have to go into Adult Basic Education (ABE). At the moment, ABE is focused on getting people their GED. Where is that going to leave all the others? Sorry, it just makes me so mad!

In the meantime, we do what we can. Our department is very innovative. Right now, with the support of both the Vice President of Student Services and the President, we are working on a project similar to a project known as South Texas Project Hire, we call ours Project HIGHER. Our program currently have six students, 18-25 years old, taking level 1 certificate classes. They do not have to take the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment. Several have just graduated from high school and a couple have previously taken college classes but needed more help. Participants in the program are students with developmental and intellectual disabilities and they are clients of the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS).

Students will take about two years in the certificate training program, but they will graduate-with an employable skill. The educational coaches—students from the Masters of Rehabilitation Counseling program from a nearby University will be with them throughout their academic career to ensure they be successful. Our project is a coordinated effort between us, DARS, and as well as the area university's Rehabilitation Counseling program. The program will be handled through this office and students go into existing certificate programs. A Project Manager will be hired to oversee the program. Prospective student interviews will be conducted in mid-June in order to have

time to get the students ready for the fall semester. The project will be placed within this office.

I don't want to take credit for our department, because it's everyone here. I never want anybody to think it is me, me, me, me! I hope I've got a regular-sized head and not a big swelled one! But I really want the staff to take credit for what they do. I could not do this job without them, but I am very proud to be the director of what I consider to be one of the best departments in the state. I love my job and I feel that what we do makes a difference for students! Because of the different things that we have been doing, we are known and respected within the college and with many entities in this community and surrounding school districts.

We have expanded and grown over the years. We created an Assistive Technology Specialist position because we needed to have somebody with the expertise who knew what to do with assistive technology and manage five labs. We now have a top-notched assistive technology lab that is open for anybody in the community to come in and use—DARS clients, the VA (Veteran's Administration), and even the public schools have sent people to try various technology and software. We are constantly looking for ways to improve upon the tools and equipment we already have. One simple thing we've done is ordered little tables that are adjustable for the assistive technology lab. In October 2015 there will be one in every classroom. That is the goal—to have one small table that can go up and down for somebody who is in a wheelchair. Pregnant women and overweight individuals can also use the table, even if they don't have a disability.

The thing about this department is, it is kind of eclectic. We cover all disabilities; deaf students are just one component of that. We don't have a separate program for them. We did get approval for a coordinator position here. We have some staff who are stepping in and doing what they can to help out until we find someone permanent for the position. Our new Coordinator will begin in the fall of 2015. Because of the loss of our retiring developmental person who oversees tutor and note-taking training coupled with a decline in the number of deaf students, I have combined those two positions. So that position will not only be the coordinator for the deaf program including the interpreters, they will also be doing other things, including working on training for the department as a whole. With the training person retiring, so went the funding. I couldn't get any funding because, of course, we are in a crunch. So, I am having to change that position.

I try to keep up with trends in disability services by trying to read articles from a variety of professional journals, particularly those that have to do with disability issues; and I share related articles and information with other individuals as I come across them. One of the resources I utilize is a journal called, <u>Disability Compliance for Higher Education</u>. I also read a couple of online ones. I am a member of AHEAD and TEXAS AHEAD and attend the national conference every other year. I rotate attending with the Assistant Director. In addition, I attend supervisory trainings provided by the College. Other resources I take advantage of are discussion groups and newsletters: <u>Why Disability Lost in the UK</u>, <u>ADA OSU</u>, <u>Learning Disability Association</u>, <u>Student Disability Services in Health Sciences and Medicine</u>, <u>The Department of Labor Newsletter</u>, <u>Workforce3 One Communities Daily News Digest</u>, and <u>pepnet2</u>, which is specific to the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students are just a few of the resources I look at.

I'm of the feeling that as I learn things, I share what I learn with others. I am trying to include my Assistant Director and others in a lot of what I learn and do, because I am hoping to retire in a couple of years and I am hoping that things will work out that she would get the job. Mainly it stems from my belief that if anything happens to me, somebody can step in and knows what's going on. I don't want people to be left out in the cold and have them say, "Well, now what?" It just doesn't fall on one person---- everybody has a responsibility to contribute to the process of checking and balancing, so somebody can step in and do their work. The important thing is to keep people informed.

Not having worked in any other institution, I can't do a comparison, but I see my role not as a direct service provider, but as a person to manage a department. I am at the pinnacle of the umbrella. I need to ensure the department operates efficiently and effectively. I need to make sure staff are not only hired, but well trained, that direct services are provided, that they handle student and personnel issues, network within the college and in the community, and maintain and reach out to resources that would be beneficial to the operation and responsibilities of the department. The department, is only as good as the staff. How well we do in helping our students, falls back on the staff; I cannot take credit for what we do, because it's the staff that make ~~us~~ the department successful.

I see our role as a department as one in which we provide students with a more even playing field. In other words, the support services provided by the department can give students an opportunity to overcome whatever disability they may have -- be it someone to take notes, an interpreter, or just extended test time. If it wasn't for

departments like mine, the services would not be available and the student may not be able to overcome their disability and complete their education. The services are not to be a crutch or an easy way out but a way to help them overcome their disability.

There are two things that I think have impacted me in my journey. One has been the interactions I have had with students over the many years I have been here. In fact, a few of the students and I have developed a long-term friendship beyond their time here. Second, has been my having to deal with my own mother's disability, and that of my husband's. Dealing with disabilities on the home front has really had an impact on me, both positively and negatively. On the positive front, it made me more aware of their needs—physically and mentally. I had to make some changes in my home for a wheelchair and a walker. People helped out along the way. One lady gave me a hospital bed, instead to selling it to me. In turn, I gave it to our local hospice that helped me with both my mom and husband.

At the same time, as a result of my personal experiences, I've learned about the limitations of local resources; I found that I couldn't access most of them, because I made too much money and the programs were geared to those on Medicaid. There is virtually nothing out there for the middle income families. This was a big disappointment for me, but at least now I can refer people to certain organizations when there is a need.

In the end, I've come to realize that being the CSD director means overseeing a department that is needed—not just because of a legal requirement, but because of the need for the students to be able to have support. I feel very proud to be a part of what we have been charged to do.

Summary

Several themes were unfolded in Kit's journey. One is her compassion for others, including animals. She appreciates differences and acknowledges that people come from different places and spaces. This was borne from her early childhood experiences growing up and traveling with her father out in the field and meeting a variety of individuals. Compassion also comes to mind in her work as a DS director, as she has advocated to reconsider the Texas Success Initiative (TSI), based on her belief that the TSI will close doors to opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing students' and other students with disabilities to further their education.

Another emerging element in her story is curiosity. Kit's curiosity is revealed as she answered in response to the interview question to become a director that even though she does not know anything about disabilities, she wanted to and was willing to learn. Curiosity (and compassion) is also evident as she talks with others about how they are doing. She seems to constantly want to know and be in the know.

The notion of curiosity naturally segues into another theme: Education. She is passionate about education, for herself and for others. She pursued two master's degrees and has worked in a variety of educational settings, and continues to engage in personal professional development attending conferences and seeking information from professional resources—such as listservs and journals. She also champions the pursuit of education on the behalf of others. Upon learning something new, she seeks to impart her knowledge to others, bringing to mind John Dewey's point, "There are scholars who have [the knowledge] in a marked degree but who lack enthusiasm for imparting it. To

the 'natural born' teacher learning is incomplete unless it is shared" (Simpson & Stack, 2010, p. 35).

In concordance with her belief that knowledge should be shared, she strives to impart knowledge and information regarding current trends and issues (related to disability services) to her staff in order to ensure that there is a smooth transition when she retires. Kit's thoughts of retirement are front and center. She mentioned a derivative of the word, "retire" nine times, of which four were associated with her own plans.

Chapter Discussion

All of the directors were welcoming and eager to talk about their respective journeys, what they have seen and done as disability service directors/providers, and about their departments. Each of their stories contain commonalities in their themes as well as differences. The make-up of the participants is diverse in terms of years of experience, gender, position responsibilities, size and location of the institutions where they work.

In tracing each participant's journey to becoming a director, only Calvin took a linear path, having gone to school with the expressed intention of working in the field of higher education and student affairs. Harbour (2009) notes that most of the offices of disability services are organizationally located within student affairs or academic affairs, thus making disability services a likely destination having matriculated with a master's degree in Student Affairs.

In comparison, Jill's undergraduate background least resembled the education background profile reported among directors in Dukes III and Shaw (2004), Harbour (2004) or Kasnitz (2013). Regardless, like many other disability service coordinators and

directors, the participants in this study reported learning by trial and error in some manner. After all, pre-service programs related to disability services are scant (Brinckenhoff et al., 1993; Dukes III & Shaw, 2004; Madaus, 2000; Whelley, 2002). None of the participants had any original designs or intentions of becoming a director of disability services.

A brief review of the models of disability are in order here, in preparing to address the research questions involving the directors' ontology in their work with students with disabilities. The three models, borrowing from Guzman (2009) and Guzman and Balcazar (2010) are: the individual/medical, social, and universal design. In short, using the individual/medical model, one views a disability is a condition that must be overcome with help (Alrayes, 2004; Olkin, 2002; Scotch, 1997); this viewpoint situates the disability at the individual level and the director identifies strategies that allows the student with a disability to participate with an equal opportunity to be successful. In contrast, the social model moves the attention away from the individual and addresses environmental conditions or barriers that may impede an individual's ability to participate. Following the universal design model, one evaluates the learning and/or social environment and designs it in such a way to include the greatest number of individuals possible, regardless. Not a model unto itself, but one may also employ a hybrid approach (Guzman, 2009), such as a mixture of individual/medical and social or social and universal design approaches.

As a person with a disability, Calvin's own experiences have influenced the manner in which he conducts himself, as a director and as a director provider of disability services. He has strategically guided his department away from the medical

model of disability, which is the prevailing viewpoint among providers of disability services (Guzman & Balcazar, 2010). For Calvin, ontologically, the medical model which stipulates that the "problem" resides in the individual rather than the environment is antithetical to the social justice model he endorses. Epistemologically, in accordance with his ontological aversion to the medical model, he follows a hybrid model that incorporates aspects of the social and universal design models of disability as exemplified by his department's push for greater inclusion via online forms, as well as the Accessibility Support Team project that is underway.

Ben also espouses the ontological stance that aligns with a hybrid of the social and universal design models. In light of years of experience, one might assume that Ben's ontological and epistemological foundations would be centered on the individual/medical model (Guzman & Balcazar, 2010). On the contrary, he endorses the social/universal design model. His background enables him to look at systems as a whole rather than simply isolate problems at the individual level. For example, he states the case applying the universal design principle for a lab that serves all students recognizing that any student may reap benefits, whether or not they have a disability (Goff & Higbee, 2008).

Jill's viewpoint, however, is the more common among disability service providers in higher education in spite of her years of experience (Guzman & Balcazar, 2010). Her ontology is consistent with the medical model, likely shaped by her early work experiences in the health care industry. For current students who are registered with the disability office, Jill's efforts are focused on individual cases, advising students, advocating on the individual students' behalf, and implementing individual-specific

accommodations, which are the hallmarks of the medical model of disability (Guzman, 2009; Guzman & Balcazar, 2010). In providing support to a student who uses a wheelchair in his efforts to cross the street to access the student bookstore, Jill articulated the social model, whereby she sought to eliminate environmental barriers.

Kit's journey entailed caring for close ones who had become disabled. Her experience enlightened her regarding the challenges individuals with disabilities face. Echoing Shaw and Scott's (2003) conclusion, she stated that the necessity of her department is not just about the need to be legal, but also the need of the students to be able to have support services. She spoke explicitly about her and the department's role to provide assistance to students with disabilities in order for them to overcome their disability and to level the playing field for them. Hence, this directly correlates ontologically with the individual/medical model (Guzman & Balcazar, 2010). However, she also demonstrated elements of universal design when she called attention to securing adjustable tables to augment standard desks in the classroom in order to accommodate diverse student needs from individuals who use a wheelchair, to pregnant women, to individuals who are overweight.

Notwithstanding their perspectives regarding individuals with disabilities, all of the participants indicated that they are concerned about the gaps in awareness regarding disability services and the rights of students with disabilities on the part of administration, staff, and students. The lack of awareness is documented elsewhere (e.g., Baggett, 1994; Jarrow, 1991; Leyser et al., 1998; Leyser et al., 2011; Vogel et al., 2006); There are a number of ways each participant goes about raising awareness—engaging in personal consultations with students, with faculty, and administration; providing formal

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trainings; disseminating printed materials; and through the school's and department's website.

In listening to each of the directors, the underlying theme essential to the task of promoting awareness of their departments and disabilities, in general, is through the development of relationships. There was a consensus among the directors on the need to establish, develop, and maintain relationships in their work with administration, faculty, and students. Kit even detailed the need for face-to-face informal interactions with her own staff as a way of developing and sustaining relationships. Dixon's (1997) portrayal of hallways comes to mind, as "places where collective meaning is made—in other words, meaning is not just exchanged, it is co-constructed in the dialogue between organizational members" (p. 25). It becomes evident that teamwork is essential.

Relationships outside of the college are also important to the directors. Each had mentioned the need to develop associations with other professionals in the field in some manner—directly or indirectly. Moreover, they expressed the value of making connections with other entities, such as public schools, in an effort to meet the needs of students with disabilities who are considering enrollment or who are already enrolled on their campus. Furthermore, both Kit and Jill, who work at the community college were more pronounced in their interviews about having a relationship with DARS providers as a way of meeting the individual needs of students.

The discussion of relationships segues into the next chapter, which offers a unique perspective by presenting capitals that are derived from having relationships: namely, social capital, human capital, and resistant capital. Therein, this study will address the last two research questions which address the forms of capitals each director possesses

as they go about their duties, and the impact their capitals have on services, students, and the institution.

IV. FORMS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN PRACTICE

This study was undertaken as a result of a disorienting dilemma (Mezirow, 1990) borne from an abrupt change in the interpreting services provided. One of my interpreters was no longer a part of my education and was replaced by someone with whom I had not developed communicative chemistry. The disruption of my old ways of knowing triggered my curiosity about directors of disability services' sense of agency as they balance what they believe about disabilities, their responsibility to the institution, and to students with disabilities. Consequently, examining the directors of DS' forms of social capital was an apt fit to my research interest.

After all, directors of DS serve an important role on higher education campuses, since they are, at once, direct and indirect service providers to students, faculty, and administration. Their roles and functions are widely documented (e.g., Blosser, 1984; Dukes III & Shaw, 1999, 2004; Harbour, 2008; Kasnitz, 2013).

The objective of Chapter IV, then, is to address the following two research questions that were formulated at the beginning of the dissertation study: What are the capitals that manifest in the work that DS directors are doing? What impact do the capitals-in-use have on services, students, and the institution?

Thus, this chapter presents an analysis of the data and the different forms of capital found in the narratives that the participants provided. From the many possible forms of capital described in the literature, human capital (Flora, Flora, & Gasteyer, 2015; Lin, 1999), social capital (Coleman, 1988; Lin, 1999; Putnam, 1995; 2000; Stanton-Salazar, 2001), and resistant capital (Delgado-Bernal, 1997; Yosso, 2005) emerged as the three prevalent forms of capital in the work that the directors do while

providing disability services. However, the forms of capital tapestry is informed by cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Flora et al., 2015; Lin, 1999).

The first section of the chapter provides an overview of the forms of capital illustrated with relevant examples provided by the directors (see Table 3). The purpose is to help the reader understand the role that the different capitals play in the directors' practice. The forms of capital, including cultural capital, are discussed in the last section of this chapter in which their commonalities and differences among the four directors are outlined. In addition, this section also highlights further connections to the literature.

Three forms of capital surfaced in the findings: human capital, social capital, resistant capital all within the cultural capital realm.

As illustrated by the directors, institutions are depending on directors to utilize their human capital to adapt and adjust their programs to remain in compliance with Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (Jarrow, 1991; Kaufman, 1991; Madaus, 1998). As stated in the literature, human capital is primarily forged via formal education (Becker, 1962; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000; Flora, Flora, & Gasteyer, 2015), however, few postsecondary programs exist for the purpose of developing human capital specific to the profession of disability services (Brinckenhoff et al., 1993; Dukes III & Shaw, 2004; Madaus, 2000; Whelley, 2002).

Table 3. *Capitals and Examples from Participants*

Forms of Capital	Definition in light of participants' narratives	Participant Examples
Human Capital	Participants told of personal experiences when they have acquired specialized knowledge and skills that they have contributed to their work as directors of DS'.	*I keep up with trends in disability services read articles from professional journals. I am a member of AHEAD, Texas AHEAD, and I attend the national conference and supervisory trainings provided by the College. I share what I learn with others.(Kit)* *My mentor has a background in disabilities. I'm very lucky in that way, because he understands issues and is able to help me navigate different situations. (Ben)*
Social Capital	Participants iterated the importance of developing trusted networks and connections internally and externally in order to mobilize resources and supports for their department and for students with disabilities.	*Disability services is in a unique position on a lot of campuses; there aren't many people on campus who know what we do. My advice is to get connected! Make connections within the college, as well as with colleagues in the field. (Calvin)* *A number of students are referred to us by the counseling department since our office focuses on providing academic supports and accommodations to students with any disability. A lot of times, we refer students to them, because we can clearly see they need some sort of psychological intervention. It works both ways. (Ben)*
Resistant Capital	Participants revealed ways in which their words and actions, directly and indirectly, provided an alternative to the status quo.	*We can help empower students advocate for themselves, speak out, and know their rights. They should learn to question us. (Jill)* *I'm trying to change beliefs away from the medical model paradigm, so that people with*

	Participants seek to counter microagressive policies and practices that marginalize students with disabilities.	*disabilities themselves recognize that a disability is only one aspect of who they are. I tell students all the time that you don't have to wear your disability on your sleeve and announce it to the world, but on the other hand, don't diminish it, either. (Calvin)*

Yet, Coleman (2000), Flora et al., (2015) and others note that human capital can be acquired outside of a formal education. In fact, human capital consists of "the talents, skills, knowledge, and potential of each person" (Flora, Flora, & Gasteyer, 2015, p. 35). Flora et al., (2015) argue that human capital is derived from learning from experiences; for the directors, this includes knowledge and skills borne from personal experiences while growing up and on-the-job experiences and training. Thus, since none of the participants in this study specialized in disability services in college, whatever human capital they acquired in preparation for their role on campus has been secured through other means.

Coleman (1988) contends that human capital does not occur in a vacuum and as such, is a beneficiary of social capital. The production of human capital is facilitated by access to social capital, which entails gaining access and using resources embedded in the directors of DS' social networks for the purpose of securing some return that is of benefit to them (Lin, 1999). Hence, to gain some favor or support for a position or to meet an instrumental need, directors of DS invest in relationships with other individuals or groups who possess the wherewithal that they seek. Putnam (2000) relates two forms of social capital: bonding social capital and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital is generated between individuals and groups who share a common identity (e.g., all are providers of disability services and/or are members of AHEAD). Bridging capital, on the

other hand, consists of relationships that are outside of one's immediate sphere, wherein resources may be accessed (i.e., relationships with those who are not disability service providers--administration, faculty, students, and community).

Another form of capital that emerged from the directors of DS' narratives is resistant capital. Resistant capital refers to goal-directed emancipatory behaviors (Delgado-Bernal, 1997) that, in the end, imbue empowerment in students with disabilities, rather than accepting widely held perceptions that maintain dis-abling conditions.

In large part, cultural capital redounds in the acquisition and utilization of the forms of social capital in practice. Each of the individuals in the study bring with them their "ways of knowing" as a result of their enculturation within their family and the values derived their education. Their respective institutions also have institutional cultural values and practices the participants have adopted. All of the directors in this study possess different manifestations of cultural capital.

The following section of the chapter describes cultural capital, human capital, social capital, and resistant capital from the point of view of the directors' work as they strive to meet the needs of students with disabilities. I present these capitals within the individual narratives to provide a deeper description of the work that each director is doing and selected examples extracted from the interviews with them to illustrate their point of view.

Calvin: Make Connections, Get Connected!

Calvin is a director at a public university. His narrative uncovered three forms of capital: human capital, social capital, and resistant capital. Firstly, one source of Calvin's

human capital is his own disability. He recognizes that having a disability enables students to identify with him and commented,

> Looking back, I can now say that my values on the role of disability services emanate from my own experiences with having a disability. My seizures have really impacted who I am and how I view life. I realize what it's like to have an episodic condition where I never know when my seizures are going to happen, how long they are going to last, how long it's going to affect me. So I understand that it can be challenging for individuals that have these types of episodic conditions that might flare up from time to time. Or if it is like a mental health condition where maybe they are experiencing a depressive episode, having challenges motivating themselves to get out of bed and get to class. But I just think that it is a lesson that all of us have to learn. It's not necessarily an easy lesson. With that, I just want students to accept their disability as one component of their identity, and recognize that it will influence what they do and who they are.

Calvin's disability is his human capital and he shares it with the students he serves. Specifically, his disability is a personal resource that he employs as an instructive device for use with students with disabilities when he is coaching, advising, and educating.

Calvin not only utilizes his disability as a source of human capital, but he also relies on others in the field of disability services to equip him with knowledge and skill development. He speaks accordingly,

> In terms of the support from colleagues, I go back to the listservs that I'm on and the relationships and contacts that I've made with other people along the way.

When I go to AHEAD conferences, it's hard for me not to run into 40, 50 people

that I know. I stay in contact with a lot of my colleagues because I realize that

they've been in the field for a while; they have a lot to offer. If I had questions

and I can't figure out what to do, it's much easier to turn to them and say, "Well,

what would you do in this situation?" and I hope that I can contribute to those

listservs as well, so I that I can also provide my expertise in giving back to them.

Calvin's comment illustrates the value of being able to access human knowledge

resources. He draws from others' knowledge, yet he also suggests that he, too, is able to

contribute to the knowledge base of others in the field.

In addition to human capital, Calvin's association with other disability service

providers carries an additional benefit of social capital. Social capital benefits him in the

manner that it facilitates mutual access to information, knowledge, and expertise from

having networking relationships with other individuals (Moolenar, Daly & Sleegers,

2012). He accesses resources and information from other disability service professionals

through AHEAD and various listservs for human capital development purposes.

Calvin also stressed the importance of developing relationships with fellow

campus personnel to advance the cause of making college an accessible experience for

students with disabilities. His relationships with others on behalf of the institution and

students with disabilities is a product and a source of social capital. Calvin philosophized:

I think that within the field of Disability Services, it is very difficult to be silent. I

think that if you are going to survive within your field, you have to be involved

and make connections with other people on campus. That's why I have

connections with the HR director and the associate vice president who oversees

the IT. Along with that, I have connections with people in other areas of IT--

library media, web design, and instructional designers who produce and oversee

our online classes--and physical facilities.

Calvin provided some concrete examples of instances where he has interfaced with others

on campus. For instance, he shared the following about his connection with Human

Resources (HR) on his campus:

I have partnered with Human Resources (HR) to give updates on their policies

and to explain how Title I of the ADA is implemented. Moreover, the HR

Director and I have been dialoguing about ways to relieve the responsibility of

individual offices from having to pay for accommodations (e.g., interpreters,

CART providers, producing documents in electronic formats). Instead, a

centralized pot of money would be made available to secure the necessary

resources and services.

The relationships he has formed is in the background of an organizational structure

which recently underwent changes, which Calvin believes to be positive in terms of

supporting the department and students with disabilities. Calvin stated,

I like this new structure because I think that it will create more collaboration

within these four areas that already see a lot of overlap to begin with. Here, I am

blessed to be a part of a culture that is proactive, and supportive administration

that recognizes that it is not only is the right thing to do, legally, but also the

morally appropriate thing to do, for they want to be an inclusive environment and

welcoming of all students with all types of backgrounds.

Calvin cites that the climate is amenable and accepting of students with disabilities and the administration demonstrates its support in different ways, including moving DSS away from the Health Center, which represents not only a philosophical shift in thinking, but a symbolic shift away from the medical model. In Calvin's opinion, his institution is striving to promote a climate of acceptance and understanding of students with disabilities and the programs charged with delivering services to them (Kolvitz et al., 2000; Kurth & Mellard, 2006; Wilson et al., 2000).

Shifting the focus to Calvin's social capital relative to students, he takes the time to provide dialogue and develop relationships with his students. In the space of the relationships that he develops with his student, Calvin views himself as an educator providing strategies for success to students with disabilities. He provided an example of his engagement with an older adult learner,

> In my experience working in student affairs, there's a lot of education that happens outside of the classroom as well, such as meeting with a student of sexagenarian age who doesn't know how to navigate the university system. I think of myself as an educator because I'm trained to teach her and other students some of the skills they need in order to be successful. So, I think that there is a level of education that happens both in and outside of the classroom. And how it is assessed might be different, but we are still working to the same goals of making a well-rounded, well-educated individual that will be able to successfully navigate employment once they graduate.

Within the context of his interactions with the students, Calvin is sharing resistant capital (Yosso, 2005), whereby he is equipping them with tools that they could use to

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succeed as a person with a disability, in spite of whatever adversity may come their way. His resistant capital is illuminated as he spoke about moving the institution and students away from the medical model towards a more socially-inclusive perspective:

In addition, I'm trying to change beliefs away from the medical model paradigm, so that people with disabilities themselves recognize that a disability is only one aspect of who they are. I tell students all the time that you don't have to wear your disability on your sleeve and announce it to the world, but on the other hand, don't diminish it, either.

In this space, in the face of the predominantly medically-oriented perspective taken by most directors of disability services (Guzman & Balcazar, 2010), Calvin attempts to impart cultural capital by orienting his school and the students towards a more socially-aware and inclusive environment. He aims to create a culture of can-do among students with disabilities and he believes his relationships with students with disabilities are bonded by possessing a shared identity.

Kit: Know Your Field, Be Engaged!

Kit is a director of a disability office within a community college. Her department is under the auspices of Student Services. Similar to Calvin, the capitals that she manifests in her work are human capital, social capital, and resistant capital. Below are examples of each as she described her activities.

In relations to human capital, explaining what her experiences as director of disability has taught her, Kit said,

I think it impacted my feelings regarding working with people with disabilities. It has not only made me even more compassionate, but also more demanding,

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because when somebody has a disability, they should have an opportunity to achieve or to get the help they need and not just be ignored and forgotten about or bullied or anything like that. The process has taken time. This is not something I came in with into this position--I did not know anything about disability until I came into this job.

For Kit, another means of developing human capital manifests through immersing herself in sundry professional development activities. Professional development (i.e., human capital) underscores much of her role at the college. She endorses professional development, not only for herself, but for her staff. She peruses a variety of sources to access information about disabilities, the laws, and developing leadership skills. Kit utilizes journals in order to keep abreast of issues that directors and other higher education disability providers must contend with in their work as they relate to laws that affect disability services, best practices, and other pertinent and relevant topics. Kit shared,

I try to keep up with trends in disability services by trying to read articles from a variety of professional journals, particularly those that have to do with disability issues; and I share related articles and information with other individuals as I come across them. One of the resources I utilize is the journal called, *Disability Compliance for Higher Education*. I also read a couple of online ones. Other resources I take advantage of discussion groups and newsletters: *Why Disability Lost in the UK*, *ADA OSU*, *Learning Disability Association*, *Student Disability Services in Health Sciences and Medicine*, *The Department of Labor Newsletter*, *Workforce3 One Communities Daily News Digest*, and *pepnet2*, which is specific

to the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students. In addition, I am a member of

AHEAD and Texas AHEAD and attend the national conference every other year;

I rotate attending with the Assistant Director.

The resources which Kit accesses contain a bevy of information useful to the

practice of disability services. Human capital is an integral aspect of Kit's practice in

sustaining pace with legal, service, and resource trends. In the process, she maintains

personal and departmental viability (Romer, 1990; Rosen, 1999). She iterated,

All of our full time staff will be starting in the college's leadership, which is a

good one. I want all of my full-time staff who are in supervisory positions to

receive the training. That is my departmental requirement. If any others want to

do take part in the leadership training, they can take the second level; I will

approve it!

Her actions are congruent with Lin's (1999) definition of human capital, which

represents investment in training and other programs of activities to acquire skills,

knowledge, and certifications. In other words, Directors of DS learn from and depend on

connections with others for their knowledge and skills.

Accordingly, Kit capitalizes on her social capital to better navigate situations that

arise on her campus by connecting herself with AHEAD Texas. Kit referenced linking

with other AHEAD Texas members via listserv to gain insight on how to approach

students, faculty, and administration related to potential legal pitfalls and other challenges

that arise in her position and in her field:

I am a member of the Texas AHEAD, so I am on their listserv. There are different

kinds of situations and questions that people put out, such as, "Do you have this

problem?" or "Can you help me with this . . . " or "Can you help me with that?" I generally share what I learn with the counselors and if it is something other \ than that, I will share it with whoever would be appropriate. So, I find my connections with Texas AHEAD very helpful.

The capacity to negotiate potential legal pitfalls and to guide others, be it students, faculty, or administration, depends on the social structure and the resourcefulness of the directors and networked partners (Stanton-Salazar, 2010). Kit has developed connections with various partners and stakeholders at the institutional level. She talks about how making connections is paramount to one's ability to be an effective service provider:

I think making connections within your institution and networking with various individuals and departments is extremely important. I feel you can do a better job if you utilize the skills of other people and don't try to do everything yourself.

Kit indicates that she is thriving in a supportive environment that enables her to carry out their responsibilities in order to meet the needs of the students, the institution within which she works, and the community at large. Within the context of a supportive climate is the element of trust, which Kit refers to as she spoke about the relationship she has with her supervisor. She credits her supervisor for allowing her to be able to acquire and share social capital within the college, and with others in the community. She shared,

One thing I have got to say about my supervisor -- though I don't always get what I want -- she is somebody I can talk to, which is different from my past experiences. My supervisor allows me to do my business and has been very supportive of me and my department. So, I've got to be thankful for that.

Her connections with administration has enabled her to receive broader support and trust to endorse a mural to be painted in an office by individuals with disabilities and giving her department the go-ahead to coordinate the establishment of a program for students with developmental delays. Trust engenders social capital (Brian, 2007, Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000). In other words, trust is the grease to effect action on various projects and mechanisms in a multitude of spaces, within and outside of one's institution. Kit uses her relationships with partners with whom she has developed trust, and hence social capital to provide support to and receive support from community agencies. As she stated, "We are very strongly linked with DARS! In fact, a couple of DARS people were here just at our staff meeting. We share a lot of information back and forth. DARS is a stakeholder in the community-based project involving the development of a program for students with developmental disabilities."

Moreover, Kit indicated that her involvement in the community extends beyond DARS. She provided the following examples:

We have a lot of connections with the community! We are well entrenched into the community and that is very important. Because of our involvement at the regional level, that has led to us to being involved with a lot of different high schools in the surrounding areas. In particular, we have a unique program here with the local school district. But our connections have also helped the community by them knowing **what** we do, what we **can** do and what we **can't** do. I am also on the advisory board for the regional workforce and their disabilities committee. In addition, we have very good working relationships with universities

and colleges in the surrounding areas. We have had a couple of regional meetings

between us and shared information.

Kit's narrative is in agreement with the literature; as Coleman states, "an important form

of social capital is the potential for information that inheres in social relations.

Information is important in providing a basis for action . . . . (1988, p. S104)." Kit

underscores the importance of sharing information, which enables her to gain social

capital -- with her staff, the faculty, the administration, the students, and the community.

Her access to social capital is not solely for the purpose of promoting her

department and its resources, but also for the purpose of countering what she perceives to

be wholesale alienation and marginalization of students with disabilities, either because

of the imposed Texas Success Initiative (TSI) or because of the K-12 pipeline that

diminishes expectations of students with disabilities.

The Texas Success Initiative is a law that requires students to pass a test with a

certain score in order to take college-level courses towards a degree. A student who does

not meet the cutoff score must take developmental courses which do not count towards a

degree, but must be satisfied before one can take courses that count towards a degree.

Another challenge faced by two of the directors who spoke about this is that financial aid

counts, regardless of level of courses and thus, may be exhausted before a student can

successfully complete a degree. Kit remarked,

I have a real fear that the TSI will lead to big cuts on the number of students with

disabilities who might otherwise enroll in college. And of course, we shouldn't be

doing the developmental level courses. That should be done at the high school!

And now they are pushing the high schools much harder to do that, but you are

starting now with 10th, 11th and 12th graders. What good will that be? It needs to

start in kindergarten and talking to parents! You **have got** to get them to learn

English! You **have got** to get them to write! They need ASL [American Sign

Language]! You need to have these programs. You **don't** baby them! You push

them! And they **can** do it! But, "Oh, poor baby. You don't have to do *that* much.

You will get into the community college." Well, they've gotten in so far, but I

don't know how much longer that will last. I am very emphatic about it. I have

been harping on this for two years, ever since I heard that this is what they were

going to do. Boy, my antenna went up and I started talking about this. I am very

much a radical about it!

Yosso (2004) describes what Kit has undertaken as "resistant capital." In other words, Kit

is building countermeasures by using her social capital with community partners, both in

Texas AHEAD and other individuals to address a system that she believes will otherwise

cause many individuals to decide not to attend college.

Jill: Advocate for Yourself!

Jill works at a community college, where she oversees disability services on her

campus. From the interviews, three forms of capitals surfaced as the sole disability

service provider on her campus: human capital, social capital, and resistant capital. The

theme underlying her capitals is "advocate for yourself." This theme is extracted from the

messages she shares with others with the goal of helping others furthering themselves and

taking charge of their own lives and decisions, beginning with getting an education.

Outside of her experiences, Jill continues to pursue ways to acquire human capital, as she shared that she attempts to access information from a variety of sources to enable her to effectively carry out her duties. She pointed out,

> One of the resources I rely on as I work with deaf or hard of hearing students is *pepnet2*. *Pepnet2* [a federally-funded resource center for disability service professionals working with students who are hard of hearing or deaf] has a wealth of information that they put out on the web. I have taken advantage of their webinars. Another go-to resource I rely on for information is the Texas AHEAD's listserv, where challenging situations are submitted to get input from other disability service providers. I also subscribe to D*isability Compliance in Higher Education*, a professional journal. It is a great resource! The journal has a component called, 'Quick Study,' which involves different situations that have come up at different institutions to gauge your understanding of the issues and their legal implications.

The informational sources vary from web pages to listservs to journals. Jill capitalizes on each to of the different informational resources to provide her with additional human capital. Becker (1962) concluded that investment in education and training is comparable to investment in equipment. Thus, Jill makes an effort to keep up with information in order to give her the tools to be able to navigate legal and institutional issues and challenges, as well as identify resources and best practices in working with students with disabilities.

Entering into the space of online communication and engaging in personal interactions with others professionals in the field for information also contributes to

social capital. From Jill's narrative below, we learn that in the process of her acquiring

human capital from her peers, she is also adding to her stock of social capital. Jill shared,

> There are a few people I connect with for information. I have a counterpart in a
>
> nearby college who is their disability service coordinator; he's been a good
>
> resource to connect with. He's been in that position for quite a long time.
>
> Another person who I rely on is the director of the local DARS office. She has
>
> been in her position for many years, helping individuals and students with
>
> disabilities in a variety of ways. Also, in this region, we have two hearing loss
>
> resource specialists who have been immensely helpful. If there's ever a challenge
>
> with a situation involving a deaf or hard of hearing student, the resource
>
> specialists have been very good about helping identify ways to meet their needs.

Jill's social capital resides predominantly in her relationships with students on

campus, since her participation on campus-based committees is confined largely to a

committee that deals with crises; she becomes involved when a student with a disability

is in crisis. Jill explained that she meets with students to accomplish a variety of tasks,

including serving as an advocate. In one situation, Jill partnered with a student to break

down physical barriers. In her words,

> I have advocated on behalf of students and others when they have faced barriers to
>
> accessibility. There was an instance in which one of our students had to go to the
>
> bookstore, but it is located across the street. When I assisted the student in getting
>
> to the bookstore, we both found out the timing at the intersection for someone
>
> using a wheelchair was not safe. I made some phone calls, as did the student, and
>
> we sent an email to the city traffic department. After about three to four days, the

timing for pedestrians to cross the street was increased, and a concrete slab was redone so someone in a wheelchair could have access to the button for crossing the intersection.

Corresponding to Jill's social capital with students is evidence of resistant capital (Yosso, 2004). Jill philosophizes on the need to empower students to develop their own agency countering the pervasive atmosphere in which choices and decisions are defined and made by others. She shared in the interview,

> I think knowledge is power. Right? But if we can keep people not really knowing all their rights, maybe we can control them? Then, we can have a little bit more control in what all they do, how they behave, what they say, and how outspoken they are. As a result, students with disabilities are only going to take what we say and never question. I don't feel that that's the right thing to do. I think we have to move away from that--controlling people. So, if we don't really help empower the students to know that they can speak out, to advocate for themselves, and to know about their rights, they will never question us; they're never going to challenge us.

In inculcating resistant capital within students with disabilities, Jill draws upon her human and social capitals. Just as she had defied others' diminished expectations, she delivers a message for students with disabilities to disregard the status quo and become self-determined.

Ben: Make Yourself Known and Don't Forget About Us!

As noted in the previous chapter, Ben works at a college where he is in charge of a staff of providers. From the data gathered in his interview, two capitals were extracted for discussion here: human capital and social capital. Human capital is acquired, among other things, from formal education, as Becker (1962) and others have noted. In this regard, human capital in Ben's narrative is derived from two degrees--one in psychology and one in business related to customer intelligence and analytics. He believes both have been instrumental in his work as a director. He indicated that his dual degrees have helped him negotiate the macro college-level issues, as well as the micro personal relationships, as he said,

> I think my business background has helped me a lot in terms of my interactions with other people and departments outside of this office. Having a Master's in counseling psychology has helped me deal with the people side of things. Having a combination of a psychology degree and a marketing degree is unique in this field, but I also think it's that very combination that has contributed to my getting this job, with managing the department, meeting and working with other departments, and working with students, themselves.

Beyond benefiting from formal education and obtaining degrees, seeking interactive support from others who have experience in some capacity similar to ones own can also enrich one's human capital. In this regard, Ben spoke glowingly about someone whom he considers a mentor. The individual has provided him with insights to his questions and concerns, and has helped Ben with identifying possible tools and strategies to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Ben shared this about his mentor: "My mentor has a

background in disabilities. I'm very lucky in that way, because he understands issues and is able to help me navigate different situations."

From his mentor, Ben is able to gain additional perspectives and knowledge of the challenges he and his department are likely to face with regards to budgeting needs, legal requirements, and parameters pertaining to addressing students with disabilities' educational needs, and other departmental considerations. Ben is fortunate to have someone whom he can rely on--someone who can bolster his human capital. Human capital is a rational investment choice made by Ben as well to strengthen his position as a director (Becker, 1975). Accordingly, the mentoring support he has received has opened human capital doors for Ben to better negotiate the challenges he faces as an administrator, as the spokesperson for his department, and as a disability service provider.

Another source of human capital for Ben is the listserv. Ben revealed that there are times when he or his staff have questions that are best answered by other colleagues in the field:

> We will put our questions out on--it's called Disabled Student Services and Higher Education. It's out of Buffalo, and it's one of the biggest listservs for higher ed. disability professionals. Hundreds of questions and topics come in a day! I have to organize the topics in separate folders! I'm not always able to check it, but if we don't know the answer, we'll put questions on the listserv to find out what our colleagues and other institutions have done.

Information that is otherwise out of reach for Ben and his staff is made available through listserv connections with other disability service providers. While they all share a

common identity as providers sharing resources via bonding social capital (Flora, Flora, & Gasteyer, 2015; Putnam, 2000), they are also heterogeneous in terms of geography, their institution's type, institution's size, student demographics, and respective institutional cultures, and institutional climates. Because of the multi-dimensional make-up of the listserv participants, bridging social capital (Flora, Flora, & Gasteyer, 2015; Putnam, 2000) allows for a cross-pollination of ideas that might not otherwise be available if only accessing a single-dimensional demographic.

From Ben's story, we also learn of the social capital he possesses and shares on site, where he works. One example of the immediate relationship that Ben spoke of that provides benefits to both parties is Ben's connection with the counseling department. He explained,

> There is a great deal of collaboration between our department and the
> counseling department. A number of students are referred by them to
> us, since our office focuses on providing the academic supports and
> academic accommodations to the students with any disability. A lot of
> times, we refer students to them, because we can clearly see they need
> some sort of psychological intervention. It works both ways.

The reference to the relationship working "both ways" illustrates the level of trust and norms of reciprocity (Coleman, 1988; Lin, 1999, Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Putnam, 2000) that has been established between Ben (and his department) and the counseling department. Ben and his department have an expectation that the counseling department will follow through on its commitment, just as the counseling department believes Ben and his staff will keep theirs.

Chapter Discussion

From the data, it became evident that all of the directors exhibit human capital and social capital in the work they do. For all but one of the participants, resistant capital was present. Far from suggesting that resistant capital is absent from their practice, the data illustrate that resistant capital was portrayed more prominently by Calvin, Kit, and Jill.

As illustrated by the directors, institutions are depending on directors to utilize their human capital to adapt and adjust their programs to remain in compliance with Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (Jarrow, 1991; Kaufman, 1991; Madaus, 1998). Human capital is primarily forged via formal education (Becker, 1962; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000; Flora, Flora, & Gasteyer, 2015), however, few postsecondary programs exist for the purpose of developing human capital specific to the profession of disability services (Brinckenhoff et al., 1993; Dukes III & Shaw, 2004; Madaus, 2000; Whelley, 2002).

Yet, Coleman (2000), Flora et al., (2015) and others note that human capital can be acquired outside of a formal education. In fact, human capital consists of "the talents, skills, knowledge, and potential of each person" (Flora, Flora, & Gasteyer, 2015, p. 35). Flora et al., (2015) argue that human capital is derived from learning from experiences; for the directors, this includes knowledge and skills borne from personal experiences while growing up and on-the-job experiences and training. Thus, since none of the participants in this study specialized in disability services in college, whatever human capital they acquired in preparation for their role on campus has been secured through other means.

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From the participants' stories, multiple human capital entry points were identified, including direct experiences as a person with a disability (Calvin) and experiences with a family member with a disability (Kit). Years of experience in the field of disability services also contribute to human capital (Kit, Ben, Calvin, and Jill).

All of the participants' human capital continue to be developed as they invest in accessing other people's knowledge and experiences (Lin, 1999). Other sources of human capital were generated from knowledge and skills gleaned from mentors and colleagues with whom the participants interacted (Ben, Kit, Calvin, and Jill). This includes partaking in human capital-rich sources such as AHEAD conferences, journals, and listservs that cater to the unique and specialized field of disability services in higher education. All but one of the participants referred to turning to pepnet2 for specialized knowledge related to deaf and of hearing students. In utilizing the various sources and resources, the participants' acquired human capital translates to increased knowledge and skills, which aids in productivity and output (Becker, 1962; Lin, 1999). The directors of DS credit the variety of informational sources and resources as equipping them with resources needed to handle a myriad of challenges.

Coleman (1988), Robison and Flora (2003) and Schuller (2001) all contend that human capital does not occur in a vacuum and as such, is a beneficiary of social capital. The production of human capital is facilitated by access to social capital, which entails gaining access and using resources embedded in the directors of DS' social networks for the purpose of securing some return that is of benefit to them (Lin, 1999). The structural dimension of social capital reflects the need for directors of DS to reach out to others in order to secure resources that they may not have at their own disposal (Lesser & Prusak,

1999). Put another way, social capital entails interacting with others to gain access to each other's embedded resources (Lin, 1999; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Stanton-Salazar, 2001).

Hence, to gain some favor or support for a position or to meet an instrumental need, directors of DS invest in relationships with other individuals or groups who possess the wherewithal that they seek. Putnam (2000) relates two forms of social capital: bonding social capital and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital is generated between individuals and groups who share a common identity (e.g., all are providers of disability services and/or are members of AHEAD). Bridging capital, on the other hand, consists of relationships that are outside of one's immediate sphere, wherein resources may be accessed (i.e., relationships with those who are not disability service providers--administration, faculty, students, and community).

To meet the needs of students with disabilities, the directors all mentioned tapping into their respective resource systems to provide instrumental and/or emotional support. For instance, three of the directors--Calvin, Kit, and Ben--indicated that they have received from their administration embedded instrumental resources such as money, or intangible embedded resources, such as authoritative support, or both.

Interestingly, it was observed that only Jill has limited social capital within her college for her to be able to call up favors. She does not participate on any committees, except an ad hoc committee that deals with crises. There are no obligations from which to build social capital. Her social capital resides primarily in the space of her work with families and local schools outside of the institution where she works.

Another form of capital that emerged from the directors of DS' narratives is

resistant capital. Resistant capital refers to goal-directed emancipatory behaviors

(Delgado-Bernal, 1997) that, in the end, imbue empowerment in students with

disabilities, rather than accepting widely held perceptions that maintain dis-abling

conditions. Resistant capital is generally associated with the work of Delgado-Bernal

(1997) and Yosso (2005). They observe that communities of color, in their pursuit of

equal rights and collective freedom, engage in social justice. The historical legacy of

resistance passed down from parents and community emboldens individuals of color to

challenge the status quo.

Similarly, I would argue that the directors of disability services, as institutional

agents (Stanton-Salazar, 2001), have demonstrated their roles in supplying resistant

capital to students with disabilities, particularly in light of the fact that disabled

individuals are less likely to have completed a Bachelor's degree or higher than those

without a disability (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Not only are people with

disabilities less likely to enjoy a college degree, "across all age groups, persons with a

disability were much less likely to be employed than those with no disability" (Bureau of

Labor Statistics, 2015). The unemployment rate for persons with a disability was 12.5

percent in 2014, which is more than twice the figure of 5.9% of those without a disability.

In spite of not demonstrating institutional social capital, Jill, along with Calvin,

Kit, and Ben, supplied resistant capital in their work with students with disabilities,

directly and indirectly in their efforts to empower students with disabilities. Jill and

Calvin's message to students is to "speak up for yourself." They spend time teaching

their students ways to advocate for what they need and not merely to accept others words as gospel.

Calvin, Ben, and Kit each demonstrate resistant capital with their respective institutions whereby their counter-narrative is a rebuttal to the status quo's positioning of students with disabilities as "the other." Calvin seeks to promote social justice on his campus; Ben seeks to convince others that students with disability are part of a diverse student population. Kit's resistant capital is seen in her efforts to include students with developmental delays--a population rarely considered among institutions of higher learning. In summary, all of the directors of disabilities are making an effort to instigate social transformation (Solórzano & Bernal, 2001).

Lin (2001) described agents as possessing either *personal resources* and/or *positional resources.* Personal resources refers to resources an actor possesses without having to secure authorization from higher-ups or be held accountable to other actors; conversely, positional resources are advantages gained by an actor's position within a given structure, where he or she has access to others and is able to exchange or borrow resources. Akin to human capital, all of the participants have personal resources at their immediate disposal, for instance, each has brought background experiences to their position; more recently, the directors of DS' personal resources have derived from knowledge gained from in-service trainings, listservs, and so on, with which they have applied relevant knowledge and skills to their practice.

Three participants--Calvin, Ben, and Kit--spoke of positional resources on behalf of their respective departments. Each indicated that they borrowed or exchanged resources with other departments. Calvin exchanges resources with HR to effect changes

in policy and practice; Ben and his department exchange resources with the counseling department to ensure that students with psychological needs are addressed; Kit borrows the skills of one staff member to handle in-house management needs. Jill's position, while it holds little social capital on campus, seems to enable her to access resources in the community that might not otherwise be present.

Omnipresent in the lives and practices of the four directors under study is cultural capital. Where social capital is comprised of resources acquired via social networks and social connections, cultural capital involves resources which are through social identification and reciprocal recognition (Lin, 1999). Flora et al (2015) elucidate, "Cultural capital can be thought of as the filter through which people live their daily lives . . . and the way they view of world around them" (p. 78). For the directors of disabilities, the filter which Flora refers to is the embodied state (Bourdieu, 1986).

There are three states of cultural capital, according to Bourdieu (1986). One dimension Bourdieu names consists of the disposition of mind and body, or *embodied state*. Essentially, this consists of the directors' ontologies. The *institutionalized state* refers to the qualifications and degrees each of the directors possess, as well as their role in the institution. Material goods (e.g., clothing, equipment, forms and documents) represent the *objectified state* of cultural capital.

In the embodied state, the directors' ontologies guide their individual decision-making processes. Calvin's personal history growing up with seizures and only learning later about supports for students with disabilities plays a significant role in his work; Jill's experiences in which she is the first to complete her high school education and graduate from college—all in spite of naysayers—informs her work; Ben's formal education and

subsequent experiences regarding the interplay between human and economic elements factor in his work as a director of disability services; and Kit's early life experiences as she sojourned with her father and cared for animals, instilled the values of compassion, about listening to others, and the importance and value of education.

In addition to the embodied state of cultural capital, another dimension of cultural capital is the *institutionalized state*, which refers to the qualifications and degrees each of the directors possess, and the institutional and community recognition of the respective degrees and titles the directors hold. All of the participants in this study have advanced degrees and have experiences in some manner in working with underrepresented and underserved populations (such as students with disabilities), and have a title that implies specialized knowledge and are in possession of skills to address the educational needs of students with disabilities. Calvin, Kit, and Ben all have access to decision-making bodies by virtue of their cultural capital, in which their titles, "Director of Disability Services," permits high-level discussions and partnerships with other decision-makers on campus. This is an example of Bourdieu's reference to *institutionalized* cultural capital, which entails conferment of some recognition that potentially adds to an actor's capacity to produce or contribute something of value to the institution.

Finally, the objectified state of cultural capital includes tangible attributes associated with the position. One tangible aspect observed in the study involved the location of the office of disability services. It can be said that the three directors' (Calvin, Ben, and Kit) whose offices are in the midst of other student services offices possess greater levels of objectified cultural capital than Jill, whose office seemed to be more

cloaked and distant from other essential services. Even Jill commented specifically on the fact that she is isolated from others.

The proximity to other integral student support services may be convertible to other capitals, as witnessed by the wide-ranging and far-reaching involvement Calvin, Ben, and Kit indicated having in campus affairs. Their centrality of their offices appears to facilitate social capital, whereas Jill's office's relative isolation seems to dissuade internal partnerships, thus limiting her social capital.

V. TAKING A STEP BACK TO LOOK AHEAD

This qualitative case study recorded the experiences of four individuals who are in charge of disability services on their respective campuses. Data was gathered from face-to-face interviews and phone conversations, as well as via e-mail exchanges in order to answer the study's guiding questions:

1. What are the participants' journeys into becoming directors of disability services?

2. How do the directors' ontology manifest themselves in the supports they provide to students with disabilities?

3. What are the capitals that manifest in the work that DS directors are doing?

4. What impact do the capitals-in-use have on services, students, and the institution?

The driving force behind this study was to document the journeys and experiences of four disability service directors in order to give voice to higher education disability service professionals who are in charge of overseeing departments charged with maintaining compliance with federal laws to ensure a discrimination-free and educationally accessible environment for students with disabilities. This study was an opportunity for four individuals to provide their own lived stories as directors of disability services on higher education campuses.

In turn, their stories may inspire directors and providers of disability services in higher education to appreciate the value of and application of human capital, social capital, resistant, and cultural capital in their daily work. Study findings may also be informative to the national AHEAD organization as they revisit their Program Standards. University and college administrators are also considered as an important audience for this study, given the need to be aware of the multiple fronts and challenges participants

and others in the field face and the value of human, social, and resistant capital in their practice.

To arrive at this point, Chapter One served as the launching point for the study by introducing the impetus and focus of the study, and the study's guiding questions. In addition, Chapter One reflected on the current literature involving the definitions of disability, the laws that disability services must attend to, models of disabilities, and introduced three theories of capital employed in this study's analysis. Chapter Two explained the methodology by which this study was conducted, including the study's design, data collection, and data analysis. In Chapter Three, stories and experiences from four directors of disability services were told in their own words with accompanying professional journey timelines and personal artifacts. Chapter Four included more of the participants' stories, though filtered through the lenses of human capital, social capital, and resistant capital. The current chapter's mission is to answer the question, "So what?" by reflecting on the impact and implications the respective capitals have on practice. A summary of the reflection questions for each capital is provided in Table 4 in association with emerging themes. In addition, tensions encountered in the undertaking of this study will be shared, along with recommendations for future research.

Table 4. *Capitals and Emerging Themes: Reflection Questions*

Capital	Emerging Themes	Reflection Questions
Human Capital	- Sources of knowledge: - Listservs - Professional journals - Colleagues in the field - Mentors - Knowledge of laws - Knowledge of different disabilities - Ability to mediate and negotiate differences in perspectives - Ability to educate others - Knowledge of institution's power brokers - Maintain involvement with AHEAD - Practice praxis	What knowledge and skills are needed to be an effective director of disability services? Where are the sources of knowledge that will benefit directors of disability services? How is human capital sustained?
Social Capital	- Build bridges with other departments - To affect macro- and micro- politics and practices - Instrumental and emotional support - Community partnerships	What makes social capital so critical in the one's work as a director of disability services? How was social capital established in professional networks?
Resistant Capital	- Recognize disability as a social construct - Empower students with disabilities	How will the study participants' stories help disrupt the status quo?

Human Capital

Human capital consists of skills and abilities, including the ability to access resources and bodies of knowledge outside of their immediate purview. Being equipped with such skills and abilities leads to greater understanding and the ability promising practices (Flora, Flora & Gasteyer, 2015). Human capital is not limited to the human

capacity to produce for economic gains (Becker, 1962), since there is no foreseeable way to quantify outcomes. However, the value of human capital cannot be understated relative to disability service directors and professionals in their endeavor to satisfy the jobs' demands.

Human capital is not a self-contained phenomenon, for it has enabled the participants to benefit others with and for whom they work--administration, faculty, students, and the community at large. They have relied on personal experiences, listservs, journals, colleagues in the field, and mentors for their human capital nutrients.

Directors of disability services and others in the field encounter a voluminous amount of information that they must navigate through as they attempt to secure as well as maintain new knowledge skills. From the interviews, all of the participants alluded to having to keep updated on the laws that impact services for students with disabilities, having to keep abreast of technological advances pertaining to assistive technology, and having to learn how different disabilities affect students' ability to access their learning and social environments.

AHEAD, too, recognizes the importance of human capital, as they specify "Professional Development" as one standard to be upheld. Within the standard, two subsets speak specifically to the importance of developing and maintaining knowledge and skills: providing *opportunities* for ongoing professional development and provide the *tools and skills* to work with students with disabilities (AHEAD, 2012).

Social Capital

Portes aptly notes, "Whereas . . . human capital is in (people's) heads, social capital inheres in the structure of relationships" (2000, p. 7). He expounds upon this,

indicating that the manifestation of social capital resides in the advantages that others provide to the individual--advantages that cannot be secured on one's own.

For the participants in this study, the advantages reside in their relationships with administration, with other departments, with students, as well as with community-based entities. The participants utilized social capital in a variety of spaces in their efforts to provide resources and services for students with disabilities on their respective campuses and to ensure that the institution is in compliance with the laws. By having such connections, the directors of disability services spoke of having access to decision-makers and decision-making bodies; having access to financial sources and resources to procure needed funds for programming, services, and assistive technology; and having access to community-based entities and resources.

AHEAD's Program Standards (2012) recognizes the significance of social capital, for in the standards, the word "collaborate" is mentioned eight times. However, one outtake from this study is three of the four directors referred to the need to develop and sustain bridging social capital (Putnam, 2000; Flora et al., 2015) with community entities. They spoke of the need to go to public schools and connect with high school students there; they also spoke of the need to partner with vocational rehabilitation services and other resources. As result, this finding suggests the need to extend AHEAD's program standards to include community outreach. The current standards refers to community involvement on campus advisory boards but not the other way around.

Finally, it is essential to point out that social capital has been found to have more than instrumental value (Flora et al., 2015). Flora et al. (2015) note the emotional support is also a byproduct of social capital. In the safety net of trust, all of the directors in this

study revealed having connections with others for the purposes of gaining emotional support and understanding. Much of the emotional support derived from others who share common values, which was generally other disability service professionals.

Resistant Capital

Going forward in terms of maintaining discourse on the directors of disabilities' resistant capital (Yosso, 2004), I would like to propose considering the importance of their work as a form of "transformational resistance" (Delgado-Bernal, 1997). In succinct terms, Delgado-Bernal suggests that transformational resistance involves "holding an acute awareness of her/his oppressive conditions, and . . . be motivated by liberation or social justice (p. 24, 1997)."

Hence, the participants found attitudinal and behavioral ways to counter the "status quo"--i.e., that the disability resides within the student. Adopting and advocating a social justice stance enables students with disabilities to be included in institutional discussions of issues related to race, class, and gender.

Additionally, participants in this study revealed their value as "institutional agents" (Stanton-Salazar, 2001), rather than simply being caretakers and "service providers." They supplied resistant capital by instilling an empowerment mentality in students with disabilities, demonstrating that students with disabilities need not be passive actors.

Cultural Capital

The directors' stories and their sense of agency (i.e., human capital, social capital, and resistant capital) serve as the foreground for discussion; however, (institutionalized) cultural capital is pervasive in the background as it is sine qua non. Each of the directors'

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Masters' degrees is a reflection of the values that higher education institutions place on advanced educational qualifications, even if the participants' degrees were not in the field of disability services.

Additionally, every institution has a culture of its own, regardless of its function, which is reflected in at least a mission statement. All four college's websites contained mission statements; on the other hand, value statements were located on only three of the four websites. Common and divergent attributes were discovered amongst the missions and value statements that were examined.

The mission statements of the different institutions seemed to reflect a different tone from one another. Three of the four mission statements held a more humanistic, student-centered perspective, specifically mentioning their intent on developing "students." One mission statement appeared more rational and directed towards society as a whole. Several mission statements referred to institutions' determination to produce excellence in academics, provide various educational opportunities, and strive towards contributing to society in some manner.

All three of the institutions that shared value statements included student growth. Even though only two of the four colleges specified the importance of valuing diversity in their missions, all but one stressed diversity in their statement of core values. Coincidentally, my own impression of the disability services offices' whose institutions targeted diversity in their core values was one of inclusiveness. The directors in these institutions seemed to hold a more social perspective of disabilities.

Going Forward

Recommendations for Policy-Makers

The best gift given to disability services providers was the federal sponsorship of the first-ever disability service professionals' conference in 1977, titled, "Disabled Students on American Campuses: Services and State of the Art Conference" (Marx & Hall, 1977, 1978, as cited in Madaus, 2011). The study findings indicate that the organization now known as AHEAD plays an integral role in the development of the directors of disabilities' human and social capital.

Continued federal support is also essential in the maintenance of another entity-- pepnet2. More often than not, as evidenced by the sample in this study, not all colleges and universities have specialists who understand the cultural, linguistic, and educational needs of d/Deaf students. Participants credited pepnet2 with providing them with information related to working with students who are d/Deaf they might not have found elsewhere.

Moreover, the directors noted some of the many challenges Wolanin (2005) observed in that students with disabilities are at a significant disadvantage financially compared to students without disabilities, even before matriculating into college. There are two challenges in particular that need to be redressed: financial aid application constraints and financial aid timeline constraints.

Current 2015-2016 "Free Application for Federal Student Aid" (FAFSA) regulations asks that the student documents "unusual circumstances … that might affect your need for student financial aid, then consult with the financial aid office at the college you plan to attend" (FAFSA, 2016). Wolanin (2005) contends, "To have the expenses

related to their disabilities included in the cost of attendance, students must take the initiative, knock on the door of the student financial aid office, and make their case to the student financial aid administrator" (p. 20). The form assumes that all students, especially students with disabilities and their families possess self-confidence and self-advocacy skills.

For students and families who have been coddled by their respective special education programs, they may not possess the wherewithal. Even those who became disabled post-high school may not have the knowledge or skills needed to proceed with applying for financial aid for college.

Just as was mentioned in some of the directors' narratives, Wolanin (2005) shares that there may be a number of reasons why an individual may require more time to complete their studies. Among them, students with physical disabilities may need additional time to ambulate from place to place; their stamina may be sapped. They may need more time to bathe, dress, shop, and accomplish other self-care tasks. Outside of their studies, students may have to make repeated to doctors, therapists, counselors, and so on. Learning to use and maintaining auxiliary aids requires time, as well. Further, students with physical disabilities or cognitive disabilities may need additional time on academic tasks.

As a result, students who have physical, cognitive, or emotional disabilities who, for whatever reason, may not be able to carry a full load (e.g., stamina, anxiety, to name a few). Policies such as the Texas Success Initiative preclude students from completing their program of study. Specifically, policies that connect financial aid to timely graduation disregard students who need developmental courses, but also depend on

financial aid; funding is exhausted being spent on developmental coursework before a student has an opportunity to take degree-based courses.

Recommendations for College and University Administrators

Directors of disability services and providers of disability services on college campuses are, first and foremost, employees of the institution. They are responsible for ensuring that the institution is in good legal standing. However, the position relies on being able navigate a multitude of demands, which can only be enhanced by the continued support of administration.

Relative to human capital, one of the important steps administrators can take is to create or avail opportunities for disability service professionals to engage in professional development. At the outset, strong consideration should be given to encouraging and supporting the development of pre-service training programs for individuals wishing to become higher education disability services professionals. This would alleviate some of the pressures felt by participants to have to learn on the fly. No doubt, not all who go into the field of disability services will have planned on such a career.

Thus, at the risk of stating the obvious, directors must have regular opportunities to strengthen their human capital through structured professional development in addition to informal workplace learning. McClellan and Stringer (2009) remind us that higher education providers of student services can only help the institution achieve its goals if they are educated and given the tools and skills to be able to support, educate, and develop students.

One of the issues expressed by the participants is that there is an ongoing need to educate faculty and staff about disabilities and services. The best vehicle for educating

others is social capital, and the ideal institutional veins within which to spread such information lies in opportunities to serve on advisory committees and decision-making bodies. It became abundantly clear to me that the absence of space for within-institutional social capital means a corresponding vacuum in the directors of disability services' agency in giving voice to their department and, ultimately, to students with disabilities.

Therefore, including disability service professionals on decision-making and advisory bodies is recommended in order to effect a number of benefits, including, but not limited to: institution-wide decisions being made in which students with disabilities are kept in mind; departmental and committee representatives consider students with disabilities when making local decisions; and partnerships between the office of disability services and other departments being developed and/or strengthened.

Lastly, institutional policies that dictate graduation expectations must bear in mind those students who need additional time to complete coursework. It is understandable that extending financial aid for a student who prolongs their education may not be cost-effective, however, consideration should be given to those who have documentation that they have a disability. Expecting a full load for every student is unreasonable, since there are a number of mitigating factors that may contribute to a student with disabilities' need to extend the timeline for graduation.

Recommendations for Directors of Disability Services

One recommendation resulting from this study is for DS directors to get connected. In fact, Calvin shared, "That would be my first recommendation. Get connected with other members . . . other colleagues within the field." Jill added that she would recommend getting connected with the local school district. She suggests

particularly the special education department to gain a foothold in preparing students with disabilities for postsecondary experiences and making them aware of disability services. Additional entities to consider developing relationships with are: the local and state-based Workforce commissions, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Business Relations (in Texas, Business Relations is under Vocational Rehabilitation). Another takeaway from the study is to utilize listservs. Listservs readily enables disability service professionals to connect with others from a distance to gain information and resources to address different situations.

Yet, real psycho-social components of social capital--i.e., trust and life contentment—were more pronounced in face-to-face community interactions (Lee & Lee, 2010). In-person participation in professional organizations, such as AHEAD, is needed for the purpose of fostering social capital. In addition, such involvement is likely to foster the development of human capital, with the quantity and quality of information and knowledge provided in that space.

Participants reported encouraging individual students with disabilities to find their own voice so that they may get their needs met, rather than passively acquiesce to the conditions they face. Thus, voice (resistant capital) is shared, but the impact is limited to the student. AHEAD's (2012) Program Standards recommendations for students with disabilities to serve on advisory boards is a good one, as it would give students with disabilities a more generous space to add their voices and resistant capital.

Additionally, the participants expressed concerns consistent with the literature that for a variety of reasons, there is an underrepresentation of students with disabilities registered with DS for supports and resources (Getzel, 2008; Newman & Madaus, 2015b;

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Rocco, 2002). New student orientations are an ideal platform to introduce DS to **all** students, since a) we are all "temporarily-abled" bodies, for at any time, one can *become* disabled (Gerschick, 2000), b) since students without disabilities may be a vehicle for supporting their friends' decision to disclose, and c) for the more obvious reason that it lets students know that there is such a resource on campus and where to go to.

<h3 style="text-align:center">Tensions and Challenges Encountered</h3>

Undertaking this study presented opportunities as I learned from four directors of DS their stories, but there were also tensions and challenges, which will be discussed herewith. Initial challenges faced involved the design of the study. Should I or should I not include the DS director from my own campus? After all, my personal experiences as a recipient of disability services was the catalyst for proceeding with this research in the first place. This breeched into another tension, would the participants be willing to talk to me about their experiences? Even if they consented, how much would they be willing to share?

I reasoned that the only way participants would be willing to open up to me about their experiences was to assure that their identity would be concealed. Maintaining confidentiality was important to me, recognizing that the disability services community is small.

Once participants were identified, then there was the issue of how I was going to conduct the interview. Would I use sign language interpreters? If so, who would be responsible for paying--my university or the institution I am visiting? I settled on utilizing remote CART services. The acquisition of CART services was not without its own challenge, since my professor had to assure disability services that CART services

would not constitute cheating or "compromise the integrity" of my work, which is often a concern of faculty members (Burgstahler & Doe, 2006; Nelson, Dodd, & Smith, 1990).

Another tension related to whether or not I would be a participant-observer given my own involvement as a "consumer." In the end, this study was not about me or my experiences; it was about collecting and documenting the experiences of four directors of disability services.

In that same vein, being a Deaf researcher, I was originally (and still am) interested in learning of the directors' experiences working with d/Deaf students. The interview findings forced me to reconsider my focus, as the experiences of the participants centered more with the broader population of students with disabilities.

Other tensions and challenges arose during the course of the data collection and analysis process. My original research questions involved exploring the directors' ontologies and matching up their ontologies with acquired capitals. However, the lack of neatness in the stories made it difficult to piece ontologies and capitals together. Additionally, during the course of the study, it was revealed to me that one of the participants was a one-person department and her designation was not that of a director. I made the conscious decision to include Jill, since I reasoned that she is in charge of the provision of disability services on her campus and she is the one who is looked to for guidance by administrators, faculty, and students.

In the end, in spite of the tensions and challenges, this study added a unique element to the literature related to disability services in higher education. Directors of disability services possess agency in the form of human, social, and resistant capital.

There are new openings to explore, however, in future research endeavors, which will be discussed next.

To Go Where No One has Gone Before

More work needs to be done to document the experiences of disability service providers. This study focused on directors of departments in public institutions. Future studies may consider examining public versus private institutions, community colleges and technical colleges versus major universities, and small institutions versus larger institutions.

Any efforts to examine the experience of providers relative to d/Deaf students would best be conducted with specialists or those providers who have a background in working with d/Deaf students. This includes an awareness of the many "faces of deafness," including language, culture, educational experiences, to name a few.

Examining the work of disability providers through the lens of other types of capital may be informative, such as exploring Yosso's (2004) navigational capital, or Bourdieu's theory of social capital (1986). Along the same lines, a study similar to the one conducted by Pearl (2013), whose units of analysis were students and student affairs professionals and their mentoring relationships and social capital.

I briefly referred to the role of the directors of disability services as "Institutional Agents" (Stanton-Salazar, 2001, 2010). My mention merely touches the iceberg; undoubtedly, this topic deserves undivided attention.

Finally, the employment rate of individuals with disabilities lags behind the rate recorded for the general population (Newman, Wagner, Knokey, Marder, Nagle, Shaver, & Schwarting, 2011). Learning about the impact of disability service providers on

students with disabilities would be helpful to inform administration and policy-makers of the importance of gaining campus buy-in. The study would offer a different perspective than the one conducted by Warick (2010), which examined hard of hearing students experiences through Tinto's (1975) theory of retention framework.

Concluding Thoughts

My journey began from the vantage point of a Deaf student and consumer of disability services. The intention was to learn the challenges faced by directors of disability services in their work with d/Deaf students. Needless to say, I am not where I began. Through the generosity of the four individuals who have given their time, I have learned a great deal more about the "inner workings" of being a director of disability services. Certainly, I have only scratched the surface, but what I have learned has taken me miles further down the road.

This research project addressed a gap in the literature by documenting the stories of disability services directors that were heretofore untold. I, and I hope the readers of this study, have learned about the journeys of four individuals in their work as directors of disability services and what shaped their viewpoints and values. Moreover, I learned how their viewpoints and values have manifested themselves in the work they do; how their respective human, social, and resistant capitals are manifested; and how their capitals impact the work they do in providing resources and services to students with disabilities. Their jobs are not easy ones since they must navigate the winding roads in the spaces between what they believe and value of student with disabilities, the laws, their institution's climate, and the awareness level of faculty, students, and community.

As a beneficiary of disability services and as a researcher undertaking this study to learn about the directors of DS' work with students with disabilities, little did I realize what would surface in the findings. I hold greater appreciation of directors of DS as institutional agents (Stanton-Salazar, 2001) and am in awe of the enormity of the tasks faced by DS directors and their utilization of the different forms of social capital to accomplish their jobs on behalf of their institutions and students with disabilities.

In turn, the experience in undertaking this study has informed my own forms of social capital in practice as a school psychologist in the K-12 pipeline. Consequently, I am much more reflective of my own role as an institutional agent and the forms of social capital I possess. Hearing from the participants that they wish more students with disabilities would know and take advantage of the resources that are available through their departments, I intend to further share my own forms of social capital with fellow practitioners, educators, parents, and students about disability services in higher education.

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