

# DSP Connections

Disabled Students' Program Community News  
University of California, Berkeley

## Become Part of DSP's Community

Would you like to receive periodic updates and newsletters by email on DSP's initiatives? Fill out the enclosed card or send your email address to [dspfriends@berkeley.edu](mailto:dspfriends@berkeley.edu).

## DSP Alumna Becomes Worldwide Disability Rights Advocate

From *The Promise of Berkeley, Spring 2009* by Janet Wells. Used by permission.

Until she came to Cal, Shannon Coe, Class of 2000, had never heard of disability rights. Born in war-torn Vietnam, Coe contracted polio as a toddler and fled the country with her family when she was four years old. She received her first wheelchair when she arrived in America months later — a vast improvement in mobility. Still, growing up in inner-city Los Angeles, Coe felt isolated because of her disability, and was taunted at school.

With her acceptance to Berkeley came a letter from the Disabled Students' Program (DSP), a national leader in disability rights. It was "eye-opening," Coe, 32, says. "I never knew that disabled people could be just as integrated and involved. DSP gave me confidence that I was capable, and how to compensate or work around issues to succeed in the world."

## New Assistive Technology Teaching and Learning Center Opens

After decades of using assistive technology in the cramped "CAVE" in Moffitt Library's basement, the campus will be opening a bright, spacious new facility in Wheeler Hall in Spring 2009. It will contain state-of-the-art technology including software for literacy, speech recognition, mathematical equations, organizing, and visual assistance, as well as a Braille embosser and media to convert textbooks into accessible formats on demand. An open house will be held May 11 to inaugurate the new facility (see reverse side for details). ▶



At Berkeley, Coe began to cut a global swath as a disability advocate, interning with the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. and studying in England, where she persuaded a member of Parliament to shadow her for a day to understand barriers faced by the disabled. After graduating with a B.A. in mass communications, Coe served in the Peace Corps, organizing Special Olympics projects and teaching English in Paraguay. She has traveled to 43 countries, including Vietnam, Cuba, and India on volunteer missions to deliver wheelchairs.

"In undeveloped countries, nothing's accessible," she says. "Disabled people can't even leave the house."

Coe, who was chosen Ms. Wheelchair California 2008 and first runner up to Ms. Wheelchair America 2009, is now studying for her master's degree at the Monterey Institute of International Studies with the goal of forging a bridge between the disabled worldwide. ●



## Attend the ATTLC Open House

You are cordially invited to attend the grand opening of the Assistive Technology Teaching and Learning Center:

**Monday, May 11, 2009**  
**2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.**  
**22 Wheeler Hall**



## DSP Director Ed Rogers Retires

A festive gathering at the Alumni House on December 8, 2008 celebrated Ed Rogers' decade as director of the Disabled Students' Program. At the reception he was presented with the campus's highest honor for staff, the Distinguished Service Award. Ed initiated many new programs during his tenure to benefit the campus' s 700+ students with disabilities to improve their academic success and full participation in campus life. "I'll miss DSP," said Ed, "but I'm eager to do more sailboat and BMW racing, traveling, spending time with my family in Southern California, and playing with our three yellow labs." We salute Ed for his years of dedicated service to Berkeley's students and wish him well in retirement. •



## New Director Sought for DSP

A national search is under way to locate a new Director for the Disabled Students' Program. For information about this position, visit [dsp.berkeley.edu](http://dsp.berkeley.edu). In the meantime, DSP is under the leadership of two interim co-directors, Connie Chiba and Randy Jordan, long-time DSP managers. •

## Support Stellar Services for Stellar Students

Your gifts to the Disabled Students' Program help provide innovative services for our outstanding scholars. Visit [dsp.berkeley.edu](http://dsp.berkeley.edu) to make a secure gift online. Or mail a check, payable to UC Regents, to DSP, 260 César E. Chávez Student Center, Berkeley, CA 94720-4250. Thank you!

