



# SVRI Newsletter Winter 2009

## Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 1

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTERESTS:

This is a *Special Edition* issue of the SVRI Newsletter. This issue is dedicated to Honor and In Memory of:

- Shirley Stewart
- Paul Hoffman
- Henry Redkey

Awards & Recognition to:

- Tom Modahl
- John Wesolek
- Dan Stewart

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- In Honor and In Memory of 2
- Awards and Recognition 3

ON Back:  
New Generation of Leaders

## Special Edition

### The IMPORTANCE of History

*Executive Director: John Lui, CRC, CDMS, PhD*

The Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Conference, besides providing quality professional development topics for practitioners, also promoted one important concept – LEADERSHIP.

We honored and remembered Shirley Stewart, Henry Redkey and Paul Hoffman; and presented the Outstanding Graduate Award to Dan Stewart, and the Distinguished Service Awards to John Wesolek and Tom Modahl.

These great pioneers that we

recognized at the Conference had laid the foundation for the future generation of leaders to build upon to create the Department of Rehabilitation & Counseling and the Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute that exist today. These individuals gave tremendously at their personal and professional levels for the growth of the rehabilitation fields and for the primary focus on student learning.

With the current undergraduate and graduate students in the audience at this Conference, we

were actually witnessing the passing of the torch to a new generation of rehabilitation leaders. We look forward to their journey of growth and development to elevate this field and this profession to a different plane to positively impact the lives of ALL people with or without disabilities.

## Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Conference Highlights

The 2008 Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Conference was another *great* success with many attendees from across the nation, faculty and staff from SVRI and the Department of Rehabilitation and Counseling, and included Stout students primarily in the field of Vocational Rehabilitation. Students were able to attend for free!

The theme of the conference was "Rehabilitation <-> Employment: Supply <-> Demand," and many sessions discussed the importance of supply and demand in the field of rehabilita-

tion and in the work place. Employers were identified as an important stakeholder.

Some of the session topics that focused on the demand-side of employment included 'Economic Development and its Connection to the Workforce,' 'Legal Issues with Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining Workers With Disabilities,' 'Reasonable Accommodation-The Key to Success,' 'Ethical Dos and Don'ts: Avoiding Potential Dilemmas When You Can and Dealing with Problems When You Can't,' and 'Employer Solutions to Work Interruptions:

Tools for Return-to-Work at Andersen Windows-Menomonie.'

This was a great opportunity to learn how employment and rehabilitation interact with the supply and demand of employers and workers; this was also an opportunity to interact, converse, and collaborate with students and professionals in the field that have a variety of backgrounds, outlooks, and ideas. It was a conference to remember.

# In Honor and In Memory of...

The field of Vocational Rehabilitation and the expansion of SVRI has been led by many visionary leaders who dedicated their lives to service. Three individuals who are honored and remembered in this edition of the SVRI Newsletter include Shirley Stewart, Paul Hoffman, and Henry Redkey. The following remarks were taken from their memoirs in the Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Conference 2008 program pamphlet.

*"If your actions  
inspire others to  
dream more, learn  
more, do more and  
become more, you  
are a leader."*

*~John Quincy  
Adams*

*"The best example  
of leadership, is  
leadership by  
example."*

*~Jerry McClain*

## Shirley Stewart 1948-2003

Shirley Stewart had a consistent focus of promoting the value and purpose of vocational evaluation. She taught undergraduate and graduate courses at UW-Stout in vocational evaluation and assessment, non-profit management and psychological testing in the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (now Rehabilitation and Counseling). Outside the classroom, Shirley possessed strong administrative and leadership skills. As a result, she was frequently promoted throughout her academic career including department chair, graduate program director, and Associate Dean for the College of Human Development. She was an eternal optimist; she saw possibilities where others did not. Twenty-five years post-graduation, a former student remarked, "Shirley always made me feel as though I was the most special student." In October 2008, the evaluation laboratory was dedicated in her honor and it will be a constant reminder of her optimistic spirit of determination, and her willingness to look for possibilities consistent with the philosophy of vocational evaluation.

## Paul Hoffman 1929-2007

Paul R. Hoffman came to Stout State University (now called UW-Stout) in 1966 with a vision and a dream to build a new world-class vocational rehabilitation program. The first class of students were selected in the spring of 1967 and the program began in September of that year. Paul was driven and continually sought new development opportunities for the now established Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute (SVRI). Paul always believed that good ideas and programs were of no avail unless you hired the best people to lead, manage, and serve these programs. His hard work and tenacity were rewarded when the UW System Building Commission authorized significant remodeling of the vacated library and the annexation of McCalmont Hall, an adjacent five-story residence hall. Paul was also a founding member of VEWAA and other national and international professional rehabilitation organizations. There are thousands of people with disabilities and rehabilitation graduates who have benefited from the improved quality of services and programs that were a result of the Paul's influence and impact in this field.

## Henry Redkey 1907-2007

Henry Redkey inspired and mentored many of the professionals who helped to build the fields of rehabilitation. After World War II, Henry was on Mary Switzer's staff as Chief of Rehabilitation Facilities in what is now the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). In this position, Henry was instrumental in the formulation of the basic federal legislation on rehabilitation facilities enabling persons with disabilities to gain access to community based services. When Henry retired from federal service, he chose to pass on his passion and knowledge about rehabilitation to the next generation, as a rehabilitation faculty member at UW-Stout from 1970 to 1973. After he retired he moved to Port Townsend, Washington, when the U.S. Government requested that he do research studies on sheltered workshops in Denmark, Sweden, Poland, West Germany, and the Netherlands. Over the years, Henry authored many articles and monographs, and received numerous awards including the Commissioner's Award of Excellence in Vocational Rehabilitation from the Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (RSA) and the Distinguished Service Award from the Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute.

# Awards and Recognition

At the Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Conferences, there are primarily two awards given: The Distinguished Service Award and The Outstanding Graduate Student Award (UW-Stout VR Alum) for contributing to the field of rehabilitation and improving the lives of people with disabilities. This year The Distinguished Service Award was given to Tom Modahl and John Wesolek and The Outstanding Graduate Student award was given to Dan Stewart. The following remarks about the award recipients were taken from the Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Conference 2008 program pamphlet.

## Tom Modahl *Distinguished Service Award*

A professor at UW-Stout for over 25 years, Tom Modahl was a gifted educator. He could bring subject matter to life - empowering students and practitioners to understand how testing and assessment helped or hindered our work with consumers. Glen Peterson wrote, "Tom Modahl's contributions would be worthy of recognition even if they stemmed primarily from the knowledge and expertise that Tom has shared with so many. However, the things that make him so unique and so worthy of recognition have more to do with Tom's unique human qualities. He is someone who exemplifies genuineness, compassion, honesty, and no small amount of humility." As a graduate of the UW-Stout VR program, Tom exemplifies the quality training and applied learning that has made the name "Stout" synonymous with excellence in rehabilitation. The legacy of Dr. Tom Modahl is that which he left behind - knowledge and the ability to effectively use that knowledge to make a positive impact in the lives of people.

## John Wesolek *Distinguished Service Award*

John Wesolek is a natural leader with the vision to move people and organizations forward, the courage to explore and create innovative ideas, and the innate ability to inspire others to excel. Early in his career he was selected by Paul Hoffman to assume a key role within the developing field of vocational evaluation as Director of the Vocational Development Center (VDC), which is currently known as the Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute (SVRI). John created an environment where students were given the opportunity to take the knowledge and skills they learned in the classroom to a higher level. He played a major role in molding students into professional vocational evaluators and professionals into leaders. Later in his career, as Dean of the College of Human Development (CHD), John's visionary leadership was widely recognized across disciplines for moving the college forward on a similar level. Fred McFarlane, a colleague and UW-Stout alumni, summed up the impact of John's work locally, nationally, and internationally when he said, "John's vision, leadership, and persistency were driving factors in Stout's premier status in rehabilitation." His greatest skill is his ability to create an environment where students, faculty, and staff are empowered, enthused, and infused with the sense that what they are doing is important. For 40 years, John has been the type of colleague, leader, and mentor that moves people and organizations to excel and to have fun doing it.

## Dan Stewart *Outstanding Graduate Award*

Dan Stewart received his Bachelor's degree in Vocational Education in 1970 and his Master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation in 1971 from UW-Stout. In 1986, he accepted the position of Vice President of Business Development with MedRehab, Inc., a private rehabilitation organization in Indianapolis. Dan became President/CEO in 1997 of the Wayne County Council for Retarded Citizens, Inc, in Richmond, Indiana which is now called Achieva Resources, Inc. He increased the service area from one county to twenty-seven and grew the agency's Vocational Rehabilitation Services program. In the past five years, 450 people with disabilities have obtained employment through this program. One of Dan's greatest accomplishments occurred two years ago when he received a letter from the Governor of Indiana, E. Mitchell Daniels, appointing him to a three year term to the State Rehabilitation Commission. He was elected Chairperson for 2007-2008. Angee Blevins, Dan's administrative secretary wrote the following of her nomination, "Mr. Stewart is one of the hardest working executives I know. There is no way to describe to hours that he puts into this organization. He is always doing something with the people we serve. He is a very caring person who has developed an incredible relationship with his staff, the people we serve, and his Board." Dan continues to contribute to the field of vocational rehabilitation and to the lives of people with disabilities.



University of Wisconsin-Stout  
Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute  
101 Voc Rehab Building  
221 10th Ave E  
Menomonie, WI 54751

Acct # 102-6-339001

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 3  
Menomonie, Wisconsin

## New Generation of Leaders

There is a new generation of students graduating in the field of vocational rehabilitation throughout the country, especially here at UW-Stout. They are becoming practitioners and advocates for services and programs for people with disabilities.

They possess different talents, some of which include: compassion, organization, strength, endurance, loyalty, leadership, creativity, initiative, and civility. They are beginning to exercise and utilize their talents as they have opportunities within their communities and their places of employment.

They are working with state vocational rehabilitation programs, the Veteran's Administration, in universities and colleges, in private rehabilitation and non-profit organizations, and in other organizations throughout the world.

They are becoming the future leaders in the field of vocational rehabilitation, and are helping to shape the quality and scope of services provided to people with disabilities. The possibilities, their potential, and their impact are limitless.