

## The First Disability Ministry Certificate Granted

By Jim Pierson

One of CCFH's goals is to spread the word that people with disabilities need to know who Jesus is. We do that through the development of a variety of educational materials that are available on our website. All of the work we do in education is aimed at training church workers to include people with disabilities in their programs. A growing part of our resources is our Certificate in Disability Ministry available through Johnson Bible College.

Students are required to take four courses: *Introduction to Disability Ministry*, *Survey of Persons with Disabilities*, *Family Issues in Disability Ministry*, and *Ministry Strategies for Person with Disabilities*. The courses are designed to provide the student with a well-rounded view of disability ministry. The studies begin with a background of the history of disability ministry and the present status of the church's ministry to people with disabilities. The second course gives an overview of people with disabilities and suggests methods for working with them. The third course discusses the needs of families experiencing disability and outlines ways the church can minister with them. The final course guides the student in developing strategies that will build disability ministries in their congregations.

Several students are in the process of working on the Certificate. It is rewarding to know that across this country and beyond people are learning to provide disability ministry in their congregations and communities.

In June, JBC/CCFH granted the first Disability Ministry Certificate. It went to Heather Brugger of St. Albert, Alberta, Canada. Heather has been a delight to teach. She is full of energy and wants to do disability ministry. Her project was to design a retreat for families experiencing disability that she hopes to do someday in Canada. Her interest is growing. She plans to enter college to further her interest in disability concerns.

Congratulations, Heather! I will miss your emails, your keen interest, and am expecting great things from you.



Go to [www.ccfh.org](http://www.ccfh.org) for more details on the Certificate in Disability Ministry Distance Learning Program.

If you reside outside the United States or need additional information about the program before enrolling, please contact us at [info@ccfh.org](mailto:info@ccfh.org).

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### Use [Disabilityinfo.gov](http://Disabilityinfo.gov) to Enrich Your Ministry

***A Different Kind of Courage: Safeguarding and Enhancing Your Psychological Health*** is a new educational video depicting how service members and their families may be affected by combat and deployment stress. This 25-minute video may be viewed by clicking on [link](#) or [http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/military/FullLength\\_LQ.wmv](http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/military/FullLength_LQ.wmv).

### It is a Question of Understanding

Question: A mother's caregiver expressed dismay that the pastor of her church continually questions the family about not attending weekly Bible study. They do attend Sunday worship services and serve the church in other ways. Due to the mother's attention span and degree of understanding, the Bible study setting is not conducive. How should the caregiver address the pastor's concerns?

Reply: Concern for spiritual welfare is admirable but we must show empathy for individual situations and relate on a more personal level. Assure the pastor of the family's commitment to study the Bible on a regular basis; welcome ministry home visits for study of a suitable duration; ask for suggestions for home study material; and above all pray for the understanding of the pastor so that he may effectively minister to all.

### Introducing Learning the Basics of Disability Ministry

In an effort to update and provide material in easy to follow formats, we have combined two of our most requested publications, *Basic Disability Training for Christian Education Teachers* and *Beginning a Disability Ministry*, into a six lesson study. Use it to train your staff individually or in a group setting. An outline follows:

#### Lesson 1

- A. Study the specific call for disability ministry.
- B. Review the principles of its foundation.
- C. Establish a plan – not a program.
- D. Look at some considerations.

#### Lesson 2

- A. Look beyond architectural barriers.
- B. Consider ministerial staff education.
- C. Review the twelve major steps for implementing a disability ministry.

#### Lesson 3

- A. Identify suitable volunteers.
- B. Provide volunteers with awareness and accommodation information.
- C. Retain volunteers with encouragement.

#### Lesson 4

- A. Study an overview of disability.
- B. Get to know the student.
- C. Make everyone a part of the inclusion process.

#### Lesson 5

- A. Review the necessity for discipline and how to put it in to practice.
- B. Look at procedures for behavior management.
- C. Apply the basics to the learning setting.

#### Lesson 6

Consider three action plans:

- A. General Published Material — Adapt
- B. Special Needs Curriculum — Adapt
- C. Custom — Create

This material may be used to address Christian education not only in Sunday school but, in a small group or other settings ministering with learners of all ages.

[Click](#) to go to our Online Store. Order today and use the material to enhance your ministry no matter what the configuration.

*Information in this CCFH **Connections** newsletter compiled by Sylvia Hemphill, Director of Administrative Functions and Resource Materials.*