R.A.I.N.B.O.W. - the Foundation of Americans with Disabilities in Action: A Chronology Narrative of the Special Education/Vocational Education Program at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School #233

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

R.A.I.N.B.O.W. - THE FOUNDATION OF AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES IN ACTION
A CHRONOLOGY NARRATIVE OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION/
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AT HOMEWOOD-FLOSSMOOR COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL #233

VOLUME I (CHAPTERS 1 - 5)

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

BY
LAWRENCE J. BARAN

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
JANUARY 1996
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author, wishes to acknowledge the members of the dissertation committee who directed and assisted this work. My sincere gratitude to Dr. Janis Fine, Committee Chairperson, Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies; Dr. Max A. Bailey, Advisor and Chairperson of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies; and Dr. Phil Carlin, Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, for their valued contributions.

My love to my family, my wife Cathy, my daughters Heidi and Amy, and my canine sidekicks and bodyguards, Noel and Nick.

My deepest thanks to Dr. Laura Murray and Dr. Edward Rachford for their mentoring this scholastic venture.

My heartfelt gratitude to Dr. David Moss, John Wrenn, Dr. Terrence Peabody and Dr. Bruce Brockstein for their persistent coaching.

My heartfelt gratitude to Ms. Sandy Sullivan for her invaluable editing efforts for this document.

My perpetual thanks to my parents Charles and Josephine Baran whose dream to educate their children is ever written in their son's heart.

Finally to my guardian angel Saint Ignatius of Loyola, to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, thank you and Ave Maria for your compassion. Hallelujah!
PREFACE

This dissertation will review documents from a transitional perspective for youth with disabilities. It will discuss the current national situation for job training and the relationship for linkages for employment opportunities. Americans with Disabilities in Action will be discussed in terms of job training and employment opportunities. The program will be placed in the context of vocational education and special education by setting this historical narrative into the development of vocational education and the evolution of vocational education and special education legislation.

The chronology will trace the foundation and philosophy, the development and achievements of the Special Education/Vocational Education Program at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School that is titled, Americans with Disabilities in Action.

The interpretive framework for this research is Kouzes and Posner's *The Leadership Challenge*. This dissertation chronology follows this model. The five principles of leadership are superimposed upon the philosophical, developmental and exponential years as a leadership frame of reference.
The research is compiled from the program's archives and interviews conducted with persons who have had significant involvement with this program over the past fifteen years.
To

my parents

Charles and Josephine Baran
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**. iii

**PREFACE**. iv

**VOLUME I (CHAPTERS 1 - 5)**

**Chapter**

1. INTRODUCTION. 1

   The Purpose

   The Procedure

   The Content

2. A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW OF SPECIAL EDUCATION. 12

   Transition in Job Training and Employment

   Employability Dilemma of the Disabled

   Program Design

   Vocational Programs and Their Implication for Specific Job Skills Training

   J.T.P.A. - Job Training Partnership Linkage

   History of Vocational Education and Special Education

   Federal Legislation: An Historical Perspective

   Rehabilitation

   Social Action

   Educational Programming

   J.T.P.A. - Job Training Partnership Act
3. THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND FOUNDATION YEARS 1980-1984 89

- Challenging the Process
- Search for Opportunities
- Taking Risks
- Inspiring a Shared Vision
- Envision the Future
- Enlist Others

The Philosophy

The Homewood-Flossmoor High School Years

The Foundation

4. THE DEVELOPMENTAL YEARS 1985-1989 136

- Enabling Others to Act
- Foster Collaboration
- Strengthening Others

The Developmental Period

The Bush/Quayle Inauguration - 1989

5. THE EXPONENTIAL AND INNOVATION YEARS 1990-1995 171

- Modeling the Way
- Set Examples
- Plan Small Wins
Encouraging the Heart
Recognition
Celebration

The Visitation of Vice-President Quayle - 1989

The First Lady and the Reading Tree of Knowledge - 1989

Dr. Martin Luther King Remembered - 1989

The Moving Vietnam Wall Project - 1990

The White House Signing of the ADA - 1990

The Points of Light Nomination - 1990

Flags in the Desert Tributes to Desert Shield/Storm 1990-1991


The Illinois Institute for Entrepreneurship Education and the Valley Forge Freedoms Foundation Award 1991-1992

The National Victory Celebration Memorial Service 1991

Pearl Harbor - 1991

The Discovery Space Shuttle - 1992

Vice-President Quayle's Visit with ADA Students at Midway Airport - 1991

The Democratic and Republican Conventions - 1992

The Mock Democratic and Republican Convention - 1992

The Clinton/Gore Inauguration - 1993
The Papal Visit to the Rocky Mountains - 1993

Working in the White House - 1993

The Francis Scott Key Foundation - 1993

The Vietnam Women's Memorial Project - 1993

The American Horticulture Award - 1994

The 50th Anniversary of World War II Commemorative Committee Partnership - 1993 - 1995

Normandy D-Day Tributes - 1994

The Marine Corps Iwo Jima Memorial Ceremony - 1995

VOLUME II (CHAPTER 6 - 7)

6. THE SUMMARY .......................... 301

7. THE IMPLICATIONS ...................... 320

EPILOGUE ................................. 326

Appendix

1. COURSE PROPOSAL FOR FLORAL DESIGN AT HOMEWOOD-FLOSSMOOR HIGH SCHOOL .......................... 334

2. LIST OF COMMUNITY CUSTOMERS OF R.A.I.N.B.O.W .......................... 340

3. BY-LAWS OF PROJECT RAINBOW .......................... 343

4. THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS .......................... 359

5. THE BUSH/QUAYLE INAUGURATION .......................... 363

6. LETTERS FROM FIRST LADY BARBARA BUSH .......................... 376

7. LETTERS OF CORETTA SCOTT KING .......................... 379
8. LETTERS OF J.T.P.A. .......................... 382
9. THE MOVING VIETNAM WALL PROJECT. ............... 385
10. THE WHITE HOUSE SIGNING OF THE ADA. .............. 387
11. THE POINTS OF LIGHT AWARD. ..................... 395
12. FLAGS IN THE DESERT PROJECT. .................... 400
13. THE LT. GOVERNOR KUSTRA INAUGURATION. .......... 416
14. MISSION OF ILLINOIS INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION. .......................... 419
15. THE VALLEY FORGE FREEDOMS FOUNDATION AWARD. .... 422
16. THE NATIONAL VICTORY CELEBRATION. ............... 425
17. PEARL HARBOR. .................................. 430
18. THE DISCOVERY SPACE SHUTTLE. .................... 442
19. THE DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN CONVENTIONS. .... 448
20. THE MOCK DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN CONVENTION. ... 450
21. THE CLINTON/GORE INAUGURATION. .................. 461
22. WORKING IN THE WHITE HOUSE. ..................... 467
23. THE FRANCIS SCOTT KEY FOUNDATION. ............... 473
24. THE WOMEN'S VIETNAM MEMORIAL PROJECT. ........... 477
25. THE AMERICAN HORTICULTURE AWARD. ............... 487
26. THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF WORLD WAR II COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE PARTNERSHIP. .................. 490
27. THE IWO JIMA MEMORIAL CEREMONY. ................ 501
28. THE KOREAN WAR VETERANS MEMORIAL. .............. 509
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Purpose

This dissertation will chronicle the development of Americans with Disabilities in Action the Secondary Special Education/ Vocational Education Program at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School during the years 1980 - 1995. This historical reconstruction will analyze the program design, implementation, and achievements, based upon the records, documentation, and interviews from the program's archives. The leadership styles of Kouzes and Posner will emerge as the philosophical tenets that form the interpretive framework and foundation of this unique experiment in entrepreneurship.

The Procedure

The researcher will first review the purpose, the procedure, and then the interpretive framework of Kouzes and Posner's leadership style. He will then review the literature for best practices and perspectives of special education transition, job training and opportunities for employment linkage. He will also summarize the development of Vocational Education/Special Education in the United States. This historical legislative review will end with
the year 1985. Highlights of this analysis will be the evolution of job training opportunities for youth with disabilities. This history will assist in placing the documentary research for Americans with Disabilities in Action into a unique perspective for analysis for youth with disabilities in employment training in 1995. Documentation for this study will come from the Americans with Disabilities in Action Archives. Interviews will be conducted to clarify and illuminate the development and achievements of this program.

This dissertation will follow the prescribed format of a historical narrative. Major consideration will be given to the location and collection of data. Primary source data will be collected from the program's fifteen year developmental time period. Research will include a review of all records of written documents, correspondences, newspaper articles, notes, videos, memos and organizational minutes. The oral records will be collected from interviews with adults and students involved with the program. Specifically, this group consists of special education students, alumni, regular education student aides, staff members, administrators, parents, members of the Board of Education and groups or organizations that have supported the entrepreneurship efforts of the students who were also recipients of the products manufactured. Artifacts will be collected and reviewed. They include photographs, videos,
documents, awards, and symbolic gifts of appreciation given to the program. Interviews, documents, and artifacts will document the program's design, implementation and achievements. The interviews correlate to concepts of leadership and philosophy of Kouzes and Posner's as related to entrepreneurship, patriotism, self-worth, and work ethics.

This historical chronology of interviews and documents from the archives will be summarized and then analyzed from a philosophy of leadership viewpoint. Implications and recommendations will be given as suggestions for further study.

**The Content**

The chapters of this dissertation will include:

**The Preface** - This preface will set the philosophical structure of the historical narrative into a context for best practices in special education transition, job training, employment opportunities, the history and legislation for vocational education/special education.

**Chapter 1** - The Introduction. Define the purpose of the study, explain the methodology/procedure and the resources to be used. The interpretive framework of Kouzes and Posner's leadership style will be analyzed and then related to this study.
Chapter 2 - A Retrospective View of Special Education

Transition.

1. Transition in job training and employment opportunities.
2. History of vocational education and special education.
3. History of legislation for vocational education and special education.

Chapter 3 - The Philosophical and Foundation Years.


1. Search for opportunities.
2. Experiment and take risks.

Inspiring a Shared Vision

3. Envisioning the future.
4. Enlist the support of others.

Chapter 4 - The Developmental Years.

Part B: The Leadership Development Program.

Enabling Others to Act

1. Fostering collaboration.
2. Strengthening others.

Chapter 5 - The Exponential/Innovation Years.

Part C: Americans with Disabilities in Action.

Modeling the Way
1. Set an example.
2. Plan small wins.

Encouraging the Heart
3. Recognizing contributions.

Chapter 6 - Summary, Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations.

Chapter 7 - Implications for the Americans with Disabilities in Action program as a model for vocational education/special education for the twenty-first century.

Review of the Leadership Challenge

Recipes for Success:

"Mix knowing what you are doing, loving what you are doing and believing in what you are doing."  

Will Rogers

"The Society has no purpose other than the love knowledge and service of God...and that greater good."

St. Ignatius

"Pioneering journeys follow the path of a three-stage strategy. We refer to it as VIP - vision-inspiration-persistence - model of leadership."

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

Dr. Gary Meers, an authority in Vocational Education for special needs youth philosophy states, "Teachers of
special needs students have a unique opportunity to meet students where they are and to help them go places they never thought possible." This researcher postulates that this can be done if students follow Will Rogers' recipe for success.

Inscribed on the entrance to the National Archives of the United States in Washington, D.C. are the words "WHAT IS PAST IS PROLOGUE" and "STUDY THE PAST." For the past fifteen years, special education students of Americans with Disabilities in Action have built a solid philosophical foundation that has been cemented together within the bricks of their hard work and mortar of their past accomplishments. These entrepreneurial contractors continue to enlist further achievements. The program's motto is, "We are job worthy and ready if given an opportunity." The hard work of these past students gave way to many simple opportunities to showcase their talents within the local school and community. This tenacity laid the groundwork for numerous projects on a national and international level. Something very unique is happening within the microcosm of these special needs youth in pre-employment training. A recipe of vision, patriotism, collaboration, and entrepreneurship created an exemplary hallmark for leadership success.

Kouzes and Posner state, "We have found such achievements to be commonplace. We have discovered that
there are thousands of success stories. Getting extraordinary things done in organizations is not restricted to a select few stars. We refer to it as the VIP - vision - inspiration - persistence - model." 5 For every problem in society some basic need is not being met. A strategy for a solution is necessary. Americans with Disabilities in Action began as a strategy to solve the problem of a lack of employment opportunities for the disabled high school graduates of the Homewood-Flossmoor community. This reflected a national travesty in our secondary schools: inequity in the delivery of vocational education services to students with special needs. Just as the word "Vietnam" evoked and triggered mixed emotions for America in the 70's and 80's, so too the word "unemployment" evokes and triggers similar feelings for Americans confronting our society in the shrinking world of the 90's. As the Industrial Revolution paved the way to the technological revolution, specialization of tasks for specific job skills will continue to become a focus to combat an untrained, unskilled labor force. Cobb and Hyatt believe that:

In our society we define ourselves by the job we hold or the career path that we have chosen. It is a firmly held cultural belief that each individual has the right to choose and pursue their dreams of a good job and productive life, whether their dream is to construct houses, teach school, or heal those who are ill. In general, career development theory suggests we begin to develop vocational interests and aptitudes early in life....Our high schools have assumed, at least in part, the responsibility of preparing their students for what they will encounter upon graduation....It has
only been in the last decade, however, that our schools have begun to develop similar programming for students with disabilities.  

Americans with Disabilities in Action demonstrates leadership dynamics within the administration, staff and students. Major components of this leadership are evident within the special education students. These youth are making leadership into common sense experiences through their interactions and interfacing with all aspects of the program. Students who are considered less than the ordinary by worldly standards are now considered extraordinary by the partnerships and collaborations with the White House and the Pentagon. Kouzes and Posner believe that leadership is an observable, learnable set of practices. Leadership is not something mystical and ethereal that cannot be understood by ordinary people. Given the opportunity for feedback and practice, those with the desire and persistence to lead can substantially improve their abilities to do so. Leaders do this by first of all being credible. That is the foundation of all leadership. They establish this credibility by their actions—by challenging, inspiring, enabling, modeling, and encouraging."  

These authorities claim the essence of leadership is that followers want them to be credible, have a sense of direction, express an image for the future, and have the skills to take them there. In other words, leaders are admired who are honest, competent, forward-looking, and
inspiring. These authors have summarized characteristics that are considered the five leadership practices common to successful leaders. Each of these practices have two behavioral commitments that are considered observable and learnable by these authors. They have named these characteristics the ten commitments to leadership and are listed below under the five key best leadership practices.

- Challenging the Process
  1. Search for opportunities
  2. Experiment and take risks

- Inspiring a Shared Vision
  3. Envision the future
  4. Enlist others

- Enabling Others to Act
  5. Foster collaboration
  6. Strengthen others

- Modeling the Way
  7. Set the example
  8. Plan small wins

- Encouraging the Heart
  9. Recognize individual contribution
  10. Celebrate accomplishments

This dissertation matches each of these five leadership principles and their two behavioral commitments to Chapters 3 - 5 in the historical narrative chronology. The framework of this researcher is that this leadership model parallels
the foundation, development and exponential growth of American with Disabilities in Action. Each chapter will include a comprehensive explanation of the leadership principles and commitments that are evidenced as the chronology progresses. Specific examples and interviews will be quoted to validate this philosophical frame of reference.

2 Ibid, 7.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid, 27.

5 Ibid, 13.


CHAPTER 2

A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSITION

This chapter will review the literature for a retrospective view of special education. There will be four sections to this chapter. They include transition in job training and employment opportunities, history of vocational education and special education, history of legislation for vocational education and special education, and best practices evidenced in Americans with Disabilities in Action.

Transition in Job Training and Employment Opportunities

Employability Dilemma of the Disabled

Research is in agreement that there are serious problems relating to the training and employability of the disabled. The solutions continue to elude school administrators yet school systems must share in this massive failure in job preparation as significant difficulties continue to exist in the special education populations.

Kochhar, Leconte, and Ianacone claim:

Solutions to the persistent unemployment problems of handicapped populations in the United States continue to elude past and present administrations. A clear national priority has emerged out of national concern about the complexity and persistence of the problems.
The economic dimensions of unemployment are especially serious and pervasive among youth and young adults with handicaps. Yet despite decades of effort, both the educational system and employment and training systems continue to share massive failure to prepare handicapped populations to successfully enter the work force.\textsuperscript{1}

According to Rusch & Phelps, "Though there have been significant federal and state efforts, the educational and employment problems of youth and adults with handicaps remain a major dilemma for policy-makers, professionals, and many others in human services."\textsuperscript{2} Society expects the public schools to assume the responsibility of preparing all students for a place in the working world. Therefore, does the special education student need special vocation consideration? Congress has enacted legislation for vocational training of secondary special education students. Specific stipulations relating to vocational readiness are included in Public Law 94-482, The Vocational Education Act, Sections 503 and 504 of the 1978 Amendment to the 1973 Vocational Rehabilitation Act, and Public Law 94-142 of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. Though these laws and regulations require special education students to be mainstemed into regular vocational programs to the maximum extent possible, the statistics indicate the contrary.

Inclusion of the special student population has not been widespread in regular vocational programs. Only two per cent of the thirteen million vocational education
students were from the handicapped population as documented in the 1976 Report to Congress.³ Reviewing data on the employability of the disabled shows full employment present in 21% of mildly developmentally delayed persons with 26% unemployed and the remaining 40% under-employed.⁴ Levitan and Taggart document a 26% employment rate for the disabled.⁵ Showrles reports an employment prediction that two million special education youth would receive a high school diploma without the skills necessary for a productive work and this prediction is a reality.⁶

Thomas, Coker, and Czerlinsky state that an abundance of literature suggests that significant difficulties are encountered by students with disabling conditions who are attempting to enter the labor market.⁷ The United States Department of Education estimates that of the approximately 625,000 handicapped youth who leave the country's school systems annually, many have some type of disability.⁸ It has been well documented in the research literature that these students have unemployment problems that surpass those of their nondisabled peers.⁹ Bowe suggests that the unemployment rate for this population is in excess of 50 percent.¹⁰ Gill presented data which supported this assumption.¹¹ Another study by Mithaug and Horiuchi found that, "only 31% of the students surveyed after graduation were unemployed, but 43% of those who were employed earned less than $3.00 per hour. Not only do they fare less well
in obtaining employment, when they do it tends to be in work which provides less opportunity for personal fulfillment or financial independence."  

Kohler and Rusch believe, "Ample evidence is available to suggest that our high schools are failing to achieve desired and expected outcomes for all students, regardless of ability." The difficulties faced by students with disabilities are evidenced by an unemployment rate that exceeds 50%. An even greater percentage drop out of high schools each year. Although many of these youths leave school for employment, most do not find it. Youth with disabilities who leave school early have less than a 35% chance of finding work. Youths with disabilities also live dependently; over 80% live with their parents after high school.

The National Organization on Disability reports the most current statistics on persons with disabilities and their employability:

The main message of the 1994 N.O.D./Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities is that the participation gap is wide. The survey further shows that, with few exceptions, the participation gap is not closing. In employment, the gap actually may have widened since 1986. Because work is fundamental to meaningful life, the survey focuses heavily on employment issues. In one key area, there are hopeful signs. Largely due to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1976, the gap in education is beginning to close. People with disabilities also say that conditions have improved for them in recent years, and they are relatively optimistic about the future. They now identify more closely with others with disabilities than at any time in the past. All in all, people with
disabilities have faith in America, and they want to participate and contribute like everyone else. If America acts on this survey's findings, the current participation gap will begin, at last, to close.\textsuperscript{17}

Marder and D'Amico claim that there are high level commitments to people with disabilities because of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Yet barriers exist that need remediation. They reviewed the International Center for the Disabled survey which reported that the disabled are three times more likely to drop out of high school, have the lowest employment rate, and are twice as likely to become America's poor. These authors state:

How can the prospects for adult independence of persons with disabilities be improved? The public education system is well positioned to exert a positive influence, both on those with disabilities - through education and training in skills needed for independence and on the general public through education aimed at increasing appreciation of the abilities and unique qualities of all people.\textsuperscript{18}

Mader and D'Amico also claim in the report, "How Well Youth with Disabilities Are Really Doing," that the findings give a solid basis for concluding that on average, young people with disabilities are not doing as well as their counterparts in the general population along a number of dimensions. A comparison of 15 - 20 year old youths with disabilities and in the general population who were in secondary school or had been out of school less than 2 years shows that:

- More exiters with disabilities left secondary school by dropping out.
• Fewer dropouts with disabilities completed GED's.
• Fewer graduates with disabilities attended post-secondary schools, although about the same percentage attended post-secondary vocational schools.
• Fewer youth with disabilities had paid jobs both during and after secondary school.
• More employed youth with disabilities worked part-time and in low-status jobs.
• Fewer out-of-school youth with disabilities achieved residential independence.
• More youth with disabilities were arrested.

Although programs designed to ameliorate or compensate for the effects of disability may be helping many young people achieve better transition outcomes than would be possible without such services, young people with disabilities as a group continue to experience significantly less favorable outcomes. 19

The former Assistant Secretary of Education, Madeline Will, claims that it is extremely important that individuals with disabilities be like all individuals of paid employment. She states:

Paid employment offers opportunities to expand social contacts, contribute to society, demonstrate creativity, and establish an adult identity. The income generated by work creates purchasing power in the community, makes community integration easier, expands the range of available choices, enhances independence, and creates personal status. 20
It has been questioned whether jobs held by high school students in the general population are a good prerequisite for adult jobs. Wehman, Kregel, and Barcus, identify work experience as imperative to prepare special education students fully for a successful transition to adulthood. They state:

Students should train and work in the community whenever possible. This is not only to expose them to the community and work expectations, but to expose future employers and coworkers to their potential as reliable employees....{it} appears that this form of service delivery will be a truly vital aspect of meaningful transition into natural work environments.21

Among the most frequently quoted statements from the 1986 Harris survey was that 66% of working age people with disabilities who were not employed said that they would like to have a job. High as they were, these promotions have increased still further in the intervening years. Now, fully 79% of non-employed people with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 64 say that they want to work. Even among those who report they are completely unable to work, two-thirds say they would like a job. Other than the obvious limits imposed by the disability itself, the barrier cited most often in the 1994 survey was that employers would not recognize that individuals with a disability could not do a good job. Other barriers also were mentioned prominently. Some 32% of the respondents said that their lack of skills was an important reason why they did not have a job. As noted, many people with disabilities receive
large proportions of their income from government benefits or insurance payments. This situation goes a long way toward explaining why 57% of working-age people with disabilities who were not in the labor force said they would lose benefits if they were working full-time. Given this extensive reliance on government benefits and insurance payments, it should come as little surprise, as noted above, that about a third (31%) of people with disabilities working less than full-time, including 38% of part-time employees preferring full-time work, say that the risk of losing government benefits or insurance payments is an important reason why they are not working full-time.\textsuperscript{22}

Sarkees and Scott state:

Handicapped and disadvantaged students have the legal right to enter vocational programs in order to develop marketable skills. These learners have the same needs and desires as anyone else to develop occupational skills, enter the labor force, and become contributing members of society.... It is more cost effective to educate special needs students than to provide high cost public support for these individuals.\textsuperscript{23}

The labor force for the twenty-first century will be rooted in technology yet be centered on the service related industry to provide employment opportunities. Meers states that:

It is imperative that schools offering vocational training be cognizant of these emerging employment opportunities and develop training programs within these areas. A nation needs a labor resource pool from which it can draw, and the special needs population composed of disadvantaged and handicapped individuals is one of the most readily available.\textsuperscript{24}
Leadership in solving this national educational dilemma must come from the insight and innovation of special education administrators, special educators and vocational educators working in collaboration. The primary focus of the teaching methods must reflect creativity and specific pre-employment skills training in order to make students ready to take their place in the work force. Special education/vocational education administrators and teachers have been mandated to plan and implement basic strategies. Frith states, "In view of the increasing dialogue between special education and vocational educators due to the need for career preparation of handicapped adolescents, additional avenues of realistic vocational training should be explored." 25 Meers adds, "Teachers, especially those who teach special needs students, quickly realize that in order to effectively instruct their students, they are going to have to develop different strategies to effectively instruct their students, they are going to have to develop different strategies and methodologies than those traditionally used." 26

Since its inception, Americans with Disabilities in Action has exemplified vision in the career preparation of all of their students. Meeting the individual differences in all of the different disabilities of each student has been a primary focus. Developing goals and objectives to
capitalize on their strengths and compensate for each student's weakness is necessary to gain the necessary pre-employment skills. Another initial feature that remains paramount to this exemplary program's success is the belief in a simulation structure that makes every aspect of the program a real work experience.

Program Design

Homewood-Flossmoor High School's mission statement and philosophy prepares students for the real world. This expectation is inclusive of the special education students, as part of the total school, to do likewise. These special needs youth need their self-images lifted, their academics made meaningful, teaching strategies adapted to their strengths as well as circumventing their weaknesses, and career and vocational preparation in order to have an equal chance at successful access to the working world. In other words, the mission is to instill life skills. Our nation expects, that through its educational programs, its citizens can adapt to a variety of situations, feel good about themselves, have the ability to problem solve, ask appropriate questions, and be a part of the work force, and therefore be self supporting productive citizens of the American society. Though the government has implemented new laws, this does not mean the social problem will be remedied. O'Day comments:
With the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1974, parent advocates and people with disabilities hoped that employment and independence for high school graduates would largely be alleviated. Yet, almost 20 years after passage of this legislation, options for students with disabilities leaving high school are still quite limited, with the vast majority remaining unemployed or working in sheltered workshops, living at home with parents, isolated from their communities, and not very happy with their lives. Finding employment, living independently, and participating actively in the community are common goals for all high school students and should be reasonable expectations for special education graduates. Yet students with disabilities face major barriers in achieving these goals—public attitudes, lack of access, and insufficient vocational and social support inherent in the communities into which they graduate."

Homewood-Flossmoor High School has been attempting to meet these significant areas of transitional concerns through a variety of courses provided within its curriculum. One of the most popular job training opportunities at the high school is the Floral Design and Manufacturing Class for special education youth. The first title given to this vocational program was R.A.I.N.B.O.W. (Realistic Achievement for Individuals Needing Basic Occupational Workskills). It was designed with the philosophy that all students with disabilities will have the training and access to employment. It is this program's expectation that students will gain pre-employment skills that are above and beyond the regular education or regular vocational education program. The hallmark of special education teaching strategies stress over-learning, repetition, visual, hands-
on experiences. This simulation work experience teaches, through the vocation of floral design/manufacturing, that all of the pre-employment skills and vocational subskills can be mastered by a majority of the student workers. The medium in R.A.I.N.B.O.W. is the creation and manufacturing of floral designs, but the message is employability skills training.

**Transitional Perspective**

Transition from school to work is another key special education program consideration. Transition is an important issue in that the aspect of job skills training and work simulation can be seen as a significant component of successful transition into the world of work. Transition is basically coaching disability students all along the way, even past the high school diploma where even greater life complications begin for students with disabilities. Transition is mandated and specifically required for all special needs youth. "Transition is viewed as a dynamic process involving a partnership of consumers, school age services, post-school services, and local communities (employers, neighbors, etc.) that results in maximum levels of employment, independent living, integration, and community participation." 28

Transition is vital and important because it is a bridge between the security and structure offered by the
school and the opportunities and risks of adult life. The transition from school to work and adult life requires sound preparation in the secondary school, adequate support at the point of school leaving and secure opportunities and services, if needed in adult situations. Johnson and Atkins believe that currently little is being accomplished. They state, "Despite the concern for transition evidenced in federal legislation, many students with disabilities "transition" from school to unemployment." Another negative view of school outcomes in transition is stated in Gartner and Lipsky. The problems here are succinctly summarized: "Overwhelming data suggests that rehabilitation agencies and high schools, the primary vehicles for vocational services to individuals with handicaps, have been ineffective in preparing these students for competitive employment." Ing and Tewey found that, "The transition from school to work is a major adjustment for all students, but particularly those with disabilities. The transition requires new challenges to independence including where to live and where to work. Whereas education is guaranteed for all students with disabilities, not all persons with disabilities are eligible for the employment services that vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs provide.... Once students leave school, even the most independent were still in need of support services. One in five youth who had achieved the most independence were estimated to need
occupational therapy or life skill training. According to the 1990 U.S. Current Population Survey, 9% of Americans between the ages of 16 and 64 have a work disability. Of youth ages 16-24, 18% are limited in the amount of kind of work they can perform.

For students who are ready for employment, the state-federal vocational rehabilitation program (VR) is a potential source of assistance. Students are evaluated for their eligibility for VR services. Unlike special education which is mandated for all students with disabilities, VR requires that the applicant meet eligibility criteria in addition to the disability.

Hasazi, Gordon and Roe view transition from the results of these students if and when employed. "Thus, youth with disabilities who have jobs early in their lives and can hone their work skills and demonstrate their reliability to employers may have a greater chance for subsequent employment success." 32

In the introduction from the Consensus Validation Conference, Nancy Vanderber summarizes transition in the following way:

Impressive results have been achieved when school, human service organizations, community entities, government and employers work together with students and their families to prepare and plan for school to work transition. However, there is still a long way to go....and there is still more to be known about what constitutes the best practices in transition. What is known is applied in far too few places, and there remains a complexity of issues that present continuing
barriers to effective transition. The essential component of a comprehensive school to work transition process for youths with disabilities must include appropriate training instruction that gives students the opportunity to learn those independent living skills necessary to attain successful employment.  

Research suggests activities and simulations as found within the Americans with Disabilities in Action Program. Research has shown that youth with disabilities need to have role models who are disabled and successfully employed. During the transition period from school to work, students with disabilities need to have mentors who have "been in their shoes" and understand how to negotiate systems in order to become successful. Lerman also supports transition from a job skills training perspective. There are many essential components of a comprehensive school to work transitional program for youth with disabilities. The educators, the youth, the transitional support personnel, and the employer all play a key role in the success of a program. He states, "The educational curriculum must start preparing the youth for work at an early age by incorporating work related issues into classroom studies. The completion of employment applications, job skills, and other "work readiness" skills are all important topics to be covered." D'Amico also advocates specialized job skills training. "Early work experience, whether or not as part of a work-study program, is one mechanism by which students with disabilities may enhance their prospects for a smooth transition to employment when they leave secondary
Youth who make the most successful transitions to employment after high school are those with specialized job skills who find jobs that require and reward those skills. Therefore, the process of developing a youth's interest and abilities and optimally matching them to available job opportunities could be critically important to their transition success.

Ronald D'Amico is a leading researcher on school-to-work transition. He believes it is imperative for these students to have immediate employment opportunities. Prolonged periods of joblessness may give due cause to "scarring effects" that impair them to compete for work. This period of joblessness may cause any of the job skill training that occurred in the high school years to become lost in the anger and frustration of these youth. Finally, the future employer may see this period of non-work as the disabled's problem rather than a problem that these students have in common. D'Amico also reviews employment rates of disability students to youth as a whole. He states:

Past research on the transition to employment found that the transition from school to work often is a chaotic period characterized by frequent spells of joblessness, weak labor force attachments, and seemingly directionless job hopping, referred to as the "floundering period". However, despite the difficulty youth in general have in finding sustained employment, we find that youth with disabilities were even less likely to have been employed. 36

Finally, Goode suggests another important issue in transition. "When an individual, with or without
disabilities, is able to meet important needs in major life settings, he or she is more likely to experience a high quality of life." 37 Thus, to summarize, a perspective of true transition should emphasize quality of life. Transition is now mandated by the Education of the Handicapped Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA) so that schools do transition planning for all students with disabilities who are age 16 or older. Proper planning of high school vocational classes and programs, specific jobskills training and linkage to supportive employment and living situations should be specifically tailored to each disability students specific needs.

Vocational Programs and their Implication for Specific Job Skills Training

Another perspective to view employability for disability youth is from their participation in vocational programs during their high school experience. Does participation in these types of classes helps in the future employability of disability youth? The Third Comprehensive Report form the National Longitudinal Transition Study of Special Education Students reports on post-school outcomes:

In 1983, the first generation of children to go entirely through elementary school under the provisions of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was
approaching secondary school. The secondary school students with disabilities who had preceded them had left school. Their graduation and employment rates and wages were low. Most students were not furthering their education after high school. Social adjustment was also difficult. The study asked, "How widespread were these problems? Were students with particular characteristics more prone to have difficulty making the transition from school to adult life? What could schools or service agencies do to support students in making that transition more effectively?" 

This National Longitudinal study found participation in vocational classes by special education students to be a significant factor for success. Vocational education is an avenue for job training and offers no-college bound students the chance at success as a skilled worker in the labor market. Though it has been debated as relevant by some educators, it is an important component in transition planning for the special needs student. There are benefits for special education participating in vocational education program that is primarily reflected in the term "employability." Special education students who took either a survey or concentrated coursework were less likely to drop out of school. The study also hypothesized that vocational education participants had a positive effect on future employment and positive wages. They also believed that the more classes in this curriculum would lead and translate into significant employment goals, post-secondary vocational enrollment, residential independence, and full community participation because of their improved labor market successes. The study conclusions found that special
education students who participated in vocational education confers post-school benefits on many youth with disabilities. Employment and higher wages were significant. Those who concentrated in more vocational coursework resulted in substantially higher total compensation. "Thus, for youth with disabilities whose transitional goals involved competitive employment, vocational education was an effective part of the transition program. 39

Wehman, Kregel and Barcus also promote community training. They state:

For youth with disabilities, practitioners are much less equivocal about the value of high school work experience... and identify work experience as imperative to prepare special education students fully for a successful transition to adulthood. Students should train and work in the community whenever possible. This is not only to expose them to the community and work expectations, but to expose future employers and coworkers to their potential as reliable employees...[It]appears that this form of service delivery will be a truly vital aspect of meaningful transition into natural work environments." 40

Morgan, Moore, and Salzberg state the importance of job skill training activities in transition when they say:

Relative importance of teaching social skills was identified as one of the five most important activities by 81% and 87% of respondents working with mild and severe disabilities, respectively. Three other activities (teaching job skills, involving parents, and matching skills to jobs) were also identified by at least 50% of respondents. Respondents working with students having mild or severe disabilities, respectively, identified teaching job skills, to be among the most important transition activities." 41
Ross-Gordon and Forlizza stress another important component to an appropriate program including basic skills in job training. They state another factor that complicates the transition of some adults with learning disabilities from school to work is the fact that the number of jobs available in which workers can function with low-level skills is shrinking. Most newly created jobs call for basic skills considerably above previous basic levels. The nature of work in the United States and other industrialized countries is changing. As new jobs are created and old jobs disappear, new levels and types of basic skills for employment are also created. In addition, basic skill demands on the job often differ considerably from those students are best prepared for in school.

They also have found that purposes and strategies involved in basic skills as they are used in schools are often inappropriate and ineffective in the workplace. A job-related basic skills component should therefore be important in any comprehensive vocational program for individuals who have learning disabilities.

In summary, levels of unemployment, underemployment and job-related problems among adults with learning disabilities warrant concern. It seems important that any program aimed at this population should include at a minimum recruitment, vocational assessment, vocational training, job placement, and job follow-up.42

Hasazi, Salembier, and Finck believe that, "Training in generalized work skills (i.e. prevocational preparation) and
specialized job skills in the identified area of interest must be developed, using both classroom training and community based work experience." 43

The Sixteenth Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1994, it states that students' experiences with vocational education vary considerably. Vocational education and its relationship to school performance can be analyzed by considering two factors: intensity of instruction and participation in work experience as a component of vocational education. Regarding intensity of instruction, students in secondary schools had the opportunity to become 'concentrators' in a vocational content area by taking four or more semesters of instruction in a particular area (e.g., agriculture). Some hypothesize that this concentration of instruction builds the skills that will later translate into success in the labor market. Thus, students who were concentrators may see the value of their school experiences more than other students, be absent less, and have a lower dropout rate than if they did not have a concentration in vocational education. These analyses only partly confirm the hypothesis that vocational instruction, as an alternative to academic curricula, ameliorates course failure and assists in dropout prevention. The annual report concluded, "The relationship between concentrating and lower dropout rates remained.
This finding gives greater credence to the hypothesis that vocational concentrations and vocational survey courses have some "holding power" over students with disabilities. 44

D'Amico and Marder comment on the early work experiences of youth with disabilities. They believe the transition experiences have created an increasing amount of the attention from practitioners and researchers over the last ten years. Without adequate attention to linking schooling experiences to post-school outcomes, it is recognized that intensive programs of vocational training will fall short of fulfilling their promise of improving employment prospects. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, and the Carl Perkins Act of 1984 assure that individuals who are inadequately served under vocational education programs are assured access to quality vocational education programs, especially the handicapped and persons entering non-traditional occupations. 45 These pieces of federal legislation have revolutionized the educational services received by youth with disabilities by mandating that students in special education have equal access to vocational training and that they receive appropriate education and other services in the least restrictive environment. Though much work remains in this field, recent evidence suggests that many schools have taken their mandate into action. The National Longitudinal Transitional Study reports that a substantial percentage of
students in secondary special education attend schools that provide prevocational and vocational skills training. More than 80% of 11th and 12th graders took at least one course in vocational education. What is lacking is an understanding of how the employment experiences of youth with disabilities evolve in the first few years after they leave high school. This information is critically important. Experiences during the first few years after these youth leave school can be a critical determinant of subsequent employment success. D'Amico and Marder further claim that the major reasons disability youth left their last job included: quit, was fired, was laid off, or temporary job ended. They also discovered disability youths had interesting perceptions of their employment opportunities. They state:

Youth with disabilities express a remarkable degree of satisfaction with the present and optimism for the future....more than 95% felt that they were treated well by coworkers, and 90% liked their job at least fairly well. A smaller percentage, but still a majority, felt that they were paid well for their work. Reinforcing the positive trends described earlier, nearly 60% liked their current job more than the one they held previously. Finally, 82% felt that they had the opportunity to advance.46

These outcomes of youth with disabilities may vary because of the yardstick with which they are measured. The experiences of young people in general population not only are a logical comparison for the outcomes of young people with disabilities, they also are important in formulating
public policy in helping us understand the extent to which young people with disabilities are having certain experiences because they have disabilities or simply because they are youth. Poorer transition outcomes of young people with disabilities in employment, point to opportunities for building specific education and training programs. They also attest to the need for legislative guarantees of equity in employment for those with disabilities, such as those included in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Validation of Specific Job Skills Training

There are substantial studies and programs that validate forms of work simulation and real work situations as supportive training programs that give merit and exemplify the model of Americans with Disabilities in Action. Woolcock found that the concurrent use of in school (or simulation) instruction combined with community instruction and/or community non-trained probes may produce generalized performance across stimulus and response variations for a particular community skill. He finds simulation in job training to be troublesome unless associated with real community situations. He states:

The greatest dangers in building simulations are that they teach a skill only useful in the constrained context of simulation settings, or that the simulation will lead to extended training sessions that teach little....These dangers are avoided by building simulation training sessions that teach the "general case" and by ensuring that all simulations include some
instruction with real community situations....and it is important that the tasks taught in school settings represent tasks encountered in community environments. This calls for the systematic determination of task variations found in the community environments and the development of in-school teaching strategies.47

Woolcock believes that these settings may present the most logistically feasible learning situations. He also believes that the local high school's instructional possibilities can be found in the hallways, restrooms, cafeteria, etc. of a large school building, particularly an integrated high school. Such a setting may offer a wealth of jobs skills that may be incorporated into a "generalization curriculum" which provides in-school and community instruction in such areas as secretarial skills, janitorial and maintenance skills, landscaping and yard work, cooking and kitchen help, etc. Instruction in non-classroom school settings also introduces students to helping, service, and reciprocal interactions with non-handicapped peers and school personnel other than their teacher/teacher aide. 48

J.T.P.A. (Job Training Partnership Act) Linkages

Americans with Disabilities in Action have integrated into linkages with real private sector leaders. This has made the students' work skills exemplary and the actual work real.

The Kochhar, Leconte, and Ianacone School to Community Linkages paper states that:
In chemistry, "alchemy" means combining two elements to form a substance of much greater value than that of the original elements. Analogously, the proponents of an expanded school-to-work linkage are attempting to achieve essentially the same result. The relationship is this: if private sector leaders and vocational special needs educators combine their purposes, not abstractly with rhetoric, but concretely through creation of joint learning-earning experiences for youth, then the programs that emerge hold greater value for the learner. The value for the educator and the employer is clear since they both can observe and evaluate demonstrated performance by the learner in authentic work activity. The JTPA mandate especially promotes innovative activities that fall within the "integration" level of linkage. At this level the transition from school to work (or for adults, work to school) becomes almost non-existant. Because the two environments become fused, learning and working are unified experiences. Such integrative activities and their effectiveness in facilitating learning have been the goal of vocational education special needs educators for all their students. The approach to training that is promoted through JTPA activities centers upon practical learning experiences and active performance of the individual within actual work environments. And, importantly for these JTPA participants who qualify as disadvantaged, the authors of the Act recognized the need for supportive vocational services to reinforce and complement skill training. Vocational education special needs educators, with their cumulative history of proven methods for tapping and extending human potential in disadvantaged and handicapped persons, are the most qualified to become the "new alchemists." 49

In a report to the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, Kogan, Dickinson, Means, and Strong suggest ways of improving the quality of training in JTPA. They suggest a model of quality training for JTPA students which uses instructional strategies that promote active learning. This principle suggests that good training programs employ instructional strategies that lead students
to actively process material, rather than parroting back academics that are not necessarily comprehended. Although it is difficult to guarantee that students will be active learners, practical exercises where the student must transform information and then produce a product tend to be more successful than typical reading assignments and lectures. This is particularly true for JTPA clients, many of whom have found traditional classrooms unengaging and discouraging. In the J.T.P.A. Training for Transfer manual, it states:

The purpose of occupational classroom training is to produce transfer to the job setting. If the knowledge and skill acquired in the classroom are not transferred to the workplace, the training is of little utility. But transfer has proven to be elusive in many training efforts, and therefore continue to be an area of concern. We can say several general things about how to teach for transfer: 1) teach the target skills, not related skills or 'nice to know' information; 2) teach skill performance under conditions as similar as possible to those under which the skill will be performed on the job; and 3) teach principles of application—students need to learn when to apply a skill as well as how to apply it." 50

Senta Raizen's report to the National Center for Research in Vocational Education states a new paradigm view of work preparation in "Reforming Education for Work: A cognitive Science Perspective." This report significantly reflects the curriculum and philosophy of vocational education/special education exhibited as best practices within the Americans with Disabilities in Action program. Senta Raizen states:
The workplace has been transformed, and the work force is changing. How should vocational education be changed to meet the needs of individuals preparing for work? The basic premise of pioneering learning sciences in the cognitive sciences is that separating learning from doing and the sequential teaching skills hierarchies are ineffective. Learning and acting are not distinct in real life. Learning is a continuous, life-long process resulting from one's actions. The corollaries of this understanding are, first, that expertise and knowledge are built out of interactions with the environment. Second, the process of becoming an expert is not linear and cannot be divided into a number of discrete skills taught in isolation. Third, students do not come to school as "blank slates". Learning changes what is already in the students' heads. Based on all this evidence, what needs to be done seems clear:

- Erase the artificial boundaries between different forms of preparation. The distinctions between learning for doing are untenable. Schools must be restructured so as to allow the modeling of authentic work experience during, not separate from formal schooling.
- Expand and upgrade apprenticeship opportunities - people build workplace expertise through the opportunity to participate, under the tutelage of experts, in tasks specific to a particular work setting.
- Ensure that apprenticeships and other work experiences teach not only how to do a particular job but also how to become a competent novice (i.e., learning how to manage oneself in any work setting: noticing procedures and social interactions, copying experts, and asking for explanations and guidance). 51

The above mentioned three key factors of modeling authentic work experience, participating in apprenticeship opportunities, and mastering the pre-employment skills have been the cornerstone for the success behind Americans with Disabilities in Action. The hearts and hands of several dozen special needs students each semester, year after year, has lead to not only master the needed competencies to enter
the world of work but they have also mastered the commitments of leadership that have made a profound effect to touch lives within their school, community, state, nation, world and literally circle interstellar space! The program and its numerous student initiated projects have fostered partnerships with two United States Presidential and Vice Presidential administrations, the Pentagon's Department of Defense and the Joint Chief of Staff, the Commandants of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and NASA. This collaboration of young Americans with Disabilities with national governmental, military and veteran's agencies is a unique paradigm that warrants an investigation into its design, implementation, achievements and outcomes. A leadership style unnoticed will emerge and showcase these special education youth as diamonds among glass that will exhibit vision, patriotism, collaboration, and entrepreneurship as the prisms of color that make R.A.I.N.B.O.W. -- Realistic Achievement for Individuals Needing Basic Occupational WorkSkills -- exemplary and successful.

**History of Vocational Education and Special Education**

**Vocational Education: An Historical Perspective**

The foundations of vocational education for the United States had a noteworthy inauguration. Colonists basically sought out freedom from former governments in regards to
pursuing family life, religious liberty, and happiness within their career choice. Calhoun and Finch claim that there were two common philosophical threads uniting the settlers to this new land: (1) "An individual has much worth and the dignity of that individual must be preserved," and (2) "Individuals should be free to earn their livelihoods in whatever way that proves most profitable." It is believed that the country of origin sent their unwanted and less desirable citizenry to this new land as a means of sweeping clean their growing populations. These refugees would have included persons with special needs who were also considered the debtors, and assorted minor criminals. European court systems were unloading their prisons that were already filled to capacity by offering an opportunity for export to the new world as part of the work force that would be needed to harvest the hidden resources that were predicted as plentiful. On their immediate arrival these new settlers had an impending need to seek out the needed abilities and skills that would become the basis for literally staying alive. The means for this survival was the transferring of the European systems for indentured servants and apprenticeships to the new land. Meers has documented an interesting perspective on the apprenticeship and indentured systems. He states:

The basic objectives of the apprenticeship system were: to teach a particular trade, to give the apprentice a good general education, to give the apprentice good
moral and social training, to pay off debts incurred by the father in apprenticing the son, to provide a system of poor relief by apprenticing poor, homeless, or orphaned boys, and to eliminate idleness by forcing the idle into apprentice programs. The chief advantages of the apprenticeship system for special needs or disadvantaged youth were: it was a good way to bring such youth to the new land, it allowed an opportunity for them to develop strong and close relationships with adults, it served to assist some disadvantaged youths to get out of the ranks of poverty, it involved the entire development of such youths, not just the skill development component. 53

This system was far from being pure at heart. The length of two to ten years for the apprenticeship, the exploitation of these youth by not learning a specific trade and a lack of a provision for the basic human needs made this system somewhat fraudulent. 54 Most of the special needs individuals came to this land via the indenture system. Most of the judges had the option of using the court system to indenture persons to ship captains. Employers waited on the docks of the harbors of the new world so that they had first options of purchasing the indentured from these ship captains. Meers contends that the indentured had the following characteristics: the master was not required to train the indentured servant in any skill or provide a general education, the indentured servant had to do any work that was requested, the paper of indenture could be sold to another master at any time, children and adults of both sexes could be indentured, the indentured paid the cost of transporting the servants to the colonies, the period of indenture ranged from one to seven years in length. 55
These two systems were mistaken for each other primarily because of the period of time that was needed for service. Apprenticeships quickly became uncommon because the colonists preferred the indentured for their requirement to do labor rather than become an apprentice at a set trade. Meers reports that:

A very large illegal traffic in indentured servants quickly sprang up. The courts of England sentenced special needs individuals in great numbers to be deported to the colonies. Ship captains would buy the papers of indenture and then sell them at great profit upon arrival in America. As the apprenticeship system declined into a form of indenture, many young special needs individuals were abused. They were beaten and starved and were not tutored in any skill or provided with a general education. Often such apprentices were forced to flee from their masters in order to survive.\(^5\)\(^6\)

Not until the 1830's did a new perspective for Vocational Education begin. Reform schools and orphanages began to introduce a basic type of vocational training program that remains to cast dispersions on vocational education even to this day. The stigma was that these types of programs were meant for the poor, the offender, and the orphan and this would remain the significant reason mainstream students would continue to avoid an association with these undesirable students. A second stigma of not allowing these disadvantaged youth with training that matched their interest or ability was significantly detrimental. Meers states:
A vicious circle was created that did much to limit the opportunities of special needs students. Since vocational training was perceived as being only for special needs students, only special needs students would enroll in vocational education; observers could then say, "See, I told you that vocational training was only for those kind of people."  

The advantages of vocational training for students of other kinds were simply not appreciated. Educators then thought that vocational education would contaminate general education. The apprenticeship system met its natural death with the onset of the Industrial Revolution of the 1860's. A sad period in our nation's labor market arose. The special need child, the orphan, and the homeless were becoming the new labor force working fourteen hours a day, six days a week in dangerous and hazardous factories. During this period, society removed people with disabilities from sight. There were no opportunities for any type of education, vocational or academic. These youth were perceived as "the sins of the father's" and were literally hidden within their homes and not talked about by their families. It is sad to state that this perception and attitude continued in our society through the post World War II era.

Some changes began to appear in the early 1900's. Isolated pieces of legislation for particular handicaps were initiated. Public Law 58-171 advocated Braille reading materials for the blind. Preparation in teacher education for the handicapped was inaugurated in the states of Ohio, Rhode Island, and New York. The only vocational
opportunities in the schools was, "limited to be isolated, specific, and repetitious tasks such as broom making." Hiring the 8, 9, and 10-year-olds was now being restricted by the introduction of compulsory school attendance laws and child labor laws. Public sentiment believed that disadvantaged youth should be holistically educated and that vocational education would play an important factor in the child's total education. In 1917 the most significant piece of federal legislation which is considered the foundation of vocational education movement was introduced. The Smith-Hughes Act (Public Law 64-347) was initiated as part of World War I's emergency war measure. Monies were now allocated for the first time in American history for developing and promoting home economic, agriculture, and trade and industry education in secondary schools. Of the seven million dollars allocated, one million was marked for specific teacher training. The Smith-Hughes Act also established the Federal Board for Vocational Education whose primary purpose was overseers of all the expenditure of federal monies as stipulated in the Federal Act. This board also had the responsibility to coordinate vocational rehabilitation programs for the disabled. This duty was not accomplished due to discrimination toward the handicapped by members of this federal board. This discriminatory philosophical view was demonstrated in an excerpt from
Policy Bulletin No.1, which outlined whom vocational education would say:

The Federal Board desires to emphasize the fact that vocational schools and classes are not fostered under the Smith-Hughes Act for the purpose of giving instruction to the backward, deficient, and incorrigible or otherwise subnormal individuals; but that such schools and classes are to be established and maintained for the clearly avowed purpose of giving thorough vocational instruction to healthy, normal individuals to the end that they might be prepared for profitable and efficient employment. Such education should command the best efforts of normal boys and girls." 59

It is obvious from this federal policy statement all Americans were not perceived as equals and vocational education was not an option nor a consideration for the special needs child.

Federal Legislation: An Historical Perspective From a Rehabilitation, Social Action, and Educational Programming Perspective.

This segment will first trace the federal government's involvement with public education. Specific legislation will then be traced affecting vocational education for the special education student through a review of rehabilitation, social action, and educational legislation.

Rehabilitation

The federal government may be viewed as the driving force behind the financial and program support for the disabled citizens population. Federal legislation helped to
bring the disabled to an eventual accommodation level. Initially, the President and Congress were remiss in giving the disabled any moral or financial provisions. This was due to the fact the Constitution of the United States gave all public education responsibility to the local states. This predicament began to eventually change for the disabled. This was due to the slowly evolving legislation enacted by the Congress. Meers refers to Samuel Johnson who places this into its proper context when he says, "The law is the last result of human wisdom acting upon human experience for the benefit of the public." Since the states held the responsibility for education, the involvement with the federal government was initially abstract and nondirect. A more substantial impact slowly began once a foundation was laid so that specific assistance could impact the process of education. As early as the late 1800's the Continental Congress began their relationship with the states involving the education of American youth. The Ordinance of 1785 set aside a piece of each township for the support of schools. It was not a direct initiative yet it did set an emerging precedent for future interactions on the part of the federal government. In 1802, future foundations for involvement were begun. Congress granted lands to the states for support of schools by setting aside the 16th section of each township for the purpose of education. This was called the Ohio Enabling Act.
The Morril or Land Grant Act of 1862 provided public lands for colleges and universities that would train students in agriculture and mechanical arts. These are the beginnings of the A & M Southern universities.

The National Defense Act of 1916 was another piece of legislation that served as a model for later legislation to assist persons with disabilities. This particular act served as a guideline for instruction and study of occupations for later legislation affecting military and civilian workers. Reed claims that during this time period, most of the soldiers and sailors were functionally illiterate. They could not read or write and had only those job skills acquired from working and living in rural America upon a farm. This was a forward-thinking idea for development of occupational skills since our country was moving from a rural to an urban population and an agricultural to industrial society. The responsibilities of Congress toward education began to change with the Industrial Revolution and began to make significant initial impact in the early years of the Twentieth Century. The Smith-Hughes Act (Public Law 64-347) also known as the Vocational Education Act of 1917 provided funding for pre-collegiate youth in the areas of agriculture, home economics, and trade and industry. This act set a precedent for future funding and regulatory concerns for subsequent job training and upgrading of legislation. In August of
1917, a special project expanded the Federal Board for Vocational Education's role to be inclusive of medical and vocational rehabilitation to injured war veterans. The Smith-Sears Act of 1918 (Public Law 179), also known as the Soldiers (Veterans) Rehabilitation Act, was for the sole purpose of beginning rehabilitation through vocational rehabilitation for the disabled veterans discharged from their service in World War I so that they could have some chance for employment in this new industrial world of the Twentieth Century. Disabled veteran's concerns previous to the Smith-Sears Act date back to the Civil War era when disabled soldiers were given a type of monetary stipend. In 1865, Public Law 179 was designated as the first legislation from the federal government to begin a type of assistance for rehabilitation of Civil War veterans. This rehabilitation act only designated the disabled veteran and not the disabled civilian. It is believed that Congress thought that giving help to the civilian disabled would only harm them in their ability to become employed in the working society of the late 1800's.

The next important legislation came in 1920 with the Smith-Fess Act (Public Law 236), also know as the infamous Vocational Rehabilitation Act. This legislation earmarked rehabilitation services for accidents that occurred in factories that left the employee disabled and/or injured. No physical therapy or medical procedures were provided.
The only accommodation was vocational training for the injured party. This legislation was seriously underfunded by the federal government. It was only able to meet the needs of a very small segment of the working public who became disabled during their working hours. The errors in this legislation became the catalyst to provide revolutionary incentives for future legislative. This was one of the first times that legislation matched state funding on a fifty/fifty matching funding level. The state's population was another criteria for additional financial assistance. An additional incentive from this act was that the Federal Board for Vocational Education was given the authority for the act's administration and all of its programs.

The Great Depression and a different political viewpoint in Congress halted any additional rehabilitation legislation until the beginning of the 1940's. In the 1920's, a laissez-faire viewpoint was the norm. In the 1930's, getting the masses back to work held the country's peak interest. A sense of total isolation was the hallmark of the person left handicapped in the reality of that working world.

World War II provided for the creation of the Bardon-LaFollette Act of 1943 (Public Law 113). This act designated that the disabled men unfit for military combat and service were in need of vocational training to assist the manpower
shortage created by the Selective Service draft. Meers states that:

Public Law 113 was unique in the annals of rehabilitation legislation in that it was the first such act to include medical services along with vocational training. Fifty percent of all funds were earmarked by the act for rehabilitation services in the areas of medical examinations, corrective surgery, hospitalization, transportation, occupational licenses, occupational tools and equipment, prosthetic devices, and so forth. The act also provided rehabilitation for the mentally impaired, but the effect was limited by the fact that only a small number of mentally impaired individuals were willing or able to take advantage of the services. 62

Reed states that:

World War II also gave us the Disabled Veterans Rehabilitation Act (Public Law 78-16) which provided vocational retraining for veterans of World War II. In addition, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (Public Law 78-346) also known as the G.I. Bill, was designed keeping in mind the importance of education to assist the World War II veteran with tuition and subsistence for veterans whose education and training had been interrupted by military service. 63

The need for more rehabilitation facilities and a shortage of personnel was the logic behind the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1954 (Public Law 565). A 75% Federal funding level was matched to a 25% fund from the states as the source of funding for this legislation. This act also had additional provisions for training and needed research. To the present day, this act provides for various funds for fellowships and grants for those seeking career training in the arena of vocational rehabilitation. In 1967, amendments called the Vocational Rehabilitation Amendments (Public Law
90-99) were legislated. These amendments provided over one billion dollars to be funded through 1970. This funding earmarked research and model projects for the disabled migrant workers' rehabilitation and inaugurated a national clearing house for the visually impaired and the hearing impaired.

In 1968, the Vocational Rehabilitation Amendments of 1968 (Public Law 90-391) were established. These amendments assisted rehabilitation by appropriating grants for innovative rehabilitation and the research for training projects, establishing funding programs for public and nonprofit agencies so that recruitment and training of manpower could provide services to rehabilitation programs, the authorizing of up to 10 percent of the states' allotment construction of rehabilitation facilities, and the expansion of optometrists work in rehabilitation services.

The most poignant piece of legislation to affect persons with severe handicaps was The Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This act superseded all other disability legislation. Section 504 of this act was the first time Congress addressed employment discrimination for persons with disabilities as well as equal access to programs for vocational education. This Public Law specifically states, "No otherwise qualified handicapped individual....shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected
to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." Any violation of this act was followed by losing the services, grants, and contracts from federal funds. Other objectives of this law were expanded employment opportunities for the handicapped in business and industry, to allow states to plan for the purpose of providing vocational rehabilitation services for the handicapped, to conduct evaluations for the rehabilitation of handicapped clients, to expand services to the handicapped, to increase the number of rehabilitation personnel through retraining. Equity for the disabled continued with the passage of the Rehabilitation Act Amendment of 1974 (Public Law 93-516). This act had high emphasis on services and programs for the visually impaired.

A final effort to coordinate the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, The Education for the Handicapped Act and the Vocational Education Act came to fruition with the Rehabilitation Comprehensive Services, and Developmental Disabilities Amendments of 1978 (Public Law 95-602). The National Council on the Handicapped evolved from these amendments. This council, "Established general policies for, and review of, the operation of the National Institute of Handicapped Research provided advice to the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, provided advice on the execution of the act, and continued to review
and evaluate all policies, programs, and activities concerning the handicapped." 65

Another very significant concept for transition services of the handicapped came from Title IV of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Special needs persons need coordination of services for living independently. The Comprehensive Services for Independent Living Title allows for comprehensive service delivery, centers for independent living, counseling, living skills training, housing, transportation assistance, health maintenance and other services that will enhance the independence of persons with disabilities.

In 1984, the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services was given the administrative responsibility of rehabilitation control through the passage of the Rehabilitation Amendments of 1984 (Public Law 98-221).

Social Action Legislation

Within the New Deal Era of President Roosevelt's Presidency are the roots of social action legislation. The President and Congress needed a means to solve the enormous amount of unemployment created by the great depression. This was the time when the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Public Works Administration placed men all across America building roads, bridges, and working in our national
parks. Remarkably, these programs were not seen as a long-term solution in assisting the social and economic issues of this segment of the twentieth century.

This era brought about the Social Security Act of 1935 (Public Law 74-271), which provided the first permanent, continuous authorization of funds for vocational rehabilitation training programs for civilians. Prior to this act, re-authorization was required periodically, making it subject to shifting political climates and varying levels of sympathy for the needs of persons with disabilities. Although the primary emphasis of the act was again on education and training, the programs offered an advantage over previous legislation because it was now possible to plan for long-term services instead of just working from one year to the next waiting for re-authorization. This Social Security Act would become an important cornerstone of governmental legislation for persons with disabilities. 66

Another declaration of war that immediately followed the end of World War II occurred when Congress passed the Employment Act of 1946 (Public Law 304). This effort on our government's part was to deal with the massive numbers of military returning to the ranks of civilian looking for their piece of the American pie - a JOB! This Act states:

The Congress hereby declares that it is the continuing policy and responsibility of the federal government to use all of the practical means consistent with its needs and obligations and other essential considerations of national policy, with the assistance
and cooperation of industry, agriculture, labor and state and local governments, to coordinate and utilize all its plans, functions, and resources for the purpose of creating and maintaining, in a manner calculated to foster and promote free competitive enterprise and the general welfare, conditions under which there will be afforded useful employment opportunities, including self-employment, for those able, willing, and seeking to work, and to promote maximum employment, production, and purchasing power."  

All unemployment was not solved by this legislation yet it did give our government an opportunity to establish the President's Council of Economic Advisers and give the President a mandate to yearly address the nation in the form of a annual economic report to America. This act assisted in allowing a means to develop strategic economic policies.

In 1961, The Area Redevelopment Act (Public Law 87-27) was designated to assist in bringing commerce into economically disadvantaged areas of our country. This act also dealt with underemployment by initiating retraining workers for new jobs in an assortment of new industries. The Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962 (Public Law 87-415) resulted from merging of the former act with new economic legislation. This was considered the most significant piece of social action legislation of the 60's. Known as MDTA, this act established, "Institutional training at either public or private institutions, on-the-job training at the place of employment, demonstration and experimental training programs, youth training programs for individuals aged 16-20 who were out of school and out of work." Amendments to MDTA in Public Law 88-214, were
designated to provide survival academics in reading, writing, and math for the unemployed. The basic tenet of this legislation was to get the out-of-school youth into some type of academic and vocational training due to their failure in a normal work or school setting. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-452) was designed to alleviate the lack of employment skills among unskilled and disadvantaged Americans. The seven significant programs initiated by this act include, "The Job Corps, the Neighborhood Youth Corps, College Work Study Programs, Urban and Rural Community Action Programs, Adult Basic Education, Education of Migrant Children, and Adult Work Experience Programs." In addition to these seven major programs, special remedial and noncurricular programs were inaugurated that specified retraining opportunities for the mentally and physically disabled in regards to education, employment, health, and rehabilitation.

MDTA was being absorbed into the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-203). Known as CETA, it became the new administrative umbrella for the MDTA programs. CETA was designated to provide America with comprehensive manpower services. Our country had an exploding number of young and old that were not working, had no specific job skills, and were taking from the country's tax base rather than becoming contributors to it. CETA was a short term solution to an enormous problem in American
society. The job training was a fast, quick fix solution that kept needing remediation from Congress. The private and public sector agencies sponsored classroom programs as well as on-the-job training. The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973 assures their clients:

Individual and family support for the trainee and provided monetary incentives to complete the programs. Support services and funds were also available for health and medical care, child care, residential support, transportation, counseling, and remedial instruction. In these ways, and by directing vocational educators to plan their programs in concert with CETA programs, Congress expressed its belief that CETA programming would be an extremely important means for curing the problems of the hardcore unemployed." 70

This legislation evolved into the CETA Reauthorization Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-524). It continued the funding for CETA programs already in existence such as the Young Adult Conservation Corps, the Countercyclical Public Service Employment Programs, and private sector opportunities for the economically disadvantaged. This Reauthorization Act also mandated the coordination of programs that:

Aimed at alleviating the unemployment problems of this country. Specifically, the act required that programs involving vocational education, rehabilitation, public assistance, self-employment training, and social services work together to eliminate duplication and counterproductive competition. Thus, the 1978 act refocused the efforts of all relevant agencies on the common goal of turning unproductive individuals into a productive force in the United States economy." 71

The Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (Public Law 95-93) or YEDPA was added as an amendment to Public Law 93-103 in order to set up the Young Adult
Conservation Corps and the Youth Demonstration Program. In 1981, the Youth Employment Demonstration Amendments (Public Law 97-14) kept the program afloat with the needed funding.

The Job Training Partnership Act (J.T.P.A.)

All of this social action legislation led to the funding source that this historical narrative dissertation is documenting, the Job Training Partnership Act Grant of 1982 (Public Law 97-300). This act was designated to, "Establish programs to prepare youth and unskilled adults for entry into the labor force and to afford job training to those economically disadvantaged individuals and other individuals facing serious barriers to employment, who are in special need of such training to obtain productive employment." 72 This act was the work of both Senator Ted Kennedy and then Senator Dan Quayle. It also included access for special needs and special education youth in need of pre-employment training. Up to ten percent of JTPA service recipients may be individuals who are not economically disadvantaged but have encountered barriers to employment; this group includes persons with handicaps. Under the terms of the act, a "handicapped individual" is any individual who has a physical or mental disability which constitutes or results in a substantial handicap to employment.
According to the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services Clearinghouse:

This legislation revamped the much criticized Comprehensive Employment and Training Act by emphasizing training for private sector jobs and eliminating federal aid for public service employment. In contrast to its predecessor, the JTPA program includes: greater private sector involvement; increased state responsibility for program administration and implementation; stricter performance criteria to ensure improved accountability on the part of program participants and administrators; specific programs tailored to distinct populations; a broader definition of individuals eligible for the program; and involvement of community based organizations.  

The two key components of the program which enable it to work on the state and local levels are the State Job Training Coordinating Council and the Private Industrial Council. The State Training Coordinating Council is appointed by the Governor of each state to plan, coordinate and monitor job training services under the act. The Council designates service delivery areas, approves job training plans and allocates and oversees the use of federal funds. A Private Industrial Council (PIC) is appointed to govern JTPA-funded activities in each service delivery area, performing functions comparable to the state council on a local level.

The act states that education and training funds may be appropriated to, "Any state education agency responsible for education and training services." The agency must enter into cooperative agreements with other appropriate state and local agencies for administration and implementation of the
program, as a prerequisite for approval of its plan. Community based organizations and other interested parties are encouraged to comment on the state's job training plan before it is finalized by the Governor.

The provision for a "prime sponsoring agency" that was so central to the operation of CETA programs, was eliminated under JTPA. However, cities and counties with a population of 200,000 or more are entitled to receive direct allocation under the act. The remainder of a state's allocation are channeled through the Job Training Coordinating Council, designated by the Governor, to specified service delivery areas.

The act was amended in 1986 (Public Law 99-496) to include special consideration for persons with handicaps in the awarding of discretionary projects. The transition from CETA to JTPA-funded activities occurred between October 1982 and September 1983. During that time, states had the option of adopting the new program immediately or continuing under the provisions of CETA until October 1, 1983.

For the most part, JTPA funds benefiting persons with disabilities have been used to place persons with mild and moderate handicaps in community jobs. However, an increasing number of projects are being developed to place persons with severe disabilities into supported employment. This act also established a Private Industry Council to develop employability programming and to give
parameters to these programs. They place major emphasis on the accountability of training programs. This initiated a step-by-step documentation system relating to the design, administration, and operation of training programs. Each job training plan was required to contain the following:

A complete administrative plan, a description of services provided, procedures for identifying and selecting eligible participants, performance goals, a budget, a description of methods for complying with coordination criteria, coordination of services within a geographic area where more than one job training program center exist, periodic reports pertaining to the progress of the program." 76

Persons with disabilities may receive services under four major programs entitled under JTPA. These include:

- Training Services for the Disadvantaged. Title II-A of the Act authorizes job training assistance, job counseling, basic skills training, on-the-job training, programs to develop work habits, education-to-work transition activities, job development, follow up services to persons placed in unsubsidized employment, and customized job training programs.

- Pilot and Demonstration Programs. Title IV of JTPA authorizes grants for pilot and demonstration programs on a national level and provide, foster, and promote job training and other services to individuals who have particular disadvantages in the labor market, including handicapped persons.
Employment and Training Research and Development Projects. Title IV of the act also authorizes a research grant program that supports employment and training studies leading to policy and program development that aims at new approaches to training and placing the "difficult to employ."

Job Corps. The Job Corps Program, authorized under Title IV, Part B of the act is a national program of residential and non-residential centers, in which enrollees participate in education, vocational training and counseling to help them become employable, productive citizens.

History of Legislation for Vocational Education and Special Education

Educational Legislation

The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 was landmark legislation for vocational training needed for the handicapped. Because of this legislation, vocational educators have the oldest mandate for mainstreaming the special education student.

The Vocational Education Act of 1963 (Public Law 88-210) first established the label "special needs." The act states:

It is the purpose of this part to authorize Federal grants to states to assist them to maintain, extend, and improve existing programs of vocational education, to develop new programs of vocational education, and to provide part-time employment to continue their
vocational training on a full time basis, so that persons of all ages in all communities of the state—those in high schools...and those with special education handicaps—will have ready access to vocational training or retraining which is of high quality, which is realistic in the light of actual or anticipated opportunities for gainful employment, and which is suited to their needs, interests, and ability to benefit from such training." 77

This act realistically did not mandate the use of federal funding for the special education population, therefore it is not surprising that little service was appropriated to them. The act only stated that funds could be used, not will be used, for individuals with special needs.

Initially, most legislation for persons with disabilities was directed primarily at adults. Legislation for disabled children existed in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-313), but only for children in state-operated or state owned facilities. The first legislation to address education of children with disabilities in the public schools was the Elementary and Secondary Education Amendments (Public Law 89-750), passed in 1966. In 1966 Congressional hearings revealed that only about one-third of the five and a half million handicapped children in the country were being provided appropriate special education services. According to a Senate Committee report issued at the time, the remaining two-thirds were either totally excluded from the public schools or "sitting idly in regular classrooms"
awaiting the time when they were old enough to drop out." 78 Federal programs directed at handicapped children, the Senate Committee reported, were "minimal, fractionated, uncoordinated, and frequently given a low priority in the education community." 79

The special needs population, which includes the disadvantaged and the disabled, were finally given mandated services through the Vocational Amendments of 1968 (Public Law 90-576), which gave 10 percent to the handicapped population and 15 percent to the disadvantaged population from this vocational education fund. The disadvantaged are students with social, economic, academic, or cultural disadvantages that prevent them from succeeding in the normal school environment. The handicapped are students who are unable to learn successfully because they were mentally impaired, emotionally disturbed, orthopedically handicapped, visually handicapped, had hearing, speech, or other health impairments, or are multihandicapped.

Special needs youth were offered programs in career and occupational education for secondary schools through the Educational Amendments of 1972 (Public Law 92-318).

The funding formula for special needs programs and services was increased to 20 percent for the handicapped and to 20 percent for the disadvantaged by the passage of the Vocational Education Amendments of 1976 (Public Law 94-482). The label for disadvantaged was also changed by dropping
cultural disadvantaged and only including those youth who were considered disadvantaged by social, economic, or educational reasons. These amendments also stipulated an anti-sex discrimination clause to open jobs for men and women in nontraditional occupations. The Department of Labor was linked to the CETA agencies to coordinate services in order not to duplicate federal services.

Another very important piece of educational legislation is the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (Public Law 94-142). This act is keystone from the viewpoint of addressing, establishing, and maintaining quality educational programs for the handicapped. This Act's purpose is:

To assure that funds received by the state or any of its political subdivisions under any other Federal program, including Section 121 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965...and Section 122(a)(4)(B) of the Vocational Education Act of 1963...under which there is a specific authority for the provision of assistance for the education of handicapped children, will be utilized by the State, or any of its political subdivisions, only in a manner consistent with the goal of providing a free appropriate public education for all handicapped children." 80

The Education of the Handicapped Act is the primary source of federal aid to state and local school systems for instructional and support services to handicapped children. This act requires the local public school district to provide a free appropriate education that is inclusive to vocational education programs for all disabled students.
The responsibility for these services remains with the local school district and if such services are not available locally the school district must find such services and make them available despite the geographic location and cost. The law's intent is, "To assure that all handicapped children have available to them...a free appropriate public education which emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs...to assure that the rights of handicapped children and their parents or guardians are protected, to assist states and localities to provide for the education of all handicapped children, and to assess and assure the effectiveness of efforts to educate handicapped children." 81

Meers summarizes the act and its relevance when he writes:

Thus the 1975 act is considered to be a piece of civil rights legislation for the handicapped. Since its passage, Public Law 94-142 has had a profound effect upon the total educational environment and in many cases has improved the overall quality of all educational programming. The Act, in essence, guaranteed a number of rights to all handicapped children. 82

These rights are specific in the major provisions, which are briefly described in Appendix 30.

The Department of Education was created as a result of the passage of the Department of Education Organization Act of 1979 (Public Law 96-88). A presidential cabinet position was created as the Secretary of Education and special needs
students concerns were placed in the Offices of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services and Vocational and Adult Education Office. The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1984 (Public Law 98-524) was an additional piece of vocational legislation to assist persons with disabilities and other specific groups. This act aimed to:

Assure that individuals who are inadequately served under vocational education programs are assured access to quality vocational education programs, especially individuals who are disadvantaged, who are handicapped, men and women who are entering nontraditional occupations, adults who are in need of training and retraining, individuals who are single parents or homemakers, individuals with limited English proficiency, and individuals who are incarcerated in correctional institutions." 83

This law changed the name of The Education of the Handicapped Act to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This law also reauthorized and expanded the discretionary programs, mandated transition services and assistive technology services to be included in a child or youth's Individual Educational Plan, and added autism and traumatic brain injury to the list of categories of children and youth eligible for special education and related services.

The Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-496) authorizes grants to support the planning, coordination, and delivery of specialized services to persons with developmental
disabilities. In addition, this law provides funding for the operation of state protection and advocacy systems for persons with developmental disabilities. The original law was enacted in 1963 by Public Law 88-164. In 1987 Public Law 100-146 significantly expanded the act to include persons with mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy, and epilepsy. 84

**Best Practices Evidenced in Americans with Disabilities in Action**

A summary of best practices reflects current trends in disability issues, transition, employment training and work simulation. These are documented because they are in some aspect evident within the Americans with Disabilities in Action program.

A significant trait of Americans with Disabilities in Action student workers is their ability to shed their shadow once they enter the work center. By shedding one's shadow, the disability is left at the door. The administration, teaching staff, and clerical support mirror the philosophy of "seeing past the disability" and this has become very contagious to anyone who enters or participates in this program. The label of handicapped or disabled is seen very negatively in this society. This program is proactive in trying to do something about it.

There is also a fallacy in our society that youth with disabilities have far less potential than the nondisabled.
Everything that has made this program into the model exemplary stature that it has become is due to the tenacity and diligent work of disabled youth. The following authors also believe these factors to be significant.

Kochhar, Leconte, and Ianacone state:

The "image" of persons with handicaps is also an important factor in considering what constitutes barriers to employment. The American public, including policy makers and business and industry leaders, still operate largely uninformed of the proven capacities of these individuals. This problem is compounded by confusion surrounding the terms 'handicaps' and 'disabilities'. These terms conjure up very different images for many people. For most of society, the term 'handicapped' or 'disabled' conjures up an image of severe mental or physical disability, with equally severe incapacities. Educating policy developers, as well as service providers, is a process which needs the unflagging attention of advocates of persons with disabilities. The pervasive social perception that individuals with handicaps have far less potential for gainful employment presents an attitudinal barrier which frequently blocks their full participation in many aspects of contemporary work. An additional barrier lies in the frequent failure of employment and training services to accommodate for disabilities or allow for the unique differences of these individuals. For example, a time-limited job training program which cannot be adapted to accommodate persons with different rates of learning may completely exclude groups such as those with learning disabilities or other mental handicaps." 85

Wagner and Blackorby state:

The longitudinal look at the trends in post-school outcomes of youth with disabilities in this paper has demonstrated significant achievements for those making the transition from adolescence to young adulthood and that some aspects of secondary school programming like vocational education are helpful in that transition. However, comparison between outcomes for youth with disabilities and youth in the general population also indicates the challenges facing young people with
disabilities. Their experiences present challenges to others as well - to policymakers, advocates, educators, service providers, researchers, and parents who are committed to helping youth with disabilities achieve their potential as adults. The effects of disability on young people's lives are unlikely to be eliminated entirely, no matter how intensive the effort; disability implies a reduction in function that may influence the outcomes of individuals for their lifetimes. Yet the ongoing active federal role in legislation and programming for persons with disabilities, illustrated by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the transition initiative in the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, for example, indicates a commitment at the highest level of government to continued efforts to help persons with disabilities meet the challenges they face. 86

Another highlight of Americans with Disabilities is the program's ability to build self-esteem and provide the student workers with meaningful work. The following research agrees. D'Amico states:

Obstacles to employment also may result from the fact that past cohorts of youth with disabilities often have entered adulthood with little orientation to the world of work and with limited marketable skills. Although discriminatory attitudes and practices may be slow to change, improving the work readiness of youth with disabilities is directly amenable to social intervention and can have sizable payoffs. Indeed, practitioners are convinced that nearly all persons with disabilities, even the severely disabled, can perform meaningful work if given the proper training and support."87

The International Center for the Disabled stated that:

Finding steady employment often is central to young adults developing feelings of self worth and attaining economic and psychological independence. Indeed the report of the Survey of Disabled Americans concludes that disabled people who work are much more satisfied with life, much less likely to consider themselves disabled, and much less likely to say that their disability has prevented them from reaching their full abilities as a person."88
The real world opportunities for the student workers of Americans with Disabilities in Action is painted by researchers as very negative and filled with pessimistic and bleak futures for people with disabilities. Americans with Disabilities in Action offers the students hope and opportunity. It works on getting the students to believe in themselves and insists on keeping up a positive mental attitude. There is a saying that one cannot legislate the heart. With all of the well-meaning new laws and legislation, people and youth with disabilities are only looking for a chance and not a handout. It is up to the American public to confront this last vestige of discrimination in our society.

The Department of Labor planning document details the changes projected in the American workforce for the 21st century. With the growing importance of the service economy, the report predicts that the jobs of tomorrow will require increased levels of skill and flexibility. As a result, the standards for successful employment in the future are expected to be higher. This factor may place individuals with disabilities at an even greater disadvantage than they face today. 89

Fagan and Jenkins find that, "Vocational rehabilitation program unemployment or underemployment has been the rule rather than the exception for adults with disabilities."
This according to the President's Committee on the
Employment of Persons with Disabilities (PCEPD).\textsuperscript{90}

In her opening remarks at the National Council on
Disability, the chairperson Sandra Swift Parrino stated:

One of the many contributions of the ADA is the
establishment of national goals for individuals with
disabilities. For the first time in our nation's
history, our disability policy has overarching goals.
These goals are equal opportunity, full participation,
independent living, and economic self-sufficiency.
These goals are big promises to Americans with
disabilities; promises the provisions of the ADA alone
cannot meet. Consider the area of employment. Today
about 13 million Americans with disabilities are
jobless. About 28 percent of all disabled people live
in poverty, and another 50 percent are near-poor.
While discrimination is surely a culprit in this
joblessness and poverty, so are lack of education and
job skills and access to personal assistance. The ADA
will not provide education, and job skills and personal
assistance." \textsuperscript{91}

In the conclusion of Closing the Gap it states:

The 1994 N.O.D./Harris Survey of Americans with
Disabilities shows that people with disabilities in
general are optimistic about the future. They expect
job opportunities, income, education, and access to
community institutions and activities to improve.
Although not as hopeful as other Americans, as the
bimillenium approaches, people with disabilities are
showing confidence in our country and its promise of
opportunity. And yet the optimism voiced in this
survey, as encouraging as it might be, will not be
rewarded unless America puts the survey's results into
action. Just as the 1986 survey helped pave the way
for the Americans with Disabilities Act, the findings
presented herein can inspire a similarly profound
change by ushering in the last great inclusion - people
with disabilities - in American life. To make this
change a reality, the American people must look at the
abilities of the nation's citizens with disabilities
and not their disabilities, welcome people with
disabilities into the mainstream of community life, and
make the accommodations and technological changes
needed to "level the playing field." In the end, America must become a society in which disabilities are invisible in all respects in which they are irrelevant. Those with disabilities already face far too many challenges. They should not be burdened further by restrictions on their participation in the country's economic and social spheres out of ignorance or unfounded fears. As this survey shows, individuals with disabilities want to - and can - participate and contribute more to society. By acting both collectively and individually, Americans can make this cherished dream of full participation, at last, a reality. All America will gain! 92

The ADA, Americans with Disabilities Act, offers opportunities for the student workers of Americans with Disabilities in Action yet there are more specific opportunities coming from involvement with specific job training because of the federal J.T.P.A. funding and programming.

Richard C. Douglas, the Executive Director of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, states:

The Americans with Disabilities Act provides new opportunities for people with disabilities as they prepare for tomorrow's workforce. The Job Training Partnership Act provides vital training opportunities that can help many of these valuable workers acquire necessary skills. The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, the National Alliance of Business, and the National Association of Private Industry Councils are pleased to join together in the effort to encourage greater participation by persons with disabilities in JTPA programs throughout the country. In reviewing the total number of individuals with disabilities served by JTPA, it is evident that JTPA has become a major training and employment resource for our nation's citizens with disabilities. For example, in program year 1989, almost 163,000 people (both adult and youth) with disabilities were served by JTPA programs. Although
additional efforts can be undertaken to increase the number of people with disabilities in JTPA programs, our nation's federally funded training and employment system has demonstrated, in general, a commitment to serving this group. 93

Americans with Disabilities in Action is a vocational education/special education work center that is offering disabled youth a chance at building their pre-employment skills as well as life skills. This program is unlike some special education programs and educators who believe that they should "do" for the special needs youth which has given a sour taste to vocational special educators who try and place the ownership upon the student who is within semesters of receiving a high school diploma. High school is one of the only hopes for our society in preparation for all our youth to take up the responsibility of citizenship. Kohler and Rusch state:

The knowledge, technology, and resources are now available to change the course that today's youth with disabilities should take in preparing for the challenges facing them tomorrow. If the practices that currently are being validated by federally sponsored model programs throughout the United States could be introduced in every high school in the near future, drastic improvements in secondary special education effectiveness would be realized. Clearly, a youth's high school experiences are a cornerstone to assuring his or her success throughout life. Indeed, failure to provide an effective high school experience results in personal shortcomings. Tragically, tens of thousands of youth with disabilities leave high schools without the skills or the support needed to survive independently in their communities. Theirs is an uncertain future.94
F.H. Wood states that:

The mission of special (or general) education is not restricted to the teaching of academic subjects, nor is it to protect students from a harsh adult environment. It is to prepare them to participate fully in the mainstream adult world. At one time our preoccupation with the vulnerability of children at risk prompted educators and other caregivers to be overprotective....Many of the children thus isolated were wiser than their protectors....they made it clear that what they needed was not restraint but instruction, support, and companionship.95

The high school diploma is a difficult and frustrating accomplishment for most special needs students to achieve. Yet there is one hidden tenet that most special needs youth do not understand. Society has an expectation that all of its citizens understand their roles as Americans. The sad commentary on this tenet is that most regular education students who are new graduates do not comprehend this responsibility. Americans with Disabilities in Action is very proud of the fact that there is a heavy dose of patriotism and citizenship built into the program and projects from the customers. The following authors confirm the importance of citizenship. H.A. Giroux believes citizenship is an unnoticed topic as an outcome in education. He states:

Education must prepare youths not just for work, but also for citizenship in a society that is still oppressive for many citizens. Work, employment, and career are basic parts of citizenship. Without slighting the absolute necessity of meaningful and well-paying jobs of all, educators need to rethink education within a definition of citizenship... as an ethical compact [in which] empowerment is related to...
forms of self and social formation that encourage people to participate critically in shaping public life. 96

Siegel and Sleeter tie this citizenship paradigm together with the analysis that:

Job situations where difficult-to-employ individuals are being served reveal the crisis that originate in the chasm between the needs of the labor market and individual human needs that are not adequately considered. While supported-type services are new, the social contract will emerge in a workable manner when the other aspects of education for citizenship have been better provided for in our schools. Education of disenfranchised groups to advocate for themselves will empower them to reach for a society and jobs that fulfill their needs as individuals, as members of a special group, as citizens of a nation, and as citizens of one world. Citizenship education of advantaged groups will help them to respond intelligently and sensitively, and use their power for a society that produces a true appreciation for the diversity of the human condition. The criterion that should determine practice and pedagogy is that, whether a child has profound disabilities or profound competencies, that child enters our public schools a citizen by name and should exit a citizen by action. 97

The future of employability for special needs youth and the other Americans who do not have marketable skills will eventually be seen as needed components to make American workplaces function.

U.S. News & World Report JOBS Issue states that non-college bound students are shunted aside by teachers and neglected by employers. But the nation's economic security may well depend on the half of American workers who do not attend college and who lack the skills to do the jobs of the 21st century. This article states:
You don't have to go to college to be a success... we need the people who run the offices, the people who do the hard physical work of our society. Bush's comments may have seemed patronizing, but he was right on one vital point: The nation will need millions of workers without baccalaureate degrees in the 1990's. Stereotypes of non-college bound youth as janitors or hamburger flippers have fed the notion that Americans who lack a college degree are economically inconsequential. In fact, half of all young American workers still do not attend college. And in the upcoming decade, the economy will depend as much on this diverse group of less schooled workers as it will on the nation's software programmers and rocket scientists. Unfortunately, however, few of America's "forgotten half" either possess the basic reading-writing-arithmetic skills or receive the training necessary for the more complicated jobs of the future.98

Americans with Disabilities in Action has a unique history of forming partnerships with the government, the military, and with veterans groups on a national level. The program is very proud of this fact. It seems that one answer for the disabled and future assistance from educational programming needs to come from the partnership concept and model. The following research supports this concept. Allen Phelps believes partnerships may be a needed answer. He believes that:

However, most of the current calls for reform speak eloquently and directly to the charge of uniting the education and business communities in such an endeavor. Our nation's leaders recognize the existence of the problem and are encouraging school reform and reconstructing that include a total effort, including human and material resources available from the business world....While Perkins II strongly encourages vocational-technical programs to build and maintain effective partnerships with business, industry, and labor, the Act falls short of mandating them. From the
evidence provided, it appears that newly created, close, and systematic working relationships between educators and the business community (i.e. partnerships) are an essential ingredient for serving minority at-risk youth. The challenge confronting vocational special needs educators is to move beyond the minimal suggestions for business-education partnerships found in Perkins II to design, implement and evaluate partnerships serving the full range of special population youth and adults. 99

Tilson, and Tebbutt state that:

The extent to which employers have been actively involved in the education and transition of nondisabled youth, and the impact of such involvement, have been topics of great debate in the past several years. There has been an explosion of discourse as educators question the degree to which the business sector has contributed to the schools. At the same time, business leaders have voiced alarm over the lack of preparedness of the future workforce, and government officials have grappled with the problems faced by both of these constitutes. Essentially, education is in the business of serving its "customers," namely its students. Educators are charged with preparing these students to be a viable labor source for employers and to become law-abiding members of their communities. Likewise, employers have to meet their customer's needs in order to stay in business; and to do so they are dependent on educated, trained, and willing employees. Clearly, both education and business need one another. Partnerships, in this instance, make good common sense as well business sense. What information do we have about business-education partnerships? Where are they taking place? How do they work? Have these partnerships resulted in mutual benefit to both partners?.... In summary, a vast array of community-education partnerships have been established over the years, all sharing goals to improve the lives of children and youth - and in turn improving communities. These partnerships have been initiated by individuals, schools, government agencies, private foundations, corporations, and other entities. They have varied dramatically in size and scope. However, few of these partnerships have targeted youth with disabilities. Annually, the government (federal, state, and local) spend millions of dollars for educating, training, and supporting youth with disabilities.100
The final researcher to be reviewed claims that there are five best practices that are common to successful programming for special education youth. Since this author was this researcher's instructor at the Leadership Development Program for Vocational Education/Special Education at the University of Illinois-Urbana, it is understandable that these five characteristics are evidenced within Americans with Disabilities in Action.

Repetto reviewed literature on vocational education for special needs students in urban areas. She identified the following five best practices that characterize successful programs for this population: (a) high standards for student achievement; (b) commitment from administrators, teachers and employers; (c) functional curricula that focus on the relationships between school and real life; (d) program flexibility; and (e) collaboration between school and community members. 101
Chapter 2


8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.


13 Education Commission of the States, 1983; National


16 Ibid.


19 Ibid, 47.


24 Ibid, 7.
26 Meers, 4.
30 Alan Gartner and Dorothy Lipsky, "Equity and Excellence For All Students," Presentation Paper before National Council on Disability, 7 June 1989.
33 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
1993: 1.

39 Ibid, 4-13 to 4-15.


48 Ibid.


50 Deborah Kogan, Katherine Dickinson, Barbara Means, and Mariene Strong, "Improving the Quality of Training Under JTPA: Summary of Findings," *SRI International* (January


53 Meers, 11.

54 Calhoun and Finch, 31.

55 Meers, 11.

56 Ibid, 12.

57 Ibid.


60 Meers, 29.


62 Meers, 32.

63 Reed, 398.

64 Public Law 93-112 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973), Sec 504.

65 Ibid, 34.

66 Public Law 74-271 (Social Security Act).

67 Public Law 304 (Employment Act of 1946), Sec 2.15

68 Meers, 36.

69 Ibid, 37.

70 Ibid, 38.
71 Ibid.

72 Public Law 97-300 (Job Training Partnership Act).

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.


76 Meers, 39.

77 Public Law 88-210 (Vocational Education Act of 1963).


79 Ibid.

80 Public Law 94-14223 (Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975) Section 613 (A)(2).

81 Ibid, Section 3 (C).

82 Meers, 43.


85 Ibid, 11.


87 Ronald D'Amico, "How Well Are Youth With Disabilities Really Doing?, The First Comprehensive Report From The National Longitudinal Transition Study of Special Education
Students, SRI International (September 1991): 8-1.


93 Ibid, 3-4.


99 Allen L. Phelps and Carolyn Maddy-Bernstein, "Developing Effective Partnerships for Special Populations - The Challenge of Partnerships and Alliance," Journal For Vocational Special Needs Education 14/2 and 3 (Winter 1991 -


CHAPTER 3

THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND FOUNDATION YEARS 1980-1984

Challenging the Process

"The maturity reflected in this man is the product of unusual compensatory drive. In the course of his personal psychoanalytic pilgrimage he paid close enough attention to the critical junctures of his life that his capacity to empathize matured to the point that Albert Schweitzer referred to as the "reverence for life." One of my mentors, Heinz Kohet said that empathy, the recognition of the self in the other, is an indispensable tool of observation without which, vast areas of human life, including man's behavior in the social field, remains unintelligible. Empathy, the expansion of the self to include the other, constitutes a powerful psychological bond between individuals which counteracts man's destructiveness against his fellows. And empathy, the accepting, confirming and understanding echo evoked by the self, is a psychological nutriment without which human life as we know it and cherish it could not be sustained. The nature of empathic love is that it is contagious. Using his own creative attributes as a touchstone, Larry designed project R.A.I.N.B.O.W. to enable self-respect, interpersonal responsibility, an interest in learning and personal dignity. As Larry's psychotherapist, I had the privilege to watch the development of project R.A.I.N.B.O.W. from its conception. In my 22 years as a psychoanalytic practitioner, I have not seen a better example of "corporate generativity." His students respond to him on a very basic level. As a priest, I refer to that level as the soul." ¹

David Macbeth Moss

This chapter will first define the leadership principles of first challenging the process with the commitments of searching for opportunities and experimenting
and taking risks and the second principle of inspiring a shared vision with the commitments of envisioning the future and enlisting the support of others. The researcher will integrate this philosophy of leadership into the philosophical and foundation years by showing specific examples from this part of the chronology. Then this chapter will document the philosophical formulation and foundation years of this program. It will include a biographic account of Mr. Baran's educational and belief system. It then will be related to the environments he associated with that led him to the dream of starting a simulated work experience and later building employment skills and opportunities for special education youth. This will include his volunteer work with handicapped youth from high school through college. It will include his educational experiences within the Chicago Board of Education and end with the Principal of Homewood-Flossmoor High School calling him for consideration to teach at his school. The chapter will then document the specific beginnings of the program as a class in vocational education for special education youth. It will also trace the dream of assisting special education graduates from the high school in gaining needed employment training so that employment could become a reality for them. Working in collaboration with the Homewood-Flossmoor Park District and the Coop for special youth in the south suburbs known as
SSRSA (South Suburban Special Recreation Association) will demonstrate the need other professionals in the area saw for vocational training through the Park Districts. Finally this documentation will trace the meeting of significant persons from the Homewood-Flossmoor Community who wanted to take a leap of faith and start a foundation to assist special education alumni of the high school in receiving needed transition services of additional employment training and supportive employment and even supportive living arrangements. This chapter will end with the unpredicted conflict of interests and disharmony it caused between the high school vocational class and the newly formed foundation.

Carrigan states that, "The ability to participate in a challenge and to make it a shared challenge is an incredible task for a leader." Challenge is the opportunity for greatness. People do their best when there's the chance to change the way things are. Maintaining the status quo breeds mediocrity. Leaders seek and accept challenging opportunities to test their abilities. They motivate others to exceed their limits. They look for innovative ways to improve the organization. Leaders do their best when there is a tough assignment or quest for change. Leaders understand that the workers or followers usually initiate the ideas for innovation. Recommendations are always listened to and given serious consideration.
Disappointments from the failures are a significant factor when the leader takes the needed risks. This will evidently become an opportunity for reflection and learning.

**Commitment Number 1**

- Search Out Challenging Opportunities to Change, Grow, Innovate, and Improve.

Sparagna states, "Leadership requires changing the 'business-as-usual' environment." \(^3\) Leadership is closely related to innovation and change. The quest for change is an adventure. It tests our skills and abilities. It brings forth talents that have been dormant. It is the training ground for leadership. The following are suggestions for searching for opportunities in leadership: Treat every job as an adventure, treat every new assignment as a turnaround, even if it isn't., question the status quo, go out and find something that is broken, add adventure to every job, break free of routine, make the adventure fun.

**Commitment Number 2**

- Experiment, Take Risks, and Learn from the Accompanying Mistakes.

Ruck states, "When people don't make mistakes, I'm uncomfortable. They're not reaching out, growing." \(^4\) Leadership comes from learning from successes, failures, risks, and experiments. They state that the search for opportunities beyond tradition is an exploration of the new. It requires individual creativity and organizational
innovation. That means that a leader must have an openness to ideas and a willingness to listen. It means that leaders must try untested approaches and accept the risks that accompany all experiments. Renew your teams.

Inspiring a Shared Vision

"One of the many joys which followed my election to the H-F Board of Education in 1983 was meeting the remarkable Larry Baran. With boundless energy, enthusiasm, creativity, and love for his students, Larry has challenged and inspired them to levels of development and hope that no one has expected. What a unique individual! For twelve years I have watched him build a pre-employment program that has not only altered the lives of his students, it has forever changed everyone's perception of what can be achieved by disabled children. Our school, our community, our country is so fortunate to have Larry." 5

Karen Hoffschmidt

Boettinger states, "To manage is to lead, and to lead others requires that one enlist the emotions of others to share a vision as their own." 6 There is no freeway to the future. No paved highway from here to tomorrow. There is only wilderness. Only uncertain terrain. There are no road maps. No signposts. So pioneering leaders rely upon a compass and a dream. Leaders look forward to the future. They hold in their minds visions and ideals of what can be. They have a sense of what is uniquely possible if all work together for a common purpose. They are positive about the future, and they passionately believe people can make a
difference. A lone vision by the leader is not enough to initiate change in the organization. An excitement must be mustered for the followers to become ignited by future possibilities. A vision is given by the life breath of the leader. This vision must be clearly communicated so that the followers can begin to show ownership to the dream. By expressing sincere warmth, friendship, strong appeal and quite persuasion, leaders will gain a strong support group.

Commitment Number 3

- Envision an Uplifting and Enabling Future

Swiggert states, "The leader's job is to create a vision." 7 Organizational visions are influenced by our assumptions about people and the world in which we live. No matter how grand the opportunity, if a leader is not open to it, the vision will be constrained. These suggestions are given to enhance envisioning the future: Think first about your past, determine what you want, write an article about how you have made a difference, write a short vision statement, act on your own intuition, test your assumptions, become a futurist, use mental rehearsal.

Commitment Number 4

- Enlist Others in a Common Vision by Appealing to Their Values, Interests, Hopes, and Dreams.

Berlew states: "The executive must find a way to communicate the vision in a way that attracts and excites members of the organization." 8 The first task in enlisting
others is to find out what you and your constituents have in common. No matter how grand the dream of the visionary, if others do not see in it the possibility of realizing their own hopes and desires, they will not follow. It is incumbent upon the leader to show others how they will be served by the long-term vision of the future.

The Philosophy

Mr. Baran has a belief system that is very simple. He loves his God, country, and teaching. He grew up as a 50's post-war baby living in Chicago's Beverly Ridge area, known to the locals as "Fisher" for the parish area of Saint John Fisher. Within this loving neighborhood, education was emphasized by all adults. Therefore to no one's surprise, the favorite game on the block was "playing school." His gang would take turns while meeting on a front porch, a basement, or a garage and make flash cards, do times tables and read from old primers. They would always argue whose turn it would be to be the teacher. Age always won out! At least five of the group actually became educators. Mrs. Rosemary Schoenknecht, neighbor and life-long friend of the Baran family, remembers:

We always insisted upon manners - May I, please, thank you, and we emphasized to be courteous. School was the most important and college --- why we never thought of having our children not going. There was no such word as NO as far as going to college. From the time they were babies we were schooling them into going to school. Because in order to be someone in our society, you have to have an education.
Mr. Baran's faith was based in the parochial training from the good priests and nuns who taught him the philosophy of knowledge and love and service to God and country. Pledging to the American flag and pledging to the cross of Christ was a daily ritual. Also instilled by this educational system was taking these values and converting these beliefs into service to the parish and community. This is where during his eighth grade graduation conference, the parish priest listed the variety of groups and activities that his class could participate in during their high school years. Mr. Baran can vividly remember Father Clark describing the CCD, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine classes, held on Saturdays in the primary classrooms for mentally retarded children. Something tugged at his heart at that moment to go and see what that was all about. Father Clark was trying very hard to influence him to recognize a calling to the priesthood that he was sure Mr. Baran had and was not responding to, the calling that he righteously knew was present in his life. Mr. Baran went to the information meeting and later volunteered for the CCD program. That fall following his grammar school graduation, he became a very active aide with the special children. Mr. Baran had a very special career/transition planning experience within the first three Saturdays of service. On a beautiful October morning he recalls Mrs. Naylor, a teacher, asking him what he planned on doing as a life's work. He responded
that he did not know. Mrs. Naylor then planted a mustard seed into his conscious. "Did you ever think of becoming a teacher of mentally retarded children? You are so good with these children and they love you so...." Mrs. Sarah Mattson, Catechist for St. John Fisher Parish CCD Program for Special Education states:

I knew that too, that Larry would be a special education teacher. The children were very receptive to him. He was a kind and gentle person with the children. He taught the children about God in their hearts. I remember Bobby Krissy. He looked up to him especially when he talked about the word of God. 10

Delores O'Neil, another Catechist for St. John Fisher Parish CCD Program for Special Education also remembers:

First of all we were a group who worked with retarded children and we had a preponderance of working with young boys. So when Larry came in we were delighted and the boys took to him immediately. Secondly, because of Larry's working here, his teaching abilities helped us to do a better job with the children especially since none of us were teachers per say. Third, Larry displayed such enthusiasm not only in teaching but in his artistic ability. 11

Mr. Baran can remember completely agreeing with this possibility. At that moment he decided that he always loved and respected teachers and teaching and that he would set his life's goal of becoming a special education teacher. Mr. Baran was an aide for that program for four years. He went to a local commuter teacher's college and continued his service to the program. He ended up heading that program as well as being given the responsibility of another south suburban CCD program for the mentally handicapped. He was
responsible for supervising a volunteer staff and teaching them pedagogical techniques as well as using his artistic skills to infuse needed hands-on activities to overteach the biblical concepts that he personally thought were mental age levels beyond the students that the curriculum of the Archdiocese insisted upon. Mr. Baran considers these years of service very special in assisting in developing his educational philosophy. Mr. Baran also remembers hearing about the Kennedy School for Mentally Retarded Children. He heard about a program there called a "Sheltered Workshop." Something again tugged at his heart to investigate this school and concept. He called and drove out on Wolf Road into the rolling hills and forests of Palos Park, Illinois. He was given a private tour of the facility and was able to meet the happy youth involved in various activities. There was a workcenter store where he purchased a very special gift for himself, a hand sawed/hand stained creche with packaging straw. Laid within this crib was a hummel-like Christ child with a halo cut with the edge of pinking shears. That cradle has been in the center of every advent wreath in his home each and every Christmas season ever since. Truly the mustard seed rooted that afternoon with a very hidden agenda would come to true fruition years later! It is extremely important to document Mr. Baran's artistic and creative nature that is interwoven within the development and later achievements of this program. He was
always singled out by the nun teachers of his grammar school as so creative in his artwork. They always asked him to be involved in special art projects, especially product maps, for the annual open house at school. He vividly recalls Sister Mary Joseph Ann asking the class to look out of the second floor classroom window as to what they really saw. After numerous comments she called on Lawrence for his artistic viewpoint. He responded to the different hues of color radiating from the various shingled rooftops! Sister responded, "Now that's an artist's view!" She even consulted his mother and insisted that she look into Saturday classes downtown or at St. Xavier College for his creativity. By the way, his mother did nothing with the recommendations but did allow him to be as creative as possible around the house. If he completed his chores he would take his allowance and walk up to Evergreen Plaza and go to the Fair Store or S.S. Kresge's dime store and purchase plastic flowers that he would bring home and arrange over and over again. This is significant for Mr. Baran's background in floral design. With his dedication to the CCD Saturday classes for the mentally retarded youth he was also extremely interested in finding a part time after school job for extra money. He applied over and over at local florist who wanted to hire him yet his insistence of continuing to be a volunteer to the CCD program canceled out any opportunity of being employed in any florist shop.
Farris Flowers owner Mr. Joe Farris in Evergreen Park allowed him to come and make dance and prom florals when need be. It was not until college when he needed additional funds did he apply at Brainard Florist where he thought he was being hired as an apprentice yet the position ended up being a delivery man. Mr. Baran was quite observant and picked up numerous tapping, wiring, designing and structure techniques that were basic to the foundations of all fresh floral designing techniques. Becoming extremely frustrated and not being given much of a chance at dabbling in the floral design aspect of the shop as promised by the owner, Mr. Watkins, he decided to resign from his truck driver position. Mr. Baran continued to become self taught in this career. He would make floral presents for various occasions. Later he even made and designed his own wedding flowers at his friend's Farris Flower Shop. During the early years of his marriage he decided to begin a home/hobby wedding floral business and had his sister, at Michael Reese Nursing school, solicit her friend Barbara Ruden to do her wedding flowers. For that initial wedding back in 1972 his pregnant wife insisted that he name this infant business which he immediately named, "Heidi House Originals" after his maybe future daughter Heidi! This business became very successful through word of mouth referrals. He eventually rented an exclusive tiny storefront in downtown Flossmoor and did the actual designing from his home basement. Mr.
Baran built a significant satisfied customer base. He even contemplated leaving education to become full time in this venture. Listening to the advice of his business manager wife he finally realized and admitted to himself he was terrible at the money making aspect of this business and was continually underpricing himself. He had to admit that between the two, his hobby, moonlighting florist job, and his avocation as teacher of special needs youth, he should rededicate himself to teaching and only do a dozen or so weddings a year for friends to keep his creative hands in the floral field. Little did he know how much this expertise would integrate into the evolving vocation program for his disability students.

Mr. Baran attended Chicago State University on a full scholarship to prepare himself as a teacher for the Educable Mentally Handicapped. Here he became actively involved in the Special Education Department and the Special Education Club-Sigma Epsilon Kappa. He was elected president of the club which was a state chapter in the Illinois Student Council for Exceptional Children. He had the opportunity to travel across the state to various state universities for executive council meetings. He was elected as President of the State of Illinois Student Council for Exceptional Children in St. Louis in the fall of 1968. This experience was indeed an introduction to the political arena he would become involved with in the 1980's.
Mr. Baran was then granted a fellowship to Northwestern University's Learning Disabilities program where he became the first male ever accepted within that world renowned program. Here he learned the skills of becoming an educational diagnostician: learning to evaluate a student's strengths and weaknesses as well as his achievements and comparing these scores to a true ability level. Writing specific learning prescriptions was also conceptualized. Mr. Baran used his graduate year to also go and substitute teach one day per week within the inner city's Chicago Public School system. Though he was sent to the worst school settings it didn't seem to bother him for he always loved the students that he was given charge over. Besides, he was earning a few extra dollars that were needed to court and also purchase an engagement ring for his girlfriend who was attending Mundelein College.

This experience lead to accepting a long debated first teaching assignment within the west side inner city Beidler Elementary School rather than the offer from the elite Wilmette School system teaching assignment offer for a self contained LD/BD class. Here Mr. Baran taught for a total of nine years, first for one year in self-contained Severe Learning Disability Class. For four years he taught at the Lewis-Champlain Elementary School in Englewood as a Resource Learning Disabilities Class. Finally, he received a very unique assignment in one of the three Educational Service
Centers for the city. This was ESC South located in the
Woodlawn neighborhood within the first floor of the newer
building of the Wadsworth Elementary School. Here he had
the opportunity to be part of a diagnostic team that
included a medical unit, psychiatric unit, psychological
unit, speech and language unit, social service unit, and
educational unit. Mr. Baran had the position of Educational
Diagnostician for Learning Disabilities. He would do an
educational diagnostic evaluation and write an educational
prescription for the client. He would participate in
multidisciplinary staffings and assist in coming to a
consensus on the specific needs of the youth being served.
Visiting home schools of the clients and sharing the
prescriptions with the educators was a significant part of
this position.

Ms. Gerri Jones, Chicago Board of Education social
worker vividly remembers:

Larry always had an exaggerated sense of humor - an
extreme sense of humor but underneath the humor was an
amazing sense of spirituality and insight. Looking for
a balance of happiness and a higher calling to
ministry. He has a beautiful soul. It would baffle me
always as a struggle of wrestling with resolving some
unfinished work with his "child". He would use humor
to diffuse seriousness with clinic staff. These were
usually double bind messages that most did not
understand. He has a good soul and godliness. He was
afraid how people would react to him but he is blessed.
He had a catharsis of letting go and letting God.
There was a spirituality with the many murals he
painted on the clinic walls. When I go back to the
clinic and see them it connects me with him and what
used to be. I remember when he brought Mother's Day
flowers for everyone and I didn't realize I hadn't finished grieving for my mother. That Friday before Mother's Day I finalized my grief through Larry's creativity. A spirituality of sister/brother evolved between us. He was a hands-on person. He was the idea of the shepherd sharing goodness of his childhood which was an issue of insight. I was very happy when he went to Flossmoor for his vocational training for special education youth. Even though the Chicago Public Schools gave no vision for opportunity, he still was ambivalent and struggled to leave. I was happy for all the successes he accomplished with the H-F kids. He lives his religion and touches lives. 12

Mr. Baran was becoming very bored with this special position. It seemingly became very repetitive to him that everyone was becoming labeled by the team psychologist as either BD/LD or EMH with little respect for the professional input from him as a learning Disabilities Specialist. He felt he was being used as a rubber stamp for many inappropriate diagnoses and was becoming very frustrated at a number of staffings. His only ally was the Speech Therapist Diagnostician, Ms. Glenda Malone who also was training from viewing inner language and auditory processing dysfunction areas. All students tested couldn't possibly be mentally handicapped special education clients, could they? Mr. Baran realized that what was also going on was that he missed the daily contact and forming relationships with special education students. He remembers daydreaming during his hours of scoring diagnostic evaluations and dreaming of starting a work center for handicapped youth. He would literally draw out floor plans for this dream center. Mr. Baran was also beginning to integrate
conceptually his expertise moonlighting as a wedding florist with the ideas of analyzing all of the various jobs that could be broken down for making basic floral arrangements, corsages, and boutonnieres. He also remembers discussing these dreams and aspirations with his colleagues within the diagnostic center.

Mrs. Nettie Stokes, special education teacher for the Chicago Board of Education, remembers her interactions with Mr. Baran and states:

It was my good fortune and privilege to have worked closely with Mr. Lawrence Baran during the early years of his career at the Chicago Public School District 14 Pupil Service Center. Throughout the performance of his daily duties as an academician/prescriptive diagnostician working with both children and adults, it was evident that the young man was God-centered and dependent upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit. He often spoke of his vision and plan for children and young adults with special needs. He had a plan. He offered to share that plan with us at the Chicago Public School system. I only wish that we could have been perceptive enough to have supported his plan and vision for individuals with special needs. Having known and worked closely with this young man during the early years of his educational career makes it difficult for me to speak of him in a few sentences. In addition to his expertise in his profession and his dedication to children, I am reminded how he pitched in washing walls, scrubbing floors and painting walls to beautify the diagnostic center in which we were beginning to work. To this day when I am feeling stressed or anxious, I am still able to relax and calm down by visualizing the mural of Bambi in his natural habitat that he painted on one wall of my classroom sized office. During the two years that I tested special needs young people, that mural appeared to have a calming effect in those young people also. To sum it up as I remember Lawrence Baran, some of the words and phrases that come to my mind are God-fearing, Holy Spirit inspired, dynamic, focused, perceptive, other-
oriented, innovative, futuristic in thinking and planning, goal-oriented, visionary, sensitive, and intelligent. 13

During these four years, his dissatisfying clinic experience led Mr. Baran to seek employment opportunities in suburban high school districts. He was usually offered the positions he applied for but due to a huge pay differentiation and two baby daughters at home he could not take the needed gamble to take a reduction in pay and leave the Chicago Public School System. Mr. Baran at the young age of 28 was feeling extremely trapped. His prayers were to have one last opportunity in an educational setting where his creativity, expertise and love of special education students would be appreciated. Then, in the last week of September of 1980, he noticed while driving to his inner city work site that a semicircular rainbow formed exactly over the Pupil Service Center South in the heart of the Woodlawn Community even though it was only mildly cloudy and it had not been raining. He pulled his car off the road and gazed. Little did he realize that an answer to prayer would reveal itself through a very important phone call which was awaiting him from a very prestigious school system.

Homewood-Flossmoor High School Years

In early October of 1980, Mr. Charles Smith, Principal of Homewood-Flossmoor High School, was urgently trying to replace an immediate vacancy within his Special Education
Department. A former teacher who was hired to teach one-half day special education in Physical Education and one half day within specific special education academic classes was asked to leave his teaching assignment. Mr. Smith was trying to figure out how to fill this vacancy quickly since most of the excellent teachers who were overlooked from that and other vacancies had accepted teaching assignments at other schools. In a panic Mr. Smith dug down in a resume file drawer and found one from a Homewood resident interested in any future special education vacancies at Homewood-Flossmoor. This candidate had tried on numerous occasions to set an appointment to meet with school officials and let them know of his qualifications. Mr. Lawrence J. Baran had a deep desire to teach special youth at this prestigious secondary school for over ten years. Mr. Baran was then functioning as an educational diagnostician for the Chicago Board of Education at Pupil Service Center South. On October 3, 1980, Mr. Smith called his home phone number. Mrs. Cathy Baran answered the phone and told Mr. Smith of his present working situation with the Chicago Board of Education but she was sure her husband would love to talk with him about this opportunity. She called her husband immediately and Mr. Baran promptly called Mr. Smith back. Mr. Smith wanted to know of any union or contractual ties and Mr. Baran told him that if they would consider him seriously and offer him that position he would
resign from the Chicago Board of Education. Mr. Smith asked him how soon he could arrange to come for an interview and Mr. Baran responded, "How about today at 1:00?" Mr. Baran will never regret going to his administrator and requesting an immediate personal business day release. This was granted. Mr. Baran went home and changed into his finest suit and met Mr. Smith and Mrs. Carol Grzelak, the acting head of the Special Education Department, at 1:00 sharp! The interview went extremely well. Mr. Smith's key hiring question for teachers was, "Do you like kids?" and Mr. Baran responses were right on target yet he rattled on for more than the necessary amount of time.

Mr. Charles Smith, retired Homewood-Flossmoor High School states:

Before Larry Baran arrived at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, special education students had a poor self-image. Larry changed this with his enthusiasm and his vision to create an atmosphere of positive self-worth by involving students in decision making and marketing. I saw special education students smiling. I saw special education students motivated. I saw regular education students treating special education students with respect. The special education projects were a rallying point for a school of 3,000. Larry got kids excited about special education. Before Larry Baran arrived, their self-image was low. He motivated them and they started feeling good about themselves and each other. I also witnessed on a regular basis Larry leading kids to accept responsibility. I saw special education students teaching regular education students and adults how to assemble various projects. Larry's enthusiasm was contagious and the students shared his ideas and encouraged others to do the same. Larry is a very unselfish person. He did all these projects for kids! He enjoyed their successes. If you like kids it shows! And they will respond. I was so proud of these
Mrs. Grzelak knew of Mr. Baran's creativity from the community and associates. She was very interested if he had any ideas to spark some needed interest in any area of their special education department's Center of Individualized Instruction, known as the CII. Something definitely happened during that part of the interview that impressed both her and the principal in regards to ideas for new creative courses for their special students. Mr. Baran shared with them a real dream that had been formulating for years within his heart. He shared his idea of teaching real life job skills through the medium of a simulation of a floral shop/manufacturing center.

Mrs. Carol Grzelak, special education teacher at H-F recalls:

I remember the "flavor" of the first time I met Larry to interview him for the job. I had heard that there was an applicant waiting to be on our staff. We needed a teacher. Our aide, Lynn Frank, came in with glowing reports about this person who would be so good for the kids. He has so much enthusiasm and so many ideas, she reported. So, on with the interview.....Mr. Baran hurried into the room and proceeded to answer my questions as well as questions I hadn't asked. He had so much enthusiasm, ideas, and excitement as well as experience. I remember I asked him what he envisioned for H-F in the future if he were hired. He was so excited to share this "vision" with me which included a floral workshop for special needs children and he saw this down the road about 3 years. He was still involved with "Heidi House" and had planned to phase that out so he could use his creativity in the floral arts and combine it with his interest in special needs
children. This sounded good to me and we really needed a teacher, especially male. We decided to give him a try.  

After speaking on far above and beyond the amount of time, Mr. Baran was escorted over to the Administrative Office to meet the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent. Mr. Baran was offered the position by Mr. Burghart, the Assistant Superintendent for Personnel. Mr. Baran remembers responding to Mr. Burghardt's comment that he never met anyone as energetic and talkative as himself. Mr. Baran remembers distinctly stating that, "I will make a definite mark on Homewood-Flossmoor High School and you will never regret hiring me!" After signing the teaching contract, Mr. Baran was asked how soon he could write up his idea so that an elective course in special education could be passed through the needed curriculum channels and approved. By the second semester, a one period course titled Floral Designing was being offered as a very needed elective course within the special education department. The proposal submitted to the HFHS Administration is found in Appendix 1.

Lynn Frank, former special education aide at H-F, remembers:

From the moment Larry started at H-F and began teaching he not only had his students meet all of the program's goals, he had them exceed these expectations! I was privileged to witness "challenged" students develop self-esteem and become integrated in mainstream and extra-curricular activities successfully! Honor students as well as the rest of the school population looked at the special education students with new
respect because of Larry Baran's "vision", painstaking nurturing, encouragement, and plain hard work!. During these initial years, Mr. Baran integrated his business and entrepreneurial skills into making this program more than a hands-on practice session of "basket weaving" as it was perceived by some fellow special education colleagues. He began using marketing strategies he had utilized during the marketing and promoting of his wedding floral business. Literally he used all of the self taught promotional techniques that he used at Wedding Fashion Show Exhibits. A business person would pay a fee to set up an exhibit for the several hundred brides and their mothers in attendance. The gimmick was that the show promoter allowed several similar wedding services as duplicates of services. There were several florists, photographers, bakeries, etc. The brides came primarily to see a fashion show, not necessarily to walk around and view the services available at tables along the wall. Mr. Baran learned early in the game that strategies that were non threatening yet would attract the brides to his creative exhibit of wedding bouquets should be his main strategy. He became very successful from a low key sales pitch embellished within a fantasy and whimsical floral display. This success is what he used to initiate a customer base at Homewood-Flossmoor High School.
There were clubs, service groups, administrators, sports groups etc. that needed or didn't realize the need for his students floral products. He involved his students in this aspect very early on in the program. There were always some high energy, hyperactive, now known as attention deficit students that could really hustle and promote their products and services. Rather than re-practicing making the same corsages and taking the components apart over and over again, he believed that the students would learn numerous life and survival academic skills by soliciting orders from school groups. Making customers come to the class and place the orders with the students led to complete ownership skills, which progressed to planning and discussing how to order all of the needed components for the impending orders. The numerous math skills involved in ordering supplies are hour lessons in themselves. Do we need a dozen or gross of items and what units are they sold in? How many yards of ribbon are needed? How many stems of this color rose are needed if we place three red roses in each of the thirty five corsages? How much foam will we need if we use a three inch by four inch piece and we have fifty to produce?

Initially, orders came from the HFPA -the Homewood-Flossmoor Parent Association - for simple name tag boutonnieres for the annual open house, "Voyage to Excellence". The administration ordered Secretary's Day silk bud vases. The deans helped begin Friday Flowers for
the faculty. Here, students had to prepare a simple different floral bouquet on Thursday ready for delivery at the sixth and seventh period of Friday. Survival reading of faculty names and delivery strategies were learned, taught and relearned. To this date Coaches/Sponsor Day has always used our services for a creative red and white Viking tribute.

Dr. Donald Lambert, retired Director of Special Education at H-F, states:

The vision or dream of the program would include the zeal of the program director, parent volunteers, and parents of special students, the development of a network of services and opportunities for improving the prevocational and vocational opportunities for handicapped persons. The network was made up of school, community, government resources and this would be a significant part of the dream. 17

Because of this success, the program desired to venture into the community and seek work opportunities from service groups, church and temple women's groups, civic and Chamber of Commerce groups, as well as community service related groups. With a few initial phone calls and after school in person solicitations, several groups gave us the opportunity to provide a needed product for a recognition ceremony, banquet, or club meeting or function. Again, the satisfied customer base gained numerous word of mouth business for this one period per day elective special education vocational class. A list of initial patrons and the product requested are included in Appendix 2.
In addition to all of the support from the high school's organizations and the snowballing community based support, certain warning signs were being exhibited and needed analysis of the rapid growth of the customer base asked where this program was going. The basic question that was bothering the teacher was that it was becoming a sort of in-school store and was that the intention of this program? Mr. Baran was extremely bothered that the students were becoming saturated in real work experiences and they were not being remunerated for the labor that they were doing. When the students, even the low functioning mentally handicapped students, were beginning to state that this was not fair, that they were doing work and why were they not being paid? Mr. Baran believed that this simulation with real work was an incredible opportunity. He knew that there was a very uncomfortable feeling and fit to this program's rapid growing customer base. An initial reward system of Friday pizza and pop paid for by the community customer seemingly placated the student workers, however it still did not seem the only appropriate solution.

In addition to this dilemma, numerous special needs youth kept visiting Mr. Baran after school or at his home which is in very close proximity to the high school. These junior/senior students and alumni special needs graduates were not finding the desperately wanted after school or after high school job that was so desired. Their constant
and continual questioning and requests over the years had been, "Mr. B can you help me find or get a job?" Numerous conversations of rejections or when hired first fired accounts. In fact to this day when Mr. Baran is asked to speak for a variety of organizations and groups he usually begins the speech by lifting up the actual front door electric bell from his home that numerous students have rung and begins ringing it in front of the entire audience.

The future of this program's development and foundation was critically reviewed and constantly deliberated by Mr. Baran in his waking hours. He knew that there had to be a way to make this program into something more notable than it was becoming. In numerous conversations with his spouse she advised him that he should be satisfied with the high school students he was helping one period a day and put to rest this idea of a student or alumni owned work center. She emphasized from her MBA and bank Vice President expertise that it was impossible to achieve a goal like the one he had in his heart. His determination and drive never was put to rest. He was willing to knock on numerous doors of rejection, bump into brick walls of defeat, and trip over constant putdowns about the dream and vision he saw within the spirit of his students hands and hearts. The following narrative accounts for a very significant support base for his idea that was concurrent to his low profiling of his wedding flower business and going after a life's dream of
initiating a work center that would provide needed employment for the special education graduates from his community.

A very important opportunity evolved from his teaching assignment at the high school. He agreed to become credentialed in Behavioral Disorders within a two year period from signing his contract. The high school had a cross-categorical special education program. That simply means that all special education instructors must have the credentials for instructing special education youth with learning disabilities, educable mentally handicapped, and behavioral disorders. He took the needed course work through extension classes from Chicago State University. Here he was fortunate to have as a teacher, Ms. Meg Kelly, a very outstanding college special educator. She made all of her lectures and outline very understandable with an easy to follow outline on her lectures. She taught both classes and challenged her students to find a meaningful topic that they would have to later lecture and share with the classmates. Mr. Baran saw this as an excellent opportunity to share his philosophy and idea of formulating a simulation workcenter program for his students. This paper was a positive way to review current literature in the field and also explain his conceptual framework on paper. Not to his surprise, very little employment opportunities were available to disabled youth and very few programs were out there as models to make
a comparison with. This paper later served as the research for developing the class proposal. From Mr. Baran's association with soliciting work for his class from the Homewood-Flossmoor Park District he began sharing his vision when discussing the Daddy-Daughter Valentines Dance order from the Park District staff. Ms. Jill Bartholemew became sincerely interested in his idea. Jill shared this idea with Ms. Sandy Gbur, the director of a cooperative for parks and recreation services for special needs youth titled SSSRA - South Suburban Special Recreational Association which is located in Park Forest, Illinois. Modeled after the special education cooperatives for special education educational services, this model provided park district services for low incidence (hard to serve rare types of disabilities) for the south suburban communities. Somehow a meeting was arranged and much brainstorming was accomplished. Mr. Baran's dream and vision was shared as well as the need and vision of the special services park cooperative personnel. Ms. Gbur came up with a very creative response and idea. They had been noticing a definite flaw in their delivery service to the special youth population. During the summer, parents of these low incidence handicapped youth continued to enroll them in their developmental day camps. Modeled after regular populations park district programs, they were noticing that these day camps may be mentally appropriate for these youth
but they truly believed they were not age appropriate behavioral activities even though the special needs youth seemingly continued to enjoy this provided service. Ms. Gbur was well versed in what was truly needed for the special youth 16 years and above. She had been designing a new summer program entitled, Beyond Day camp - an age appropriate experience for disability youth. This program could use services that were appropriate for these youth. She was interested in negotiating to use Mr. Baran's expertise and services to develop a vocational component to this program.

Sandra Gbur, Director of South Suburban Special Recreation Association (SSSRA), states:

As you are aware, part of the Beyond Day Camp program that your son/daughter is participating in involves 2 days of learning to make silk flower arrangements. We were very pleased with the program last year and felt fortunate this year to be able to continue working with Larry Baran, the designer. Larry's long-time ambition is to actually start a sheltered workshop for the handicapped and disabled in the south suburbs. He has begun to fulfill his ambition by obtaining community support and starting the Project Rainbow Foundation. The Foundation Board approved our participation with them this summer and asks that each parent sign the enclosed waiver. 18

What evolved was basically the following: Mr. Baran came three of the five days of day camp and set up a park facility activity room into a work simulation center. Students would do solicited work only from community agencies and Mr. Baran would provide all of the supplies and material, structure and instruction for all of the jobs. He
was also able to in service and use the Beyond Day camp staff to assist and supervise the various work activities. It took very little time and energy to get this program off the ground. The strengths of this experience was the support from the park districts programs for the need for such programs as well as the spectacular assistance given by the day camp staff. The support from community based organizations was again overwhelming. What was once again happening was what had happened at his high school program. Orders supporting the students work skills were skyrocketing whereas remuneration of monies for the work being done by the students was not addressed or considered appropriate. Once again, a park district could not pay their charges a salary in any manner. Many discussions and strategies were formulated but the board of directors of SSSRA did not see their mission as being in the business of training for payment disability students. This vocational part of the program continued and Mr. Baran loved the wonderful developmentally delayed youth that he was working with. Yet once again his frustration began building. He had to admit to himself that this program was wonderful for what it was but was not going to address and take the needed next step of risk needed to become the dream and vision he still kindled in his heart. It is almost that these experiences which would have been seen by others as setbacks and detours were enriching learning experiences for him and the youth he
served. Instead, he took these ember ashes from the campfire and rekindle them into billowing flames of hopes and aspirations. He definitely saw the special education youth as becoming happier campers through this experience with the positive support from the SSSRA program and staff members.

Janet Porter, Program Coordinator for SSSRA, spoke to Mr. Baran about the summer program:

Thank you for talking with Sandy the other day about working with our Beyond Day Camp program this coming summer session. Although all of the details are not worked out, we are interested in you providing the flower arranging instruction to our participants. We are pleased to offer you a position with us again this summer. Our Beyond Day Camp participants in the past learned many new skills and really enjoyed working with you! We look forward to working with you again this summer.19

As with his dilemma of working with CCD on Saturday's for the mentally handicapped rather than taking the desired Saturday part time job at the local florist, Mr. Baran was rather willing to work with the SSSRA Beyond Day camp program rather than teaching a full position or part time position as a Drivers Education teacher in the summer. Since Mr. Baran shared his dream and vision with whomever he came into contact with he believed that someday this program would take off in the needed direction he envisioned. One significant advocate for this idea of transition was the Flossmoor School District 161 Director of Special Education, Mr. Nate Walton. Mr. Baran was introduced to him at a state
of Illinois Behavioral Disorder Conference by a fellow staff member from the Chicago Board of Education Pupil Service Center, Ms. Elziiena Smith who was functioning as Assistant Director for this Evaluation Center. She said, "Larry, I want you to meet a former classmate of mine from a BD teaching methods course. It's Nate Walton, head of Special Education in Flossmoor. You never know when your going to need to network in the community where you reside." She then introduced Nate to him. Lo and behold, Mr. Baran knew several of his children from his Homewood Flossmoor experiences.

Dr. Elziiena Smith Dawson, Chicago Board of Education, recalls:

Certain individuals inspire greatness by their individuality, great sense of humanity, kindness and sense of humor. Larry Baran was able to delve into the creative minds of children and minds of his peers to touch untapped reserves of creativity and enthusiasm, thereby pushing students to achieve and adults to tap the sense of humor often required when working in a challenging milieu. Larry inspired us all with his dream of what could have been called the "Rainbow Coalition" working with children of all abilities with a myriad of strengths and weaknesses in helping all to achieve! 20

Nate and Mr. Baran shared their philosophies on numerous occasions. Mr. Walton's philosophy was that special education needed a complete overhaul in its curriculum so that special needs youth were continually being assessed and educated and trained with a full transition viewpoint. That now federally mandated concept
believes that special needs youth need their educational program based upon the idea that its major emphasis is career preparation from the primary grade experience and as many pre-employment experiences as possible. This viewpoint also emphasizes the need for supported living and leisure accommodations so that this special needs youth will become a successful special needs adult within the community. The mark of a true citizen is one who has achieved an education, employment, and living situation while also enjoying recreational leisure activities. Nate is now retired but during this time frame revealed that he was very evangelistic in his push to try and convert administrators and staff to this viewpoint. He also had seen his own special needs daughter go through this entire school district with mediocre vocational preparation. Therefore it is easy to see why he and Mr. Baran developed a strong friendship and association.

Over these initial years, Mr. Baran never agreed with some special educator's advice to keep one's distance from special education parents. Their common opinion was that they always want to talk to you and may be very pushy in regards to their children rights and privileges under special education's laws and regulations. Mr. Baran has always been his own person and had formed relationships with as many of his student's parents that he had the opportunity to meet. He always saw them as allies and partners in
serving the children that he was charged with educating. To this day he has wonderful friendships with parents that he worked with years ago. He wants to be kept informed of the new dilemmas that these alumni are having in the real world of living and work. Mr. Baran has always felt that special education programs and staff own the responsibility for the students as well as over protect the student in deciding to do all of the needed networking within the high school so that these youth can walk across the stage and graduate with a watered-down special needs curriculum seemingly painting the picture of normalcy and a graduation that will lead to a world of milk and honey. What Mr. Baran has constantly heard from these parents is the new situation of an eighteen year old or more child who has had numerous job rejections, little opportunity for socialization, and very little hope that these young adults will ever be living either in a supportive living or decent living arrangement. As these parent get older fear and anxiety about their children's future worry them constantly.

The Foundation

One day in the depths of his frustration Mr. Baran invited people with his similar viewpoint to a meeting. This included Special Education teachers and administrators, parents and alumni, leading community members from civic and religious organizations. This meeting's main emphasis was to address and make the community aware of the significant
and critical problem facing this and most communities throughout this nation: the lack of employment training as well as real jobs for special education who graduate from our academically outstanding high school. This meeting was held in early December of 1986 in a community meeting room of St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church in Flossmoor, Illinois. The meeting was attended by the following persons: Mr. Larry Baran Organizer; Father Tom Broullaird, Curat; Mrs. Jean Ratko, community member; Scott Benjamin, special education student and almost graduate with parent Carolyn Benjamin; Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Joseph, parents; Mrs. Kay Golden, parent; Mrs. Jodie Scariano, friend of Kay Golden and concerned community member; Ms. Gloria Powell, high school vocational coordinator, Southwest Cooperative; Dr. and Mrs. Joan Ore, local dentist and concerned community member and wife who is a special education vocational coordinator for Homewood -Flossmoor Community High School; Mr. and Mrs. Robert Christopher, concerned parishioners from St. John's and active community members; Mrs. Judy Hogan, community social worker; and Mr. Jim Chasey, Economics teacher at Homewood-Flossmoor High School. Nate Walton was present in spirit. Father Tom began the evening meeting with a special prayer and blessing asking God's guidance upon this group of concerned community members. He also hoped that we would discern and share with each other before coming to any recommendations. Mr. Baran began the meeting
with a review of the accomplishments of the high school class program and reviewed his association with SSSRA and their employment of him for vocational services for their Beyond Day camp program. He showed examples of student's successful designing skills for various school and community events. He shared his concerns about his students and alumni not having a fair chance once they were in the real world of our community. He asked that this meeting would seriously consider debating the situation, and consider and proposing some options. Mr. Baran, in closing his introductory statement, showed a beautiful word collage about rainbows. He read a select few and then dedicated the evening to the person who gave him the framed graphic. It was from his friend who had recently passed away after a six year battle with cancer. Her name was Mrs. Thais Neuman and she was one of Mr. Baran's dearest friends and life mentor. She coached Mr. Baran to never give up seeking his rainbow. She was a valuable consultant for his floral business for she truly knew the Flossmoor clientele. She also was extremely supportive of the Floral Design class at the high school and would bring community service groups business to our program on a constant basis. She especially enjoyed visiting the students and insist that they do all of the initial sample designing, planning, and manufacturing and insisted that they keep Mr. Baran out of it. This was in order for him to see how much he really trusted the youth
as he purportedly stated. She also taught Mr. Baran an extremely important rule of life. She constantly said, "Larry, there is always a gray area in the middle. Everything is not just black or white! You are always like an oak tree you never will bend in a storm so learn to be a willow tree that bends in the turbulence of a storm!" Most of the community members were associates or friends of this gracious lady.

This meeting gave everyone a chance to introduce themselves and state their reason and position for being there. Then a very intense sharing and caring meeting was underway. The touching highlight of the meeting was the testimonies from the parents about the hopes and fears they were having for their children as they began to complete their high school prerequisites for graduation. They were doing some investigating on their own and realized there were really very little transitional services or planning out there for their children.

The parents also shared a vision of what was going on in other progressive communities providing supportive employment training, supportive living arrangements and supportive leisure activities that led to the opportunity for successful independent living skills. The two vocational coordinators shared what was being done and required by the suburban school systems and told of the limited services provided within the south suburban area.
They even agreed that some of these services were more bureaucracy with little successful linkages being provided. It seemingly is always presented to the parents that they have the responsibility to run with ball and no one has given them the ball, told them where the playing field is and also they have no idea what the real rules are. The other regular teachers and community members shared their concerns because they were friends of some of these parents and wanted to help and assist them in this community cause.

Everyone decided that they wanted to make a commitment to this community need. Dr. Donald Ore proposed the idea of starting a community foundation for the sole purpose of addressing further vocational training and job linkage for special education alumni from our Homewood-Flossmoor Community. Mrs. Jodie Scariano placed a motion to second the idea. They all agreed to continue to meet and formulate this foundation to select officers and write the rules and regulations for this organization. That evening, Mr. Baran proposed a very interesting name for the foundation. An acronym called The R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Foundation - Realistic Achievement for Individuals Needing Basic Occupation Work skills.

The following are excerpts from the adopted by-laws of Project R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Foundation:

Article 1 - Name
The name of this organization shall be the Project R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Foundation. R.A.I.N.B.O.W. is an acronym for
Realistic Achievement for Individuals Needing Basic Occupational Workskills.

Article II - The purpose of the Project R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Foundation.
(Hereafter referred to as the Foundation in this document) are:

a) To secure and channel private funds to support vocational programs and activities which are beyond the budgetary parameters of and for which federal and state funding has not been and is not available, and which will lead to the overall improvement of the quality of life of young adults served by the Foundation;

b) The Foundation will provide a vocational training workshop which refines job, living and social skills, as well as foster the development of body, mind and spirit for the special needs population leading these individuals to an independent lifestyle within our community;

c) To hold, manage, invest and expend endowment funds and other gifts, grants, and bequests;

d) To build links among business, government, and civic organizations which will enhance community support for Project Rainbow and which will lead to overall improvement of the quality of vocational training and employability and employment of the special needs population served by Project Rainbow.  

The entire by-laws of Project R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Foundation can be found in Appendix 3 of this document.

Everyone unanimously agreed on the title which turned out to be the easiest decision that would be made by this well intended group of concerned citizens. Mrs. Scariano also volunteered her husband's legal services on a complimentary basis. He directs a leading educational law firm located in Chicago Heights, Illinois. As the Foundation evolved, Mr. Baran's idea of a supportive employment site was seen as a needed facet of this foundation. Mr. Baran thought it appropriate to solicit local area community centers, churches, and temples for the
use of their facilities on a temporary basis with no rental fee attached. St. John's in Flossmoor agreed to the use of their church basement three day per week in the summer month that was monitored by volunteers with the support of the SSSRA Park District Program to allow their clients to come for job training and to pay for two additional summer college age job coaches for this program.

The Dimensions section of the Homewood-Flossmoor Star reported on the initial focus of R.A.I.N.B.O.W. stating:

Nature's rainbow has come to represent color, beauty and symmetry, an image reflected in flowers. The flowers needn't be fresh. Their beauty is recreated in silk, which has an indefinite lifespan. A floral bouquet evokes a smile, admiration and good cheer. The Project R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Foundation aims to perpetuate this image through the floral designs it creates. This Foundation was formed last December..... The Foundation is designed to provide vocational training for young adults who were enrolled in special education classes in high school and received their diplomas, but have no specific training in the workplace.

"The whole idea is to break down the task into components," Baran explains as he separates the intricate working..... to show how each student contributes to its assembly. "Everyone has a task." The students receive a token paycheck for their work....but Baran believes they can earn minimum wage under supervision. "You can see the program is operational and with proper funding you can have a business."

"I like the job," Lynn Tingue, a former student at H-F says of the experimental project. "It's fun. It gives me an opportunity to keep busy."

"We know we can teach these kids, but they need a place to work," Jean Ratko, Baran's assistant says. "There is a place for them in the working world." 22

Mr. Baran held as many school given floral orders from his vocational program and directed them for completion
within this new program. A basic profit margin was added for their products and services so that a basic paycheck could be finally given to the special needs youth enrolled in R.A.I.N.B.O.W. The program did not have a smooth inauguration. It was and continued to have a very rocky road related to the mission statement and roles and responsibilities of the officers and members of this foundation.

Many members seemingly were very excellent at stating what they would do yet on many occasions the responsibilities of the officers were never completed or taken seriously. Mr. Baran often wondered if people liked their names on letterheads with the officials listed in a softer ink along the left stationary side. It seems that Mr. Baran, the idea man and director of the work center and the president, Mrs. Scariano, were constantly meeting and asking each other whether certain functions and job roles were being carried out. The situation became very serious with well-meaning individuals not taking their commitment seriously. It is very hard to get a group of individuals to follow through on a commitment. Mr. Baran was also getting frustrated that most of his undergraduates were being served by this foundation when its main intention was for alumni of the high school not being served. Conflicts of interest with the vocational school responsibility were overlapping
with the R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Foundation and once again Mr. Baran found himself in a serious dilemma.

It took all he had within him to initiate this Foundation and now it was more than floundering. Even the financial duties that others made a commitment to were not being cared out. He had to take this responsibility on and this truly broke him down. Mr. Baran always relied on his wife for all financial concerns of their personnel finances as well as his formal floral business. His spouse is very analytical and predicted this dilemma. She warned him that it would and could become a financial mess and she would have no part of it! Mr. Baran rarely wrote a single personal check and never looked at the business's bookkeeping ledger. Again Mrs. Baran's prophecy came to fruition. He was left with the financial mess and Mrs. Scariano was left with the legal mess because a group of volunteers were not keeping their commitments.

Judy Hogan, a social worker from the south suburban region, recollects:

I was involved in the early planning stages and experienced first-hand Larry's vision and enthusiasm. Unfortunately he did not receive the response or support that was needed at that time. I feel badly that I was too involved in graduate school at the time to make a contribution. Larry was able to overcome these obstacles and forge ahead without a great deal of initial support. 23

Mr. Baran made a very serious decision after long deliberations which kept him up many evening hours. He
decided to call a meeting of the R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Foundation and resign from the leadership role he was so instrumental in starting. Of course this was additionally disruptive to the organization which lead to its soon eventual downfall and termination. This caused a lot of additional legal work and complications for the Scariano's. It even ended with a not-so friendly parting of the president, Mrs. Scariano and the idea person and program director, Mr. Baran, who seemed to be left holding the bag.

It took more than a year to terminate this organization. Mrs. Scariano had to call Mr. Baran after his resignation to handle numerous accounting and financial matters. Mr. Baran was angry yet assumed with guilt the responsibilities of the other officers who never made good on basic commitments. This left a very sour taste in the mouth of the initial group that met to establish the foundation. Literal driving or walking past each other in the community became extremely difficult. It took several years to get past the feelings of animosity towards each other.

Gloria Powell Backman, Vocational Coordinator for South West Cooperative for Special Education, recalls:

A lot of the people involved had personal motivations but did not see the collective goal behind R.A.I.N.B.O.W. There was dissension in the group at every level and it was difficult to decide even on membership, structure, officers, and even the simple $10 or $20 dues. The simplest decision was impossible. People needed causes and a lot of the people had
different motivations. The people who assumed the leadership titles - not Larry for he was the creative genius behind it all - but others were unable to guide us all to consensus even from meeting to meeting! People who agreed to assume responsibility had not done so by the following meeting. It was essentially a cathartic session for the people attending. The focus began to shift from students who had exited high school to those enrolled in high school and that limited the potential opportunity for all people with disabilities and this did not follow the by-laws. There was even a problem as where the students would meet. In summary, seeing what has come out of what is now Americans with Disabilities in Action, in retrospect, people were willing to become involved with success and people were not willing to initially support the concept and take the risk. Finally it was up to Larry to do it by himself and he did it! 24

In retrospect, as Mrs. Baran stated, the group was a bunch of do gooders who did not realize the significance or responsibility that comes with accepting a position as an officer or committee chairperson. It has always been difficult for Mr. Baran to recognize that Mrs. Baran's left brain analysis always turned out as predicted. As usual, Mr. Baran tried to see the positives within this failure. His wife begged him to finally put this idea to rest and be content with teaching vocational skills for a small part of his day and resign himself that starting a work center could never become a reality. Mr. Baran listened and knew some of this reality was sinking in his dreamer's head. Yet that spark and belief that something great was someday going to happen did not die. Driven, compulsive people never know where the key is to turn off the accelerator nor do they want to!
ENDNOTES
Chapter 3

1 Interview with David Macbeth Moss, Ph.D., October 1995.
2 Ibid, 29.
3 Ibid, 49.
5 Interview with Karen Hoffschmidt, July 1995.
6 Ibid, 79.
7 Ibid, 101.
8 Ibid, 106.
9 Interview with Rosemary Schoenknecht, October 1995.
10 Interview with Sarah Mattson, October 1995.
11 Interview with Delores O'Neil, October 1995.
12 Interview with Ms. Gerri Jones, October 1995.
13 Interview with Mrs. Nettie Stokes, October 1995.
14 Interview with Charles Smith, October 1995.
15 Interview with Carol Grzelak, October 1995.
16 Interview with Lynn Frank, August 1995.
17 Interview with Donald Lambert, October 1995.
20 Interview with Elziena Smith Dawson, October 1995.
23 Interview with Judy Hogan, August 1995.
24 Interview with Gloria Powell Backman, October 1995.
"When I think back, I don't believe anyone, myself included, realized what we were getting into. The scope, effort, recognition, student and parent satisfaction, growth, success, cost and national acceptance have been beyond my hopes and dreams. This program brought a status and attention to a division of our curriculum that had never been in the forefront. It now stands tall with the reputation of all other divisions. Captain Rainbow made it all happen. God bless him and his family." ¹

Dr. Edward Rachford, Retired Superintendent

This chapter will first define the leadership of the third principle of enabling others to act with the commitments of fostering collaboration and strengthening others. The researcher will integrate this philosophy of leadership into the developmental years by showing specific examples from this part of the chronology.

This chapter will also document the developmental years of this program. It will include an account of the disharmony of the special education department with the vocational program because of the conflict of interest with several staff members and their involvement with the now dissolved R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Foundation. It will also document
a serious problem with a variation in the name of the program which led to additional community/school discontent. It also will discuss the teacher dissatisfaction with the program's focus and vision. This chapter will document Mr. Baran being interviewed for a civil rights compliance audit for the Illinois State Board of Education for the services being given to special needs youth and their delivery of services of vocational education at Homewood-Flossmoor High School. The auditor challenged Mr. Baran to become involved in a new transition, state sponsored program at the University of Illinois in Champaign, Illinois called Leadership Development Program for Vocational Education/Special Education which developed transitional planning for the special youth before it became a mandate. This chapter will document the personal challenge this program gave to all of its candidates to develop their personal vocational goals. The result from this challenge placed the simulated work center experience into a new paradigm with an initial linkage on a national level. This involvement with the inauguration of President Bush and Vice-President Dan Quayle will demonstrate how the focus and parameters of R.A.I.N.B.O.W. was forever changed.

Rosabeth Moss Kanter within The Leadership Challenge philosophy states:

The few projects in my study that disintegrated did so because the manager failed to build a coalition of supporters and collaborators. Leaders know that they
cannot do it alone. It takes partners to get extraordinary things done in organizations. Leaders build teams with spirit and cohesion, teams that feel life family. They actively involve others in planning and give them discretion to make their own decisions. Leaders make other feel like owners, not hired hands. Leaders develop collaborative goals and cooperative relationships with colleagues. They are considerate of the needs and interests of others. They know these relationships are the keys that unlock support for their projects. They make sure that when they win, everyone wins. Leaders must gain a respect that is mutual as well as create an environment that radiates human dignity, trust, and nurtures self-esteem, strength, and capability in others. 2

Commitment Number 5

• Foster Collaboration by Promoting Cooperative Goals and Building Trust.

Robert L. Phillips states, "The collaborative goal—promote local physician participation—established early on enabled us to work through later disagreements, and as disagreements were resolved, trust was developed." 3 Fostering collaboration begins with creating and sustaining cooperative goals. The best incentive for someone to help you is knowing that you will reciprocate this action and help them in return. Cooperation breeds teamwork as solutions are sought that integrate people's needs.

Commitment Number 6

• Strengthen People by Sharing Information and Power and Increasing Their Discretion and Visibility.

A Chinese Proverb suggests, "If you want one year of prosperity, grow grain. If you want ten years of prosperity, grow trees. If you want one hundred years of
prosperity, grow people." Empowering others is essentially the process of turning followers into leaders themselves. The process of building and enhancing power is facilitated when people work on tasks that are critical to the organization's success, when they exercise discretion and autonomy in their efforts, when their accomplishments are visible and recognized by others, and when they are well connected to other people of influence and support.

The Developmental Period

There is a definite overlap to the developmental years with the philosophical years. The philosophy of a simulated work center where employment skills were being taught to disability youth was definitely taking hold in most of the special education students attending the class. A feeling of resentment was beginning to make itself known, coming first from comments from special needs students quoting what several special education teachers within the department were saying about the program. Some of these comments were specifically addressed to and about their teacher. This was eventually verified because many students commented and it seemed it was always the same educators who were being quoted. These comments were also given to Mr. Baran in a slighted manner during informal conversations as well as reading the verbiage at department meetings. Rather than soliciting their support or taking them on regarding their insults and comments, he decided to keep to himself and
become focused with only his students. One reason these antagonists did not subside was that the program was very well received and supported by the school administration. Mr. Baran has always had the knack of building a strong support network from the school superintendent and principal.

Mr. Baran always felt that his immediate supervisor, the Director of Special Education, was seemingly not truly supporting the program. This in retrospect was primarily due to a personality conflict. In later years, he realized that the director wanted to be more involved but felt that Mr. Baran may have brought the lack of teacher/administrator collaboration upon him himself. In fact, Dr. Lambert and his wife agreed to chaperone in the summer of 1993 during the J.T.P.A. "Working in the White House" program. In a very non-threatening situation they formed a late blooming, new friendship. Mr. Baran learned numerous responsibilities and dilemmas attached to the role of administrator during his doctoral studies.

In addition to these unproved feelings there were other things causing unrest within the program. First, there was still community disharmony from members of the initial R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Foundation Board. Some members were parents and special education staff members of the present high school program and were still having "words" with other community members. This lingered for some time. Secondly,
Mr. Baran insisted on keeping the acronym, R.A.I.N.B.O.W. in the program's name. Instead of the R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Foundation, he called it Project R.A.I.N.B.O.W. He remembers thinking of the title while daydreaming and writing diagnostic reports for the Pupil Service Center sometime during the year in which he resigned from the Chicago Public School system. The Director of Special Education involved the Superintendent in this argument which came from the former Foundation president, Mrs. Scariano. She insisted that legally it was a name from a disbanded foundation and using it would cause future legal problems. With recommendations from the Superintendent, Dr. Rachford, Mr. Baran dropped the title. Yet, when news media came to the program, the mention of Project R.A.I.N.B.O.W. was always used in the press. Third, Mr. Baran felt that the program was in a slump. He felt that the program was stagnating upon a foundation of hope and vision. He often visualized working as a youth for his father's Baran's Cinders, Inc., helping and watching a truck driver unload a dump truck's contents of cinders or sand for the newly laid cement basement foundations. With shovels in hand, he and other workers would spread the cinders in place around the cement footing prior to the construction company's bricklayers cementing bricks and mortars in place to complete the structure.
Again, there was a hidden compulsion, spirit and drive pushing him constantly to seek out different angles, opportunities. He networked to whomever would listen. From his homefront, his wife would ask him to be content with the wonderful job at H-F he had. Then, once again, during the late afternoon, he would receive a phone call or the doorbell would ring that would tug at his heart for once again a special needs youth was imploring his help in finding employment.

The Leadership Development Program

In the fall of 1987, the Director of Special Education selected Mr. Baran to be a part of an Illinois State Board of Education compliance review for Special Needs Vocational Education Program Approval and Evaluation section. Homewood-Flossmoor High School was selected to audit all aspects of their vocational programming for special needs youth. Ms. Rita Kalfas, an occupational consultant from the Illinois State Board of Education, conducted the audit. Her job consisted of assisting secondary and post-secondary occupational program administrators to be in full compliance with civil rights legislation. Her responsibilities included first reviewing written materials such as contracts, school board policies, grievance procedures, salary scales, and students handbooks to assure compliance with civil rights legislation and second, interviewing
administrators, occupational and special education teacher and students regarding program accessibility and practices.

Mrs. Kalfas, an occupational consultant for the State of Illinois, recalls the following:

When I interviewed Larry Baran, a special education teacher, I was impressed with his energy and enthusiasm. I challenged Mr. Baran to expand the scope of his program from high school limitations to a state and national perspective. Larry Baran entered and completed an excellent Leadership Development Program at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana in 1988 and 1989 and under my guidance, recommendations, and challenges, Mr. Baran's knowledge, skills and abilities were enhanced. Although the statistical extend of his program's projects are impressive, the proof of his dedication and hard work is the success of his students. Time will measure the success of the motivational and entrepreneurial skills empowered in Larry Baran's students.

The interview was a definite hallmark in the development of leadership initiatives for him and the program. Mr. Baran immediately called the University's Vocational Education Department for the needed application forms. As the application process evolved there was one minor problem that eventually became a major one. The Leadership Development staff were looking for teams of individuals that were coming from set special needs facilities and were jointly trying to initiate new programs and strategies for transitional services within their schools and communities. There were a total of twelve teams already selected for the 1988-89 June program year. Mr. Baran would not let this dilemma rest. He persistently kept
in contact with them and asked why an exception couldn't be made since he was the only staff member in his school currently interested in transition planning and trying to challenge his program to new dimensions. His tact and persistence finally paid off.

A vocational coordinator from the SPEED Cooperative in Chicago Heights, Illinois also had made application on her own. The University staff member called and asked Mr. Baran if SPEED was in any way near his school. He told the staff that some of H-F's low incidence youth were educated in their facility and that our high school used the SPEED Cooperative services for vocational linkages at some of our special education staffings for linkage to the D.O.R.S - Department of Occupational Rehabilitation Services - for the State of Illinois. Ms. Elaine Young was one of the DORS consultants that could service our youth. Mr. Baran was asked to informally meet Ms. Young to see if they would be able to work together on a joint service project for their common south suburban region relating to transition planning. The two individual personalities meshed immediately and both decided that they desperately wanted to be in this program and they agreed to a mutual service project which was a needed service requirement for the LDP program.
Ironically, Mr. Baran and Ms. Young were given the appropriate number and name of "Team 13." Ms. Young remembers:

In June 1987 I had the opportunity to participate in the University of Illinois's Leadership Development Program with Larry Baran as my teammate. The objective of this program was to solicit involvement by school staff to inform and implement career and transition planning in Illinois school districts. Class sessions and conferences were held throughout the state acquainting us with exemplary programs and challenging us to take the torch of transition planning and race across the finish line. We conducted a needs assessment by surveying IEP's in the H-F high school district to determine the degree of career and transition planning and if these were being addressed. We reviewed 167 IEP's and found that as a whole, students' career goals and post-school plans were not addressed on the IEP. We found that only 13 out of the 167 addressed any form of vocational or career planning. Our tenure with the Leadership Development Program ended in May of 1988. It broadened our knowledge of the many issues that must be addressed in order for students with disabilities to be successful after school. For Larry, it allowed him to pursue his dream of fostering awareness of the abilities of students who have disabilities. 5

Ms. Young and Mr. Baran attended LDP from June of 1988 through April of 1989 and found this experience a highlight of their professional careers.

Mr. Baran and Ms. Young worked diligently to design and implement their PIP's needs assessment and transition plan for Homewood Flossmoor High School. Again it was obvious that the state was trying to make numerous agencies and schools take a proactive posture before the federal mandate would be instituted. From their study it was critically
evident that only 13 out of 167 IEP's surveyed mentioned any type of career planning statement. Several LD students' IEPs mention a phrase, "Going to college or junior college." There were four key IEP's, when analyzed, that had questionable amounts of transitional language with step by step documentation of what services, staff and evaluations would be taking place in the remaining years of these students' educational experience. Ms. Young, who in several years would replace the DORS counselor from the SPEED Cooperative and work one day a week at HFHS, found these IEP's very extreme when compared to the total audited. These four parents were friends and allies to his program who had attended the Next Steps program several years earlier which trained special needs teachers and auxiliary staff as well as their key target audience, parents, to the philosophy that knowledge is power. Their objectives were to train everyone in the rights, rules and current special education legislation, as well as the evolving transition planning rights and protocol. Mr. Baran stated that it was no surprise to him once he noticed the parent and students names as he was instrumental in recruiting theses initial parents into this class which would teach empowering techniques. Mr. Baran has always had a keen ear for listening to their concerns and always told them that after high school a new struggle would evidence itself as to avenues for work, living and leisure skills. Mr. Baran and
Ms. Young discussed this unlevel playing field and voiced a deep seeded frustration when seeing the inequities in recommendations for services based upon the socio-economic status of the parents. He would leave many staffings wondering why the higher sociological status parents were given more services based on their coming to the staffings knowing what they thought they deserved. Many times these parents would bring legal advisers and/or advocates. When parents of a lower socio-economic status would be attending staffings he would notice the lack of mention of additional range of services that the former staffings had been pressured into and then agreed upon. Mr. Baran realized that there was a cost for services but he was always quietly adamant about equity in special education for all students. Probably because of his age and lack of being assertive, he repressed his feelings and also refused to voice his concerns at these staffings for fear of administrative retribution coming down upon his vigilant head. On several occasions early on he did muster the needed courage to state his opinion at these IEP meetings yet it caused more disharmony than was tolerable. Mr. Baran decided early in the game to low key his responsibilities at staffings and state the minimum but when teaching and training his students he would go the entire nine yards to motivate, challenge and inspire the wonderful students he was charged with educating.
One example was during his LDP experience when the program was housed at H-F. He decided to showcase the SSSRA students for LDP and do a food service unit. Tina Copeland, daycamp supervisor at SSSRA remembers:

By special invitation, Beyond Day Camp has been chosen to complete two days of vocational training in food service. Under the supervision of Mr. Larry Baran, the campers will practice food preparation skills, plan and prepare a cold lunch, and serve it to a group of special education professionals. The University of Illinois Leadership Development Program for professionals in the area of Special Needs Vocational Education is meeting at the Homewood-Flossmoor High School. This group has heard of our B.Y.D.C. program and is interested in meeting our campers and providing them with this learning experience. We are excited to expand our learning opportunities for the B.Y.D.C. participants. 6

Dr. Jeanne B. Repetto, LDP Co-Director, University of Illinois stated:

Recently the Leadership Development Program: Education for Employment in Vocational Special Needs held a two-day session at Homewood-Flossmoor High School. Lunch was prepared for our group by Larry Baran's class. The food was quite good and the decorations were great. Larry and his class should be commended for a job well done. Thank you for the warm welcome extended to our group. 7

It is evident that this is why Mr. Baran really focused on the part of LDP's PIP that challenged, through unique state speakers and leaders in the field, to take any program one was dealing with into the twenty-first century and begin to think of business and community partnership for a new paradigm in vocational education/special education services and programs. The cumulating event for the year, four-
course graduate study was a 13 Team LDP state seminar for the University of Illinois in the spring of the year with leading educators and administrators coming to refine and update their skills and services for this field of study. Mr. Baran wanted Team 13's presentation to be memorable and convinced Ms. Young to agree to a "Wizard of Oz Theme" for their presentation called "The Yellow Brick Road of Transitional Opportunities!" Besides reporting on the supportive employment site, the needs assessment and the transition plan, he was now driven to present strategies for linkages with the business and community partnerships since the program had initial success with our school and community involvement. His final hope was to take this program on the needed next steps to unknown entrepreneurial experiences to fulfill the dream-wish his heart had made to these students years ago!

Mr. Cal Hainzinger, school psychologist at H-F states the vision of the program as follows:

Mr. Baran had the initial inspiration for the program. He challenged the status quo and did something about it. He involved the entire administrative team and networked with other members of the community - parents, businessmen, and politicians. Mr. Baran's ideas are unique and transcend the local scene. By aiming high, he generates excitement in his program. His dedication and commitment to the vision power him through obstacles.

Associate Principal of Homewood-Flossmoor Hig School, Keith Kelly, observed that:
Students with disabilities can contribute in a real and meaningful way in our society. There is something to be learned by those who work to overcome their handicap. Students in Mr. Baran's program are continually interacting with all segments of our population. Our students have proven by the quality of their work that there is a place for people with disabilities. The vision of the program is to help student reach their full potential and to help others recognize the attributes and talents of those with disabilities. 9

When returning to his classroom/work center in that fall of 1988 he decided that a linkage was needed and he knew an inspiration was forthcoming. He just needed to continue to network and broadcast this vision. Several significant encounters happened that fall. Mr. Baran made an unknown significant linkage the preceding January at the Chicago Florist Supply floral wholesale center while on a last minute wedding supply purchasing extravaganza. While checking out with his supplies he noticed two African-American women who seemed a bit frustrated with their floral wholesale encounter. He could tell they were new at the game and sympathized with their impending sense of confusion. It is in a special educator's nature to help out and explain things.

Mr. Baran remembers one woman who radiated with the most wonderful friendly smile saying something about wedding flowers. Something inspired him to stop and help her. He thought she might think it inappropriate but after several of these "help her" signals, it became evident that an obvious forthcoming encounter was about to occur. He walked
business. He also stated he had a lot of wedding equipment he was selling and still renting out to people. Finally he even had to brag and network with this woman about his avocation with special education youth and job training.

Little did Mr. Baran know that this encounter with Mrs. Marionette Young would form one of the closest friendships and special education vocational partnerships imaginable. It wasn't even a week later that she came to his home studio to negotiate purchasing or renting needed wedding equipment. He will never forget being introduced to her three little children, Rodney Jr., Serita, and Renita Young. They were so well behaved and curious. Little did he know how special these children would also become in his life and work.

Ms. Marionette Young was also affected by this chance meeting and encounter for she was involved with the McDonald's Corporation as the first minority businesswoman with whom they had contracted services to decorate on a seasonal basis all of their corporate stores and promotions. Ms. Young also had a brother who was involved in a supportive special needs sheltered work activity center. She had an empathetic heart and decided to ask Mr. Baran if he would consider his program to begin doing some consignment work for her for large orders for seasonal corsage and boutonniere work for McDonald functions.

Mr. Baran agreed to this proposal and enlisted another vocational special needs program now located and renting
space in the HFHS North building. He contacted Mr. Michael Levine, the vocational special education coordinator for the SMA (South Metropolitan Association) Independence High School for emotionally disturbed and behaviorally disordered youth. This special education cooperative also had a tiny vocational hands on course that made stained glass and taught furniture upholstering as specific job training skills. And of course the reason for these skills being taught was the same reason Mr. Baran uses floral designing; two teachers in that program coincidentally had a hobby or a definite interest and leaning in that area.

Mr. Baran thought through expanding ideas by training other special education vocational teachers at other schools to expand his simulated work center idea. Since this initial McDonald's order was a bit large to facilitate, it was his idea to cottage out the work as well as share the concept of the simulated work. Mr. Levine and his upholstering students also refinished the wooden furniture frames and other entire wood furniture pieces. The results from this partnership was very impressive. Mr. Levine was a very meticulous instructor whose expectation was perfection. The 100 plus McDonald's fall corsages were practically perfect clones of one another. Mr. Baran had to realize that those students have normalcy in their work ability but not in their emotions and behaviors whereas his students were for the most part developmentally disabled and educable
mentally handicapped. His class production was always done properly yet large production orders were definitely not exact copies of the floral piece next to it. He could always state that this was where his students exhibited their creativity. Mr. Levine and his students were successful in services by Mr. Baran to make this project a real success.

With this initial success, Mr. Baran now had his dream of including an assortment of low incidence classes looking for a transition/work simulation approach being initiated with more of the SMA Cooperative classrooms by contacting and meeting with Mr. Robert Van Dyke, the Administrative Director of SMA, whose administrative office was housed within the HFHS North Building rental facility. Mr. Van Dyke was another associate of Mr. Baran's and his step daughter was involved with him in one of his extra curricular responsibilities. Mr. Baran was the HFHS Varsity and Sophomore cheerleading coach and that seemingly helped his determination and presentation. Mr. Van Dyke was very open to this concept of expanding the training to other disability teachers and students needing work simulation. Also the larger orders that were beginning to flood in to his floral design class could be expanded with a larger special education population work force and more students could benefit from this program. Mr. Van Dyke also liked the idea of facilitating an order based on selling a seasonal product to the teaching and auxiliary staff of SMA
that included 400 personnel within 50 south suburban school districts. A proposal of manufacturing a very basic Valentine's day red and white basket centerpiece that would retail for $5.00 with a $2.00 profit margin built in would be earmarked for program expansion and equipment. Mr. Van Dyke was very receptive to this idea and stated that he wanted to confer with other staff supervisors to see if they could expand this program beyond their Independence High School program. He promised to get back to him in the very near future but felt it was an excellent project and plan in regards to transition of work training for his constituents. He also saw great merit in being involved with the LDP of the University of Illinois.

Mr. Baran was learning how to further network and relished the important educational concept that he realized he was working under. The word "auspices" took on an important realization to Mr. Baran. An idea in educational circles took on greater acceptance when it was under the auspices of an institution with credibility, such as Homewood-Flossmoor High School, University of Illinois Leadership Development Program, and South Metropolitan Association. This gave very needed credence to his vision and dream. Finally the vision was beginning to take on a needed slow rate of reality. It was as if a mirror that was covered in a steamy coating was beginning to dissipate and slowly clear up. Mr. Van Dyke also suggested that Mr. Baran
go and meet auxiliary teachers at various work sites to see if the student body and staff would be appropriate. He was very interested in forming a partnership he sensed would give his special needs constituents an opportunity of a lifetime.

The Bush/Quayle Inauguration - 1989

Mr. Baran was content now that he had SMA's interest in forming a linkage for his individual part of the PIP to further develop the HFHS program. It was just the matter of getting the right project to link the SMA program into partnership. The Valentine's Day project was not being immediately accepted by SMA which caused some anxiety and nervousness for Mr. Baran. As previously noted, Mr. Baran had extra curricular responsibilities of coaching the varsity and sophomore cheerleaders. He enjoyed this means to bring in additional revenues to his home budget since he had been phasing out of the wedding business. Mr. Baran's drive would not let this LDP project for SMA rest. It popped into him mind constantly and as usual he would then play every angle and strategy to try to come to a creative solution. During serious personnel dilemmas such as this he would take this inner turmoil and turn it over in prayer to Providence. He has a deep faith that all things work out for the good of those who trust in God. On December 4, 1988 at 10:15 in the morning he was spending his preparation period for teaching at his cheerleading desk near the
Athletic Office. For some reason he walked over to the connecting office and had a conversation with Mrs. Jane Fulghum, the secretary for the Athletic Department. Mrs. Fulghum cannot forget and states:

I was amazed that Larry called the White House and I was more amazed when he told me what he was trying to accomplish. He probably will never forget the look on my face. I was awestruck and never thought someone from H-F would accomplish all that he did and even more.  

He was talking about the upcoming game but was also sharing the latest about his program and the current frustration he was encountering. As the conversation ended he walked into the adjoining office when a moment in time occurred which changed the direction and destiny of his life and career. Mr. Baran turned his frustration into a prayer request and said, "Lord what do you want me to do with these kids?" An immediate response was vividly heard and received by him. It said, "Larry, I want you to call the White House and I want my children to do flowers for the Inaugural." Some call it Karma, coincidence, or the Holy Spirit but Mr. Baran's faith knew it to be real. He acted on it immediately. There was a school phone right across from him. He called 411 to get the area code for Washington D.C. which is 202. He then called 202 to get their directory assistance. He asked for the phone number of the White House and was told 456-1414. If Mr. Baran only knew the future and the hundreds of calls for his program's destiny
in D.C., he might have thought twice! He called the White House operator and shared his idea with a male operator named Mr. Harkin. The man thought it sounded like a very wonderful idea but the inaugural committee was not located in the White House but in the United States Navy Yard Southeast Federal Building. He also mentioned that they were just setting up desks, tables and chairs and plugging in phone lines. He gave him the phone number and Mr. Baran placed this call immediately. He was connected with Mr. Rob Carter of Operations of the Inaugural Committee. This was also going to be the beginning of the many dealings with Washington bureaucratic jargon and abruptness. Mr. Baran was in for a baptism of fire of bureaucratic red tape and detours. His faith and his friendship with the varsity football coach, Mr. John Wrenn, taught him that for any true victory there would be many adversities to conquer. Mr. Wrenn has supported all of the program's projects and states:

The program Larry has developed has taken individuals that have a hard time with authority and taught them how to communicate and handle adversity in a positive way. When Larry's students walk into his program they all have a "fired-up" approach to work. 11

Mr. Baran was about to begin to conquer the Mount of Inaugural Bureaucratic Washington. He began with tools of tenacity, faith, and chutzpa. He was connected to numerous persons involved with the inaugural committee. Ms. Peggy Hazelrigg finally became his chief liaison. She was one of
many persons that he verbally pleaded with over the phone lines. Mr. Baran was already becoming anxious for a decision as to when this proposal for inaugural floral decorations would be accepted and when would they need to be completed? He would then decide to cover the problem at that point in time. One matter that was causing conflict was a brother-in-laws gift to his wife's immediate family of all air fare expenses to Maui for a group of 16. All the families had to pay for was their condominium rental and food. Mrs. Baran knew her husband's driven composure and asked if he would enjoy this trip and leave his project alone. He said that he would keep his contacts with the Inaugural committee even from Maui and so he did! One definite help to him in this non-commitment of acceptance of this project was going to a daily prayer service at 5:30 a.m. in the town of Lahina, Maui at Maria Lanenakihi Catholic Church where he likened this dilemma to an adult holding a lollipop in the face of a child and not yet giving it to the child who anticipated it with great contemplation. Well this morning rosary service seemed the needed kick into compliance for the D.C. people. During another phone contact with Ms. Hazelrigg on December 29th, she confirmed that this program at HFHS would be assigned a definite event but could not confirm which event it would be. She then passed her responsibilities over to a Ms. Beth Nichols who was his new contact. They agreed to touch base
again after the new year on January 3, 1989 when his vacation would be over and he was back at school. What went on at the inaugural committee will never really be completely known but Mr. Baran always believed that verbal agreements made to him or by him were sacred. On calling D.C. on the third of January he received a very rude awakening. Ms. Nichols stated that in order for this to become a reality, her committee must see photos or samples within 48 hours. Once again rather than arguing he took on this challenge of adversity. His mind went wild and came up with this simple strategy. Fly to D.C. tomorrow with samples that had not yet materialized. The strategy was to go to the wholesale house after school and get the materials for samples. Stay up half the night designing them. Call his rich brother-in-law who had given his family more flight tickets for skiing with him in spring. He asked if he could use this for an emergency with the inaugural flowers. In his wisdom, he gave permission to use the ticket for D.C. but, as a seasoned businessman, stated to be forever careful and get the agreement in writing! Mr. Baran told his spouse in the middle of the night his plans and he also called in to the HFHS answering service to arrange for his absence from school. He also wrote a lesson plan in those morning hours and got his wife to drop them off at a teacher friend's home to bring to school. With two large boxes in hand he left O'Hare on the earliest United flight to D.C.,
6:00 a.m. He arrived by 8:00 a.m. and went to the wrong Federal Center, West rather than East.

Once there he was in the midst of organized confusion. He called up and was to be escorted by his contact, Ms. Nichols. When she finally came down 45 minutes after the initial contact she asked who he was and what was in the boxes. He said he was Mr. Baran to show her the samples from the disability program. She became quite disheveled. She said that she did not know when she could talk with him for she had numerous scheduled appointments. Mr. Baran responded that he had all day and the last flight out to Chicago was 10:00 p.m. She then decided to take him upstairs to a waiting chamber where four other men were meeting. On the elevator she stated that she hoped he understood that there was nothing definite stated about this order. At this point, Mr. Baran began to get angry. He retorted that her statement was not true because her boss, Ms. Hazelrigg, told him that his program was doing an inaugural event and her word was gold to him. He waited there for several hours bopping in and out checking on him. Finally, she brought Ms. Peggy Hazelrigg to meet him. She stated how impressed she was with the dedication to his students and program. He thanked her and began to mention all of the specific special education students as well as describe the program. He stated that he was an advocate for equity and access to jobs. She then stated that he and his
program were a definite part of the inaugural committee and promised to contact him with specifics by the end of the week. They shook hands and now physically agreed on this destined procurement.

After this event, Mr. Baran noticed it was just noontime. He had a late afternoon flight home. He decided in lieu of sightseeing he would try the ranks as a lobbyist for his cause. He visited three Senators' offices; Vice-President Elect, Dan Quayle of Indiana, Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts and Alan Dixon of Illinois. Staffers from Quayle and Kennedy listened to his plea for support in this inaugural endeavor. He selected these two individuals because of learning at a LDP lecture that they jointly wrote the J.T.P.A. legislation. Mr. Baran was very disillusioned with his encounter with the Illinois Senator Dixon, whose staffer listened to his plea yet went unrecognized by Senator Dixon as Mr. Baran watched him discuss this matter through the open office door dialogue. Mr. Baran was very angry that his own senator from Illinois would not come out to at least greet him. Years later, he made sure he would vote for Carol Mosley-Braun! Flying home he felt that he had succeeded in this first attempt to gather the needed supplies for climbing this mountain.

On January 9th, he confirmed the order specifications with the new inaugural contact, Ms. Marianne Hansen. The event which Mr. Baran would be supplying flowers for was to
be an Inaugural Jazz Band and Popcorn party for all senators at the Marriot Hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue. Mr. Baran worked out the details for the flower shopping list of supplies and equipment that would be needed. He immediately set up an appointment in order to offer to include the SMA Cooperative. This would definitely be the most sensational joint partnership PIP ever presented to LDP. Mr. Van Dyke and Ms. Leslie Wilson met with him and made another verbal agreement to pledge $1500-$2000 to this project. Mr. Baran also solicited the support of his state legislators who also verbally agreed to finance an equal amount of funding of $2000. He then went to Van's Inc., the local floral wholesale house and purchased the needed supplies and billed it all to his business account of Heidi House Originals. This was followed by Beth Nichols' phone call to the special education office which definitely caused an unforgettable disruption that would repeat itself on numerous occasions. She needed to talk to Mr. Baran immediately. Mr. Baran was summoned from his special education gym class. Ms. Nichols handed over responsibilities to a Ms. Lois DeVecchio who was chairman of a different inaugural event. He was in another dilemma for he had already purchased the floral supplies for the other event and now he was receiving this order for a larger event at the United States Departmental Auditorium in the Commerce Buildings. Ms. DeVecchio calmed Mr. Baran down and stated
he should use all of purchased supplies for this order and only add needed supplies if necessary. She was a society lady placed on the committee. She made special arrangements for Mr. Baran to contact the caterer, Mr. Bill Anton, who was very touched by the inspiration of the special needs youth behind this project. He shared the needed specifications and also immediately faxed the room layout with table arrangements for floral designs.

The next and most important component was to solicit students and supporters to become real inaugural floral designers. A "Call to Arms" was sounded to SMA and HFHS teachers, administrators and staff, students, parents, and club/team members. They were invited to come and help participate on a school holiday, Dr. Martin Luther King's Birthday, January 16, 1989. Many students and community supporters showed up to make this dream a reality. Mr. Baran began the work - a workathon - with everyone gathering together and explaining the significance of what special education students were accomplishing. He also dedicated the work event to the memory of Dr. King whom Mr. Baran claimed would be extremely supportive of disabled youth seeking employment training and employment opportunity. The Chicago Tribune of January 17, 1989 documented the event in an article entitled, "Inaugural shows skills of disabled." 12

Becky Mazek, who has cerebral palsy, was thrilled to be given the chance to assemble artificial flower arrangements for George Bush's Presidential
inauguration. So was Suzanne Marie Gonzalez, who suffers from Downs Syndrome. And so was Lalitha Murthy, who wasn't quite sure what her disability was. "I have trouble in math," she said. On Monday, Becky, 15, Suzanne, 20, Lalitha, 16, and some 50 other physically, mentally, and emotionally handicapped high school students from the south suburbs went to work for the next President of the United States. "These flowers are going to make the President realize that people with these disabilities can do the job," said Larry Baran, a special education teacher at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, who sold the inauguration committee on the idea.

On Tuesday evening, several students helped load Mr. Baran's van with all of the numerous decorations and huge centerpieces, lanterns with floral clusters, silk ferns and also several thousand very tiny silk red, white and blue ribbon roses attached to a leaf and ribbon made by a group of blind adults from the park district SSSRA Program. In this group, Mr. Baran invited his mother who had just become blind through diabetes. Little did he realize this boutonniere was the precursor of the "star spangled tribute" that would later by just adding a toothpick American flag touch the hearts of one million Americans. On Wednesday, January 18, 1989, Mr. Baran went to say goodbye to his mentor and Superintendent, Dr. Rachford. He went to his mailbox and found a letter from Washington. He had never received any prior written correspondence. He opened the letter and to his surprise it was a letter of rejection from William D. Harris, Director of Operations. The letter can be found in Appendix 6. It stated:
After carefully considering the needs of the Presidential Inauguration Committee, we, regretfully, are unable to utilize your services at this time. Thank you again for your interest and support. 13

Mr. Baran was devastated. Two of his coaching pals, Tom Krysinski and Scott Handler, came to escort him to his van and say farewell. Mr. Krysinski remembers:

I always knew Larry was "crazy" from the first day I met him and I don't mean crazy, insane, I mean crazy, different. When I sometimes think how God works in strange ways, whenever I'm feeling bad I recall during my lunchroom door duty when all of the wheelchair kids come out that door and I see the girl steering her chair with her head, the autistic girl being dragged along by the aide, the older boy hanging out of his chair, so when I think I'm having it bad then eventually I think of Larry because he's the guy who makes their lives worth living - the patience - and I don't have that gift for one minute! 14

Mr. Scott Handler, formerly of Homewood-Flossmoor High School, also remembers:

Encouragement of the heart is a large part of the program. By recognizing contributions it gives identification and validation of individuals through the entire process. Accomplishments are achieved through public ceremony and feedback from public celebrities. Students are continuously always challenging individuals, the group, and willing to do so is self-reflecting. To be and feel apart of this inspires and fosters a sense of investment and self­worth. 15

Mr. Baran made the best decision of his life. All of the weeks of phone calls and hard work by the kids could not go ignored and he had Mr. Bill Anton with whom he was coordinating things. He was going to pretend the letter never came and he asked his friend to hold it for him until
he came home. The special education secretary ran out and handed him a rosary to hold in his hand while driving which he agreed to do. He stopped by the local catholic church and said a prayer for safety, guidance and protection before the Blessed Mother statue. He then left at 11:30 a.m. and arrived in Washington from a non-stop drive at 12:00 p.m. He drove literally in front of the Nation's Capital and asked himself what he was doing here. He went to his hotel and got up the next morning to begin decorating for Mr. Anton, the caterer.

The flowers were well received by the committee chairpersons who consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Marriott of the Marriott corporation. They asked if Mr. Baran could remain in town one more day so that the silk flowers could be used for a private function in this same location. Mr. Baran agreed and had to reset the decorations for a more intimate setting that next morning. As he was setting up the decorations, a very young Washington staffer wearing a conservative blue suit and a walkie-talkie in his ear approached him. His name was Pat Gruby and he stated that he knew Homewood-Flossmoor from playing soccer against them for his parochial Notre Dame High School in Park Ridge, Illinois. He explained how thankful they were that Mr. Baran was letting them use the beautiful silk decorations. Mr. Baran then was quite inquisitive as to what private event he had agreed to decorate that would showcase his
special students talents. He will never forget the young Mr. Gruby stating he was an aide for the Vice-President and this was going to be the Vice-President's and Mrs. Quayle's private reception for all members of the United States Congress. He then invited him and his assistant to attend after decorating the event. There is no logical reason why and how this all happened. Mr. Baran was only moved to say a prayer of thanksgiving. Little did he know that evening of January 21, 1989, the birthdate of his deceased father, was marked for destiny calling (D.C.) Lawrence Joseph Baran to bring to the attention of Vice-President Dan Quayle the hopes, dreams and accomplishments of his special education students so that he could recognize and say thank you!

On Sunday, January 22, 1989, The Washington Post documented the achievement of the program and Mr. Baran's successful attempt to make Vice-President Quayle aware of the students' accomplishments. The entire article is found in Appendix 5. It stated:

Larry Baran of Chicago leaped and jigged and quivered with the joy of it all. "I did it!" yelled the high school special-education teacher as Vice-President Quayle disappeared behind the stage yesterday at the Departmental Auditorium. "I was not going to let him leave! I gave my life to this!" And so Baran besieged Quayle as the vice president was leaving the congressional reception and gasping, told him about the 100 disabled students who made all the silk flowers decorating the room. Baran gasped, his quarry listened, and before his entourage swept him away Quayle agreed to talk to Baran later and perhaps, to visit Baran's school. "That man's brilliant!" said Baran afterwards. 16
Mr. Bill Weir, one of the Vice-President's co-hosts of his Congressional reception, documents the event in a letter found in Appendix 5. He states:

Meeting Larry Baran and the lady assisting him, Marionette Young, I felt the Holy Spirit working through us in a mystical way. I quickly realized in the closing minutes of the reception that Mr. Quayle needed to receive important information from Mr. Baran about the kids and their program that with Larry's leadership....Dan Quayle responded with a promise to come to the school where he would personally thank the kids who contributed so much to this beautiful reception--the beginning of very productive years for Mr. Baran and his program, extending the kids productive work into national and international events, sharing the love and beauty carrying their Spirit to millions throughout the world. 17

The March 1989 edition of Flowers & trade magazine, confused the inaugural reception for the congressional reception when it reported the event. The article is found in Appendix 5.

The NEA Today, a monthly national teachers magazine, wrote a short article in March of 1989 with an ending statement that questioned the probability of the promised visit. In October the following article on the visit appeared in that magazine and is found in Appendix 5. It states:

Quayle was so impressed with the display he told Baran he'd visit Homewood-Flossmoor to thank the students personally. Quayle watchers, stay tuned! 18

Mr. Baran was introduced by the Vice-President to his Press Secretary, David Beckwith who was asked by the Vice-President to get Mr. Baran's name, address and phone number.
Mr. Baran did not leave David Beckwith alone. He phoned and wrote him constantly so that the Vice-President could keep good on his word. David Beckwith and Mr. Baran have kept in touch for years. Mr. Baran later learned how Mr. Beckwith was totally impressed with Mr. Baran's tenacity and helped persuade all the needed Vice-Presidential staffers to see the merit in this visitation. David Beckwith made it happen. Several years later, at the ADA picnic following the ADA signing, David was asked by Mr. Baran if he was too pushy with his advocacy tactics. David Beckwith, former press secretary to Vice-President Quayle states: "Larry keep it up, you're a natural in this town. Your program has inspired the Vice-President and you have a relentless pursuit to want the country to know about this program."
1 Interview with Dr. Edward Rachford, August 1995.


3 Ibid, 133.


5 Interview with Ms. Elaine Young, October 1995.

6 Tina Copeland to Special Education parents, 7 July 1988.

7 Dr. Jeanne B. Repetto to Ms. Tina Copeland, 27 July 1988.

8 Interview with Cal Hainzinger, October 1995.

9 Interview with Keith Kelly, October 1995.

10 Interview with Jane Fulghum, October 1995.

11 Interview with John Wrenn, October 1995.


14 Interview with Tom Krysinski, October 1995.

15 Interview with Scott Handler, October 1995.


17 Interview with Bill Weir, September 1995.


19 Interview with David Beckwith, January 1995.
"Larry has managed to instill pride, positive self-esteem, and the belief that "I can succeed" in his students. He has made students believe they can dream and then achieve those dreams. Larry is superior at inspiring a vision, modeling the way and encouraging the heart. These characteristics are what makes him and his program so special. It shows patriotism is alive and well in our country. This program has touched the hearts of veterans across our country and showed them we care. Also the program is contagious. After each "big" event finished, the students always came up with another idea, i.e. Pearl Harbor, Vietnam Women's Memorial, etc. Besides, how many students have the opportunity to work in the White House! The program is one of the highlights of the academic programs at H-F. It makes students with disabilities be part of the "normal" everyday activities at H-F. The program has brought notoriety and fame to H-F."¹

Dr. Laura Murray,
Superintendent of
Homewood-Flossmoor
High School

This chapter will first define the leadership of the fourth principle of modeling the way with the commitment of setting an example and planning small wins and the fifth principle of encouraging the heart with the commitments of recognizing contributions and celebrating accomplishments.

This chapter will begin with the fulfillment of the Vice-President's promise to visit and say thank-you to the special education students for an exemplary job done on his
inaugural flowers. It will then document twenty-five projects, awards, and recognitions from the partnerships made on a national level with organizations, government officials, military personnel, and veterans groups. It will end with the special students and National Honor Society student colleagues passing out the star spangled tributes for the Marine Corps beneath the National Marine Monument of Iwo Jima in Washington D.C. with the Commandant of the Marine Corps escorting the President and First Lady to recognize and celebrate the special education students' accomplishments. The cancer and medical leave of the researcher will be discussed in terms of the torch of leadership for the program being successfully passed to the J.T.P.A. staff and students who carried out three requests from the Pentagon and Office of the Secretary to Veterans Affairs. Finally, the testing and sampling of a floral project for chemotherapy patients at the University of Chicago will be discussed from a national perspective.

Maria Stratmann states, "I really believed we could do it. I was personally enthusiastic and helped others in any way that I could. The key: show them the way." A leader needs a philosophy, a set of high standards by which the organization is measured, a set of values about how employees, colleagues, and customers ought to be treated, a set of principles that make the organization unique and distinctive. Leaders also need plans. They need maps to
help guide people. Yet complex plans overwhelm people; they stifle action. Instead, leaders lay down milestones and put up signposts. They unravel bureaucratic knots. They create opportunities for small wins, which add up to major victories. Leaders are living sermons. Their actions speak louder than their words. They also practice what they preach and their behaviors reflect their respect and values. This credibility is exhibited in their words and actions.

Commitment Number 7

• Set the Example for Others by Behaving in Ways That Are Consistent With Your Stated Values.

Lachlan McLean says "You can only lead others where you yourself are willing to go." 3 Values comprise the things that are most important to us. They are the deep-seated, pervasive standards that influence almost every aspect of our lives: our moral judgments, our responses to others, our commitments to personal and organizational goals.

Commitment Number 8

• Plan Small Wins That Promote Consistent Progress and Build Commitment.

Berglund states, "Planning fosters success. We broke the project up into manageable chunks." 4 The ancient philosophers remarked that the journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. It is leaders who get us started. They convince us that the impossible is possible. They show us the way.
Encouraging the Heart

"But, I am here today because of your Special Education class and Larry Baran, who made a herculean effort to get me to come, and what Larry says I do! Just like all of his students here that follow his keen advice and leadership, I'm sure. But it certainly was an important event for us in Washington, the day after the Inauguration at the Commerce Building, and the decorations at our reception came from this special education class right here, and we had many beautiful flowers and beautiful arrangements much like this boutonniere that I am wearing here, that had come from this special education class and when Larry came up to me afterwards and we started talking about the decorations, I said, "I would really like to say thank you to those wonderful kids, and if there is anyway that I could say thank you, I'd enjoy it" and he said, "You can!" He said, "Come to Homewood-Flossmoor and we'll put on a good show for you and if you come would you please come there personally to express your appreciation for what the special education class did for Marilyn and me and our family and all the Congressional families that came down to enjoy that festive occasion.

So Larry, I'm here in person to not only thank you but to thank your special education class for a very special moment for Marilyn and me in Washington D.C. Thank you very much."

Dan Quayle
Speech at Homewood-Flossmoor High School
April 24, 1989

Major General John Stanford says, "Love'em and lead'em". Getting extraordinary things done in organizations is hard work. The climb to the summit is arduous and steep. Leaders encourage others to continue the
quest. They inspire others with courage and hope. Leaders give heart by visibly recognizing people's contributions to the common vision. With a thank-you note, a smile, an award, and public praise, the leader lets others know how much they mean to the organization. Leaders express pride in the accomplishments of their teams. They make it a point of telling the rest of the organization about what they have achieved. They make people feel like heroes. Leaders need to recognize achievements through celebrations. They will make an effort to hail milestones. Leaders are also lovers. This is the one fundamental trait that sustains them. Leaders are in love—in love with the people who do the work, with what their organizations produce.

Commitment Number 9

• Recognize Individual Contributions to the Success of Every Project.

Sullivan states, "If you don't show your appreciation to your people, then they're going to stop caring, and then you are going to find yourself out of business." 7 Leaders have high expectations both of themselves and of their constituents. They create self-fulfilling prophecies about how ordinary people can persist and by doing so achieve extraordinary results. They provide people with a clear direction, substantial encouragement, personal attention and feedback. Along the way, feedback creates small wins that stimulate, rekindle, and focus people's energies and drive.
When the journey is complete, feedback helps to ensure that learning takes place so that people acquire the competence that comes with experience.

Commitment Number 10

• Celebrate Team Accomplishments Regularly.

Renn Zaphiropoulos is quoted as saying, "When you give someone a check, don't mail it, have a celebration." Kouzes and Posner agree that, "Cheerleading and celebrating are the processes of honoring people and sharing with them in the sweet taste of success. When leaders cheerlead, they base their celebrations on three central principles: focusing on key values, making recognition publicly visible, and being personally involved.

The Visitation of Vice-President Quayle

After returning from Washington, Mr. Baran's peers and associates did not believe his story about meeting the Vice-President and his promise to visit and thank the students. The months of February through April were quite difficult because there was always the probability that it would never happen. Mr. Baran cherishes the memory of Dr. Rachford seeking him out in the cheerleading office after school in early April. He took him aside and said, "I got a call from the Vice-President's office. He's coming!" Mr. Baran got extremely emotional and shed some very serious special tears. He will always remember what his mentor Dr. Rachford said. "Larry, dream your dreams even bigger and further
beyond your imagination, Captain Rainbow." Mr. Baran made the headlines of the Sunday Star on April 23, 1989. It read:

Quayle's Visit Fulfills Promise to H-F Teacher

Vice-President Dan Quayle will visit Homewood-Flossmoor High School Monday, school and government officials have announced. Some people may be surprised by the announcement, but Larry Baran, Homewood-Flossmoor special education teacher is not. He has expected it for months. "He's making good on a promise to me." Baran said. Quayle will be in Chicago Monday to address a meeting of the Newspaper Publishers Association. While in town, Quayle will pay a "Thank You" visit to the high school for providing flowers used during the inauguration of President George Bush in January. Through Baran's persistence and vision, 50 special education students made silk flower arrangements used at two inaugural functions. One of these was a reception by the Quayles for members of Congress. Baran was at the function to tend the floral arrangements the students had prepared. "I really got into a depression because no one thought this was going to happen," Baran said. But Monday the promise will be officially fulfilled. "I knew that he was coming," Baran said. "The man is a man of his word."

While at H-F, Quayle will speak to a school assembly and at sometime during his visit, stop by the school cafeteria, according to his staff. Baran also expects Quayle to visit his special education students there. 9

On Tuesday April 25, 1989, Penny Matek documented the Vice-Presidential visitation to Mr. Baran's class and school in The Southtown Economist, which can be found in Appendix 5. The article stated:

Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School got a taste of the national scene Monday as Vice-President Dan Quayle stopped by to pay tribute to students in the school's special education classes...."These kids have been
lifted up over the United States," Baran said of his students at the conclusion of the program. "I hope they never forget it..... I had a job to do (in working with the students) and I am so pleased they came and said 'thank you'," Baran said. Before his speech and the school assembly in his honor, Quayle and his wife toured the school's cafeteria where the dozen students who created the centerpieces demonstrated for America's second couple how they put the arrangements together.

Dr. Rachford followed up with a very special document that Mr. Baran had never yet received, an H-F Viking telegram which read: Larry, Great work! Ed

All of the Chicago television stations covered the event. Fox 32's Scott Smith interviewed special student Mary Ann Boyle and Mr. Baran. When interviewed, student Mary Ann Boyle said, "I was all excited and everything and I told all my friends and everything." Scott Smith stated, "It's something you won't forget." "No, I won't forget it. I'll tell my grandchildren and they will tell their grandchildren and everything!" Mr. Baran stated, "And they were so pleased with them they came and said thank you. I think that's phenomenal and I'm glad I was an instrument, what ever it is I was pleased as punch!"

The Chicago Sun-Times also documented this event. Their article was entitled, "Quayle Offers Flowery Thanks" in the issue of Tuesday, April 25, 1989. It is found in Appendix 5. The article in summary states:

I grabbed [Quayle] and told him about my students, and I said, "I know you have a special place in your heart for them, won't you come and thank them?" Baran said. "And he said he'd love to."
For Baran, Quayle's visit was a "dream come true" because it helped him show people that his students can hold jobs. "These kids were lifted up in front of the United States today," he said. "Nobody recognizes these kids. Nobody gives them jobs, and that's the bottom line. But they showed today that they are job-worthy and ready for the world of work. If anyone wants to hire them, they're ready..."  

The NEA Today, October, 1989, in a follow-up article stated:

Vice President Dan Quayle is a man of his word. Last January, Quayle told Illinois teacher, Larry Baran he'd visit Baran's special education students, who made arrangements for a Washington, D.C. inaugural reception. The kids attended Illinois' Homewood-Flossmoor High School. Sure enough, in April, Quayle and his wife, Marilyn, visited Baran's class - and the Vice-President addressed all 2,100 Homewood-Flossmoor students in a special assembly. 

The First Lady & The Reading Tree of Knowledge - 1989

"How thoughtful of you to send me a copy of the video tape made by your class. I so enjoyed watching the tape and seeing you hard at work. I especially appreciated the part that shows you preparing the flower arrangements for the Inaugural Reception -- they were so beautiful."

"How thoughtful of you to send the lovely "Reading Tree of Knowledge." It is beautiful. It must have taken a great deal of time and effort. I especially like the fact that you included your favorite books."  

First Lady Barbara Bush

Mr. Baran's class later solicited to do some work for the First Lady. The class decided to make a Christmas Holiday Tree of Knowledge with decorations made out of disability dolls and wooden ornamental books with each of
the fifteen students favorite book decorating the tree. Mr. Baran solicited Ms. Megan Tipton of the H-F Television Station to videotape the students talking to Mrs. Bush about their favorite book as they hung it from the holiday tree. The students did an outstanding job. Two letters were received in response to their hard work and can be found in Appendix 6. The students all received copies of these letters. They were so touched and impressed that Mrs. Bush took the time to acknowledge them.

Dr. Martin Luther King Remembered - 1984 & 1990

"I was very pleased to receive this beautiful wreath and I ask that you pass on to the children my thanks and appreciation for their thoughtfulness."

"Belatedly, I wish to express my appreciation for the gift that you brought to The Center during your recent visit to Atlanta which students in your special education class made in memory of my husband. Indeed you are to be commended for the fine work that you are doing with these young people and I ask that you express to them my thanks and deep appreciation for sharing their talents with me." 16

Mrs. Coretta Scott King

Another significant American woman recognized the students' work. This was Mrs. Coretta Scott King. In 1984 and 1990 the students made a decoration and sent it to her. She responded with the letters which may be found in Appendix 7.
Mr. Baran has always had a huge poster of Dr. King in his class work center and has used him as an example on numerous occasions.

The Beginning of the J.T.P.A. Funding for the Program - 1990

One bright Sunday morning during a late February day, Mr. Baran was once again exercising his church/community involvement by acting as a lecturer and minister of communion at his parish church of Saint Joseph's in Homewood. During the administration of the Eucharist he noticed one of the ushers, Mr. Robert Gooley. What transcended from that visual encounter would change the program and lead it into an unbelievable direction.

Mr. Baran saw an article in the local Star newspaper about a cooperative venture with the village of Homewood and the businessmen of Glenwood Plaza to bring the "Moving Vietnam Wall" to the south suburbs. He immediately thought that this would be another excellent avenue to showcase the students talents and at the same time begin to teach patriotism to his students by honoring the Vietnam Veterans. He thought that this would be a perfect outlet for the little red, white, and blue boutonniere used first at the Quayle reception for Congress. The only variation was adding a small one-inch toothpick American flag to the design. This was the initiation of symbol/product that would bring notoriety to the program for years to come.
Mr. Baran had seen his goal and once again had to go back and retrace his steps and strategies as a means of achieving this goal. And of course the first step was to make a connection with a significant person involved in the planning to first listen and then agree to the idea. Mr. Baran did not know anyone at the Glenwood Plaza Association however Mr. Robert Gooley, the man he was gazing at in Saint Joseph's Church, was the village manager for Homewood for several terms. Even though they had never formally met, he knew he was to approach him after Mass and solicit him as an advocate for the program's cause. He found Mr. Gooley in the usher's room and introduced himself. He told him that they had never formally met but that he, Mr. Gooley, was responsible as a judge in the annual Forth of July Parade for both of his daughters winning a ten speed bike. Heidi dressed as Wonder Woman and Amy dressed as Little Orphan Annie! Mr. Gooley laughed and asked if he could help him. He responded with the boutonniere idea for the Moving Wall. Mr. Gooley was immediately triggered by Mr. Baran being a special education teacher interested in job training. Mr. Gooley began to share information about his daughter Barbara who taught job skills to special needs youth in the neighboring Bloom High School district. Mr. Gooley further inquired about his work at Homewood-Flossmoor High School and he was quite impressed. He stated that the Vietnam Wall committee would probably love his idea and please, let him
handle it. But this is where Mr. Gooley initiated a proposal to Mr. Baran that changed the direction of the program into the needed structure for growth and opportunity. Mr. Gooley asked Mr. Baran if he ever considered writing a grant for federal funding for his program? He responded by saying he played with the idea but he never knew the procedures. Mr. Gooley told him that he had a friend in downtown Chicago named Mr. Joseph Monaghan who was the Director for the Cook County President's Office of Employment Training. He said to call him early in the week and set up an appointment for both of them to go and meet with him. He said he had to get home from church and he shook Mr. Baran's hand and handed him a business card. As he left, Mr. Baran glanced through the ushers' room window to the front of the church's Blessed Mother's Altar and as he looked down at the card, to his surprise, it read, "Mr. Robert Gooley, Cook County Commissioner!" Mr. Baran was numb. He always wanted to pursue funding for his program. He had not known until this moment, that Mr. Gooley was a county commissioner. All he was pursuing was someone to be an advocate for his students so that they could honor veterans and an opportunity for federal funding through the Job Training Partnership Act Grant was making itself available.

Mr. Baran made an appointment early in the week as requested by Mr. Gooley. He took him to meet Mr. Joseph
Monaghen who was a gentle, soft spoken man who explained the bidding process that the county had set up for agencies and school districts to bid on the allocated funding. The request for funding application was called a RFP (REQUEST FOR FUNDING PROPOSAL). The call for these RFP's went out in early February with the date for submission for this year being less than two weeks away! Mr. Monaghan introduced him to two staffers whom he could call for technical assistance in writing this application. Mr. Baran thanked both men for this new opportunity and he went home ready to conquer writing his first grant application for the program.

Mr. Baran's wife, an undergraduate journalism major, again played the antagonist and kept asking her husband why he would be putting himself through such an ordeal with less than two weeks to complete such a involved application. Mr. Baran's response was that the grant was presented to him not at his request but at church and he knew Providence had funding in store for the R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Program. For the next 10 days he worked tenaciously in putting together a document. It included data proving the need for training from the American floral industry as well as federal job profiles reflecting the floral industry. He needed to collect numerous letters of recommendation from the local floral wholesale industry and local civic and business leaders stating the merit of the program and their advocating allocation of federal funding to be considered.
In short, it was miracle that it was completed on time. He hand delivered the three needed copies to the Wacker Drive address in Chicago right before the close of the working day when all applications were due. Mr. Baran was confident his ten days of effort were little compared to the 10 years of effort and drive for the program so far. Several weeks later, a large white envelope from the Presidents' Office of Employment Training arrived in his teacher's mailbox. He tore it open immediately read it to find out he was a grant recipient.

Please be advised that your application(s) listed above has/have received an acceptable number of points during the competitive review process, thus making your agency eligible for immediate funding consideration and negotiations.

The letter is found in Appendix 8. Mr. Baran ran across the hall to his mentor and Superintendent, Dr. Edward Rachford, to share his happiness. As usual both the Superintendent and Principal, Mr. Charles Smith, were more than one hundred percent behind the awarded funding. This grant now would allow Mr. Baran the two-thirds day he always claimed was needed for the program to grow with administrative, marketing, and training time to achieve the opportunity to make more dreams realities! Over the next five years, J.T.P.A. would reward exemplary program's such as RAINBOW not only for its benefit for pre-employment training opportunities for students with disabilities but also because of the unique national partnerships that this one of
a kind program was attracting. There is no possible way that all of the soliciting national partnerships with national governmental agencies at the White House and U.S. Capital, the Pentagon, and veterans groups could have happened without this federal funding which provided the pre-employment skills training for special education students as a work simulation class during the school year as a IIC grant. More remarkable was the Summer IIB funding which allocated funding to the program to offer opportunities to these special needs youth for supportive employment and offer a training wage of $4.25 an hour. This grant of the summer of 1990 offered an opportunity to 15 youth and grew through the summer's of 93, 94, and 95 to offer 50 special needs youth supportive employment opportunities with an allocation of $60,000 per summer.

With this manpower base, Mr. Baran had the needed work force to start the quest to further research opportunities and make these dreams realities through clever marketing techniques and leadership strategies. Since that summer of 1990 Homewood-Flossmoor High School's Simulated Work Center received a total funding level from J.T.P.A. of over $600,000. The evolution of the funding level over the past five years may be seen in Appendix 8.

The Moving Vietnam Wall Project - 1990

After all of the publicity and excitement of the Vice-President's visit, Mr. Baran still was finding out about
opportunities for the program. Due to the advocacy of Mr. Robert Gooley and a simple presentation to the Merchants Association for the Glenwood Plaza, the proposal for the distribution of the flag tributes to the Vietnam veteran's and their families was approved. The business association was very taken by the students efforts. They were also impressed that Mr. Baran solicited Hines Veteran's Hospital Occupational Therapy Unit to assist in this venture by having disabled veterans help honor their colleagues. Because the Glenwood Merchants Association wanted to include and formally thank the special students in the opening memorial ceremony on Sunday, May 12, 1990 caused a reaction, Mr. Baran decided to capitalize on it as a strategy for the program and the students in all future events. Having the Vice-President thank the students for their efforts was monumental but Mr. Baran and his students were not prepared for the heartfelt thanks from the veterans. During the ceremony the students were asked to sit as a class in the first row and they were one of the first mentioned by the speaker at the microphone. At the end of the ceremony during a playing of taps and a twenty-one gun salute by disabled veterans and non-disabled veterans, they immediately marched over to the students and began to hug and kiss them. Their response was based on the premise that no one had ever done such a kind thing for them and they would never remove the flag tribute from their fatigue.
and/or military cap. Mr. Baran relished the moment in his heart and realized that there was an untapped well of feelings that would later be the reason the military and veterans would become the perfect resource for his students products. On Thursday, May 3, 1990, the Star documented the students efforts with a color photo of three students at work which can be found in Appendix 9.

The White House Signing of the A.D.A. Legislation - 1990

"Larry's programs are successful because of the boundless energy and enthusiasm that he brings to any project. Larry's dedication and devotion to the young people in his program is without peer. Few People I have ever met can combine dedication, enthusiasm and energy the way Larry can. His energy and enthusiasm is reflected in the faces of the young people he helps. His success is measured one student at a time. He is a teacher who wears his emotions on his sleeve and everyone knows this emotion is genuine. His ability to motivate students borders on the miraculous and is highly infectious. I will never forget smuggling thousands of boutonnieres into the White House for the ADA festivities. That day, Larry and his students helped make the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act a royal success. Later, at the ADA picnic, he and his students presented a boutonniere to the Vice-President. It has been a privilege to know and work with Larry. I only wish our country had a few thousand more Larrys to work with!" 17

George Covington
Former Advisor on Disability Issues to Vice-President Quayle

The first order for the first summer JTPA program came from Mr. Baran's ties with the Office of the Vice-President. He continued to make David Beckwith, the Press Secretary for the Vice-President, aware of the program's projects and
accomplishments. Mr. Beckwith had the Vice-President's Advisor on Disabilities Issues, Mr. George Covington, contact Mr. Baran. Mr. Baran had been following the evolution of the ADA legislation through the House and Senate and had the idea of the flag tributes being used for the White House signing.

One reason that Mr. Beckwith wanted Mr. Baran to talk with Mr. Covington was because of a letter Mr. Baran sent to the Vice-President informing him of a national panel presentation he was presenting at the Fifth International Conference of the Division of Career Development for The Council for Exceptional Children entitled, "Options for Exceptional Children," held in Atlanta Georgia from October 12 -14, 1989. Mr. Baran informed the Vice-President that the President of the Division of Career Development would head a panel of key leaders in the area of legislation on public policy. Mr. Baran was asked to represent the special education/ vocational teacher on this panel and address how current legislation impacts the direct service provider, i.e. the classroom teacher.

He mentioned how this would be especially relevant to pending House of Representatives H.R. #7 and the Senate Bill 648 of the restructuring of the Carl Perkins legislation. He then went on to see if it would be appropriate to read a release from his office representing the Bush Administration's stand on this legislation.
Because of this letter, Mr. George Covington, Advisor to the Vice-President on Disabilities Issues, called him in his workclass to introduce himself. Because of this initial conversation, Mr. Covington was instrumental in getting a release for Mr. Baran to read as part of his presentation and also arrange to introduce Mr. Phil Calkins, whom the Bush Administration sent through Mr. Covington's advocacy from the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities for this important symposium. Mr. Baran also presented an individual session to educators entitled, "Destiny Calls Special Needs Youth to Follow Equity's Torch."

Following that symposium, Mr. Baran became friends with Mr. Covington. Mr. Baran asked him if he was disabled and he found out that he was chosen because he was blind. He also mentioned that the two of them something in common - being a teacher. Mr. Baran proposed the idea of the flag tributes when and if the ADA legislation passed. Mr. Covington kept Mr. Baran informed weekly. When the legislation passed, George Covington persuaded the Vice-President to use the flag tributes. Mr. Baran was told by Mr. Covington that the Vice-President wrote a personal request and hand delivered it to President Bush.

This was also the time, because of the new federal JTPA funding and making the flag tributes for the ADA signing, that Mr. Baran decided to drop the name "Project RAINBOW"
and adopt something more dynamic based on this civil rights legislation for the disabled and call the program, "Americans with Disabilities in Action!"

Mr. Baran was able to bring five students to the ceremony in the Rose Garden of the White House. A selection of students who were hard workers from the present and past as well as the most well-behaved were selected. As the guests entered the gates of the White House grounds the students were given an American flag by military liaisons in their summer whites and as they walked the curved path that led to the Rose Garden, a White House Intern and/or staff member stopped all of the guests to pin on the Star Spangle Tribute that also had a small ribbon attached to the leaf with the letters ADA gleaming in the sunlight. It was a morning that is hard to describe. Senators and Congressmen greeted the several hundred disabled guests. Senators Kennedy, Hawkin, and Dole met with the students. There was a full dressed military band. There were two tents with iced tea and water to relieve persons from the extreme heat. Finally the President and Vice-President appeared on the podium for the signing. There were several speeches and all present were enthralled by the experience.

When it was over, all were invited to an ADA picnic across the street from the White House in the ellipse park. George Covington promised that this is where the students could meet the Vice-President. Sure enough, as the Vice-
President was exiting from the microphone speakers area at the picnic, and as he was surrounded by aides and security, he passed Mr. Baran who stopped him with the awareness that five of his students were present, especially Becky Mazek. That struck a serious cord with the Vice-President for Becky read a very emotional poem at his visitation to Homewood-Flossmoor High School. The Vice-President said, "Where is Becky?" Mr. Baran responded, "Over by those picnic tables." Mr. Baran then escorted the Vice-President to the table where he visited with the five students for at least ten minutes.

Mr. Baran once again thanked the Vice-President for his help, assistance and kindness. Once again he was able to give his students a once in a lifetime experience. The students were so excited flying back to Chicago. They could not wait to tell their families and fellow students who did not come on this adventure. The Chicago Tribune of Tuesday, July 24, 1990 documented the project in an article found in Appendix 10 which states:

A group of south suburban handicapped high school students will have special reason to cheer when President Bush signs into law the Americans with Disabilities Act at the White House on Thursday. The 20 students who work in a job training program at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, made silk flowers that dignitaries, advocates of the handicapped and others will wear at the ceremony. 

On Sunday, July 29, 1990, the Star also reported this event in an article found in Appendix 10 which states:
Everyone needs a hero. And special education students at Homewood-Flossmoor High School have "Captain Rainbow." The students sent 1,500 flowers to the White House last week in celebration of Congress passing the Americans with Disabilities Act. The flowers were sent to decorate the Rose Garden where the President signs all bills. The flowers were worn by government dignitaries as well as those specially selected disabled Americans who were present at the Presidential document signing. Baran said, "And the last flower that was distributed will remain in the White House in an archive." 19

Mr. Baran also received a letter of thanks from Ms. Kilberg at the White House August 9, 1990 which can be found in Appendix 10. It states:

On behalf of President Bush, I want to thank you... for your gracious gift of boutonnieres for the Americans with Disabilities Act ceremony. We are most grateful to the Vice-President for bringing your group to our attention. 20

In a follow up phone conversation, Ms. Kilberg told Mr. Baran how she placed one boutonniere in the White House Archives for the file on the Americans with Disabilities Act signing.

Also solicited for support in this project were several leading political persons. They include Illinois Attorney General, Neil Hartigan, and Mr. Justin Dart, the Chairman of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Correspondence was received from Neil Hartigan and is found in Appendix 10.

Mr. Justin Dart wrote two notes in response to assist in advocating for the project. These are also found in Appendix 10.
The Points of Light Nomination - 1990

"Larry's "touch" is noticeable. His enthusiasm is contagious. His dexterity is awesome, and his goal of assisting special needs children to be strong productive citizens has taken him to the White House. I can think of no person more deserving than Larry Baran for this award. Larry goes where angels fear to tread -- and because of his vision and inability to take "no" for an answer, he has helped special needs children grow in self-esteem, given them courage to face great odds, and given them skills that will last a life-time. What more could you ask of one human being. I sincerely hope you will give serious consideration to Larry's nomination." 21

Karen Rezny
Director of Student Services

During the excitement of being present with five of his special needs students in the White House Rose Garden for the signing of The Americans with Disabilities Act, another incredible phenomenon happened. A very young woman approached Mr. Baran and asked if he was the teacher responsible for the beautiful flag tribute boutonnieres. As Mr. Baran responded a very proud yes the woman introduced herself. "Hello, my name is Kristi Adams with President Bush's Office of National Service and I am very impressed with your flag tributes and program. Could you tell me more about your program?" Mr. Baran bragged for a good five minutes and then decided to ask her why she was so interested. She explained that the Office of National Service is the sponsor of President Bush's 1000 Points of Light Program. She explained that she wanted to nominate
Mr. Baran and his program for this award. She gave him the needed information and told him he would need some letters of support. When Mr. Baran got home he solicited several professional colleagues for letters of support. Sample letters of recommendation are included in Appendix 11.

Ms. Adams called Larry after he asked over twenty persons to write on his behalf. She apologized and stated that the Thousand Points of Light Award, after much deliberation within the Office of National Service, is for volunteers and not paid professionals. She said that the committee was extremely impressed with his portfolio of recommendations and they would try and make an exception.

Mr. Baran's efforts with special needs youth did not go unnoticed. This nomination began at the ADA signing on July 26, 1990 and on November 1, 1990, his birthday, he received a very special letter in the school mailroom from George Bush. It is found in Appendix 11.

**Flags in the Desert**

**Tributes to Desert Shield/Storm - 1990-1991**

"I worked with Larry on the Flags in the Desert project. During the five months I worked with his kids, I saw remarkable things. Each student's special needs were addressed given their unique circumstances. One student in particular epitomized what Larry and his program provided his kids. Her name was Becky. Becky had cerebral palsy and negotiated her way through life by dragging her frail and deformed body behind a walker. As I watched her struggling down the school hallway one day, I thought how much we all take for granted. For Becky to get out of bed, brush her teeth or comb her hair in the morning required effort and
energy that by the looks of her fraility, appeared to be in limited supply. And yet when Becky came through Mr. Baran's door, who was all smiles, ready, willing and able to get down to business. Larry conducted his class like a job site. Expectations were put upon each student, not based upon their limitations, but rather their abilities and potential. Becky, like the others, rose to his challenge because Mr. Baran had given all of the gift of believing in themselves and giving them the necessary tools to exercise their talents. Watching Becky's feeble fingers taping the flowers or seeing her leaning over her walker to help her classmates prepare the boxes for shipment, Becky was far from limited. She was a productive, contributing member of the team and she could leave Mr. Baran's classroom feeling good about herself because she was significant. She was living proof that each of us can make a difference. They learned self-respect and respect for the dignity of others by the respect Larry showed to each of them. It provided them with an outlet for their creativity. It gave them a sense of self-worth and value. It provided them with job-related skills that could help them gain employment. It provided them with interpersonal skills as they learned to work cooperatively with others. It was a barnraising experience teaching them the good that can be accomplished by a collective effort. It provided them with the opportunity to accomplish great good in a fun way. It gave them a sense of value; of the goodness that comes from being a productive contributing member of society. It gave them a sense of their rightful dignity as human beings. Their limitations notwithstanding, these children were fun-loving, dependable, industrious, intelligent, and responsible workers." 22

Ms. Nancy Conley

"We had men from the army come and visit us to thank us for making the flag pins for Operation Desert Storm. We had award ceremonies with certificates, trophies and pizza parties. I felt good when I got my first J.T.P.A. paycheck because I was pleased with most of the outcomes of our floral arrangements. We are all capable of doing the work with a positive outcome. Usually the more able students helped the ones who
aren't able. Finally, Mr. Baran...he's my hero.. he's the man with the red, white and blue heart!" 23

Jennifer Bower, Alumni

Mr. Baran was convinced that nothing could possibly surpass the last project for the ADA signing. As the summer ended, serious problems were evolving in the international world community. Iraq was invading Kuwait and America was deciding to take a stand. As the school year began in late August, the introductory speeches related to the world troubles were given at the school's back-to-school inservice. Mr. Baran was attending church at St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church, in Flossmoor, Illinois on Sunday August 27, 1990. It was 10:15 a.m. when during a sermon by Father Eden on his comments of what was going on in the Middle East, Mr. Baran received a message from Providence in one split second that his program should make flag tributes for the 20,000 military men and women being sent to Saudi and this project would affect the world. He left the church a bit confused and talked with the priest about how his sermon motivated him into an incredible idea. He told him he would relate the idea once it became a reality. Back at school he wanted to figure out how this could actually happen. He remembered he once heard on television that some official said military personnel could not wear flags. So this was his dilemma - why go through all of the work and effort of making 20,000 tributes if our
government would not allow the troops to wear the tributes? Mr. Baran debated and came up with the idea of calling the head of the entire military, General Colin Powell, Joint Chief of Staff. His call was answered by a secretary who was a Sergeant. She said it was impossible to connect Mr. Baran with the General and he said he understood but she could help by giving him the fax number so that he could write a proposal. The sergeant said that was impossible but Mr. Baran began to talk about his disability students and their achievements. This for some reason worked with the woman who gave him General Powell's fax number. The next day he wrote the proposal and the following day he received a return call from the Joint Chiefs of Staff Public Relations Director, Lt. Col. Conrad Busch. He wanted to convey that their office was extremely excited with the proposal and gave their blessings to go ahead with the project. Mr. Baran and the Lt. Col. became good friends over the months. Their phone calls lasted at least 45 minutes where they discussed life and the logistics as this program snowballed. Mr. Baran quickly went to discuss the matter with his mentor and Superintendent, Dr. Rachford. He was very supportive of the idea and told him to go for the gold. Mr. Baran decided he needed the support of some key faculty members as well as school organizations in order to accomplish this task. He wrote a memorandum to the key personnel which was generally met with a very positive
attitude and agreement to be involved with the project. During this initial effort to try and get faculty support from fellow teachers, Mr. Baran will never forget the response from a math teacher who was a Vietnam veteran himself. He stated that the idea was stupid! He wanted to know how dumb flowers were and why wasn't the program sending gum or soap. Mr. Baran was surprised, but ignored the advice.

The Committee had several meetings on how to accomplishment this goal. This is where the idea of having a workathon came about. Mr. Baran explained if we got groups of students, teams, clubs, organizations, and community members to come out on a Saturday or free day, they could compete making the flag tributes while hearing pep talks from military personnel and having a lot of free food to help keep them busy working. Mr. Baran's class would also add the needed patriotic decorations as well as Americana music in the background. A larger publicity campaign was accomplished with the assistance of the student government's Laurie Goldberg and Flossmoor entrepreneur, parent and businessman Mr. Chuck Campbell. Mr. Campbell remembers:

Our family has known Larry and his family primarily through our church since 1976. From time to time I have discussed Larry's interests in special education and his approach to helping and teaching those students. I am not a professional in special education but Larry's ideas of providing meaningful vocational experiences makes a lot of sense. He has used his
special talent of floral arrangements to prove his concepts associated with special education students. I have often wondered what Larry could do if he had the resources to really expand his efforts. I do no know what would happen but I do know that a lot of people would have their lives improved. It's easy to anticipate because I have seen what Larry has done with limited resources. Those activities that have made that light twinkle were well beyond what is expected of a special education teacher. Larry is one of those exceptional people that have the dream, the talent, and the passion to change his World. 

With several strategy sessions they determined that a massive community awareness effort was needed so a tag day was planned. The committee quickly learned that politics through a presentation to the two village boards was necessary and they were successful in their request. They were able to have a tag day which really consisted of having very large signs in significant visible areas within the community and having students at key areas to pass out brochures about the workathon in October and community awareness posters for local shops and offices.

To enhance the boutonnieres, Mr. Baran contacted the Denision Paper Company to donate flag stickers and Hallmark Cards to donate several thousand of their current note card with a flying American flag as a background. Both companies were very excited to be in some way also helping our troops. These cards were going to be included at the workathon to write notes to the military and mixed in each box with the flag tributes. The flag tributes were going to be pinned to a business-sized card with our logo and title of “Flags in
the Desert" and a motto of "Heart to Heart we're all connected" and finally our name and address. On the back tribute makers were encouraged to write a short note.

Another avenue for publicity and help came from making a presentation to the recreational therapists for local nursing homes. They all thought that this was such a wonderful activity to use with their clients with that they invited Mr. Baran to speak at their state association meeting the next week at the Harvey, Illinois Holiday Inn. This is where the idea of sharing this activity with others came about because there was no possible way to have his twenty-five students singly complete the task but there was another learning objective being considered.

The program had always had the student enrollment consisting of what special education calls "cross-categorical" placements. What that basically means is grouping each and every type of disability group together. Behavioral disorders, learning disabilities, blind, multiply handicapped, and the developmentally delayed are all grouped together. Though many special education teachers disagree with this concept, it seemingly was perfectly designed for the JTPA program. Mr. Baran, because of this constant range of hands-on and mental skills, had to constantly devise a variety of job tasks that each and every student could achieve. This basic tasks analysis of each projects subskill jobs has become the hallmark of this program.
The involvement of others making the tributes would also give the students a new component to the program, that of "distribution center of supplies" which would entail a larger number of job skills. These included counting, sorting, repacking, labeling, boxing, taping and invoicing to name a few of the jobs!

Mr. Baran's favorite story on never underestimating the abilities of disabled was during part II phase of "Flags in the Desert" when Tammy Kranz warned Mr. Baran that, "we were giving out to many pins in each kit." Well, Mr. Baran sometimes in his compulsive episodes ignores the comments of some of his students. This time Tammy was correct when she brought back to literally show Mr. Baran his error.

He ordered all items as they usually were packed in grosses of the three color roses, leaves, and boutonniere pins. Tammy was correct when she said, "If we give out seven boxes of these pins we are giving more than needed." Mr. Baran looked at the box and they were not packed per 144 but rather 500's. This was definitely confusing and he would have to have the students recalculate the correct amounts for this shipment. This error also became evident with the leaves sometimes being packaged in half gross cellophane bags. They looked and felt the same size but in actuality they were not. Many groups had to telephone Mr. Baran for reshipping of extra pins or leaves which complicated the distribution. Yet definite lessons in
distribution skills were refined, not only by the students, but also by their program director! In order for this program's goals to be achieved the supplies for the tributes had to be paid for. The workers were all volunteers and they also had to find creative ways to solicit funds. Each table at the workathon was going to be sponsored by a club, organization, or community business sponsor. Each kit was based on the supplies for one thousand whose wholesale cost was $125.00. This project started with 20,000 troops being sent in late August and quickly became 150,000 by October. This is the reason that the committee solicited other groups to make and/or donate the funds needed for the supplies. This new total to be achieved was $12,000. With community awareness and much empathy in our country for the troops in Saudi the funding was raised. The Flags in the Desert workathon was successfully held on October 8, 1990, a national holiday, Columbus Day.

Two local papers provided coverage of the planning and execution of the workathon, The Star and The Southtown Economist on Sunday, October 7, 1990. The articles may be found in Appendix 12. Two excerpts include:

Larry Baran, the champion for the handicapped and students with special needs at Homewood-Flossmoor High School is reaching out to the troops in the Persian Gulf. On Monday from noon to 6 p.m., students enrolled in Baran's class will be making some 150,000 flag boutonnieres to be sent to each troop in Saudi Arabia as part of "Flags in the Desert," the brainstorm of Captain Rainbow. And community members are welcome to
help out in the project at the school's South Cafeteria. 25

At one table sat varsity football coach John Wrenn, wearing an Uncle Sam hat, working away with nearly half his team. "I asked the kids to come out because this is a good cause," Wrenn said. "I've been here two and a half hours and I think I've done a zillion." Across the room sat a dozen members of the H-F Kiwanis Club, who came to help because their organization sponsors the school's Key Club, and requested they come out....

At the next table sat a handful of senior class officers, who said they had pumped out 2,500 of the patriotic posies themselves. "Knowing this could put a smile on (the soldiers') faces means the hours (of work) paid off," senior class President Doug Lambert said. 26

At the end of the workathon Mr. Baran explained the meaning of "Flags in the Desert." He stated that "Flags in the Desert" has its basic meaning within the patriotic song of America the Beautiful. Everyone knows the first verse but the meaning is found within the third verse. "O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife, whom more than self did country love and mercy more than life, America, America let God thy gold refine, And all success be nobleness and every grace be thine."

Two significant letters followed from the Superintendent and President of the School Board. They are in Appendix 12. One is summarized:

The Board of Education wishes to thank you for the time and effort you have given to the "Flags in the Desert" project. We are proud of the honor you have brought to Homewood-Flossmoor High School. 27

This workathon's spirit continued with getting the military at O'Hare's Air National Guard facility to transport the flags to Desert Shield/Storm. By meeting with
the base Commander, Col. Peter Sullivan, he not only facilitated transportation for the boutonnieres but his staff became active in inviting the special needs youth out to his facility on various field trips so that all of the students could understand their function. Not only did Col. Sullivan transport Desert Storm flag tributes, he also facilitated the transportation for Pearl Harbor, The USS Theodore Roosevelt Air Craft Carrier in the Baltic off Bosnia, and World War II tributes for D-Day in Normandy, Iwo Jima in Washington, and V-E Day. Col. Sullivan documented his Air National Guard's involvement in by saying:

The 928 Airlift Wing has participated in three ways: speakers, role modeling and military displays and tours and providing transportation of products. It is a stated goal of the Air Force Reserve to be active in our communities, to be a positive role-model to the youth of today and to demonstrate our capabilities and professionalism. Our participation in this program has allowed us to accomplish these goals, but the difference from other community events is the effect the kids have on our reservists. Our members are energized by the enthusiasm of the kids and learn that stereotypes just don't fit. I hope the kids have benefited from their contact with the members of the 928AW. I know my members have grown and are better adults and American citizens as a result of this contact. 28

There was an enormous amount of publicity produced by this project. The following television stations produced news reports about the program: WBBM (Burley Hines), WMAQ (Phil Walters), WGN (Mr. Greg Sanders), CBN (700 Club).

At a family Christmas party, Mr. Baran's sister-in-law's sister, Mrs. Nancy Conley, became involved in a
serious conversation with him about her having an Air Force pilot in Desert Storm as a daily pen pal. He shared his program's involvement in Desert Storm. Nancy was very much affected by the concept of what the special needs youth of JTPA were doing. She immediately caught the dream and vision of the program. She insisted that his program should not have stopped at the 150,000 tributes but go on to make sure that all 400,000 Desert Storm military personnel receive one. Mr. Baran was overwhelmed with the amount of work this would be and where the funding would come from. He shared how difficult this would be to accomplish. He stated he would have to get his Superintendent's blessing since Mrs. Conley was interested in getting the entire south suburban community involved in this endeavor. The students would be the facilitator of the tributes supplies and packaging of finished products for shipping.

Mr. Baran got caught up in his vision but was nervous as he thought of what he was about to facilitate. The two people became a close team to make this dream a reality. Mrs. Conley was excellent at raising funds from companies and corporations as well as getting organizations, church groups, and clubs to sponsor work teams. During that January something incredible happened that blew the roof of the project. On January 20th, the *Sun Times* came out to do another story about the project. This news article sparked WGN to come out to do a news story on January 21st. Since
WGN is a cable station it was broadcast not only locally, but nationally several different times that day. The clerical staff at Homewood-Flossmoor will never forget that noontime. Several hundred phone calls came into the phone lines with offers to help with the "Flags in the Desert". They included the most incredible variety of Americans such as individuals, families and service groups. The most touching was from a man dying of cancer offering his services to make some tribute. From this, several hundred additional kits were facilitated all over America to assist in this project. Another special involvement came from a woman in St. Mary's, Kansas named Mrs. Helen Grahm whose husband, an Air Force Pilot in Saudi, sent her one as her Christmas present. She also wanted to be involved in the program. Over the next two months she raised enough money to facilitate 25,000 flag tributes from the great state of Kansas.

During the Phase II of "Flags", Mrs. Conley and Mr. Baran did a lot of public speaking appearances to gain financial and workers support for the project. She spoke to many village boards and Mr. Baran spoke to The South Suburban Business Expo 90 in front of several hundred business and community leaders. The main purpose of phase II was to raise the needed funding for supplies and plan several workathon sites for the south suburbs and get as many organizations to make the tributes with kits.
facilitated by the special needs students. Two workathons were planned in Homewood and Orland Park. One at the local pizza parlor, Aurelio's in Homewood and at Carl Sandburg High School in Orland Park for February 15, 1991. The Homewood Aurelio's Pizza site was where Mr. Baran arranged to be a national phone "call in" headquarters for organizations to report that they had completed their part of the work agreement. Mr. Baran had arranged that the local Army Reserve Unit would set up an actual military site like in Desert Storm so that his students could relate to it. This was all agreed to by the owners of the pizza parlor to use their south parking lot for this venture. Also, arrangements were made for several loads of sand to be scattered for that Saudi effect. The students made artificial palm trees and also one real camel named Einstein was rented to make this a very well remembered event by students and community.

Phase II was disrupted by the end of the war. Mrs. Conley and Mr. Baran had to work with various Pentagon logistics officers for the deployment of the tributes to welcome home sites all over the USA.

One major honor that was bestowed on the project and program was being the only non-military component to march in Chicago's "Desert Shield/Storm Welcome Home Parade." Students received thunderous applause as they carried a huge canvas banner explaining their efforts in "Flags in the
Desert" and with the huge local and national publicity, Chicagoans knew who they were! Many special letters of congratulations were received from governmental and military dignitaries and are also found in Appendix 12.

The State of Illinois Eighty-Eighth General Assembly, House of Representatives made a House Resolution No. 7, offered by Representative Sheehy of Illinois which is found in Appendix 12.

There were over 300 thank you letters from the men and women serving in our Armed Forces who received a flag tribute during their service in the Persian Gulf. The special education students were very touched by these letters and they were used as a way of teaching reading skills through immersion in a student driven project. Many of their touching comments are included in Appendix 12. A sampling of five includes:

For such a small thing it has a very large effect on us soldiers. We are so far away from home and alone in this strange land. When we receive an item like yours it is held close to the heart.29

Thank you for making me and several of my friends feel so good. When we arrived here we were greeted by a military man who gave several of us a card with a lovely pin. Since we are not allowed to display our colors here, the sight of those red, white, and blue flowers was a very welcome sight.30

They really meant a lot to all of us. The pins are a big hit out here! 31

I wear my pin at all times. Your support means the world to the 173rd Air Refueling Wing. 32
I've been carrying one in my pocket since I got it about a month ago. 33

The State of Illinois Election of Governor Edgar and Lt. Governor Kustra

Back in the fall of 1990, Mr. Baran decided to try to interest candidates running for state office to come and visit the program because of their high profile with the Flags in the Desert project. One day Mr. Baran received a call from Monica Mueller in the Campaign Coordinator of Citizens for Kustra office. Mr. Kustra was interested in coming to visit the students and hear about the program. A letter and fact sheet came prior to the visit stating:

October 15, 1990

Dear Mr. Baran:

I thought you might enjoy learning a little more about Senator Bob Kustra's background so I have enclosed a copy of his biography for your use. If you have any questions, please let ;me know. I can be reached at 312-372-9090. He looks forward to visiting your program on October 24, 1990.

Sincerely,

Monica Mueller
Campaign Coordinator
Citizens For Kustra 34

Robert Kustra came and was hosted by several students who explained all of the procedures for manufacturing the flag tributes as well as the distributing process for sending out kits all over America for groups wishing to help. He then directed a question and answer session with
the special needs youth. His final comment to Mr. Baran and the students was that in the morning he visited a regular education social studies program at another suburban high school and that the behavior, types of questions and demeanor of those students was far less superior to the quality that this special education class and students represented. Student Keith Nelson solicited work for his inaugural if he won. Mr. Kustra said if he and Mr. Edgar won that he would order some flag tributes for his inaugural and invite the students down to Springfield for the swearing in ceremony, meet with the Governor at the receiving line at the Governors Mansion and then treat the students to lunch. Lt. Gov. Robert Kustra made good on his promise and the students once again had a once in a lifetime experience. A letter followed the inauguration stating:

January 28, 1991

Dear Larry,

I wanted to thank you and all your wonderful students for your hard work at our inauguration earlier this month. The boutonnieres added a special touch to a very momentous occasion. I was proud to have the work of your students as part of this special event. I know that they worked diligently to prepare for the inaugural and I would ask that you pass on to them my sincere appreciation for their efforts. Once again, thank you for your help.

Warm Regards,

Bob Kustra/Lieutenant Governor
The Lt. Governor and Mr. Baran have remained close friends and associates. In fact, he got the Lt. Governor to be a guest speaker in a Politics in Administration class at Loyola during his studies for his doctorate.

The Association With The Illinois Institute for Entrepreneurship Education And The Valley Forge Freedoms Foundation Award - 1991

"Larry helps his students to not only dream but to achieve real work and through the real work that they do they came to respect the fact that they have some valuable talent but also a sense of respect for themselves. He believes deeply in what he does and he exerts more energy into teaching than anyone I have ever encountered. He makes the impossible possible!"\(^{36}\)

Dr. Tom Murray
Director of Illinois Institute for Entrepreneurship Education

During the end of Flags in the Desert, Mr. Baran's mentor, Dr. Rachford, called him to his office to propose an idea to him. Dr. Rachford was asked for Homewood-Flossmoor High School to house classes for Dr. Ed Harris's program called, "The Illinois Institute for Entrepreneurship Education" and that the program would be looking for secondary business and social studies teachers from the south suburbs. Dr. Rachford had the option to offer it to as many of his staff willing to participate. He insisted that he wanted Mr. Baran to be one of the educators representing the high school. He claimed he exhibited more of the characteristics of an entrepreneur than possible. Mr.
Baran was flattered and told his mentor he would go to the class. He went to the first session which explained the Illinois Institute Mission & Platform. It is found in Appendix 14.

Within the makeup of this class were at least 25 south suburban secondary social studies and business education teachers. As Mr. Baran took his seat one of his peers from Homewood-Flossmoor High School stared and asked why he was present. In fact this economics teacher "cat called" a comment as to why would a special education teacher be participating. Mr. Baran was embarrassed but let the comments settle. This continued for several sessions and Mr. Baran approached Dr. Harris and stated that maybe he did not really belong in a class such as this. Dr. Harris had been using Mr. Baran's program success with the Flags in the Desert Project as an example of what his class was all about on numerous occasions. Dr. Harris said to hang in there! He's jealous. Dr. Harris was right. This economics teacher dropped the class the very next session. Mr. Baran engaged himself in every aspect of this class and took pages of notes on "Entrepreneurship" which he found so many common characteristics of not only himself but also the special education students. This class experience has been considered as one very significant leadership training experiences which he has drawn from for his program over the years. In 1991 and 1992, Dr. Ed Harris sent a form to Mr.
Baran from the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge to consider nominating his program for the Leavey Awards For Excellence In Private Enterprise Education. He applied both years and received the correspondence in the mail on November 10, 1992 stating he was to receive the Leavey Award. The letter is found in Appendix 15. It stated:

It gives me a great deal of personal pleasure to inform you that you have been selected to receive a Leavey Award for Excellence in Private Enterprise Education. Mr. Baran was delighted his program was given this national recognition, but on a personal note he was extremely excited to receive the monetary award. When Mr. Baran received the application form letter, the return address logo of George Washington knelt in prayer at Valley Forge triggered his psyche that Providence was going to endow his program with this award and he would be able to use the financial award for the needed tuition for his residency year for his doctoral study at Loyola University. His family responsibility was primarily paying for the tuition of his two daughters in Illinois State Universities. Mr. Baran shared the evening with the first annual Pamlin Distinguished Awards which gave the American Patriots Medal to H. Norman Schwarzkopf. At the reception prior to the awards ceremony, Mr. Baran introduced himself to General Schwarzkopf. The general told Mr. Baran that he knew who he was and wanted to thank him and his program for what they had done for his troops. Mr. Baran was written up in the
program by his nickname, "Captain Rainbow." The General then said to Mr. Baran, "Let me call you captain, Captain!" Mr. Baran's family was then introduced to this distinguished American. A very fun and informal discussion was enjoyed by all. The evening was one of the most memorable and formal celebrations imaginable. Mr. Baran was honored to accept the award on behalf of all of his special students, past, present, and future. The program may be found in Appendix 15. It stated:

Truly one of the innovative examples of free enterprise in operation is within the walls of the Special Education Manufacturing and Sales Class at Homewood-Flossmoor High School. Here Mr. Larry Baran, alias Captain Rainbow, teacher entrepreneurship skills through the medium of floral designing....Mr. Baran constantly advocates that his students are job ready and worthy if given the chance and opportunity! As Captain Rainbow says, "The Impossible Dream isn't!"

The National Victory Celebration and National Memorial Service - June 1991

"I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation for the contributions you and your students made to the National Desert Storm Homecoming Foundation here in Washington. I'm not sure how close we came to our ambitious goal of one of this country's most remarkable demonstrations of gratitude and respect ever held for our servicemen and women. I am sure we had an outstanding program with tremendous public participation; an outpouring of justifiable pride in America that served as a great tribute to all who have served in the uniforms of our Armed Forces. Because of contributions like yours and the youngsters who worked on this project, the Homecoming Celebration was an unqualified success. Your support helped all of us say "Welcome Home" in an unforgettable way to our
unforgettable American heroes. Please accept my personal thanks and best wishes." 39

Edward J. Derwinski
Secretary of Veteran Affairs

"My first experience with Mr. Baran was when he called me about Amy not being able to use wire cutters, and seven years later he has had a lasting effect on my family. I have both volunteered and have been employed by this J.T.P.A. program. When Amy returned from Washington for the National Victory Celebration, I met the bus from the airport at school. Mr. Baran was a bit crazed that the kids were not presented to President Bush. I went up to Mr. Baran after I talked with Amy about not meeting the President. She said, "I don't know why Mr. Baran is so upset because the kids aren't going to remember President Bush or Vice-President Dan Quayle but they are always going to remember Mr. Larry Baran!" 40

Mrs. Cheryl Levy
Parent Worker

With Desert Storm's effect on the JTPA program finally calming down in the late spring of that academic year, another unexpected recognition came from Washington for the students of this program. It was May 1, 1991 during the late morning preparation period for administrating the JTPA program when Mr. Baran received a phone call from a Ms. Elizabeth A. Ganzi, the Director of Marketing for the Desert Storm Homecoming Foundation. Ms. Ganzi was briefed and informed of the accomplishments of the special needs students. Her committee was very impressed with their dedication and the amount of production achieved by Mr. Baran's group that they decided to purchase an additional
3,000 flag tributes for the National Memorial Service to be held at Arlington Cemetery and 10,000 for the Desert Storm troops that would be honored in a National Victory Parade in Washington, D.C. on June 8, 1991. She wanted to know the cost for these tributes. Mr. Baran's response was that there would be no charge and that the program had raised enough money to pay for all of the supplies, approximately $45,000, and there were enough materials and finished boutonnieres in stock to donate them to this event honoring the Desert Storm troops. She said that the students needed some kind of reward for their work and Mr. Baran proposed that they use the age-old payment of coke and pizza for the students. Ms. Ganzi said to hold on for a minute. When she returned she had an incredible proposal. She proposed allowing the class of twenty-five youth with five chaperones to be the guests of the Desert Storm Homecoming Foundation in Washington on June 8, 1991 and to pass out their famous boutonnieres at the National Memorial Service at the Amphitheater of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington Cemetery and then be guests at the parade and pass them out National Victory Celebration Picnic and concert. Mr. Baran immediately called his mentor, Superintendent Ed Rachford. Ed was honored for the school and said to accept the offer and work the details out later. He received a letter from the committee which is found in Appendix 16. In summary, it states:
This letter is a follow-up with the conversation I had today with Mr. Larry Baran. We have decided to use the Flags in the Desert for an event in Washington, D.C. on June 8, 1991. This event is a full day welcome home celebration for the troops. We planned on using your flags for the Memorial Service with the President and Mrs. Bush.

Mr. Baran was very excited and began his strategy to truly showcase and give his students an incredible opportunity and experience. The committee also asked for help with several thousand yellow ribbons for the trees along the parade route. Mr. Baran agreed but got his friends at the Occupational Therapy Unit at Hines Veterans Hospital in Maywood, Illinois involved in the production. Senator Allen Dixon and Veteran's Affairs Secretary Derwinski visited the facility during the ribbon making for the Victory Celebration. The Tuesday June 4th, 1991 Sun-Times ran a photo story about this involvement. Mr. Baran wanted the students to look patriotic and classically American at the event. He had a favorite flag rugby shirt. He decided to contact the company headquarters of Britches of Georgetown and Mr. John Barreto. John listened to his pitch for purchasing the shirts at a wholesale price. Mr. Barreto countered his offer with free $75 retail value patriotic rugby shirts because of the achievements of the students and to salute the Desert Storm troops.

When disembarking their plane at Washington National Airport, the students were greeted and had an official escort from the U.S. Army's Old Guard. These are the black
colored uniformed guards at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and at official events for dignitaries at the White House. In fact, Sergeant Huffman told the students that in the previous weeks he had been a guard for Queen Elizabeth's State Visit. The committee arranged a trolley car, open air bus, to motor the group around the Capitol.

The first visit was a private tour of the White House with photo session and then an incredible tour of the Mall of the Capital by the Smithsonian Institute where the military had every possible tank, tent, helicopter, jet plane, missile launcher and equipment used in the Gulf. The students went wild touring the site. The military men who explained the equipment were aware of the students' achievements. Once back at the Catholic University housing, a serious session with the students was held to explain the significance of what they would be doing the following morning. A review of death, dying and grief was discussed. Students used memories from funeral events they had personal experience with. The students needed to be perfectly appropriate and they were.

Their first activity was passing the tributes out at a breakfast for the 263 families who lost a loved one in Desert Storm. This was held at the Fort Meyer's Centennial Hall which is annexed to Arlington Cemetery. The students were in groups of three as they passed them out. They witnessed and experienced tears, hugs, and thank you's.
They then were escorted to the actual memorial sight of the Amphitheater which is behind the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The students were positioned past every Secret Service Security entrance. They did an excellent job at handing these tributes to all of the families, military guests, and national dignitaries.

Everyone involved in the deployment of Desert Storm from our politicians to military personnel of the highest caliber were present. The students were also commissioned to design a wreath for under the Presidential podium where the President would speak. It was a four foot diameter white grapevine wreath engulfed with golden flag tributes with the names of all the 263 servicemen and women killed in the Gulf. This list was printed in People magazine. Every fallen hero had recognition. Also upon this wreath was a ceramic eagle head surrounded by larger-than-life red, white and blue silk roses and baby’s breath. The entire wreath was accented in gold ribbon and streamers. The Secret Service men argued with Mr. Baran for bringing it to the ceremony. He persistently petitioned that it was commissioned by the Desert Storm Homecoming Foundation. They still said that they could not give security clearance for it. Mr. Baran was upset because of all of the work and efforts of the students who were asked to make it and then having it bluntly refused.
The only power left to Mr. Baran was prayer and of course an apology came to him and his students from the head of the Secret Service. Two special needs youth got to carry it through the security detectors and on to the stage of the amphitheater when the military band was playing Faith of our Fathers!

It is a moment that brings tears to Mr. Baran's eyes each time he thinks of that moment because after the ceremony family members crawled out on the ledge where the wreath rested to look for their loved ones name. Mr. Baran never told them that the names were upon the boutonnieres. The wreath was completely stripped of each and every flag tribute. It was a reverent and spiritual moment in time.

One letter excerpt states:

In June our family attended the Desert Storm National Celebration in Washington, D.C. At the breakfast for families of fallen soldiers, we were given your special little flag and flowers to wear. We just wanted to thank you for this special remembrance. Our son was a sergeant in Army Intelligence. He and eight other soldiers were killed when their Blackhawk helicopter was shot down over Iraq just prior to the cease fire. Two entire letters from families of these fallen heroes are found in Appendix 16.

Another moving letter came from one of the Old Guard soldiers who had escorted the children. He wrote of how touched he was by what the students had accomplished. This letter is found in Appendix 16. An excerpt states:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for affording me the opportunity to escort you and your students during your stay in our nations capital. I
assure you, the honor was indeed all mine. Although,
as a member of the United States Army Honor Guard, I am
in the public eye on a daily basis, it is very rare
that I have a chance to interact with the citizens of
great nation on a personal level. 43

Another significant letter was received from the
Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Edward J. Derwinski which
documents this involvement and is found in Appendix 16.

The students enjoyed the festivities of the celebration
by watching an incredible parade and then attending the
largest catered picnic in the country for the troops and
ending the evening by attending an extremely patriotic
concert near the Washington Monument featuring Barbara
Mandrell followed by the most awesome hour and a half
display of fireworks over the Lincoln Memorial. The
students flew home with truly an American experience.

Mr. Baran was so powerfully moved by the experience
that he told his wife at the Memorial Service that he was
going to go on a private retreat to the mountains of
Colorado to reflect on the power behind the accomplishments
of his students. When he got home he drove out to Colorado
and found St. Malo's center within the beautiful Rocky
Mountains of Estes Park, Colorado.

Pearl Harbor - Fall of 1991

"On behalf of the UNITED STATES NAVY and the Pearl
Harbor Survivors I would like to thank your kids for
providing us with what became the most requested item
here at Pearl Harbor. Your gold leaf and red, white
and blue lapel device was the most requested of the 160
items the Navy had for distribution at the Consolidated
Media Center. Thank you for helping make December 7th
the success that was shown around the world. We have been told that close to a billion people saw what went on here. I am including with this letter a picture of the Arizona Memorial for your kids. Thank you again for your support."  

Captain "J" Wood  
United States Navy  

Tammy Kranz was the brainchild behind the pupil's new undertaking, Project Aloha. Baran said students were scrambling to complete 20,000 new lapel pins by December 7 in time for the 50th Anniversary of the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941. Half of the pins will be shipped to Hawaii for services there, he said.

Kranz, 16, of Homewood, said the idea was inspired by her grandfather, who was wounded in action at Guadalcanal during the war.

"Mr. Baran mentioned Hawaii, and I said my grandfather was going there for the 50th (veterans) reunion, and I said we should make boutonnieres for them," Kranz said.

During a special education health class discussion, Mr. Baran mentioned that his daughters were once again traveling that coming Christmas season to Hawaii with his in-laws. That comment for some reason triggered student Tammy Kranz to share that her grandfather was going there too for that harbor thing. The bell rang and Tammy remained. Mr. Baran realized she was talking about Pearl Harbor's 50th Remembrance Anniversary. He discussed the meaning of the anniversary with Tammy and once again a special needs student caught the dream and became another leader and not follower. She proposed that we make flag tributes for the event and her grandfather could bring them with him. Mr.
Baran told Tammy he would begin to try and figure out the needed contacts in Hawaii. During his break period he contacted the Department of the Navy Commander's Office of Naval Base Pearl Harbor. He was connected with the Media Director for the Pearl Harbor Event, Captain "J" Wood, U.S.N. Captain Wood was very impressed with the offer and asked that Mr. Baran send some references. He sent a thick folder full of press releases, newspaper articles and letters of recognition. He sent this next day air UPS. Two days later Captain Wood called back to accept the program's offer to make 20,000 tributes for the event. Later that following summer when Captain Wood came to the summer program to personally thank the students, he disclosed what he did to check on Mr. Baran's references and told about another pin order for the event.

That summer the Captain shared that in those two days between the initial phone conversation with Mr. Baran, he had called one of General Schwarzkopf's Chief of Staff during Desert Storm who was an associate and friend. This military person verified what the program did during Desert Storm but also mentioned what a live wire Mr. Baran was. The Captain also mentioned another bizarre factor. As media director, he had ordered 20,000 metal commemorative pins from an American company. The day prior to Mr. Baran's initial call, the president of the metal pin company called the Captain to tell him that his factory had completely
burned down to the ground and that there was no possible way to facilitate the order. One day later, a special education teacher called him and offered the services of special needs youth in job training to construct their famous "star spangled tribute boutonnieres." Mr. Baran is convinced a sense of the mystical was again working on the program's behalf. The students were also solicited by a school board member's spouse who wrote for the local Star newspaper to consider making flag tributes for the Army-Navy Game that was honoring Pearl Harbor that year. Her son was a Midshipman at Annapolis. With several phone calls, an additional order was procured to also make a tribute for each Midshipman and West Point Cadet.

Tammy Kranz rallied her peers and also solicited the assistance of the president of the student government, Adam Reiner, to assist the program in promoting and facilitating another workathon titled "Project Aloha." The project again was successful and attracted a variety of students, clubs, teams and community groups who came together to complete a great mission. That following summer, Captain Woods presented the JTPA Program with one of the American flags that flew over the USS Arizona Memorial on December 7, 1991. He also was so emotionally moved to tears by meeting the assortment of students, but especially the low-incidence and multiply handicapped students, that he went out to his car and brought in another present in appreciation for what
the students accomplished. He presented Mr. Baran with an actual 6\" x 10\" metal fragment piece of the USS Arizona Battleship. Most adults in the room were moved to tears to see a piece of American history being given as a token of thanks for their eternal dedication. Many documents for this event including letters and newspaper articles are included in Appendix 17.

Mr. Baran was invited and given permission by his school and JTPA to represent the program and assist in the distribution of the tributes. This was documented with the letters in the Appendix.

Because of all of Mr. Baran's assistance and work helping Captain Wood distribute the boutonnieres, he was an honored guest at the Kilo Pier Memorial Ceremony for Pearl Harbor. He was seated in the first row. He was passing out tributes to surrounding guests in the first few rows. Author James Michener received one and requested to meet Mr. Baran. He congratulated the special needs youth for a job well done. Mr. Baran also chatted with the persons around his seats. Not to his surprise were seated Mrs. Chaney and Mrs. Colin Powell. Mr. Baran solicited the women for consideration of ordering centerpieces for Washington events. Mrs. Powell recognized the boutonniere and claimed that he represented the group that sent her husband at the end of Desert Storm, a beautiful patriotic floral basket with ceramic eagle. When her husband came near the stage,
she told Mr. Baran to go and greet him. He had at least one minute to brag about his students and now what they did for Pearl Harbor. Both the First Lady and President Bush were on the stage less than ten feet in front of him. It was a wonderful and solemn moment in time that he was honored to represent his students.

The Space Shuttle Discovery - January 1992

In January, the students petitioned NASA to place a model space shuttle filled with their boutonnieres aboard the space shuttle Discovery. Baran credited the creative brainstorming of Foster and two other students with the idea. The students were inclined to agree.

"We were standing around here talking to Mr. Baran about the boutonnieres," said Lee Zuick, 15 of Chicago Heights, and we said, "Hey, we can put one up in space," continued Maurice Fisher, 17, a sophomore from Homewood, during an informal lunch to welcome Oswald. The idea resulted in more than just red, white and blue adornments in space. Oswald, who spent eight days aboard Discovery last January, chose to visit the class as part of post-flight community relations work required of all astronauts.

"I thought this would be fun to do," Oswald said. "Besides" he added, "people are familiar with this group. I know I was." Oswald stood amid a ring of students and fielded a range of questions, serious and in jest, about his life as an astronaut.

"Do they have any UFO's up there?"
"What's it really feel like with that hat on?"
Does the money fall out of your pocket when you go up?"
Baran said it was a day to savor. "These kids will have a memory for the rest of their lives." 46

Homewood-Flossmoor Star

As the students' achievements continued, so did their catching the vision and spirit of the program. Ownership was infiltrating students one by one. A favorite adventure
is that of the Discovery Space Shuttle. One day in the fall, three students with attention disorders, Jim Foster, Lee Zuick and Maurice Fisher decided to stay after school and help Mr. Baran. The three of them challenged Mr. Baran with this proposition, "Mr. Baran, we got our flag tributes to Saudi Arabia and Pearl Harbor, let's get one completely around the world." Mr. Baran asked how and their response was a grander dream than he could imagine. "Let's get one aboard a space shuttle!" Mr. Baran jumped aboard the dream and responded to gather round the typewriter. "You guys dictate and I'll type your letter to NASA." Of course the dream became a reality. On January 22, 1992 a flag tribute and photos of the students flew as official cargo. On Tuesday, May 12, 1992 the Captain of that shuttle mission decided to personally return the official cargo. Be careful when you dream for they do come true! letters and press articles are official documentation and are included in Appendix 18.

Mr. Baran was very touched when he orchestrated a regular education science and math class assembly from which the three special needs youth hosted an astronaut and fielded the questions from the audience. The attention deficit disordered students did one outstanding job of what Mr. Baran would later call reversed inclusion. His intention was again making the regular education students
informally aware that his students should be respected and viewed as equal in our school and society.

The other project for the Detroit Lion's newly disabled player, Mike Utley was student Lee Zuick's idea. One hundred Lion's blue and silver boutonnieres with a gold football attached were sent to Mike for him and the entire team and staff.

**Vice-President's Visit with ADA Students at Midway Airport, November 1991.**

Larry Baran is the Alice Frazier of Chicago. Frazier created something of a stir last summer in Washington, D.C., when she breached British protocol by giving an effusive, much-publicized hug to a visiting Queen Elizabeth II.

Baran was likewise excited over the prospect of meeting American "royalty" Thursday evening on a runway at Midway Airport. That's where Baran gave a spontaneous modified bear hug to startled but beaming Vice-President Quayle.

Quayle's phalanx of Secret Service bodyguards made no attempt to restrain Baran, a special education teacher from Homewood-Flossmoor High School who brought his 46 students to the airport for an audience with the Vice-President.

Students Jeff DeBruin, Maurice Fisher, Gina Norris, and Inam Shalati praise Quayle for making time for them. Shalati called the meeting "a pleasure."

Baran credited the "Spirit of God" for the meeting and called the evening "a miracle."

"Did you see these kids? They will never forget this." 47

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With Americans with Disabilities in Action having two advocates within the Vice-President's Office, Mr. Baran kept a constant written and telephone rapport with Press
Secretary, David Beckwith and Disabilities Administrator, Mr. George Covington. Because of updating the Vice-President about both the success of Flags in the Desert and the new project for the 50th anniversary of remembering Pearl Harbor his staffers thought it appropriate for the Vice-President to meet with the students again.

The Vice-President was going to be speaking at a Republican fundraiser in Chicago on Thursday, November 21, 1991. He was flying into Midway Airport and requested Mr. Baran to bring as many of his disability student as possible to have the opportunity of meeting him. That clear crisp late fall evening was once again very memorable to all of the students but also for Mr. Baran. He was signaled to begin a new project and venture by his Superintendent, Dr. Laura Murray and Vice-President Dan Quayle.

As all of the 50 students were roped off to the side of the private airport terminal, Mr. Baran saw the portable staircase being placed along side the Air Force II and he grabbed the arm of Dr. Murray and school board member Beverley Atkins and said, "Let's go and greet the Vice-President. If we get right up there we'll have more time with him!" Mr. Baran knew the Secret Service staffers would probably do nothing to stop him and of course his intuitions were correct. When greeting them, the Vice-President realized that he and the board member Beverley Atkins were alumni of De Pauw and then Dr. Murray greeted him and began
to brag about the program and Mr. Baran. She then stated, "Mr. Baran is going to be applying to Loyola to begin work on a doctorate in Educational Leadership. Then the Vice-President took his fist and tapped Mr. Baran's forearm and said, "Do it, Larry." When Mr. Baran returned home and meditated on this foreshadowing, he contemplated this signal of further education which was brought to the forefront for some special reason. That following winter, he began the application to Loyola's program.

Dr. Murray wrote Mr. Baran:

Thank you for the excellent job you did in planning, organizing and orchestrating the J.T.P.A. and special needs students' visit with Vice-President Quayle. Your dedication and devotion to your job is simply outstanding, and your attention to detail incredible. I loved your "bribes" for the White House staff, your ordering of the shirts, and your coordination of you, me, and Bev. It doesn't seem enough to say it but my sincerest thank you! The students had an experience they will never forget. You are a better bodyguard than the Secret Service!48

The shirt bribe was made possible by a special needs student, Chris Sullivan, who noticed that Mr. Baran was short one red, white, and blue rugby shirt. He said, "Here Mr. B. (as he took off his shirt). I'll wear my regular shirt. Here's the extra one you need for the Vice-President's people." 49 That's teamwork and dedication to the program. One of Mr. Baran's most dysfunctional and at times non-verbal students surprised him the next morning with the following letter:
When I went to my 7th period class to meet with the other students I was really nervous. This was an opportunity of a lifetime. When I first got to the airport I was still a little nervous, but when we got off the bus I started to calm down. When we went into the lobby to sit down it was starting to get exciting. When it was time to meet the Vice-President, I started to get nervous again. All the special ed students and the wheelchair people were lined up to meet him. They all had a chance to talk to him and shake his hand. Even I had a chance to shake his hand and talk to him. It was something that I would remember for a long time. And it was a dream come true!\(^{50}\)

The Democratic and Republican Conventions - 1992

"Thank you so much for the great star spangled tribute you sent to the Clinton Campaign. We will be stuffing approximately 4900 bags with the "tributes." Each bag will be given to delegates who come to the convention from all over the United States." \(^{51}\)

Jess Sarmento

"On behalf of the Republican National Convention Hospitality Committee, I wanted to write and let you know how thrilled we are to include your students' American flag boutonniere in the gifts being presented to the delegates." \(^{52}\)

Cindy Garb

Back in the fall of 1991, Mr. Baran had an idea for the next summer JTPA program. He decided to solicit the chairman of both the Democratic and Republican National Committees to see if they would have any interest in allowing his program to provide flag tributes for each delegate to the national conventions. Since equity was mandatory and a non-partisan philosophy needed to be adhered to, both parties would have to agree to this proposal in order for it to become a reality. With numerous correspondences as well as phone
calls and a lot of red tape, this objective became a reality when the host committee of Houston and the Bill Clinton for President Committee accepted the JTPA program's offer. Letters of acceptance are documented in Appendix 19.

The Republican and Democratic Mock Convention – Summer 1992

"Illinois' most valuable resource is you, our young citizens. YOU are to be commended for your desire to understand the political process and exercise one of your most precious freedoms, the right to vote. Through your hard work, determination and dedication to the successful activities and experiences at your school, you have laid the foundation to all you may wish to do throughout your life. Mr. Baran, you and your student' involvement in the outstanding "star spangled tributes" program is to be reflected on with great pride. I am honored to participate in the spirit of this occasion. Please accept my congratulations and best wishes for continued success." 53

Gov. Jim Edgar

"On behalf of President Bush, I want to thank Mr. Baran and his staff for their efforts for the mini convention. Please know that I appreciate your hard work and your efforts on the President's behalf." 54

Shirley Green

Thank you for contacting the Perot Petition Committee and for your interest in a possible Perot for President campaign. The beautiful boutonnieres that you all will make and donate to us will without doubt be enjoyed by all! I am delighted to see the positive efforts of young Americans like yourselves. The knowledge you all will gain from your mock elections will teach you valuable lessons about the election process and how to make informed decisions." 55

Ross Perot
"Thank you so much for your time and effort in putting together the star spangled tributes for the party and our campaign. Programs like the J.T.P.A. are vitally important to this country. They provide our youth with the skills that they need to compete and win in an increasingly global economy."  

Bill Clinton

In order to make this summer work program even more meaningful, Mr. Baran always tried to infuse the educational aspect of the project into a meaningful hands-on experience. For this summer he devised sponsoring a mock convention of their own with real decor, real political speakers, and an opportunity for the youth to experience a mock vote in a real voting booth. And of course this all came to fruition. Once Mr. Baran convinced one state politician to attend, it was easy for him to name drop like the pied piper rounding up these other politicians to come -- and come in great numbers they did. The list of speakers is included in Appendix 20.

Each of these invited persons was asked to give a five minute speech on the Democratic or Republican platform so that the students could make an educated effort when voting later in the mock election. These guests were also given an opportunity before the convention began to visit the workcenter where the students demonstrated all of the pre-employment skills that they had been trained in. A very truly political jealousy evidenced itself when the democrats brought a letter to read to the students from Bill Clinton.
The program had a letter from Mr. Perot that was sent to them. The Republicans were given a letter to read from the governor when Mr. Baran realized how visibly upset they were that the Democrats were going to read the Clinton letter. They asked Mr. Baran to hold up the start of the convention while they worked his phone and fax which resulted in a statement from a Bush White House staffer. These letters are included in Appendix 20. Both Democratic Senator Paul Simon and the Houston Host Committee deemed it appropriate to submit a national news release. They stated:

The tri-color American flag lapel pins that show up in so many camera shots from the floor of the Democratic National Convention were handmade by disabled youths who are learning pre-employment skills at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School in the Chicago suburb of Flossmoor. 57

Thousands of delegates to the Republican National Convention will have a chance to show their patriotism and support for challenged American workers thanks to the Job Training Partnership Act and the Houston Host Committee. When delegates arrive in August, each will be given an American flag tribute boutonniere made by the special education students of Homewood-Flossmoor High School in Flossmoor, Illinois. The disabilities of the special education students range from severe physical handicaps to varying degrees of behavioral disorders. The purpose of the Job Training Partnership Act is to provide the physically and behaviorally challenged marketable job skills so that they can become independent and full participants in society. 58

This mock convention was also documented in local news as follows: The Southtown Economist stated:

It has all the making of a political convention with Democrats and Republicans, red, white and blue bunting, and the hustle, bustle and excitement of nominating a
new leader. But the scene was not New York or Houston, the site of this year's conventions. It was the cafeteria at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, where special education students held a mock convention and chose Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton over incumbent George Bush for President. 59

The Clinton Gore Inaugural - 1993

"Over the summer, we were doing this for all the Presidential candidates and I said we needed to do something to honor the one who won. I'd like to show President-elect Bill Clinton, Vice-President Al Gore and others who we are and just because we have a disability doesn't mean that we can't make stuff." 60

Amy Leff, Alumni

"Hillary!" She stopped at the Americans with Disabilities in Action booth, which featured seven challenged kids and their very dedicated and talkative teacher named Larry Baran, who calls himself Captain Rainbow and who was, it's fair to say, quite overwhelmed by the official "Drop-By" from Our Lady of Great Poise and Blondeness and Billowing Scarf. "I have known for years," Captain Rainbow said a little maniacally afterwards, "that these young people would be lifted up in front of the Capitol for their job skills, and that day has come." 61

Martha Sherril

With the summer mock election behind them, the students enrolled in the fall work center class were more motivated by the involvement in the election than Mr. Baran could even imagine. One young female student named Amy Leff had caught the dream and vision of the program by proposing an incredible idea to Mr. Baran. It was after the November election when Mr. Baran was definitely feeling quite disheartened by his program's connection with the Bush/Quayle Administration, now a lame duck. He thought that
they had little ties with the Clinton Administration and would it be worth all the letters and phone calls to try and link into them? Amy Leff, a special student with severe learning disabilities, approached Mr. Baran during a work center class while the students were all busy working on a project. Amy said, "Mr. Baran, why can't we do floral decorations for the Clinton's inauguration like you talk about when you did them for the Quayle inauguration?" She continued, "I like Mr. and Mrs. Clinton and I would like to show them that just because we have a disability doesn't mean that we can't make stuff." With that, Mr. Baran got that incredible feeling that comes over him when he knows that something is predestined to happen. This realization was that the program was going to be involved in the inaugural festivities and Amy Leff took on the ownership of the dream and would become the Chairman of this event. Amy was willing to help Mr. Baran with many good ideas. Mr. Baran's advocacy mode clicked in immediately and the phone calls, letters and faxes rolled out. The basic reason and drive for him was to make Amy's dream a reality. Letters of significant documentation include the proposal and the acceptance are found in Appendix 21.

The involvement with the Inaugural Committee snowballed. It was quite different from the Quayle Inaugural in the sense of being less uptight and more informal. They seemed really legitimate in wanting the JTPA
program's involvement. Because of the various committees using the students services, two unique proposals were asked of Mr. Baran. They Inaugural Committee was looking for someone to head the committee that coordinates logistics for disabled people planning to attend the inaugural festivities. The Inaugural committee called Mr. Baran to offer him this one month's immediate position. Mr. Baran was thrilled and his administrators were excited and willing to release him, yet it was going to jeopardize the students' chances for continued involvement in the inaugural. When Mr. Baran called back two days later informing them of that, they regretted to tell him they had to already fill the position which had enormous responsibilities. Mr. Baran was honored to have been considered but was relieved that the decision was out of his hands and that they could continue doing work for the inauguration. Mr. Baran used this new contact to arrange consideration to let eight special students and chaperones make and pass out 15,000 star spangled tributes at the Cinton/Gore inaugural festivity called "The Reunion on the Mall." And of course Amy's dream became even more than she or Mr. Baran imagined. A letter came to the Program confirming the proposal and is found in Appendix 21. An excerpt from this letter states:

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in America's Reunion on the Mall. I'm sorry it has taken so long to work out the specifics on your organization's involvement with this festival.
The students had an wonderful experience on the Mall, literally meeting America, and the students became the best broadcasters of their entrepreneurial skills. Mr. Baran realized that someone important was coming near their site location to visit the wall of letters to the First Family. Mr. Baran noticed persons who had to be secret service agents checking out that near area and also their site. Mr. Baran decided to approach them and try and arrange a meeting with the students of whoever this dignitary would be. He must have approached one dozen of these persons.

The next morning of the visit he kept up this strategy when a group of four who were obviously checking out their area and talking with the students were approached by Mr. Baran. A gentleman named Ed Emerson said, "Yeh, Larry we're not secret service and you gave us your speech yesterday. Don't worry we're with the President-Elect's Scheduling Office and Mrs. Clinton is coming to visit the Wall of letters next to your booth and don't worry, we are planning to have her also come and visit your students." 64

Mr. Baran was elated and immediately began prompting his students and chaperones of how they would line up, greet, and demonstrate their flag tribute and centerpiece making skills for her. The secret service agents came and told how they would fence off the area so that the First Lady could have a special time with the students.
It all happened so quickly and spontaneously. She was lovely and very gracious to all of the students and staff and she showed a genuine care and concern about the students' work. She was very interested that Amy Leff thought of the idea and was the student coordinator. Mrs. Clinton asked Amy to escort her to Mr. Baran, all of the students and staff and then go with her to visit the Wall of Letters. Mrs. Clinton ended her visit by signing the guest book and writing "You're great!" Amy became our new Washington celebrity. The *Washington Post* of Monday, January 18, 1993 published an article which is included in Appendix 21.

The students and program accomplished numerous floral orders for the Clinton/Gore Inauguration which included: 6,000 star spangled tributes for the Democratic National Convention delegates, 65 desk organizers, baskets for the Inaugural Committee Office Complex, 15,000 star spangled tributes for the Reunion on the Mall, 150 red, white and blue centerpieces made as a demonstration to showcase their talents at the Reunion at the Mall, 50 custom made centerpieces for the 50 "Faces of Hope" honored guests, 3,000 remaining star spangled flag tributes that were accepted by the First Lady for the Inaugural Ball titled the Finance Ball at the historic Civil War Pension Building. The students were very proud of these accomplishments to showcase their job skills in front of the American public.
The Papal Visit to The Rocky Mountains of Colorado - 1993

During the late spring of 1993, Mr. Baran received a phone call from Mr. Blake Fisher, Director of Saint Malo's Retreat Center, an Ecumenical Roman Catholic facility, owned and administrated by the Diocese of Denver, Colorado. Mr. Baran became associated with this facility when he was spiritually led there after his program's experience with the Desert Storm Memorial Service at Arlington National Cemetery in 1991. Mr. Baran was somehow led there on a personal reflection retreat. Of course, he networked and met and became friends with the entire center during this initial visit. Mr. Baran also asked if they were interested in purchasing dining room silk centerpieces for all of the 20 tables in the dining room. St. Malo's became a new client of JTPA. The phone call was of a very curious nature. Mr. Blake Fisher was going to have an internationally known guest who would be using the Center as a respite for his work within Denver. Blake was wondering if JTPA could design new centerpieces for their dining room and also design a decorative wreath as a gift for this visitor. His only hint was that this guest wears only white and also wears a white beanie. Mr. Baran knew that Pope John Paul II was coming to Denver for World Youth Day hosting young people from around the world. Blake was under the guidelines of the U.S. Secret Service to not literally revealing the actual Guest. Mr. Baran agreed to the order
and insisted he would pay for the supplies from his personal checking account. The program facilitated the order with Mr. Baran driving the order out to Colorado and hand delivering the order the day after the school year ended that June of 1993. He knew that with working in the White House almost being finalized that this would have to be completed prior to the summer program. On his drive home, he envisioned the idea for Mr. Bailey the shop teacher to make 50 wooden White House desk organizers. He also felt strongly that the long awaited White House fax documenting them to allow the students to participate in the summer work project would be arriving soon. On his return to the JTPA center, the White House Documentation was laying in the fax paperdrop!

Working in the White House and U.S. Capital - Summer 1993

"I am delighted that six of your high school students at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School will be volunteering at the White House this summer. They will be working in the Department of Correspondence from July 6th to August 6th. It is my understanding that the students will be coming on a rotational basis. Their primary responsibilities will be opening and stapling incoming correspondence and processing outgoing correspondence. I am working on getting a parking pass for your group's van. I will let you know as soon as I hear something. I look forward to meeting you and the students. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at 202-456-7756."  

Lori Krause
The White House
During the spring of 1993, an idea somehow surfaced which proposed working in the U.S. Capital for the Illinois Senators and also approaching the White House to consider allowing some special students to showcase their job skills within the White House. By writing a proposal, phoning and faxing the Senators, special education intern positions were created in the Senators Offices of Paul Simon, Carol Mosley-Braun, and Mitzimbaum of Ohio. The next challenge was trying to have someone at the White House at least review and consider the proposal. This time, Mr. Baran had one simple strategy to get this correspondence noticed. He sent the letter to the President and the letter was attached to a very high style red, white and blue silk floral design. Several weeks later, the Director of the President's Office of Interns called the JTPA Office to talk with Mr. Baran. They were very interested in his program's proposal. The Director of the White House Intern Program, Ms. Gail Britton, stated that they select and recruit over 300 college interns for working in the White House with assignments to various offices and staffers. She said she was embarrassed that she had never considered allowing special needs youth this unique opportunity to work at the White House. She was very seriously reviewing the proposal to figure out a way to make this happen and to please keep in touch. Mr. Baran warned her of his tenacity and that he would keep in constant contact. After numerous interaction
with her office, a fax came through that verified a recent phone conversation that several of Mr. Baran's students would be working at the White House that summer.

The Summer JTPA Program was able to rotate over 50 special needs youth to fly to Washington, D.C., in groups of ten with a team of four chaperones, to have the opportunity of working in either the White House and/or Senate Office Buildings. The teams of youth back at home were making up White House wooden desk organizers, ADA/JTPA wooden tool boxes for all of the 50 Senators, and patriotic floral baskets for the Congressmen of the House of Representatives. They also had classes in learning correct protocol for the potential of meeting significant dignitaries and classes in living in the condominiums, donated by members of the H-F community who had real estate in the Washington. The students had to be constantly briefed back home on the real work situation they were going to experience. Once landed in D.C., the students became involved in settling their living quarters, dividing up chores, reviewing living rules, getting up early for work, eating breakfast, taking the van to work, working, coming home from work, planning and eating dinner, coordinating the evening free time, and finally getting to sleep on time. This all had to be overlearned so that the students understood what they were really getting involved in.
Once in Washington, the various groups had the same work opportunities yet several different things happened on different weeks of attendance. One week, the students delivered all of the wooden tool boxes and floral baskets and attended the reception for the House of Representatives sponsored by Congressman Mel Reynolds and The Senate reception sponsored by Senators Simon and Braun. These receptions were an opportunity for the students to showcase their products and talents as well as attempt to make the Congress aware and advocate for JTPA concerns. This was accomplished by having the reception close to July 26th, the third anniversary for the signing of the ADA legislation. On the actual date of July 26th, two special needs youth and Mr. Baran were selected by Mr. John Dwyer and Ms. Marsha Scott of the Office of Correspondence for the President to be guests of the President at the third anniversary of the signing of the ADA legislation in the White House Roosevelt Parlor Room. This is where blind student Brian Bolakowski was asked to introduce himself to the President where he bragged about his JTPA job skills and tried to invite the President to come and visit the low incidence students back at his high school who couldn't manage to work in Washington. The Chicago Tribune stated:

The teenager from suburban Chicago fidgeted in his seat at a White House reception, waiting for his chance to talk to President Clinton. He had rehearsed all afternoon. When his turn came, he told the President, "My name is Brian Bolakowski and I am totally blind
from birth." Then he asked a favor. "Mr. President, I would like to invite you to Illinois to meet the other 100 handicapped students who were not able to attend this reception." Clinton, speaking to Bolakowski in front of guests gathered for the third anniversary of the ADA, said he had a lot of invitations but promised to attempt a visit. Bolakowski, wise to the way of politicians, asked him to put his intentions in writing. 66

The last week's group were primarily wheelchair students. The Vice-President's wife, Mrs. Tipper Gore, came and spent an hour meeting, talking and watching the students do their work skills in the Office of Correspondence. They also told her about their JTPA program. She later wrote to Mr. Baran.

Every week, the students had the opportunity to meet the Senators from Illinois at the weekly breakfast held for citizens from Illinois. A photo and hand shaking session was always a part of the event. Students working in the Senate had numerous opportunities to meet various Senators and Congressmen. For Mr. Baran it was an enormous amount of responsibility to take on, involving leaving his family to administrate, orchestrate, and facilitate this mammoth undertaking. All adults quickly learned that teaching a fifty minute class of disability students was quite different from living and supervising them for a twenty-four hour period. Overall, the students had an incredible job that they could always list on a resume. "I worked for President Clinton!"
Mr. Tom Bailey, teacher and chaperone that summer in Washington, commented that the program gave him an excellent new perception of students with disabilities. He recalled:

I was quite hesitant at first. You see, Larry is one of the most devoted teachers I know, but he is crazy. At any rate, I decided to go along with another one of Larry's brainstorms. Larry charged me with building 50 miniature White Houses. My work force consisted of special education students and a handful of college kids called job counselors. I was involved in an educational endeavor that I will cherish for the rest of my life. A Special Education teacher and close friend, Larry Baran, convinced me to work in his summer JTPA program. In the first week I worked with five students. On Thursday of that week, I called Larry and asked me when he was going to send over the special education students. He was in shock and could hardly answer. During this first week, I just assumed that the students were the job counselors. I was training these kids to coordinate specific operations as part of production sequence. Larry laughed and replied, "Tom, I did send you the special education students. The job counselors will be here next week. "In the next three weeks, I developed an appreciation (maybe a passion), for what a human spirit can accomplish. We completed all fifty of the miniature White Houses. A strong sense of pride and accomplishments came over our group. I chuckle now in retrospect. My nickname for the group was the "Dream Team." I share this scenario because many young people are labeled at an early age as Special Ed. It is an awful stigma. Yes, these kids have limitations and in some cases very severe limitations. However, in this educator's opinion, traditional approaches to preparing these kids for life after high school have us spending too much time on the wrong stuff. Vocational Education (or rather Application Education) provides the appropriate "setting" for these kids. It pains me to see "Behavior Disorder" kids isolated in a room or twenty-five low functioning kids in the same math class. Those scenarios are nightmares for students and teachers. Furthermore, they are irrational. 67
Mrs. Paula Miller, a JTPA vocational coordinator whose students from LaGrange participated in "Working in the White House," stated:

This program shows that one can accomplish anything once their hearts and minds are put into it. They have learned to believe in themselves and in advocating for themselves. The pride of country that is taught can be spread to all who come in contact with those who participated. They also learn to take great pride in what they have accomplished. Entrepreneurship is accomplished and beautifully acquired through the students learning self-advocacy along with a shared belief in Larry's vision. It becomes contagious to those around him. The students also learn that no matter what disability, maybe it does not seem to be a deterrent in what they know they can accomplish. I have seen in the students to be attentive to our veterans. They show caring and respect, not only for veterans but toward our President, our flag, and our country. Much of this seems not only accomplished through the jobs they do, but through the learning/teaching experiences that always accompany each project/job. This program is always looking for other "doors to open" like our wonderful experience in the White House mailroom. If risks like this were never taken, this program would never have become what it is. Through experimentation, chances and/or opportunities were enhanced and made whole. Pushing for the future is what this program is all about.... the future of Americans with disabilities and their place alongside those without disabilities working together to return the feeling of pride in this country. This program never hesitates to ask others for help and once they are "hooked" there in it for the term. It is ongoing and wonderful. 68

Vice-President Al Gore corresponded with Mr. Baran and in a letter to him talked about the many fine things he heard about this summer working experience. The letter is included in Appendix 22 along with a letter from President Bill Clinton who also expressed his gratitude to Mr. Baran
and his work with the JTPA summer Washington program. The *Chicago Tribune*, of Wednesday, September 1, 1993 documented this event. This article is found here and in Appendix 22. An excerpt states:

Students worked in the Old Executive Office Building, next to the White House, and on Capitol Hill. For the President they opened, sorted and stapled some of the thousands of letters the White House receives daily. They also performed similar tasks in the offices of Illinois Democratic Senators. 69

One of the most memorable stories is of an event that happened while working at the White House during the first week. Back at the condo's pool when the kids were cooling down from the 100-degree heat, Mr. Baran's daughter Heidi, was a chaperone and acting as life-guard. She had met an older man and was talking to him while watching the kids. While he was swimming laps, Mr. Baran came down in his swimsuit. The kids wanted to horse around and he was not too interested. He thought that his complicated administrative concerns about this venture was interrupting his being "real" with the kids, so he agreed to let them try. Well, they did and threw him on top of the man swimming laps. As the man was drying off, Mr. Baran went to apologize. He introduced himself and made the kids do a bit of "punishment protocol" and introduce themselves to Mr. Jamie Auchincloss, a volunteer at the National Archives. As the kids went in to change for dinner, Mr. Baran was having a great time talking with this man. Mr. Baran bragged about
the students and projects. Lee Zuick, a special education student, stayed and listened to them. Mr. Auchincloss planted an idea in Lee's head. He mentioned that D-Day was coming and there would be commemorations. He said that the JTPA program should get involved. Mr. Baran was not in the mood for a new idea for this month in Washington was already overwhelming him with its responsibilities. Lee went to change his clothes for dinner. Jamie Auchincloss continued to tell Mr. Baran an incredible story. He stated, "My deceased brother-in-law was extremely interested and advocated for the mentally handicapped. I remember once I was riding with him and my sister in his limousine. He saw a handicapped bus, stopped and signaled his driver and motorcade to stop. He jumped out and went into the bus to greet the children." Mr. Baran wondered who his brother-in-law was and Jamie answered, "Jack Kennedy. My sister is Jackie."

Over the next month, Mr. Baran spent much time talking, and becoming friends with Mr. Auchincloss at the pool when the kids were swimming or on weekends when the kids were enroute to D.C. 70

Finally, a Presidential thank-you letter for the handmade desk organizers and work done with in the White Office of Correspondence is found in Appendix 22.
The Francis Scott Key Foundation - 1993

The boutonnieres you received today were made by Young Americans with Special Needs, a program sponsored by Americans with Disabilities, Inc., which allows children to build self-esteem and practice pre-employment skills. Their "Star Spangled Tribute" is distributed today by students from Francis Scott Key Elementary School in Arlington, Virginia (celebrating its 25th anniversary this year). Francis Scott Key Elementary School in the District of Columbia and Francis Scott Key Middle School in Silver Springs, Maryland.  

Program Excerpt
Dedication Events

During the summer JTPA Program of 1993, one of Mr. Baran's staff members, Ms. Gigi Jackson-Krause got caught up in the vision and expressed an idea she saw advertised at K-Mart. She said that K-Mart was helping to sponsor and raise funds for the newest national park in the Georgetown section of Washington D.C. The pamphlet from K-Mart is found in Appendix 23.

Once again, Mr. Baran saw an opportunity for his students to showcase their talents. With that brochure with that national name title it did not take him more than ten minutes on the phone to be directed to the right party, Mrs. Jonda McFarlane, President of the Foundation. Listening to Mr. Baran's enthusiasm was again contagious. She asked for a written proposal and some documentation as well as a sample boutonniere. Coincidentally, that summer after calling the boutonniere the flag tribute, and many other things, the program came up with the title, the star.
spangled tribute. Now the Foundation honoring the actual Star Spangled Banner was considering using our product for their dedication ceremony. Not only was it used for the ceremony, it was used for a fund raiser under the actual Star Spangled Banner at the Smithsonian Institute. Letters documenting these events are found in Appendix 23. Excerpts from letters include:

"Thank you for your reply to my last letter. It sounds like you are keeping yourself busy between the program and working on your doctorate. Good luck to you! We also have been busy at the Foundation and are working toward making the dedication of the Park a success. It sounds like the best way for us to have the boutonnieres made would be by the disabled kids." 72

"Thank you so much for the beautiful boutonnieres! They became part of the table decor, and many people both commented on them and wore them." 73

Not only did the program provide the boutonnieres the summer high school special needs youth, but the SMA low incidence handicapped students ages 5 - 10 who rented rooms next to our program were recruited to help with this project. This gave the high school age disabled students such a sense of pride. Mr. Baran was also later invited to attend the dedication and he flew out to represent the program. The Foundation arranged for the local neighborhood public school children who were hosts to pass out the tributes. During the dedication ceremony, which started at Francis Scott Key's Church and then continued on as a parade to the monument, Mr. Baran was given a dedication booklet.
To his surprise the first recognition on the first page was to *The Americans with Disabilities in Action Program*. The dedication is found in Appendix 23.

**The Vietnam Women's Memorial Project - November 1993**

"Please accept our deepest gratitude for your participation in the dedication ceremonies of the Vietnam Women's Memorial. The boutonnieres were beautiful and were truly appreciated by the thousands of Vietnam vets who received them. With the placement of the Vietnam Women's Memorial, the circle of healing has been completed. It is heartwarming to know that America's young people care enough to come out and show their support for veterans. We understand that you will be working on a similar project for future events. Please know that your efforts and all the hours you contribute are meaningful and do make a difference."  

Adam Drzal  
Assistant Director,  
Vietnam Women's Memorial Project, Inc.

During the fifth group of student White House workers, opportunity for the Captain Rainbow's Sunday Cook's tour of Washington, something struck a symbolic cord with one special needs youth. Katie Slobig, who has a serious medical disability of epilepsy, was with Mr. Baran on a blistering 100 degree afternoon at the Vietnam Wall. While viewing the Men's Vietnam Memorial statue, Katie noticed and read a canvas banner flowing in the breeze next to this memorial. She caught his attention and stated that, "They are going to dedicated a Vietnam Women's Memorial in November, let's make our tributes for this event!"  

Mr.
Baran responded with Katie taking full ownership of the idea. "Katie write down the phone number from the banner and tomorrow on your break from your first day of working in the White House, you can call and propose your idea."

The National Director, Diane Carlson Evans, RN was also familiar with the program's achievements for the military and accepted Katie's verbal proposal and made her official student chairman for the boutonniere project. On Veteran's Day, five special needs youth and staff distributed 12,000 flag tributes. LD student Matt Moxley states:

This program works because the children listen to Mr. Baran. They like him and respect him. They smile and work hard and see a product completed. I feel that the children can reach a goal no matter what the handicap. It also shows Americans so they can see handicapped people out doing things and being part of society. The program also showed me that you can transfer from education to employment, the products are seen all over the world, it is okay to disagree, it is okay to have ideas, and it is okay not to be perfect! I'm very proud I got to distribute the flag tributes at the Women's Vietnam Memorial dedication. I'll never forget when the Hell's Angel Vietnam vet hugged and kissed me!"

Something interesting happened when the team from JTPA was distributing the flag tributes around the Women's Vietnam Memorial before the dedication. A U.S. Park Ranger asked the group to stop. The Ranger was not only a woman, but disabled in a wheelchair. What an irony! The team worked out this distribution dilemma and thanked her. Mr. Baran explained to his students that, from a job skills point of view, she was doing her job!
Mr. William Slobig, parent of Katie who thought of the Women's Vietnam Memorial project believes modeling the way is very present in the program as well as his other feelings. He states:

"The leader shows the kids what they must do. Once you show them let your crew leaders take over and put the other kids to work. If your kid needs help it is up to you and your crew leader to be able to show them what is expected of them. By your example, they can take the ball and run with it. Set small goals for your workers and as they reach them, give the kids a pat on the back. Each small win will lead to the final goal. These are all present in this program and it has given these children the chance to learn skills they didn't think they were able to do. In our daughter Katie we have seen a change in her self-image. The program has shown her that she can work on her own or as a member of a team. This also has fostered patriotism and taught the kid about what her parents and her grandparents gave to keep our country free. Mr. Baran's philosophy is although you have a disability, it can be overcome and you can be taught to live a full and productive life. It also shows the world that no one can stop you from your dream if you are allowed to work at it." 77

Press articles and letters of appreciation are included in Appendix 24.

The American Horticulture Award - 1994

"I am very pleased to inform you that the Awards Committee of the American Horticultural Society has selected Americans with Disabilities in Action to receive the Special Recognition Award for 1994. The Awards Banquet will be held on Saturday, starting with a reception." 78

During the Francis Scott Key dedication ceremony, Mr. Baran was able to be seated near the front of the Park Monument and thus decided to sit on a brick ledge. Once again
something wonderful happened. The man sitting next to him asked why he was in attendance. Mr. Baran explained about the flag tribute which this man was of course wearing. He introduced himself as Dr. Marc Cathey, President of the American Horticultural Society. He explained that he had designed all of the plants, trees and shrubs for the park. He was more impressed with the boutonniere and how disabled youth did this in a job training program. He gave Mr. Baran his card and said to please send him related literature on this program. He claimed that the program needed to be recognized. Mr. Baran placed the business card in his pocket and once he returned to his office, sent out the requested documentation. That winter he received a letter which once again gave national recognition to the program. The letter stated that the American Horticultural Society had selected Americans with Disabilities in Action to receive the Special Recognition Award for 1994. The letter is included in Appendix 25.

Mr. Baran was very excited to receive the award and attend this ceremony. He was flying out in the early afternoon after finishing his last Saturday of doctoral comprehensive exams. That evening was delightful. During the cocktail hour the Awards Committee introduced Mr. Baran to all in attendance. The Award was written up in the program and is included in Appendix 26. An excerpt states:
With the help of the man they call "Captain Rainbow," students at Homewood-Flossmoor High School in Illinois have combined floral craft and business acumen to found a thriving enterprise. Their "Star Spangled Tributes"—floral boutonnieres with American flags—accompanied Desert Storm troops and were blasted into space aboard the space shuttle Discovery. Their most recent project, and biggest order to date, was for the 50th anniversary of D-Day celebration in Normandy, France, where 40,000 of the commemorative pins were distributed to veterans.

The 50th Anniversary of World War II Commemorative Committee Partnership With the JTPA Program from 1993 - 1995

D-Day was the most phenomenal project ever done! The most cooperation of any of the kids in JTPA ever. The Pentagon people were being helpful about everything. As the student chairman it was my idea and when we talked to the students everyone agreed on it and we got the project done. The nicest group of vets were the WWII veterans because they appreciated us. J.T.P.A. was the best work program I was ever in. I was always in trouble because of my mouth and my behavior but the program allowed me to become a leader. I am now an alumni and am turning it into a job goal of becoming a manager of the fast food service I now work in. My boss wants as I progress to maybe make me a supervisor or in a leadership position. Mr. Baran is probably the only teacher I have ever got along with because he looks at everything from two points of view. He looks at students from an adults point and then from the view of the students. Other teachers only see their point of view.

Lee Zuick, Alumni

Back in the early fall of 1993 when the program was busy making and planning the China Beach flag tributes for the Women's Vietnam Memorial dedication, one of Mr. Baran's favorite entrepreneurial students, Lee Zuick, sought him out in his academic special education English class which he
taught before taking on the JTPA responsibilities for the rest of the day. It was passing period when Lee, Mr. Baran's shadow, came bolting in with an idea. This is the same young man who helped think of the Space Shuttle idea. "Mr. Baran I have this great idea! Let's make flag tributes for D-Day; it's going to be the 50th anniversary. I read it in my history text." Mr. Baran, who is not scholarly in famous dates in history, claimed he must be wrong. He thought that it was going to be in 1995, not 1994. Lee began to argue and ran to get his history text with page in hand and proved to Mr. Baran that the 50th Anniversary of D-Day was in June of 1994. "So let's do boutonnieres!" said Lee. Mr. Baran said that we had so many workathons and would the students be at all interested. He told Lee the only way a letter of proposal would be written was for the class to unanimously agree to own the project so that they would have something to claim as their own and not something Mr. Baran forced upon them. That afternoon, the JTPA workers met as Lee requested. He made his proposal to the class. Mr. Baran reexplained the concept and idea so that the low functioning students also would completely understand what they were about to make a commitment to. Something happened that impressed Mr. Baran. His entire work team, disabled as they may have been, took up the cry of honoring World War II veterans under the leadership of a fellow classmate who was the idea man. How really contagious is entrepreneurship and
patriotism? Very, according to these special education students. Mr. Baran promised that he would somehow network to American classrooms from across the country to help in this project if accepted by the US military. It seemed Lee pulled it off and so he remained after school and assisted Mr. Baran in writing a proposal to the Pentagon.

It was two weeks later when Mr. Baran received a call from a Major Gabriel Rubalcava, the Chief Financial Accountant and Auditor for all of the Pentagon's 50th Anniversary of World War II Commemoration Committee.

Retired Major Gabriel Rubalcava, USA reflects:

As part of the 50th Anniversary of World War II Commemorative Committee our job was to commemorate the veterans, their families, and those who served on the Homefront. Larry Baran and his children provided an important corollary to that. Initially as the Contracting Officer, I was very suspicious of Larry's program and objectives. However, through firsthand experience and participant in his program, I became a believer. There are two important issues that were resolved by Larry's program first of which is preparing mentally the special needs children for accomplishment of those tasks that can get them prepared for adult life and the working world. The second issue is giving some education to the children to some level in everyday events to become part of the world. On both counts Larry's program succeeded dramatically. This exposure I received from the program has caused me personally to become more attuned to the needs of our special children, and I have included a section on my commentary section in a draft to Congress for the WWII CC on how to better include all sections of society. The overall program would not have been as successful without the "Human Dynamo" that is Larry Baran. His excitement and belief in the betterment of our special children propelled this program into the national spotlight. There is a parable in the bible of a widow giving a penny in the Temple, when others are giving great sums. The point may be little in the greatness
of things. God appreciates those types of giving and this type of gift while small in nature. Larry has impacted significantly on the lives of God's special education students.  

He was very kind and gracious over the phone and stated the committee was very interested in using our star spangled tribute as a memento to give the WWII veterans attending the D-Day commemorations in Normandy and Washington, D.C. in June of 1994. He also wanted a price on units of boutonnieres per thousand. They were interested in 20,000 for Normandy and 10,000 for Washington. This impressed Mr. Baran for the first time everything was finally coming together. These would not be a gift from his program as many other orders from the past but a real customer, the Pentagon, wanting to pay a fair market price for each boutonniere. Major Rubalcava wanted to set the program up as a vendor for supplies. But something else happened -- he became one of our strongest allies and advocates. He was even actually becoming our personal representative to the WWII Committee. Something was and remains contagious about this program. People catch the dream and vision and become workers on the program's behalf! Mr. Baran gave the Major a legitimate price of $.15 per boutonniere with a $.05 profit margin for the program. Over the next two years, the Committee became an avid customer for other WWII Commemoration events for the flag tributes because of their popularity. Each and every bill was paid and all of the
federal guidelines for filing, billing and receiving were learned by the JTPA director and secretary!

A follow up letter with a definite order followed. It was for 30,000 flag tributes. Mr. Baran networked other American teachers to assist the class from a fellow teacher in the Social Studies Department, Mr. Denny Schillings, who was finishing his term as National President of the National Council for the Social Studies based in Washington, D.C. He loved the idea and gave Mr. Baran an active file of teachers who he thought would want to be involved. The students helped learn new job skills by stuffing envelopes and folding letters correctly, labeling and stamping. Over 100 letters went out. The only requirements to become involved were that a lesson on D-Day be part of the making of the flag tributes based on the learning packet that the Pentagon would be sending for the learning kits and that if you were a regular education class you would informally invite the special education teacher and class to assist you in the making the flag tribute while learning about the significance of D-Day. Over 75 teachers responded to participate. Later Mr. Baran was able to be a call-in guest on two Chicago radio stations, the Bob Collins Show on WGN and the Morning Show with Greg and Chris on WMBI, Moody Bible Radio. Over 125 teachers responded to the call. A total of 250 classrooms across the state of Illinois and across America from Hawaii, Alaska, Massachusetts, Georgia,
Arizona, and California wanted to become a part of a dream to uplift respect for WWII veterans and learn about D-Day that changed the direction of WWII. And a group of twenty-five cross-categorical disabilities students were leading the parade, not following the leader and taking on the leadership role to make a fellow student's dream their reality!

At the distribution of the flag tributes for the Women's Memorial on Veterans Day of November of 1993, Mr. Baran had called Major Rubalcava and informed him that he would be in Washington for the Women's event. He insisted that the following day Mr. Baran meet him at his Pentagon Office so that he could introduce the student group to the entire World War II Commemoration Committee. So after the hard and wonderful work of distributing the flag tributes to the Women's Memorial of the Vietnam War, the students kept a very interesting appointment that would lead to an incredible paradigm partnership between the upper echelon of the Pentagon and a group of twenty-five disability students within a federal job training program. Major Rubalcava first had the group take a private tour of the Pentagon. He then treated the students to lunch in the mammoth cafeteria. Finally, he took the group to the Executive Office for the WWII Committee. There they were introduced to their new advocate, Col. Kevin Hanretta, who was second in command. He met everyone and introduced them
to the entire office staff. He then invited everyone into one of the most impressive offices decked in flags and flourishes that Mr. Baran ever imagined. Col. Hanretta conveyed a message from his boss Ret. General Claude Kicklighter, who was out of town but wanted the group to know he was extremely excited by this students and was 100 percent behind their endeavor. Col. Hanretta stated that they offered complete support and were very excited about the educational value of this planned learning kit activity. He said if there was any way they could help them make the project better let them know. Just then a split second new brainstorm rolled out of Mr. Baran's mouth. "There is, Sir if you could help us produce a videotape." A videotape to be included in the learning packet produced by the Pentagon staring the special education and regular education students and staff from the WWII Office explaining the idea of the project, showing historic footage of D-Day and the significance of honoring veterans from this episode and then a visual explanation of the actual making of the star spangled boutonniere followed by a short history of the tribute's evolution. Lo and behold, Major Rubalcava and Col. Hanretta had never seen or heard Mr. Baran in action. They were literally blown away by his idea and then responded, "Why not!" Mr. Baran definitely helped bring Col. Hanretta aboard the Dream Team. Colonel Hanretta later wrote a letter when Mr. Baran flew alone to the Pentagon to
work out all of the necessary details. The letter stated their desire to work with Mr. Baran's program and is found on the following page and in Appendix 26.

The students filmed the video in early March of 1994. Lee Zuick, the chairman, picked Michael Ehman who has cerebral palsy and Mark Parker, a diabetic, along with Leslie Roth, the President of the Key Club, and finally Michelle Yang, president of the National Honor Society. The National Honor Society's national monthly magazine *Leadership* of February 1994 featured a promotion in their News column on page six asking their fellows to consider becoming a sponsor of a "Hearts from the Homefront D-Day." This article is included in Appendix 24.

Everyone had rehearsed their parts over and over. Mr. Baran requested of Major Rubalcava that General Kicklighter be in the video. He answered no way. Mr. Baran wrote a proposal to consider being in the video with Lee and Michael teaching him how to make a tribute. He also explained Mike's disability. When the General came down the main WWII display corridor to greet the students he yelled out, "Where's Mikey? We have to rehearse our part!" He also agreed to comment on the video about the program. He praised it as the most significant program that the committee had linked into. He knew from showing the memento to Pentagon officers that the veterans would love the flag tributes. There had to be several takes for some of the new
actors and actresses. They did do a great job, knew their lines and looked into the camera. General Kicklighter was extremely pleased with the students and his staff's collaboration. He sent a follow-up letter to Laura Murray, the HFHS Superintendent stating:

It was our pleasure to participate in the filming of your D-Day video, and especially to interact with your wonderful group of talented young people. My staff and I thoroughly enjoyed being a part of your project. I'm sure it will be well received by all those privileged to view it. 82

The students had two opportunities in the summer of 1994 to work in the WWII Commemorative Committee Office. On the first occasion, the following incident happened. This incident occurred when Mr. Baran had to take a later plane to Washington, D.C. and Ms. Tipton, who was the chaperone, went on ahead to the airport with the H-F students in the school van. The van stalled on the Illinois Tollway and Ms. Tipton held up traffic while the students pushed the van off the roadway. They left it to be towed and caught a taxi to O'Hare Airport. Lee Zuick, student coordinator, was happy he got on that plane because Mayor Daley of Chicago was also a passenger. Lee went up to him and told him about the program. He remembered how the JTPA program did the flag tributes for the D-Day Reenactment. Ms. Megan Tipton, Teacher of Video Productions and Viking Television at Homewood-Flossmoor High School remembers:

Throughout the whole process I have been completely amazed by what special needs students are able to
accomplish. I come from a traditional regular education background where I have had little exposure with special needs youth. Seeing your students take hold of a project of such magnitude of WWII Commemorative Committee effort and meeting the deadlines and presenting themselves to the people of this nation in a variety of ways has changed completely my use of special needs students in all categories. I as a chaperone have seen kids classified as Behavioral Disordered present themselves to veterans of our nation as truly what young people can be whereas in education special kids are not what they are used to seeing. And to see these B.D. kids, seeing them, out there relating in an appropriate fashion to people when we in education are ready to give up on these kids is truly memorable and touching. At every D.C. event I have attended to document with Viking Television, at least six years, I have seen time and time again kids interact with veterans and their heartfelt appreciation. I think it takes a person like Larry and his spirit, his patriotism, his belief in these kids to have created this program and permitted it to grow as it has. 83

Something very coincidental happened to the General with his next door neighbor. She was a high school teacher in Arlington, Virginia. While they were in a very informal conversation she told him how her class was involved in a World War II D-Day activity called Hearts from the Homefront and that they were going to be making tiny flowers and flags for the veterans. General Kicklighter could not believe how very close to home the program actually came.

Other significant national figures who sent sound bites for the video were the National Commander of the American Legion, Mr. Bruce Thiesen who said, "Every time our youth performs a service for the veterans, it proves the sacrifice the veterans made was worth it." 84 The National Commander
of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (V.F.W.), Mr. George Cramer, said, "I want to thank every student across America helping with this project." 85 Mr. Baran also solicited his friend in the Old Executive Office Building who assisted him in having his students meet Mrs. Clinton, Mr. Ed Emerson who petitioned Vice-President Al Gore to participate in the video. To the program's surprise, Mr. Gore agreed but Mr. Baran and the video production teacher friend, Ms. Megan Tipton, were asked to furnish a 45 second script which the Office of the Vice-President would edit as seen appropriate. They had to spend the entire evening that day of notification so that they could fax a copy of the script which was needed that very next day. An excerpt from Vice-President Gore states:

This idea began with a single J.T.P.A. student at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, Lee Zuick. Through his efforts and those of groups like yours across the United States, veterans of Normandy will be remembered. As Vice-President and as a veteran of the United States Armed services, I want to thank you for undertaking this project. As you learn the lessons of D-Day, remember it is only by looking at the past, we can move into the future. Your effort today surely shows, "A Grateful Nation Remembers." 86

When the students were finished videotaping in the Pentagon, the Major in charge of videotaping Major Jack Pagano, USAR, asked Ms. Tipton to come with him to view the footage. This was in the real work rooms of the WWII Committee. Here, Mr. Baran and students met a variety of military personnel who had enormous responsibilities in
logistics matters. Mr. Baran took his charges and introduced them to numerous officers. Major Rubalcava was very impressed with the students and offered consideration to allow some student to come and work for the committee the following summer. That summer of 1994, two teams of six special needs youth came from the JTPA Program and assisted various officers with their work assignments. The youth were challenged and had another real work experience only this time in the Pentagon. Major Pagano was very impressed with the JTPA program and students. He didn't know of any of their past accomplishments. He thought this was their first. Major Rubalcava explained to him the various projects of the inaugurals, Desert Storm, Pearl Harbor etc. He made an incredible proposition to Mr. Baran and Ms. Tipton. He asked if he and another officer could come out the following year and film a documentary about the Americans with Disabilities in Action Program. Mr. Baran said it would be an exciting theme for that summer and gave it a title..."Jobs! Action! Camera! Summer 94 JTPA!" Later the details were agreed to and the logistics worked out.

Major Pagano, Producer of the J.T.P.A. Documentary film states:

Larry is the kids messenger and the message is of hope, inspiration and most of all motivation! The world needs a lot more Larrys! 87

Since the Vice-President's video came late it was not included on the first Heart from the Homefront video. The
program had to make a follow-up video where the Pentagon once again covered the cost. This video included the 45 seconds of the Vice-President. It was designed into a thank you for participating video from the Homewood-Flossmoor High School Hearts from the Homefront Committee and sent to the partnership schools once they completed their learning kits. Both videos were of exceptional quality and achieved the objectives that they were designed for. The actual text spoken by Vice-President Gore is contained in Appendix 26.

During the taping of the video, the students were setting the groundwork for their summer of 1995 JTPA program. On Mr. Baran's logistic visit with Major Rubalcava and Co. Hanretta back in December of 1993, Mr. Baran remembered them digging up an area across from the Vietnam Memorial for a Korean War Memorial. Before he took an evening flight home, he went to that memorial site. There was snow on the ground and it was dark and not well lit. He knew this area so well after taking probably twenty groups of special education students to see the Vietnam Memorial. He marched up to the fenced-off area and wrote down on his Southwest Airlines ticket the formal name of the Korean Memorial Foundation. When he flew home he got their number and phoned the Foundation and eventually sent them information on the flag tributes. That March of 1994, during the videotaping in the Pentagon, Mr. Robert Hansen, Chairman of the Korean War Memorial Foundation, set up a
meeting with the students. In his Department of the Interior Office, he made an impressive 45 minute presentation for them. If this proposal would later work out, Mike Ehman would become chairman of this event. And he did!

The thank you card for the boutonniere was co-designed by the WWII Office and Mr. Baran. One side in army green ink on a deep ivory card stock had the two circular logos of the commemorative office, "A Grateful Nation Remembers" and The 50th Anniversary of WWII seal. It also had the identifying information of the JTPA program and the statement, "This 50th Anniversary of World War II Commemorative resource is produced to help honor and thank the veterans of World War II, their families and those who served on the home front. It is hoped that this resource will encourage the study of history of this era, so that this knowledge will help ensure a safer and better tomorrow." The back of the card was designed by Mr. Baran. It was a copy of the WWII learning packets picture of typical town USA during the Homefront campaign. In the lower left hand corner he had the printer leave a rectangular space for the student who made it to sign. Above that space was the key phrase, "Thank you for protecting my life, liberty, and happiness! A USA student,..." and on the right hand side was a space to write the students school address. Students received
numerous responses from the veterans because of this procedure. A simple article in the local *Southtown Economist* newspaper reported on the shipping of the tributes to D.C. and is included in Appendix 26. An excerpt states:

It was an emotional moment for a Homewood-Flossmoor High School teacher and four of his students Friday as they watched a U.S. Air Force plane leave O'Hare Airport for Washington, D.C. On board were two memorial wreaths and 14 cases containing thousands of boutonnieres - items made by students across the country and destined for D-Day ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery and the National Cemetery in Normandy, France. "I got very emotional when I saw the plane taxi down the runway," said Baran.

A workathon was held by the National Honor Society, Key Club and JTPA to complete the D-Day order but primarily to repackage the finished kits from all over the country. WWII veterans were invited to speak and breakfast refreshments were served. There was more of a work atmosphere rather than a lot of patriotic hoopla as most of the workathon had become. The main goal was achieved of finishing the few thousand tributes and boxing the 35,000 for D.C. and Normandy.

School administrator, Mr. Gary Niehaus, an observer of the program and partners with his middle school students helped the J.T.P.A. projects with several WWII events saw all five components evident. He states:

Larry's persistence and integrity have pushed the program to new heights. Larry has not accepted the normal route or the easy way. His ability to create new paths has been an excellent example for his students. Modeling the way - The students were exposed
to a wonderful role model in Larry and well picked adult supervisors who provided excellent guidance and direction. Modeling employment skills, work quality, skill and protocol were all designed to help the students to be employable and overall better people. Larry has run into difficulties with other teachers within his own district who could model their own projects after the example he has established. The jealousy and inability of other staff to take advantage of an excellent program and mentorship is difficult to understand. This program has widespread value to other schools and staff. Encouraging the heart — Encouragement is Larry's middle name. His encouragement comes from a pat on the back, to listening to concerns, to introducing students to military generals and Presidents. The students know Larry is behind them. Larry goes out of his way to find ways for students to receive the credit and get wonderful opportunities. Larry is very loyal to his students, school and family. 89

Dr. Sam Rizzo, school superintendent whose district also worked on several projects, states:

Finally someone is doing something to pull our nation together, rather than the opposite. I was touched by this program and how our junior high students enjoyed working with it. This is the only program that promotes inclusion in the workplace. I believe we are moving toward inclusion because it is the politically correct thing to do. We are moving toward inclusion for the wrong reasons. We do not have programs in place for our kids. J.T.P.A. is the only program that realistically promotes inclusion. I was also amazed at the creativity and entrepreneurship exhibited by the students in the program. 90

Mr. Baran was asked to bring six students to Arlington Cemetery to pass the tributes out at the memorial service at the Amphitheater of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Major Rubalcava invited us for the WWII Committee. He and Major Pagano acted as hosts and chaperones. The President
presided over the Normandy Service and the Vice-President presided over the Arlington Ceremony. There was a large screen video hookup from Normandy to hear parts of the President's speech. The atmosphere in the D.C. ceremony was not somber but festive. While the military band played various bee-bop music, old timers, the veterans of WWII and their wives got up and danced.

When the group returned from the D-Day ceremony his wife gave him the Sunday Star commemorating local D-Day veterans. Right on the front page was another wonderful article about the program. It had Mr. Baran's favorite press quote ever. The article started with these words..."Larry Baran and his kids are at it again!..." 91 The local Hammond Times of May 16, 1994 quoted student chairman, Lee Zuick on his reason to honor the veterans:

Both of my grandfathers were in WWII, and I think knowing that helps me understand the importance of this, which I think is a great project," he said. "And I think we need to remember what these men did for us 50 years ago. Many students these days enjoy their freedoms, but they need to think about the soldiers who paid the price for those freedoms. It makes me feel real good to do something to help recognize the veterans. 92

The complete article is found in Appendix 26. Letters of thank you again were sent to the students. Excerpts from some of these notes and letters are in Appendix 26 and also below:

I want to convey my sincere thanks for the support you provided the U.S. Coast Guard's National WWII 50th
Anniversary Commemoration at the Coast Guard Yards......You and your students received many wonderful compliments. The boutonnieres were truly appreciated by all of our attendees.  

R.J. Marafioti  
Commanding Officer  
United States Coast Guard  

Minister of State for the Armed Forces, Mr. Jeremy Hanley recently attended the D-Day service at Cambridge American Cemetery. During the event he was given a buttonhole supplied by your organization and he has asked me to pass on his thanks for your kind gesture and also that his appreciation be passed on to the students who made it.  

Minister of State for the Armed Forces/The United Kingdom, Great Britain  

Your salute to WWII Vets as very well received by male and female veterans at Normandy in early June. I observed the men pinning their bouquet on themselves.  

M. Hughes  

Thank you so much! It was comforting to know, that even after 50 years, some remembered!  

Albert Orton  

We were deeply touched by the fact your students were grateful.  

Ervin Aden  

The Marine Corps Iwo Jima Memorial Ceremony  

The Executive Director of the Navy and Marine Corps WWII Commemorative Committee takes pleasure in commending Mr. Larry Baran and the faculty and students of The Homewood- Flossmoor Community High School for exceptional service and dedication in remembering the veterans of World War II, especially those who fought on Iwo Jima, by donating your time and energy to ensure
veterans across the country received commemorative boutonnieres. The efforts of Mr. Baran and his students, the National Honor Society, members of the football and basketball team, and all those at the school who spent time working on the project, are truly appreciated. Your good deeds will touch the hearts of nearly 20,000 veterans and family members who receive them. They will feel secure in knowing that the leaders of tomorrow have not forgotten the sacrifices World War II veterans once made. Fifty years ago, young people like yourselves took up the call to arms to defend this country and her people. Fifty years later it is appropriate to remember the sacrifices those men and women made to preserve the freedoms we enjoy today. Thank you for a job well done! 98

Maj. Jack Gallant

Captain Jim Brewster of the Coast Guard was the officer of contact who would call and share the computer list of commemorative events that were planned all over the world. He usually had very excellent contacts. He called one day and insisted that I call the Marine Corps to use the flag tributes for the 50th anniversary of Iwo Jima to be commemorated at the Washington statue site next to Fort Meyer in Arlington, Virginia. Mr. Baran contacted 1st Lt. Kimberly J. Miller, a Public Affairs Officer for the Pentagon's Navy & Marine Corps WWII Commemorative Committee. There were very many special requests from the Marines so Mr. Baran wanted to work out the specific details and flew for a consultation in December of 1994. Major Pagano also wanted some video shots of him at the Capitol and in other D.C. locations. Lt. Miller introduced Mr. Baran to Captain Galant, the Marine committee chairman. He was excited about
the program's involvement. They decided to order 15,000 flag tributes for the event and also sent some to the actual memorial service they were having on the Island of Iwo Jima and Okinawa, Japan. They also liked Mr. Baran's idea of four huge red, white and blue silk floral baskets with a huge Marine logo to rest upon the four marble posts next to the stairway leading up to the memorial statue. They commissioned the program to design and construct these florals. Lt. Miller also was designated to ask if Mr. Baran could bring his students to assist with the distribution on February 19, 1995. Mr. Baran asked how many students could he bring? They had no problem with the two to three dozen he was beginning to plan for.

Back at home, Michael Ehman became the student chairman. He solicited the National Honor Society to help with this project and they completely took it on as a partnership. Michael Ehman remembers Mr. Baran and the program:

I like working for you in J.T.P.A. I get a paycheck. I learn how to work and make boutonnieres and other things. I like going to Washington, D.C. We went for the Korean War Memorial dedication. I worked passing out cards. I liked talking to war veterans. I'm glad I got to see the memorial. I love to work in Mr. Baran's program and I love Mr. Baran.  

Besides planning a workathon, the NHS students came in every Saturday morning with the group of JTPA student workers to make tributes and also prepare kits to send to
helper schools and help get all of the logistics ready for the Workathon. What pleased Mr. Baran was what was happening quite informally. He called the concept "reversed inclusion" whereby you invite regular education students to get involved in a special education project and they begin to establish an informal relationships with the special needs youth. He would work at his desk doing JTPA administrative paperwork and listen to the mixture talk about the television shows Melrose Place, Beverly Hills 90210, going to Aurielio's Pizza with their friends, and dating. One of Mr. Baran's proudest moments of his program's achievements was bringing 30 Homewood-Flossmoor High School students to the Iwo Jima Memorial Service and having eight of those students being National Honor Society or Key Club members. At the workathon, the local Marine Corps chapter leader and supporter of all the JTPA projects, Mr. John Beele, recruited over six Iwo Jima veterans to come and speak and share with the students in attendance. It should be noted that John Beele is the parent of a former regular education aide who became a special education teacher because of the love of the students and the program. John also had been a super advocate and as a former marine, brought numerous veterans as workers and speakers to all of the workathons. He states:

In all of the projects we have worked on leadership and the kids doing the work has been fun, rewarding, and very professional. Just seeing the look of the kids
doing their work and knowing what a good job they were doing was most rewarding. The program gives them the feeling of self-worth and the reward of knowing they have done a good job.... this is something we all need.100

The six men who accompanied John Beele also helped make the four silk centerpieces for the memorial and worked side by side with the disability students sticking the silk floral stems into the foam of the baskets. During the veterans' presentation, all of the students and guests stopped working and came and sat in chairs and on the floor of the cafeteria around the microphone. Those kids asked very significant questions and listened so intensively. The presentation did not last twenty minutes as predicted. It lasted over one hour. The most amazing aspect was how intense the veterans were sharing from their hearts. The students listened while the Aurielio's pizzas and Surma's fragrant fried chicken were being carried in right beside them. Not one student flinched. The teachable moment won over a teenagers' bottomless stomach. It was an outstanding moment at the Semper Fi workathon! A letter was received from the Marine Corps and the Commemoration Committee praising the students and the program for the Workathon. The letter is included in Appendix 27.

Mr. Baran had these tributes again shipped to Washington via Colonel Pete Sullivan at O'Hare.

The field trip to Washington had a few minor problems with the teens acting like teens in the hotel the evening
before the event. They were hyped and didn't want to go to sleep. They wanted to play and visit a friend's room and eat more snacks!

Student Kara Veschak who is multiply handicapped sees patriotism as the vision of this program. She states:

It made me more aware of being a patriotic American. It showed me to be proud of the men and women who serve our country. It enabled me to see the nation's capitol. Finally the trip to Washington was a celebration of accomplishments for me. I was so excited to go. It made me feel I did something special for the Marines of Iwo Jima. 101

The actual event was a climax in many ways for the years of dedication to assist youth with disabilities achieve their dreams. With thirty youth and six adults as the distribution teams, the Marine Corps had the group arrive before any guests or visitors. Since the President was going to be present, the security was high. With the teams of students wearing actual stars and stripes jackets and jeans, they stood in place at entrance and seating locations with their adult chaperones. Mr. Baran noticed the large floral baskets missing. He contacted a Marine officer who took him to the logistics tent where he found them still boxed. He had them open the boxes and enlisted two students to help bring them to the statue to have them placed on the marble podiums. A bit later Col. Sullivan from the WWII Office said that the White House would not allow them to be placed there because of security reasons. Mr. Baran argued that they were specially made for these
locations known to the Marine Corps Committee and that he should get someone from the White House to talk to him. Sure enough, Mr. Baran was called over in front of the Iwo Jima statue to talk to White House staffer Mr. Redmond Walsh. Mr. Baran listened to his request to move the designs into the large reception tent for after the ceremony. They wanted to use the designs to decorate the food tables. Mr. Baran responded that they were commissioned for the statue and ceremony. He also mentioned that six Iwo Jima veterans assisted his students make them at the workathon. But Mr. Baran realized something very powerful was happening. Mr. Walsh and Col. Sullivan were negotiating and wanted to keep Mr. Baran happy. Mr. Baran analyzed the situation and stated to Mr. Walsh, "I'll let you remove the baskets if you arrange for my students to meet the President!" Mr. Walsh's response was, "Your name is Mr. Baran, isn't it? You are friends with my pals Bart Hanford and Ed Emerson from the Office of President Advance and Scheduling aren't you?" Mr. Baran said yes. "Well, I don't think that will be much of a problem," he said. Mr. Baran asked him where they should be sitting and had Mr. Walsh literally show him the two rows of chairs by the roped off area near the path where the President would leave. He then stated that if it would happen it would happen near here! Knowing Washington, Mr. Baran said a prayer and told Major Pagano who got a clearance pass to be in the press
area near the advance team and press. Mr. Baran introduced Jack to Mr. Walsh and he left it at that. The students had an awesome experience giving the star spangled tributes to the Marine veterans of Iwo Jima. The men were extremely thankful. They were very moved emotionally by this thank you card for the Iwo Jima tribute which had a silhouette of the statue with the simple message in very large print saying, "Dear Iwo Jima Veteran, Thank you for protecting my life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, Love American students."

Mrs. Mary Mayers, the teacher for low-incidence handicapped students, whose entire vocational classes have been mainstreamed into this program for the last five years has an excellent commentary:

The Americans with Disabilities in Action program has made a significant impact on my students lives! The experiences that they have been able to participate in have been invaluable and ones that they will never have the opportunity to participate in if it had not been for Larry's program. It has enriched their lives and enhanced each participant's self esteem. Abilities, rather than disabilities, have been emphasized which is why the J.T.P.A. program has been so successful. It rejects the stereotype that people with disabilities are unable to perform productive work. Larry's program has proven that the disabled do have a place in society and can be a contributing member. The concept of teamwork is exemplified through the program.103

Ms. Mayer's SMA supervisor, Ms. Leslie Williams, comments:
Mr. Baran is a visionary whose ability to challenge the educational process and system are results of his creativity, energy, enthusiasm and love of people. I've observed all 5 program components Larry listed in the philosophy. It is wonderful for our students with disabilities to see that they can contribute beyond their small communities. Because mobility impairments and economic disadvantage prevents many of our students from learning through experience, this program has given them trips and experiences they couldn't have. This program shows students that when non-disabled people care and put forth the effort, the students can be included and succeed. The program offers students inspiration and involvement in extraordinary format. By sharing experiences they wouldn't otherwise have, they may be able to set their personal goals higher.

When the students were finished they took their seats. It was sunny but then became very cloudy, cold and eerie during the memorial service. Then as they ended by placing the wreath at the memorial, the warmth of a sunny day broke through once again. Major Pagano was busy talking with Mr. Walsh to make the visitation happen. As the ceremony ended the President was greeting WWII veterans near his podium and seat. They then led him away. This is when Redmond Walsh signaled Mr. Baran to get his group immediately lined up next to the roping along the asphalt path, with Mr. Baran being first. Then it began to happen. The First Lady, Mrs. Hillary Clinton, walked over to greet the group. She remembered meeting the Americans with Disabilities in Action at her husband's inaugural. She was just as gracious and kind. She met with each and every child. Then the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Carl E. Mundy Jr., escorted the President of the United States of America, Bill
Clinton, to come and greet Mr. Baran where he shook hands, smiled, laughed and talked to each and every student. He ended by greeting the last two chaperones and the newest administrative staff members of Homewood-Flossmoor High School, Dr. Tony Moriarty, Principal, and Mrs. Barbara Luoma, Director of Special Education. Both of the Clinton's told them that they wanted to know more about the program.

Mrs. Luoma recalled this amazing occasion when she stated, "The warmth with which our students were received and the joy which their involvement brought to the faces of the veterans will not be forgotten." 105

Dr. Tony Moriarty recalled, "The experience at Iwo Jima embodied a confluence of commitment to the collaborative efforts of special education kids, our gifted students, and parents provided an experience never to be forgotten." 106

Mr. Baran will always cherish that special moment in time. Not only did Vice-President Dan Quayle come and thank and greet his special education students for their efforts but now the President and First Lady came and greeted and thanked his class of special education and National Honor Society students. Mr. Baran didn't know if there had ever been a teacher in the United States of America to be able to claim that highest of high honors!

A letter of thanks from the White House was received and is included in Appendix 27 and on the following page.

A letter of thank you was also sent to Mr. Baran from
an alumni special needs youth who came on this trip. It is also included in Appendix 27. Candy Gibson stated:

I couldn't believe my ears when you said a miracle is going to happen when we were at the ceremony in Washington. You made my wish come true. I always wanted to meet President Clinton. That was my first time. You're the one who made it happen. You're the best, you're the greatest, you're the neatest guy in the whole wide world. You are a very special person to me and I value my friendship with you, we will always be friends forever. Thank you my sweet friend. 107

Other significant comments and letters were sent from hundreds of Iwo Jima Marine veterans. A small sampling of these comments can be found in Appendix 27. Some sample quotes include:

I was moved to think a teenager would make such a gesture of appreciation to a Marine who had participated in the action on Iwo Jima. 108

Arthur Koskiner

Receiving your flag made me not only proud but warmed my heart that someone I don't know is thanking me for something so long ago.109

Felton Owens

It was a little thing like that made a 70 year old man cry. 110

Paul Clinton

We wore them with pride and will be remembered as an important part of this solemn commemoration. 111

Bill Brock
There have been times during the past 50 years that I felt the nation, especially the younger generation, did not understand or appreciate the significance of WW II and the savagery of that was as exampled by Iwo Jima. That concern was put to rest when we were handed the card conveying "American Students Salute WW II Veterans of Iwo Jima." 112

Dick Donnelly

Something else happened after this visitation event: The chaperones and students were going crazy exchanging stories about what the President said specifically to each of them. When Mr. Baran stayed in the exact place and was signaled that his job was done. Go home write his dissertation and go to a new doctor to look at the large growth near his knee on his left leg.

Lt. Miller insisted that the entire Homewood-Flossmoor group were honored guests for the tent reception for military dignitaries and veterans. Mr. Baran could not wait to see the negotiating tools (the four large patriotic centerpieces) decorating the tables of food that all his hungry students were craving. The reception was lovely and the students did an exceptional job at being extremely appropriate meeting, greeting and receiving the compliments that they knowingly deserved. When it was time to leave, there was a group photo in front of the Iwo Jima Memorial. Lt. Miller thanked each and everyone of the students. They all loaded up in the four vans and began their drive to the
airport. The students and staff had an experience that will be a precious moment to each and every one of them.

When Mr. Baran went home, he delayed going to the doctor for a month. In mid March he was awarded the Golden Apple Award, and two days later he was awarded the Readers Digest-American Heroes in Education Award. On the day between the awards, he saw a new doctor who, after an x-ray and MRI, diagnosed his lump as a tumor and referred him to the University of Chicago Tissue and Bone Cancer Clinic. Mr. Baran was diagnosed with a malignant soft tissue spindle cell sarcoma cancer at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 28th, 1995.

Mr. Baran began treatment for his cancer on March 21, 1995. He had to take a medical leave of absence. Mrs. Marietta Coleman, a summer teacher for JTPA and Mrs. Marionette Young, the job coach and vocational trainer for floral design took over and substituted for his expertise. Something happened in Mr. Baran's absence. Just as the special education students in JTPA took on the leadership roles of owning the ideas and projects, so did the adult support staff. These two women caught the vision and dream long ago and were determined to not let anything go wrong.

Mrs. Marietta Coleman, Homewood-Flossmoor J.T.P.A. teacher believes:

We did catch the vision and the students started working with the 10,000 boutonnieres. They took it on and decided how and who would do the jobs. One of the
students, Eddie Tiedman, set up an assembly line so that certain kids sorted, made and packaged the product. I saw the students organize because we had a deadline. The work had to be done and they wanted an efficient way to do it. To be more efficient we gave them the freedom to do this. My role is a facilitator to realize the possibilities and come up with ideas. This is not a stressful environment to make students produce. It seems that the less stress make them more creative. When I was introduced to JTPA as a substitute teacher I just graduated college for I went back to school when my children were raised. I met Mr. Baran and he taught me a new way to teach students through floral designing. I found kids getting instant successes right away! Within the 40 minute class time they would get praise for their efforts. He made class fun. It is always upbeat and positive. Larry was transcending. I saw students like I've never seen before such as in the south building in the special education department. In those academic classes I saw students stressed and not feeling good about themselves and they did not want to work they always seem awkward. But here in JTPA I saw successes, and in the midst of adversity you can conquer!

Mrs. Marionette Young, Homewood-Flossmoor J.T.P.A. Job Coach, remembers fondly:

Meeting Mr. Baran at Chicago Florist Supply was exhilarating and unbelievable experience. When he approached me and heard that I was getting into wedding flowers and he was exiting the business and he told me to come over and see the stuff he wanted to get rid of. "Really?" I said. I brought my babies, my children who commented on the way home "Do you really know him? Mommy why does he think Rodney Jr. is so smart and wants to test him?" This began a friendship that has only expanded into project after project! Meeting Vice President Dan Quayle was again unbelievable. For every new phase was a first experience. I didn't know why I came along to D.C. I always think of myself as independent and to think I got caught up in this man's VISION for his program. I never thought I would end up helping decorate a Presidential Inaugural. It was a fairy tale -driving around D.C. in a raggedy van with spray paint saying "D.C. or Bust!" on its sides. Going to the Inaugural in his tux and my flowing dress in
this messy van was unbelievable. It was shenanigans! nothing seemed balanced except the decorations for the reception were perfect, balanced and eloquent! All else was disorganized and unpredictable. At the Reception for all Members of Congress I started to feel like Larry's spy protecting him and helping him figure a way to get the VP's attention. We had one mission at this Quayle Reception. We had been sent for one purpose which was the chance and opportunity to meet the Vice-President and ask him to come and say thank you to the kids! That morning when Larry went to set up early he called me that there was going to be a security sweep at 1:00 and I had to get his suit and my outfit and get over there because of a security lockout. I did as told. I was able to go through the formal reception line and tell Mrs. Quayle about the program so that Mr. Baran could talk to the VP. He was not allowed in the line because it was closed immediately after my turn. This upset the man. He was determined to talk to Quayle yet it was obvious the Vice-President's family was getting ready to leave. I was worried with Larry stalking the man. I was afraid the Secret Service might also be watching him and misjudge his intentions. I was actually fearing calling his wife Cathy with some sick arrest or even the use of guns! But all I do remember is that he had actually grabbed the Vice-President who then responded to his statement that special education kids made all the beautiful flowers for his inaugural reception. Quayle told his security to leave the man alone and let him hear him. It happened Quayle showed an interest to what he had to say ... the mission accomplished.... Praise the Lord! Larry had his chance to be heard. I can't believe how much involvement I have with this great program. At this point I'm not a trained teacher and have never been trained in anything yet I'm the floral Job Coach. Because of Larry Baran I'm in a field of flowers and special education that I never thought I'd be in. It seems I fit right in the program and its all in God's plan. The program.... oh my goodness, since the first work-a-thon for Desert Storm it has escalated and we meet more people, touch more lives than you would ever deem imaginable. Its gone worldwide and the program and students continue to get letters from appreciative veterans! The kids!.... I have adapted a bias of never underestimating the handicapped. I thought they were different... I really did. I wanted to baby and pamper the kids but the surprise is they are not different they are regular
people. They should be included in every walk of life and most are blinded by the disability ... the secret is seeing past the disability and it's a true blessing. 114

To analyze the situation, the JTPA Americans with Disabilities Program took on a life of its own and it was able to stand alone by itself without Mr. Baran. Mrs. Coleman and Young decided not to let the World War II Committee down by honoring the verbal commitment to make flag tributes for the ending celebration/commemorations of World War II, V-E and V-J days. They worked with Major Dan Ryan and had the students facilitate over 10,000 tributes for V-E and the same amount for V-J day. They only had one school assist with V-J day which was Sacred Hearts Girls Academy in Honolulu, Hawaii. Mr. Baran's friend and teacher, Sister Irene, whose students had helped with many of their WWII and Women's Vietnam Memorial projects, agreed to handle all of the 5000 tributes needed by the WWII Committee for the President's visit to the Punch Bowl National Cemetery on September 2, 1995. The staff and students took on many other orders to facilitate. Because of Mr. Baran's illness, no one was allowed to go and pass out the tributes at Ft. Meyer in Arlington, even though they were invited by Major Ryan. Something unique happened at the ceremony. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Mr. Jesse Brown, was given a tribute. He wrote to Mr. Baran and the letter is included in Appendix 27.
He also saw veterans receiving them and noticed several of them crying. He read the card and was so touched that he decided to do something that very day. He assigned a White House administrative staffer, Mr. Everett Ham, to call the program and tell them what an outstanding job that they had done. He requested the names of every special education student and staff member involved. He sent them each a personal letter of thanks. He also had Mr. Everett Ham who was also assigned from his office as his representative for the dedication of the Korean War Memorial Dedication to get the JTPA Program to do something for the opening ceremony for 100,000 Korean Veteran. The letter follows on the next page.

The students under the leadership of Mrs. Coleman and Mrs. Young worked out specific details with Mr. Everett Ham, Mr. Brown's designee on the Korean Committee, to have a project for the summer 1995 JTPA Program called, "MASH". Military Armed Services Honored! They were asked to facilitate 100,000 mementos. Mr. Baran was still the idea man in this venture. Only one month notice was given to do 100,000 tributes. It was impossible to ask other teacher to help since it was summer. He came up with the cleverest idea. Have a post card printed with the thank you message for Korean veterans but add an activity and symbol of meaning. The symbol he thought of was a dog tag. He had simulated dog tag stickers made that said, "Thank you Korean
Vets, Love USA Kids" These stickers held down a toothpick flag on the card. The students also got to place a Red Cross sticker next to the MASH logo. They even had the opportunity to sign as many cards as possible. Mrs. Coleman and Mrs. Young took eight students at the end of July to distribute them at the dedication ceremony. The heat was over 100 degrees but the experience was incredible! Once again the dream and vision of this program continued through the love and dedication of its staff and student workers! A letter of thanks from Everett Ham was received and is in Appendix 28.

A final letter and certificate of appreciation was delivered to Mr. Baran from the World War II Committee. It is truly a final compliment to the program for a job well done follows and is exhibited on the following page and in Appendix 29.

Lorry and Rick Ehman, as Michael Ehman's parents, have come to Washington D.C. to help care for Michael because of his severe handicap condition and have been active parent participants in these activities. It is an honor to quote them:

I know you want this statement to be about the J.T.P.A. program, Americans with Disabilities in Action, but there is no way to get into that without first talking about you. Without your love and dedication there would not be any program. All the students/clients benefit tremendously from your vision, passion and guidance. Your gift of vision, and your tireless determination to achieve it, result in the most amazing
accomplishments for the program and each individual student. Your heart and soul go into providing opportunities for these kids. You have the rare gift of clearly seeing through a person's disability and tapping into their potential for accomplishing great things. All of your efforts, and therefore this program, have a positive everlasting effect on each student's life.

I feel this program is the most essential training that a high school student with disabilities can receive to prepare for their future. The goal for any student is to reach their fullest potential and enter into the workforce. Many times a person's disability will obscure their work abilities, to others and maybe even to themselves. Americans with Disabilities in Action uncovers those abilities, teaches valuable job skills and helps build self confidence. To witness the growing self assurance and pride in their work as they accomplish the individual and collective jobs, is wonderful. These students also take on ownership of the program by being involved in the decision making process and helping to drive the vision for the future. In addition to learning to be responsible and gaining job skills, they are also taught how to apply for a job, job etiquette and personal skills so that they may be able to gain employment in the competitive workforce. They will also be ready to carry on the entrepreneurship that this program is building toward.

The partnership that has been created between this program and the U.S. Government has been so unique and fantastic. These young adults gain so much insight into our country and the sacrifices made for our freedom. Patriotism is instilled in them through this circle of understanding that has occurred. The students learn about the wars and those who fought, by firsthand accounts from veterans. Then each student makes the commitment to work very hard and hundreds of thousands of tributes have been made to honor those who served in the war. The tributes are then distributed to veterans across the country and in Europe. To complete the circle, the veterans have received a token of thanks and understanding from this group of teenagers and in many, many instances have expressed their gratitude verbally or by writing to the program. The students have also learned how our U.S. Government works and have provided tributes for Presidents, Senators, Representatives, and other officials. Not only has there been the connection with the military and government, but also partnerships made
with outside organizations, groups and other schools. While the goal for these students is to be included in the workforce after graduation, inclusion is occurring within the program as well. At the school this program is at, the students with disabilities invite other groups of students within the school to work together on their projects. As a result of the program seeking out these many partnerships, there has resulted an amazing unity, with everyone working productively together and connecting with each other.

I could never express adequately how much my son has gained from his involvement in this program. I am always trying to get others to realize his hidden potential yet I could never have imagined the level of responsibility and job skills he has demonstrated. My son and all the students involved with this program have obtained invaluable opportunities and experiences to assure that their future can be a very productive one. Every single child, disabled or not should be able to reap these same benefits. I thank God for Larry Baran and the Americans with Disabilities in Action program. 115

It's always a pleasure to be able to help and work with the students in your class. Going to Washington, D.C. is an experience I will never forget. It was great to be involved with the Korean War Memorial Dedication and to be able to help and show how we cared for those who fought for our country. The memory of being there during the dedication and talking to the veterans will be one I will never forget.

Having Michael in the J.T.P.A. class has been such an inspiration for him. Michael just seems so enthused to be able to help put together different projects. He loves working and being able to show what he has accomplished when he's done. Your class just seems to thrive, to be able to work hard and finish their goals. You can see how a teacher's views and attitudes rub off on the students. It takes someone like Larry Baran who is so special to be able to touch these students in this way. Everyone in Larry's class will never forget the experience and teaching he has given them. 116

Finally, the researcher's spouse after a fifteen year reflection asked to comment on the significance of this teacher and his students. She states:
Once Larry has an idea, he is virtually impossible to stop. Polite refusals just mean he hasn't yet talked to the right person. He refuses to believe that anyone could perform a job better than his students. That same spirit of self-esteem has been contagious. Some of his students have amazed me by landing jobs that other "regular ed" students might never get because they lacked the nerve to sell themselves. Larry is the salesman supreme and it has rubbed off on many of his students.

Why was the H-F flag tributes program so successful? First a group of "special ed" students and their teacher refused to stay locked in their classroom -- ever reminded of what they could not do academically. Instead, they got intrigued by what they could do -- to become contributors to their communities and students of their country's history. Parents were thrilled that their children showed a newly-found commitment and excitement to coming to school. After all, they were needed to get a job done. Secondly, the program capitalized on the concept of "social investing." It identified a group that was interested in supporting the spirit of volunteerism -- the U.S. Military World War II Commemorative Committee. This group was willing to provide the "seed money" for floral supplies for the students to use in the production of their flag tributes. It points the way to future projects. Individuals or agencies need to be identified who will reward the "can-do" spirit by purchasing products crafted by young people who because of their intellectual or physical disabilities will find it difficult to compete in a market economy. These young people don't want to sit at home collecting disability checks. They want to envision a future for themselves of contributing to their families and to society.117
ENDNOTES
Chapter 5

1 Interview with Dr. Laura Murray, August 1995.

2 Ibid, 187.

3 Ibid, 189.


5 Dan Quayle to student body, April, 1989.

6 Ibid, 239.

7 Ibid, 241.

8 Ibid, 259.


12 Fox 32, Coverage of Vice-President's Visit to Homewood-Flossmoor High School, Produced and directed by Scott Smith, 3 minutes, 25 April 1989.


15 Barbara Bush to Mr. Baran, 18 December 1984 and 22 February 1990.

16 Coretta Scott King to Mr. Baran, 4 May 1990 and 15 October 1990.

17 Interview with Mr. George Covington, August 1995.


19 Laurens Grant, "H-F Flowers Grace White House Event,"


22 Interview with Ms. Nancy Conley, October 1995.

23 Interview with Jennifer Bower, October 1995.

24 Mr. Charles Campbell to Kristi Adams, 1 September 1990.


28 Interview with Col. Peter Sullivan, ANG, August 1995.

29 Sgt. Donald Brown to students, January 1990.

30 SFC Carolyn Cantwell to students, January 1990.

31 Sgt. Dan Butkovich to students, January 1990.

32 Sgt. J. Semerano to students, January 1990.

33 2nd Lt. Chalkdes to students, January 1990.

34 Monica Mueller to Mr. Baran, 15 October 1990, Bob Kustra for Lt. Governor.


36 Interview with Dr. Tom Murray, August 1995.

37 Robert W. Miller to Mr. Baran, 10 September 1992.


39 Mr. Edward Derwinski to Mr. Baran, 24 June 1991.
40 Interview with Cheryl Levy, October 1995.
41 Elizabeth Ganzi to Dr. Rachford, 1 May 1991.
42 The Belas Family to Committee Members, 10 July 1991.
49 Interview with Chris Sullivan, October 1995.
56 Bill Clinton to students of Homewood-Flossmoor High School, 30 July 1992.
Interview with Amy Leff, November 1992.


Interview with Amy Leff, November 1992.


Interview with Ed Emerson, 18 January 1993.

Lori Krause to Mr. Baran, 15 June 1993.


Interview with Tom Bailey, August 1995.

Interview with Paula Miller, September 1995.


Interview with Jamie Auchincloss, 5 July 1993.

Francis Scott Key Park: The Star Spangled Banner Monument Dedication Program, Francis Scott Key Foundation, 14 September 1993.

Jhonda McFarlane to Mr. Baran, 15 June 1993.


Adam Drzal to Katie Slobig, 3 February 1994.

Interview with Katie Slobig, October 1995.

Interview with Matt Moxley, August 1995.

Interview with Mr. William Slobig, August 1995.

Dr. Marc Cathey to Mr. Baran, 24 February 1994.


Interview with Lee Zuick, October 1995.

Interview with Retired Major Gabriel Rubalcava, October
Retired General Claude Kicklighter to Dr. Laura Murray, 18 April 1993.

Interview with Megan Tipton, October 1995.

Interview with Commandant of the American Legion, Mr. Bruce Thiesen, March 1994.

Interview with Commandant of Veterans of Foreign Wars, Mr. George Cramer, March 1994.

Interview with Vice-President Gore, April 1994.

Interview with Major Jack Pagano, USAR, October 1995.


Interview with Mr. Gary Niehaus, August 1995.

Interview with Dr. Sam Rizzo, October 1995.


R.J. Marafioti to students, 4 June 1994.

Mr. Jeremy Hanley to Mr. Baran, 4 June 1994.

M. Hughes to students, 4 June 1994.

Albert Orton to students, 4 June 1994.

Ervin Aden to students, 4 June 1994.

Major Jack Galant to J.T.P.A. students and staff, 10 February 1995.

Interview with Michael Ehman, October 1995.

Interview with Mr. John Beele, September 1995.

Interview with Kara Veschak, August 1995.
102 Interview with Mr. Redmond Walsh, February 1995.
103 Interview with Ms. Mary Mayer, August 1995.
104 Interview with Ms. Leslie Williams, August 1995.
105 Interview with Mrs. Barbara Luoma, September 1995.
106 Interview with Dr. Tony Moriarty, September 1995.
109 Felton Owens to students, 19 February 1995.
110 Paul Clinton to students, 19 February 1995.
111 Bill Brock to students, 9 February 1995.
112 Dick Donnelly to students, 19 February 1995.
113 Interview with Mrs. Marietta Coleman, October 1995.
114 Interview with Mrs. Marionette Young, October 1995.
115 Lorry Ehman to Mr. Baran, 11 October 1995.
116 Rick Ehman to Mr. Baran, 15 October 1995.
117 Cathy Baran to Mr. Baran, 15 October 1995.
The recipe given by Will Rogers in the third chapter of "Knowing, loving and believing in what you're doing," along with The Leadership Challenges philosophy of Kouzes and Posner's of vision, inspiration and persistence are seemingly appropriate key descriptors of the successes documented for Americans with Disabilities in Action.

Walt Elias Disney stated the same basic philosophy of R.A.I.N.B.O.W. that, "Our greatest national resource is the minds of our children." Americans with Disabilities in Action has seen the power behind their disabled minds of the special education students as the catalyst behind their numerous accomplishments. This program can be compared to an all drummer band in the musical, The Music Man. Here, Professor Hill convinces the students that they all have talents and expertise that are hidden and their combined efforts can be brought together as a band. Only this time with the J.T.P.A. special needs youth they become the leaders and help recreate different drummers through their clever and ingenious national projects. Mr. Baran's secretary, Mrs. Ellen McDermott, stated it best. "Larry Baran, is leader of the band and his students the marchers!"
Together they have touched the hearts of millions of veterans with their gift of love - the flag boutonniere!" 2

Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed in such desperate enterprises? If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Chapters 3 through 5 not only document and tells the story of R.A.I.N.B.O.W. and its development into Americans with Disabilities in Action but also reflect the essence of James Kouzes and Barry Posner's Leadership Challenge philosophy. This chapter will summarize this philosophy by reviewing each principle of leadership and the two commitments to leadership that is reflected in this chronology of events and accomplishments that give meaning to this leadership philosophy. To validate this philosophy, quotations from individuals who have been involved with this program will be documented.

Charles Augustus Lindberg, believed in challenging the process when he stated, "What kind of man would live where there is no daring? I don't believe in foolish chances, but nothing can be accomplished without taking any chances at all." 3 In Chapter 3: The Foundation and Philosophical Years, challenging the process is extremely evident. There was a chance to change things and this began to give the students an opportunity for greatness. The need was employment training for students and alumni of this community to combat the lack of employability. To
accomplish great things we must not only dream but also act, not only believe but plan. This goal was accomplished through the commitments of searching for opportunities and experimenting and taking risks. By proposing the new curriculum of teaching job skills through work simulation, it was creating an opportunity for special needs youth. The program was the experiment and the seeking of real orders from real staff members and administrators was the beginning of numerous ventures in risk taking. Ayn Rand believed in inspiring a shared vision and stated, "Throughout the centuries there were men who took first steps down new roads armed with nothing but their own vision." 4

Chapter 3 also gives evidence to the second component of leadership, inspiring a shared vision. There was no road map to make the dream a reality. There was only a sense of what was possible if all of the students and staff worked together for the common purpose of pre-employment training through work simulation. Greater than an army with a banner is an idea whose time has come. The vision was ready to begin to be planted within the community and school from which it evolved from. This goal was accomplished through the commitments of envisioning the future and enlisting the support of others. By envisioning the work center with all of the possibilities of creating a position for each and every type of handicapping disability as well as believing that the program's market place could be the school,
community and nation was achieved. Enlisting others into the vision was accomplished through working with the school administration, students, parents and staff to recruiting these individuals into R.A.I.N.B.O.W.'s philosophy. Althea Gibson believed in enabling others to act by stating, "No matter what accomplishments you make, somebody helps you."  

In Chapter 4: The Developmental Years, enabling other to act is prominently evident. One single voice could not make this new program work. It could not be done alone. Partnerships evolved where collaboration and team building would become necessary from support staff and the student body. If there is anything that can be called success it chiefly is an ability to give the attention to a subject which keeps it steadily in mind. The persistence of bringing others attention to the subject of lack of employment training and employment for special needs youth of the community made other to want to take action. This goal was accomplished through fostering collaboration and building strength others. By seeking out the Homewood-Flossmoor Park District, the South Suburban Special Recreations Association and finally formulating the R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Foundation with all of the individuals it attracted made collaboration possible. Though the demise of the Foundation was a setback, it is not a disgrace for to start over it is an opportunity. Through this situation and the many linkages with the park districts alliances were
built which offered strength through commitment. The special needs students could feel the care which was evident in order to enable all of these individuals to action. Archibald Macleish believed in encouraging the heart when he stated, "There are those, I know, who will reply that the liberation of humanity, the freedom of man and mind, is nothing but a dream, they are right. It is the American Dream." 6

In Chapter 5: The Exponential and Innovative Years modeling the way is evidenced. To be a success in anything, be daring, be first, be different! The teacher modeled the ways by planting the seeds that to dream was a prerequisite for employment training. This was accomplished through the various projects that were thought of that the pre-employment skills would be taught through. This goal was achieved through the commitments of setting an example and then planning small wins. When the teacher set examples of the many ways to teach the floral art skills and then creatively finding unique opportunities in the market place for the products and services it made this happen. Planning the small wins came though building up a foundation of first marketing their products within the school, then community and finally to the nation. The first order from the Homewood-Flossmoor Athletic Director for red and white carnation boutonnieres for Coach's Day was the small win that eventually lead to the large win of making inaugural
decorations for Vice President Dan Quayle. Chapter 5 also
gives evidence of the fifth goal of encouraging the heart.
By getting the extraordinary things accomplished,
encouraging the students to continue their quest and then
bestowing recognition and praise made this significant goal
a reality. This goal was accomplished through the
commitments of recognizing contributions and celebrating
accomplishments. The pinnacle of success is when one shows
as much happiness over an honor bestowed on someone he
helped as he would if he had received it himself. And this
honor came to the special needs students by being recognized
and celebrated for each and every major project. The
teacher went out of his way to make sure that the students
were recognized. He would ask for letters, encourage
persons who purchased products not to thank him but come and
thank the students. This eventually lead to the Vice-
President thanking the class for inaugural order of 1989 and
then having President thanking the students for their
involvement with the World War II Commemorative Committee
1995. The celebrations were evidenced from simple pizza and
coca-cola parties for various community accomplishments to
workathons and end of summer JTPA major celebrations for
making an assortment of dreams a reality. Of all people to
indirectly experience this entire experience was the
secretary to the Superintendent from whose desk most of this
documentation passed. Also on numerous occasions she had
opportunities to talk and share with the students. Mrs. Jo Ann Tobin, Clerical support staff at H-F, offers a very unique and critical observation:

Students in this program have learned not only to produce a product, but the value of teamwork. These students have influenced not only their school but the entire nation with their ability to start a project and see it through to completion. The students have learned to have pride in themselves and their work. They have been able to move beyond their disabilities and discover their potential, whatever it may be. They have learned that nothing is impossible when you have faith and dedication. In challenging the process - this program says to its students we can challenge the status quo, we can go beyond what has been done in the past and open new frontiers. Inspiring a shared vision, the leadership of this program has been able to inspire the students to share its vision of what can be accomplished individually and collectively. Enabling other to act - this program shows that working together and setting an example enables others to become part of the group. Modeling the way - the leadership has shown what can be done, how it can be done and how others can become leaders within the group. Encouraging the Heart - of all the five components of leadership, the one is the heart and soul of the program. Without the love and devotion of the leader, this program could not have accomplished its goals and attained such heights of success. In my opinion, Americans with Disabilities in Action is a marvelous opportunity for disabled individuals to become as self-sufficient as possible. It has given these students a chance to grow, both mentally and emotionally. It has taken them out of their own world and shown them what lies beyond the boundaries. They have shared their abilities with the entire country and have added a new dimension to their lives. They have enlisted the help of others, young and old, both locally and all over the United States. They have created something special and have shown the county what disabled people can accomplish. They have earned the respect and love of their fellow countrymen.
They have gone beyond the classroom and embraced the entire United States." 7

Mr. and Mrs. William Thomson, parents of a regular education student aide, Kay, became very involved in the program during Desert Storm as parent volunteers. They are Scottish citizens and they state:

On each visit we made during 1991-1993 we noticed the beginnings of a development of curriculum along the guidelines of the program's five main goals. In that each student was truly developing as an individual, each taking the most of the ideas and skills within the bounds of his or her scope, and maintaining a sense of reality within the variety of perspectives, problem solving, decision making and finally, taking a responsible course of action. Loyalty to the program and teacher were evident and outweighs any flag waving, although it has its place. As an individual, the model is an excellent working theory, giving hope and encouragement by the progress of the naturally born handicapped to those whom have been disabled by tragedy rather than birth. From birth or by accident of life, these students have bent the shapes of conventional normality, the have become the living unseen, unheard, unwanted. It is the absolute right that each shall be treated as an individual, with the same rights as we would expect, freedom of choice, freedom of living, freedom of working, freedom to be happy and freedom of worship how we please. This we believe the J.T.P.A. has, and will continue to achieve in years to come. 8

Thomas Wolfe stated, "I think the true discovery of America is before us. I think the true fulfillment of our spirit, of our people, of our mighty and immortal land is yet to come." 9 The Leadership Challenge was the catalyst that made "what is past prologue" a seemingly eternal torch for the students, administrators, staff, parents, community
members, and partnerships with the government and military in Washington D.C. If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live in the direction of his dreams and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined he will meet with success unexpected in common hours. The Leadership Challenge was an invisible outline which evidenced itself in each and every one of the five practices common to leadership and in the ten commitments to leadership. This summary will now include the reflections of special students, parents and alumni who were involved with the program from its inception through the present worker clients. They share fond memories of the program as well as aspirations for employment training and transition. And as St. Ignatius of Loyola would have said if asked what his leadership style was like he would have answered, "Ask my followers!"

John Vlasek, a Homewood-Flossmoor alumni and former J.T.P.A. student states:

I enjoyed seeing Washington. I enjoyed meeting the First Lady, Mrs. Clinton. She was very nice because she took the time to talk with me like Dan Quayle did. I think it was exciting and it was an opportunity that J.T.P.A. wouldn't let me pass up. The program's goal was preparing me for the outside world. It told me how to follow directions, to be on time and how to interact with people because I kept to myself a lot due to family problems. Mr. Baran worked with other people very well and I know Mr. Baran very well. I know that he likes to help kids out. He likes working with kids and he knows how to really feel people's actions and
he figures out what's going on and that's why he's a good teacher! 10

Lalitha Murthy, another alumni student of Homewood-Flossmoor High School states:

The program is about making money and to get to know people and learning about different kinds of job skills. It built my confidence and values. It taught me to learn to like others and talk appropriately when it is the right time and less socializing and more working! I remember seeing all the kids, remembering all the people and meeting new people. When I went to the National Victory Celebration, the condolences touched their hearts by making the boutonnieres cheered them up. If people are interested in working I would suggest to get an interview and if they are really serious about it do give a call to the person in charge and tell them when your free to work at J.T.P.A. 11

Muhammed Ali Ibn (Arabic for son of Muhammed Ali, world champion prizefighter remembers:

Mr. Baran for the simple fact taught me that everything is possible and nothing is impossible! Dealing with disabled pupils really made me learn how to be patient at everything I do and be watchful with everything I say. Because surely what you say and do comes back to you and what goes around comes around. In the Islamic religion as well as Judaism and Christianity they teach you to treat others as you will have them treat you - always loving your brothers what you love for yourself. In Mr. Baran's teaching and protocol his mental imaging showed us how to get along with each other and how to get along with yourself. 12

Becky Mazek, another alumni student, talks of her favorite memory:

My favorite memory of being with Mr. Baran was meeting Vice President Dan Quayle. Mr. Baran gave me the honor to go on stage with Vice-President Quayle at our high school gym. Mr. Baran's program meant a lot to me and
it gave me a chance to meet different people. When I worked as an assistant job coach it felt good to help people with worst disabilities then I have. And I have cerebral palsy! 13

Joe Jury, a student of the J.T.P.A. program with Downs Syndrome states:

I was taught job skills twisting flags and leaves and I remember falling in the mud at the Iwo Jima Ceremony. I liked making work videos for J.T.P.A. I want to learn job skills from Mr. USA himself, Captain Rainbow(Bill Cosby). Mr. Baran tells funny jokes and he is a good guy teacher. He is nice kind hearted man.14

Charlotte Miggenburg, a Homewood-Flossmoor J.T.P.A. student states:

I be with Mr. Baran for 4 years now and he is a nice person. We make a lot of cards and flowers here and at home.15

Another student of Homewood-Flossmoor High School, Willard Brooks, states:

He teaches me how to work. I make boutonnieres, centerpieces and jobskills. When I worked in the Pentagon and went to three airports in one day and the school van broke down. This teaches me job skills and Mr. Baran makes me laugh. Mr. Baran taught me a lot about job skills. He is a nice teacher.16

Brian Chambers, student of the Homewood-Flossmoor High School J.T.P.A. program says:

He helps you learn floral skills and also job skills. I like when Mr. Baran tells funny jokes. My favorite project was Iwo Jima. I like Mr. Baran because he makes me laugh and I meet a lot of nice people like J.B. Feeney.17
Mrs. Karen Zuick, parent of two Homewood-Flossmoor High School alumni states:

I have especially noticed a pride, definite feeling of patriotism and the feeling that they are capable to entrepreneurship has been a definite resolve. I see self starting goals and ideas of carry through that were lacking before. Also working together with others and team work and not being isolated has been a factor of this leadership. Finally, the patterns of partnership established have educated others to what a disabled student is capable of and can accomplish. It says look at us, see us as individuals-productive people! 18

Mr. Jean Ratko, an adult volunteer and senior job coach of J.T.P.A. recalls:

The program showed me that within the spirit of the environment and the one-on-one assistance that these disabled children received that they too can achieve realistic goals! I recall little Suzanne with Downs Syndrome came into the summer program not being able to use wire cutters and within three weeks she was cutting and constructing silk corsages all by herself! Now that's something that still thrills me! Or the time Brian, another Downs Syndrome youth was at the Desert Storm workathon and he was teaching me how to make a star spangled tribute so I could also show others. There's something special that the Spirit is doing within that workcenter. You can almost feel it. 19

Heidi Baran, daughter of the researcher and college summer job coach, states:

I have witnessed my father's dream come true: A job training program for his students so that they will be able to be successful in a workplace environment. J.T.P.A. has provided one of a kind experiences for students that could never be learned or experienced in a classroom alone. My father's program lets special
needs students lead regular teenage lives. It provides them a place to make friends and feel accepted. I feel extremely lucky to have been part of J.T.P.A. and its successes. Personally, I have gained more from the program than anything else I have ever been involved in. Hopefully, someday J.T.P.A will be a national program so that every special needs student across America gets the chance to feel successful, needed, and accepted. One of the greatest experiences of my life was when I represented my dad for J.T.P.A. this past summer in DC for the Korean War Memorial Dedication and I handed out the famous flag tributes to Senator Dole, Billy Rae Cyrus, Judy Collins, and General Colin Powell who personally thanked me and recognized the name J.T.P.A. The most rewarding part of that experience was giving the flag tributes to the veterans who had tears in their eyes because they had finally been remembered. 20

Suzanne and Mrs. Sue Marie Gonzales and Scott and Mrs. Carolyn Benjamin views on leadership, employment and living situation are noteworthy. In an interview videotaped for a national special needs convention, Mrs. Gonzales states:

My husband and I, like thousands of other parents of a mentally handicapped child, are concerned with her future. Years pass very quickly and the concentrated efforts in school for vocational training is not what it could be even though it has made great strides in recent years there is still a great need in this area. We feel we need equal opportunities for training, employing and protecting the mentally handicapped and more funding to facilitate these programs. We need more awareness and incentives for employers that after our children are prepared to join the workforce there will be job opportunities for them. Everyone should have the opportunity to develop their fullest potential and have a meaningful life. Vocational education is the only future for many who are willing and able to give their best to society. Without vocational training our daughter will not have an opportunity in the future within the job market. 21
Suzanne Gonzales, in her interview, wanted to tell the significance of when she demonstrated her job skills for the Vice President in 1989. She stated:

When Vice-President Quayle showed enough interest in handicapped adults to come and thank us for the flowers, he gave me hope for myself and other young adults like me for future employment. We need help for training in specific jobs and I know if given an opportunity we can do as well as others in the work force. It was a great privilege and something I will always remember. 22

Mrs. Carolyn Benjamin also was videotaped and interviewed and shared the difficulty in assisting her son find the supportive employment and living that his transition plan emphasized. She stated:

When Scott left high school we wanted him prepared for a job or supportive employment and then get a job. We were eager to get him vocational education...he would need the training and that has proven to be the case. When he got out of high school he applied for numerous jobs, filled out the applications but he never got a call. He did get an interview but they would say, "Thank you, but we're looking for someone else." It seems that it is very important for employers to have people who come in to have work experience and it is very important in high school for the kids to get work experience. And he was fortunate at H-F to get some work experience through D.O.R.S. and in the library, laundry room and athletic department. He finally got a job in a fast foods service. But that didn't last long. So he had something on his resume. But when he went out to get a job I feel the employers were afraid to take a chance. They didn't know quite what to do, and if trouble would arise then it may be more trouble than they wanted to risk. He spent many months at home with no job and that was very frustrating to him and
very frustrating for us as parents. The bottom line is what's going to happen to him when we're gone, when we're not able to support his financial or emotional needs or look after his physical needs also. So I began calling places to see if there was some place to get into some supportive work or find someone to help him just get a job. I felt if he could get a job and just hold it and someone who could help the employer understand that this is what he could do. So I called many agencies. It got so depressing because there just didn't seem to be anything out there or nothing to help him. But you know me, I didn't give up, so I kept calling and I finally found a caseworker. He stated that he heard that in the north suburb of Oak Park that there are openings in a supportive living arrangement and they plan to have their clients live in apartments and they will have supportive employment. So I applied but I wasn't sure that we would get it because we were not in that district. But he was accepted and he is now living with three other guys in an apartment where a social worker comes three time a week to assist with budgeting. They have a job with transportation to and from work. It seems to be wonderful so far and we are very lucky. He seems to be happy and we're happy that he's there. The bottom line is we really had to search for it and I think of all of the other parents out there who have nothing. Employers seem to like the incentives and tax exemptions that encourage them to give the handicapped work. I think they especially like the job coaches that come in and work out the problems that they do not know how to deal with. It was so terribly frustrating to find nothing out there even with the support staff who are suppose to help say there is nothing out there.23

Scott Benjamin summarized his experience in the program and his transition into the real world of work and living by stating:

I helped do floral arrangements for the community that Larry contracted for. I worked in my junior and senior years at high school. I met a few times in the evening
to help the program after graduation. I learned to be on time for the jobs, to get along with each other, to do work. I tried to get the orders done on time, and to get them done. It helped make it easier to get a job, more confidence, and shows that I can do the job. We even went to Washington D.C. to see the President sign the ADA bill. And government is big. I learned to work with each other, and training to get a real job. I felt that I was getting job training and others weren't. They were just taking classes. Helping others do their jobs helped me for the future by helping me learn how to work with others. Working together is helpful. It shows teamwork. Larry showed me to be on time, to work with others and help each other out. The program makes the disabled look good for all the hard work that they put in and that they could do a good job. The program helped me know to be on time, do what your boss tells you, and to get along with coworkers. I felt I knew what to do when I got a job so I could keep it too. I have my own apartment now. Live by myself with minimal supervision (one hour a week). I manage my own money. I have a girlfriend. I am in a special social group activities in the community. I work in my church by being a lay reader, usher, help with a youth group. I volunteer for donut day and garage sale for the church to make money. I helped the high school basketball team for two or three years as a volunteer when I was in high school. I have learned how to take public transportation -- trains and buses. I have a job as a utility clerk for a large grocery store. I have worked there for six years. I think program's like Larry's should continue so that kids can learn different jobs, so people can have experiences. I answered the questions after my mother read and explained them to me. The answers are mine and not my mother's. My mother typed my answers.

This summary of Americans with Disabilities in Action - R.A.I.N.B.O.W. included a review of the five principles and their ten commitment of leadership with commentaries from special education students, parents, alumni and associates.
of this program. This dissertation reviewed the documents from an historical and legislative perspective of vocational education and special education. A review of disability issues of pre-employment training, employment opportunity and transition were reviewed. This set the narrative of the philosophy, foundation, development, and triumphs of Americans with Disabilities in Action into the important perspective of special education as it prepares the student with disabilities for transition into employment and living. The historic narrative documented the chronicles of events and achievements based upon the primary sources found within the program's archives. The narrative documented the teacher's philosophy of education from a review of his education and early involvement with handicapped youth. This lead to a deep desire to change employment training so that special needs youth of his community could have a better opportunity for employment. The evolution and accomplishments of these youth is specifically documented from the students meeting the Vice President Dan Quayle because of their designing his inaugural flowers to meeting President Bill Clinton who recognized their assistance in the WWII Commemorative Ceremony for Iwo Jima Marine veterans.
Chapter 6

1 Walt Disney in the American Adventure Lobby of EPCOT Center, Walt Disney World, Florida.

2 Interview with Ellen McDermott, October 1995.

3 Charles A. Lindberg in the American Adventure Lobby of EPCOT Center, Walt Disney World, Florida.

4 Any Rand in The American Adventure Lobby of EPCOT Center, Walt Disney World, Florida.

5 Althea Gibson in the American Adventure Lobby of EPCOT Center, Walt Disney World, Florida.

6 Archibald Macleish in the American Adventure Lobby of EPCOT Center, Walt Disney World, Florida.

7 Interview with Jo Ann Tobin, October 1995.

8 Interview with Mr. and Mr. William Thompson, October 1995.

9 Thomas Wolfe in the American Adventure Lobby of EPCOT Center, Walt Disney World, Florida.

10 Interview with John Vlasek, October 1995.

11 Interview with Lalitha Murthy, September 1995.

12 Interview with Muhammed Ali, October 1995.

13 Interview with Becky Mazek, September 1995.

14 Interview with Joe Jury, October 1995.

15 Interview with Charlotte Miggenburg, September 1995.

16 Interview with Willard Brooks, October 1995.

17 Interview with Brian Chambers, October 1995.
18 Interview with Mrs. Karen Zuick, October 1995.
19 Interview with Jean Ratko, October 1995.
20 Interview with Heidi Baran, October 1995.
21 Interview with Mrs. Sue Gonzales, October 1995.
22 Interview with Suzanne Gonzales, October 1995.
23 Interview with Mrs. Carolyn Benjamin, October 1995.
24 Interview with Scott Benjamin, October 1995.
CHAPTER 7

IMPLICATIONS FOR AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES IN ACTION - R.A.I.N.B.O.W.

This historical narrative of Americans with Disabilities in Action has given an opportunity to research and document the philosophy, foundation, development and triumphs of this program fifteen year progression. The analysis of these archives has suspended time and space allowing serious contemplation and reflection to the meaning of this program. Americans with Disabilities in Action - R.A.I.N.B.O.W. - is a model exemplary pre-employment skills training program that teaches through an entrepreneurial simulated work environment which attracted school, community, and national partnerships for their products. The basic truth of Americans with Disabilities in Action is that it a boot camp for leadership training in vision, inspiration and persistence. These special education students began modeling their teacher's philosophy and then believed their dream and vision could be turned into reality. They never ever had any agenda other than showcasing their products which in turn led them from their first order from the school's Athletic Director to an inaugural order for the Vice-President in Washington, D.C.
Americans with Disabilities in Action is a microcosm for building employability, patriotism and entrepreneurship. The student workers have taken very seriously President John F. Kennedy's famous quote, "Ask not what your country can do for you but rather what can you do for your country." These special education students never ever asked for anything but rather gave from their hearts and hands to recognize our national government, the military and the American veterans. Americans with Disabilities in Action also believes in President Abraham Lincoln's famous preamble of the Gettysburg Address that states, "Fourscore and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." These special needs youth have created an exemplary universal model of hope for youth and people with disabilities. And after thousands of hours of love and labor they are harvesting in a loud clear voice that is saying, "We are American citizens. We want an equitable opportunity in education, employment training, and employment. We want to earn a living, spend and save our money, raise a family and enjoy our rights to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness."

Finally, Americans with Disabilities in Action has taught the students the essence and meaning of the Rainbow which you cannot create; a rainbow is a response to life! And how have these youth responded? They have demonstrated to their
school, community, nation, and interstellar space that they have dignity, personal responsibility, and a sense of grace. Webster defines dignity as an elevation of character; intrinsic worth; and excellence. Grace is defined as a sense of right; graciousness. Truly these special education students have learned the "Tom Sawyer effect" of first observing, and then catching the paint brush vision of not only painting the gate but pushing it open into the American dream of opportunity. These special education students could have only accomplished this through the ownership of these values of dignity, personal responsibility, and grace through their patriotism and entrepreneurship. Truly for Americans with Disabilities in Action the dream becomes the reality of the Rainbow - that of Realistic Achievement for Individuals Needing Basic Occupational Workskills! Mr. Joseph Juarez, The Regional Administrator for the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration summarizes the six years of his advocacy of the J.T.P.A. program by stating:

I'm gratified that the Department of Labor and the Job Training Partnership Act have been able to play a small part in this program. It takes more than money to make an endeavor successful. Your personal commitment, sacrifice, and dedication have played a key role in the success of ADA. Larry, I've seen many programs in my career, but I can honestly say that ADA is much more than a program, it's a mission with a purpose - you meaningfully have touched peoples lives; those that participated in the program and those of us who have been fortunate enough to work with you in a small way. Thank you for caring so much and for working so hard on behalf of Americans with Disabilities in Action.
Former Vice-President Dan Quayle took the time to be interviewed through written correspondence and significantly commented on this program and other federally funded programs future with some optimism. This letter follows this page in which he states:

Thank you for sending me your book. (The Leadership Challenge) I have looked at your questions for your doctoral dissertation. Let me offer you a summary statement. First, the Americans with Disabilities Act was a much needed legislation. We tried to create opportunities for all Americans. As you know in the JTPA program which I authored, there was a very important section dealing with disabled Americans. Disabled Americans have participated in the JTPA program and many have found employment and continue to be employed to this day. There has been much criticism about the legislation and the bureaucracy at the ADA. I am not going to argue with those who criticize the bureaucracy. However, I will argue with those who attack the purpose of the ADA which provides more opportunities for all Americans. I hope this helps you with your dissertation. Good luck and I hope and pray for a speedy recovery. ²

Recommendations

This historical narrative of the philosophy, foundation, development and triumphs of the Americans with Disabilities in Action - R.A.I.N.B.O.W. Program for special education students at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School gives merit to the following educational and leadership recommendations:
1. Americans with Disabilities in Action should be shared with the regular education and special education fields as a model exemplary program for teaching employability, entrepreneurship, patriotism and inclusion.

2. Americans with Disabilities in Action should be studied to expand pre-employment training in not only manufacturing but also foods service and maintenance service training.

3. Americans with Disabilities in Action is at a crossroads. It needs to consider the process for becoming a student and alumni owned and operated corporation.

4. Americans with Disabilities in Action needs to investigate the option of becoming a student and alumni operated non-for-profit business.

5. Americans with Disabilities in Action needs to consider developing a linkage for supportive employment as an additional component to the current vocational linkage that the high currently offers.

6. Americans with Disabilities in Action needs to seriously consider linkages to corporate endowments and sponsorship based on their successful partnership model.
1 Joseph Juarez to Mr. Baran, 5 August 1995.

2 Dan Quayle to Mr. Baran, 1 August 1995.
This researcher has been in the process of being not only a cancer survivor but also adjunct to the process of cancer treatment an opportunity to complete his dissertation as well as initiate a new project based upon this experience has been completed. The tenacity and endurance to keep up the process was not only helped by having this academic pursuit as a goal to complete but also the medical and support staff at the University of Chicago's Hospital clinics for cancer treatment. There are four individuals that have allowed Captain Rainbow to remain intact during this treatment period of March 1995 - November 1995. They have listened to my ideas and plans for a national cancer flower of the month program that will involve hundreds of schools and youth across America. Primarily they will make a floral boutonniere for a person who is in chemotherapy and/or radiation, both in-patient and out-patient. These florals will have a short message of hope with the student's signature. The class will not only construct these tributes but also informally learn about cancer and its effect on families. The J.T.P.A. students during this summer program did a sampling of 1500 of these tributes. The resulting reaction was keep them coming! This researcher is going to need to find a corporate donor
to sponsor this great feat. This researcher is very proud
to share letters and comments from the University of Chicago
Hospital staff. Nurse Kim Melton states:

Devoted, caring and spirited are words used to describe
people who are generally "good." When it takes phrases
and paragraphs to describe someone, they are
categorized as "FANTASTIC." This is truly what
describes Larry Baran, or as his friends know him,
Captain Rainbow, the Philosophy King and Conqueror.
His efforts over the years have given so much joy and
hope to those who have a hard time even finding it
through a day that no thanks are enough for this man.
He has developed programs that are outstanding and
marveled by the nation, but for those who don't know,
that hurdle is hardly the highest that he has had to
scale. Larry has cancer. This visualization to some
is crippling, to Larry, it opened his eyes wider and he
preceeded to give more to all he encountered. I am one
of Larry's nurses and every time I see him, I am
reminded that fantastic people are truly a reality and
I am honored to assist in his battle for wellness, and
I am ready to share all his triumphs along the way.

Dr. Bruce Brockstein, Fellow of Oncology and Hematology
at the University of Chicago comments on the TLD - Today's a
Life Celebration flower of the month program for cancer
survivors chemotherapy treatments:

I have not met the student workers. I have learned
from treating cancer patients that seeing a person in
one setting, at one time in their life is limiting, and
that proper treatment requires imaginative envisioning
of the life longitudinally (over years) and laterally
(different aspects of present lives), similarly, I feel
that when dissecting the parts of the flowers
(products) I can envision the students at work,
achieving at least some of the goals.
Challenging...in this case, the process of chemotherapy
is challenged from a sultry one to a slightly more
uplifting one. Similarly, the process of being
disabled is challenged in its traditional sense in that
the "disabled" are "undiabled" or enabled and able to
produce a product to uplift the lives of people who in
many ways are more fortunate.
As a parent of a very young disabled child, it
encourages me to continue to strive to see my son
achieve happiness and maximization of his potential.
It validates my philosophy that achievement beyond the
easily recognizable are attainable. The involvement
with the program (the flowers for chemotherapy
patients) certainly makes the chemotherapy for our
patients a bit easier. On a personal level, it
provides hope for me as a father. ²

And from President Clinton:

Hillary and I were so sorry to learn of your health
problems. You are in our thoughts and prayers during
this difficult time. ³

Dr. Terrance D. Peabody, Assistant Professor at University
of Chicago states:

I got your last memo. I would agree, the resemblance
is uncanny. I'm also glad to hear that you're that
close to finishing the dissertation. As I could make
no sense of the jumbled questions you handed me, I'll
just give you my impression of your program which,
unfortunately, will be closely intertwined with my
impressions of you when I first met you. Please accept
it in the spirit that I say it. You know that I've
enjoyed taking care of you as a patient but even more
so getting to know you as a human being.

When I first met Larry Baran, I must honestly say I had
no idea where he was coming from. Here was a man full
of enthusiasm and energy assuming that I knew what he
was talking about when he discussed his connections
with the Pentagon and powerful political figures. I
knew that he was a teacher at a school close to my home
but nothing in his dress or mannerisms gave me a clue
as to who he was teaching or what he was teaching. It
was not until he and I both faced the serious nature of
his problem that I began to learn what he and his
program were all about. His group, Americans with
Disability in Action, encourage, instructs, and
motivates young people with developmental disabilities
to use their talent and skill to produce quality floral arrangements, boutonnieres, and the like. These arrangements have been everywhere including the Persian Gulf, inaugural ball, the Pentagon, as well as the Pope's visit to Colorado. This program allows young people to feel and be important and to contribute. Dealing as I do with people who often are disabled, I can't tell you how important that is. Self-esteem and feelings of self-worth are essential. Now that Mr. Baran is being treated for cancer, he's expanded the program into our Cancer Survivor Network here at the Hospital recording encouraging messages on cards along with attractive pin sets. His energy and enthusiasm have not been dampened by his experience here and he plans on handling the floral arrangements for the opening of our Ambulatory Care Center next year.

I think it is Mr. Baran's energy and enthusiasm which have propelled and buoyed this very worthwhile program for young adults with disabilities. I think it's a tribute to him and his community that support individuals with developmental disabilities and they acknowledge the contributions that these people make to our lives. 4

Peggy Baker, Program Director for Oncology at University of Chicago Hospitals states:

Larry's work and completion of his doctorate program are of top priority as he battles cancer. The writing of his dissertation has helped distract and motivate him to get through the rigorous chemotherapy treatments. The only short term goal he has set has involved the completion of all requirements in order to walk across Loyola's stage to receive his doctorate diploma. 5

This researcher was asked to write an article for the University of Chicago Triumph Over Cancer - Fall 1995 newsletter. It states:

Forest Gump's philosophy of life -- "Life is like a box of chocolates. you never know what you're going to get" -- became a reality for me this past March. I call this experience the "Oreo Cookie Effect."

I noticed a growth on the left side of my knee last Thanksgiving. Since I have had severe pain at that
location for over 10 years and have seen over 10 doctors, I was in no hurry to check with any more doctors.

You see, I have been extremely busy with my special education/vocational program for the past seven years doing work for our government and military, furnishing patriotic boutonnieres for national occasions. Because of this program I was awarded two prestigious educational awards. They were announced on the two days surrounding the day I went to a new orthopaedic doctor who diagnosed by growth as a tumor. The big "C" word immediately became the cream filling of my psyche. The two awards -- The Golden Apple Award and the Reader's Digest American Heroes in Education Award -- became the chocolate wafers of the Oreo Cookie Effect.

After an MRI, I was immediately referred to the University of Chicago Hospital's orthopaedic surgery program. This is where I met three great guys: Dr. Michael Simon, Dr. Terrence Peabody, and Dr. Parker Gibbs. They did the biopsy and later the initial surgery to remove a suspected benign tumor. Five days after the surgery, I needed an ultrasound for suspected blood clots in my leg. The test showed two clots. I was asked to wait while Dr. Peabody was called. He immediately escorted me to his office.

I'll never forget Dr. Peabody's eyes of compassion; I knew something was wrong. His eyes revealed his empathic heart. He said, "Larry, our initial diagnosis was wrong. Your tumor is malignant. You have spindle cell sarcoma -- a very rare cancer that just six years ago was only treatable through amputation."
Fortunately, The U of C Hospitals now offer an alternative to amputation. Dr. Peabody explained that I would need a second surgery to remove the muscles that were surrounding the tumor. Then I would need radiation followed by inpatient chemotherapy.

I'm thankful for meeting Triumph Over Cancer program director Peggy Baker, who explained to me that I was a survivor of cancer as soon as I learned of my diagnosis. She helped involve my students in the National Cancer Survivors Day celebration. I was able to meet over 700 cancer survivors that day, pass out a patriotic tribute and talk with my new peer group: cancer survivors!
I believe that Providence has this cancer paradigm as my new life challenge. I have interacted with a dynamic and friendly hospital staff. I have had the honor to hear people's stories of horror and grace while waiting for radiation treatment. I have formed close relationships with Dr. Peabody, Dr. Gibb, and Peggy Baker. I don't mean this as morbid, but I've enjoyed my experiences here. I see this new life challenge as adversity surrounded by a garden of caring professionals and loving patients whose lives are cancer-centered.

My Oreo Cancer Cookie is now surrounded by the revelation that life is a precious gift from God and I really am a mortal being! I refuse to let my cookie get stale. I've decided to celebrate each moment of the gift of life by dipping my Cancer Cookie in milk -- the precious moments to interact and live life as positively and prayerfully as humanly possible. For truly, "life is good."

F.Y.I. My nickname is Captain Rainbow and my philosophy is "The impossible dream isn't! My dream is a reality by appreciating my gift of life as a gift from God."
ENDNOTES
Epilogue

1 Interview with Kim Melton, October 1995.

2 Interview with Dr. Bruce Brockstein, October 1995.

3 President Clinton to Mr. Baran, May, 1995.

4 Dr. Terrance Peabody to Mr. Baran, 10 October, 1995.

5 Peggy Baker to Mr. Baran, 16 October 1995.

APPENDIX 1

COURSE PROPOSAL FOR FLORAL DESIGN AT
HOMewood-FLOSSMOOR COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL
Rationale for Floral Designing: A Prevocational Career Experience of Special Education

Students are eager to earn their high school diploma in order to gain the fundamental prerequisite for entrance into the working world. Implied in this notion is that students will be able to adapt and cope with the numerous demands of being employed. Special Education students have similar aspirations yet common work demands often turn out to be confusing, overwhelming, and self-defeating. A prevocational work experience within the neutral, yet protective environment of a school will be able to give the students the opportunity for the following:

1. learning the fundamentals of a specific career experience
2. skill building through capitalization of the students' learning strengths, i.e. auditory, visual, or motor channels
3. monitoring of skills which require students' area of weakness in order to control frustration level.
4. synthesizing each skill into the gestalt of the total program
5. analyzing each task into an orderly manner of skills needed
6. enhancing self image
7. developing positive behavior traits to deal with co-workers

This framework can be superimposed on various careers in order to give the student the foundation needed for specific job mastery. This prevocational experience can also lend itself to how well a student may perform in the working arena. A career in floral designing gives an employee the
opportunity to perform in various aspects on the job. Each area requires subskills and talents which are based on one or more of the following academics or related learning skill areas: basic math, functional reading, spelling, written language, fine motor, visual and auditory perception and discrimination, closure, and memory. Students who can learn to master these skills will have definite advantages for making application for employment in this area. The students would be familiar with the work settings and demands the job requires. A profile on strengths and weaknesses can be beneficial in programming the student into various job roles at work stations. Any florist would be interested in hiring an employee that would require little if any on the job training.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Baran, CII.
Floral Designing: Skills within this Prevocational Experience

DESIGNING - cutting, wiring, stemming, stripping, taping, artistry, and creativity

SKILLS - visual motor, visual memory, visual discrimination, visual closure, and fine motor

SALES - ordering, use of the phone, making change, writing up orders, and receipts

SKILLS - math, spelling, written language, auditory, and visual memory

MAINTENANCE - sweeping, mopping, cleaning, washing

SKILLS - auditory, visual, and gross motor

P.R. - talking to public, relating to co-workers

SKILLS - appropriate behaviors

DELIVERY - packaging, wrapping, map skills, driving, collecting monies

SKILLS - visual motor, fine motor, closure, visual discrimination, reading, math

All of these skills and experiences lead to the production of the product and a successfully trained employee.
DEPARTMENT - Special Education, CII

COURSE TITLE - Floral Designing: One Component of a Prevocational Career Experience Module.

COURSE LEVEL AND PREREQUISITE - junior and senior prerequisite - Careers I (Work Activity) or an I.E.P. recommendation

COURSE LENGTH - one semester

COURSE DESCRIPTION - A prevocational career experience in floral design will give the student the opportunity to develop salable skills, remediate deficit learning areas, capitalize on channels of strength and offer a chance to partake in a form of art therapy. Students will be able to observe and participate in the stages of floral design, including wholesaling, repairing, designing, selling, packaging, and delivering. Within each area are numerous opportunities to further develop basic academic skills.

COURSE OBJECTIVES - Improve basic reading skills, math skills, spelling skills, writing skills, gross and fine motor skills, auditory and visual processing skills, vocational awareness, and improve self esteem.

COURSE CONTENT OUTLINE - Aspects of shop management will be taught simultaneously with floral designing.

I. Designing
   A. Understanding of tools and materials used in floral art
   B. Developing skills in design preparation-cutting, wiring, stemming, stripping, taping
   C. Developing artistic skills-shape, colors, themes, patterns, symmetry
   D. Encouraging Creativity

II. Shop Management - Besides the actual designing procedures and phases of operation that take place in a floral environment, each area will be reviewed.
A. Wholesaling - purchasing of components from a dealer
B. Sales-receiving orders and writing up receipts
C. Maintenance procedures for keeping a shop in order
D. Public Relations - dealing with customers and relating with co-workers
E. Packaging - wrapping, taping, and tagging items for sale
F. Delivery - reading maps, driving, signing receipts and collecting monies

PROPOSED BUDGET - $1000-$2000  Items needed are container s, foam, wire, tape, scissors, ribbon, knives, picks, packing machine, non-consumable flowers for practice (plastics and polyester flowers), consumable flowers on occasion where avenue to sell would be possible in order to reinvest supply money. Facility needed is classroom with large tables and storage area. Access to lunchroom refrigerator needed occasionally.

DOES THIS COURSE OVERLAP ANOTHER? - No

HOW LONG UNDER CONSIDERATION AND DEVELOPMENT? - New proposal
PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPMENT - Larry Baran, CII Dept.
APPENDIX 2

LIST OF COMMUNITY CUSTOMERS OF R.A.I.N.B.O.W.
APPENDIX 2
LIST OF COMMUNITY CUSTOMERS OF R.A.I.N.B.O.W.

- Homewood-Flossmoor Park District - silk corsages and boutonnieres for their annual Daddy-Daughter Valentine Dance.
- Ingalls Hospital Nurses Day Tribute for 8 years of support.
- St. Joseph's Parish 75th Anniversary dinner - 50 silk centerpieces and 30 centerpieces for the St. Patrick's Day brunch.
- Infant Jesus of Prague Parish Annual Lady's Fashion Show - 50 centerpieces.
- The Illinois Parks and Recreation Association Annual State Convention - recognition tributes.
- Numerous faculty and staff members family celebrations for banquets involving silk corsages, boutonnieres and centerpieces for anniversary's and weddings.
- Subcontract work for McDonald Corporation for silk corsages for franchise owners.
- Homewood Fire Department's annual Fourth of July Parade - red, white and blue promotional handouts.
• Homewood Chamber of Commerce - Spring luncheon silk centerpieces.
• Mt. Greenwood Lions Club - 25 patriotic centerpieces.
• Flossmoor Book Club - spring centerpieces.
• New Covenant Free Church - Founders Day centerpieces.
• Naughton Real Estate - promotional corsages.
• Jack and Jill African American Youth Group - 200 printed and floral ribbons.
• Bank of Homewood - 24 holiday centerpieces.
• Heritage Bank of Blue Island - 24 holiday centerpieces.
APPENDIX 3

BY-LAWS OF PROJECT R.A.I.N.B.O.W.
BY - LAWS

OF

PROJECT RAINBOW FOUNDATION
# TABLE OF CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE I</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE II</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE III</td>
<td>Status of the Foundation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE IV</td>
<td>Members</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE V</td>
<td>Officers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE VI</td>
<td>Directors</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE VII</td>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE VIII</td>
<td>Committees</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE IX</td>
<td>Finances</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE X</td>
<td>Indemnification</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE XI</td>
<td>Order of Business</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE XII</td>
<td>Amendments</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ARTICLE I
Name
The name of this organization shall be the Project Rainbow Foundation. Rainbow is an acronym for Realistic Achievement for Individuals Needing Basic Occupational Workskills.

ARTICLE II
Purpose
The purpose of the Project Rainbow Foundation (hereafter referred to as the Foundation in this document) are:

a) to secure and channel private funds to support vocational programs and activities which are beyond the budgetary parameters of and for which federal and state funding has nor been and is not available, and which will lead to the overall improvement of the quality of life of young adults served by the Foundation.

b) The Foundation will provide a vocational training workshop which refines job, living, and social skills, as well as fosters the development of body, mind and spirit for the special needs population leading these individuals to an independent lifestyle within our community.

c) to hold, manage, invest and expand endowment funds
and other gifts, grants, bequests, whether consisting of real or personal property, and whether subject to directions or conditions imposed by the donors, exclusively for the benefit of individuals served by the Foundation and such charitable programs or activities as the Foundation Board of Directors from time to time deem to be suitable and appropriate.

d) to build links among business, government, and civic organizations which will enhance community support for Project Rainbow and which will lead to the overall improvement of the quality of vocational training and employability and employment of the special needs population served by Project Rainbow.

These purposes will not be deemed to usurp or supplant the responsibilities of the public sector in regards to education and vocational training as provided by state and federal law, and the regulations promulgated thereunder.

ARTICLE III

Status of the Foundation

No funds of the Foundation shall inure to the benefit or be distributed to its members, directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the Foundation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered which are
reasonable and necessary to carrying out the exempt purpose of the Foundation.
ARTICLE IV

Members

1. Membership. Any individual or organization which subscribes to the purpose of this Foundation may become a member of the Foundation subject only to compliance with the By-laws. Only members in good standing of the Foundation shall be eligible for election as officers or directors.

2. Dues. Each member of the Foundation shall pay annual dues of $10.00 to the Foundation.

3. Meetings. An annual meeting of the members shall be held on the 1st Thursday of January immediately following the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors.

4. Order of Business. The following shall be the regular order of business at all member meetings:
   a) Meeting Call to Order;
   b) Annual Report;
   c) Treasurer’s Report;
   d) Unfinished Business;
   e) New Business;
   f) Comments for the Good of the Organization; and
   g) Adjournment

ARTICLE V

Officers

1. Officers. The officers of the Foundation shall consist of a President, one or more Vice Presidents, a
Secretary, a Treasurer, and such other officers may be deemed necessary by the Board of Directors.

2. Elections. Officers shall be elected annually at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors.

3. Duties of Officers.

   A. President. It shall be the duty of the President to preside at meetings of this Foundation and to perform such other duties as ordinarily pertain to this office. In addition, he/she shall be an ex officio member of all committees, except the nominating and audit committees.

   B. Vice President. It shall be the duty of the Vice President to preside at meetings of this Foundation in the absence of the President and to perform such duties as ordinarily pertain to this office.

   C. Secretary. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep the records of membership, record attendance at meetings, send out notices of meetings of Board and committees, record and preserve the minutes of such meetings, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to this office. Upon his/her retirement from office he/she shall turn over to his/her successor, or the President, all records, and/or other property of this Foundation in his/her possession.

   D. Treasurer. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to have custody of all funds, accounting for same to this Foundation at least annually and at any other time upon demand by the Board and to perform such other duties as pertain to this office. Upon his/her
retirement from office he/she shall turn over to his/her successor, or to the President, all funds, books of accounts or any other property of this Foundation in his/her possession.

ARTICLE VI

Directors

1. Number. The property, affairs, activities, and concerns of the Foundation shall be vested in a Board of Directors consisting of not less than five (5) nor more than (10) members plus the immediate past president, ex officio. The members of the Board shall, upon election, immediately enter upon the performance of their duties and shall continue in office until their successors shall be duly elected and qualified.

2. Election of Directors and Term. The initial Board of Directors, who shall serve until the first annual meeting of the Board of Directors, shall consist of those individuals named in the Articles of Incorporation and such others as the then Board may appoint at its own discretion. Said initial Directors shall serve for a period of two-years and one-third shall serve for a period of three-years. At the first annual meeting of the Board of Directors and at each annual meeting thereafter, a number of Directors equal to that of those whose terms have expired shall be elected for the term of three years. At the expiration of any term of three years, any director may be re-elected. Until the full Board complement has been attained, the Board may appoint Directors at any time,
3. Ex officio member. The immediate Past President shall be an ex officio member of the Board of Directors for one year following his/her term as President.

4. Vacancy. A vacancy on the Board of Directors or any other office shall be filled by action of the remaining members of the Board for the unexpired term of said member(s).

5. Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on the second Thursday of August, beginning with the year 1988 for the transaction of such business as may come before the Board. If the date fixed for the Annual Meeting is a legal holiday in the State of Illinois, the Board of Directors may change the date for the Annual Meeting to any other date within sixty (60) calendar days of the date designated, provided that notice of at least thirty (30) days is given each Board member in writing.

6. Regular Meetings. The Board of Directors will provide by resolution for regular meetings of the Board to be held at a fixed time and place.

7. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be held at any time for any appropriate purpose or purposes, unless otherwise proscribed by statute.

(a) on call of the President; or,

(b) upon the prior written request of two-thirds (2/3) of the Directors.

8. Notice. Directors shall be given notice of any
meeting by the Secretary. Notice of any special meeting shall be given in writing and delivered personally to each director at least seventy-two (72) hours prior thereto. Written notice not delivered personally, must be mailed or telegraphed to each director at least five (5) days prior thereto. The purpose of said meeting shall be set forth in such notice.

9. Place of Meeting. The Board of Directors may designate any place within or without the State of Illinois, as the place of meeting for any annual, regular or special meeting. If no designation is made, the place of meeting shall be at St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church, Flossmoor, Illinois.

10. Quorum. A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board of Directors; however, if less than such majority is present at any meeting of the Board, a majority of the directors present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

ARTICLE VII

Voting

1. Method. The business of this Foundation shall be transacted by roll call vote of the Directors, except the election of officers and directors which shall be secret ballot.

2. Prohibition of Proxy Voting. At all meetings of the Board of Directors and committee of the Foundation, each Director entitled to vote shall have a right to
cast one vote on each question presented, which vote shall be cast in person and not by proxy.

ARTICLE VIII

Committees

Section 1. General. The President shall appoint such committees as are deemed necessary to assist the business of the Board. The first person appointed to any committee, unless otherwise specified by the President, shall be the Chairman of said committee.

Section 2. Standing Committees.

(a) Awards Committee. This committee shall consist of the liaison person, the Treasurer of the Foundation, and any additional member from the Board. This committee shall review potential recipients for the granting of individual awards and scholarships, and make recommendations for action by the Board of Directors.

(b) Fund Raising Committee. This committee shall consist of the President and three (3) other Board members. Its purpose shall be to promote and solicit revenue and contributions for the Foundation.

(c) Audit Committee. This committee shall include three (3) members of the Board appointed by the President, not including the President or Treasurer. This Committee shall report to the board at its Annual Meeting the results of the Annual Audit required hereunder pursuant to Section 8 of Article IX.

(d) Nominating Committee. This committee shall consist of three members of the Board and shall not
include the President. At least forty-five (45) days before each annual meeting of the Board, this committee shall report its selection of nominees to the Secretary. No name shall be submitted without the consent of the nominee.

ARTICLE IX

Finances

1. Contracts. The Board of Directors may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of any on behalf of the Foundation, and such authority may be general or confirmed to specific instances.

2. Loans. No funded indebtedness shall be contracted on behalf of the Foundation and no evidences of such indebtedness shall be issued in its name unless authorized by a resolution of the Board of Directors. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

3. Checks and Drafts. All checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the Foundation shall be signed by the Treasurer and the President, upon receipt of vouchers signed by the President.

4. Deposits. All funds of the Foundation, not otherwise employed, shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Foundation in such banks, savings and loan associations, trust companies or other
depositories as the Board of Directors may select.

5. Bonding. Officers and their agents having charge or control of funds shall give bond for the safe custody of the funds of the Foundation. The cost of said bond shall be borne by the Foundation.

6. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Foundation shall extend from January 1 to December 31.

7. Execution of Instruments Affecting Real Property. All instruments executed by the Foundation which are acknowledged and which affect an interest in real estate shall be deemed sufficient if executed by the President or Vice President of the Foundation and by the Secretary or Treasurer, or any Assistant Secretary or Assistant Treasurer of the Foundation, or otherwise executed as provided by specific resolution of the Board of Directors. All other instruments executed by the Foundation, including any releases of mortgages or liens of any kind, may be executed by the President, or Vice President, or Secretary, or Treasurer, or Assistant Secretary or Assistant Treasurer, or by any other person authorized by specific resolution of the Board of Directors, or as otherwise may be provided in the By-laws.

8. Audit. A thorough audit by a certified public accountant or any other qualified person designated by action of the Board shall be made once each year of all the Board’s financial transactions.

9. Budget. At the beginning of each fiscal year the Board shall prepare or cause to be prepared a budget of
estimated income and expenditures for the year, which, having been agreed to by the Board, shall stand as the limit of expenditures for the respective purposes unless otherwise ordered by the action of the Board.

ARTICLE X

Indemnification

1. The Foundation shall have power to indemnify any and all of its directors or officers or former directors or officers or any person who may have served at its request or by its election as a director or officer of another corporation against expenses actually and necessarily incurred by them in connection with the defense or settlement of any action, suit or proceeding in which they, or any of them, are made parties, or a party, by reason of being or having been directors or officers or a relation to matters as to which any such director or officer of former director or officer or person shall be adjudged in such action, suit or proceeding to be liable for willful misconduct in the performance of duty and to such matters as shall be settled by agreement predicated on the existence of such liability.

2. The Foundation shall have power to purchase insurance for such indemnification of directors or officers to the full extent as determined from time to time by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XI

Order of Business

Section 1. Order of Business. The following shall
be the regular order of business at all meetings of the Board of Directors.

(a) Meeting Call to Order
(b) Roll Call
(c) Reports of Officers
(d) Reports of Committees and Committee Resolutions
(e) Unfinished Business
(f) New Business
(g) Fill Vacancies and Conduct Prescribed Elections
(h) Resolutions
(i) Adjournment

Section 2. Parliamentary Authority and Parliamentarian.

(a) Parliamentary Authority: "Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised" shall govern the deliberations of all meetings of the Board of Directors.
(b) Parliamentarian: The President may appoint an official Parliamentarian of this organization, who shall serve at the pleasure of the President.

ARTICLE XII
Amendments

Section 1. These by-laws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors, a quorum being present, by two-thirds (2/3) vote of all Directors present, provided that notice of such proposed amendment shall have been mailed to each member of the Board at least ten (10) days before such meeting. No amendment or addition to these By-laws may be made which is not in harmony with the purpose of the Foundation.
APPENDIX 4

THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
Program Description
Leadership Development Program:
Transition For Students From Special Populations
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Audience

The Leadership Development Program (LDP) focuses on the professional development of leadership skills in personnel serving students from special populations enrolled in vocational programs. These professionals include administrators, supervisors, counselors, coordinators, and teachers who are employed by vocational regions, high schools, special education cooperatives, area vocational centers, community colleges, rehabilitation agencies, Job Training Partnership programs, and other related agencies. During the summer and academic year, the program is limited to 25 participants from local or regional programs.

Overview

This year-long, field-based, graduate-level program combines traditional classroom instruction with a collaborative learning approach to professional development. Participants enrolled in this program gain in-depth knowledge and expertise in developing, implementing, and evaluating programs that serve students from special populations. Major components of the program include two on-campus Summer institute courses, four two-day seminars held throughout the academic year, and the implementation of a Program Improvement Project (PIP) based on a formal needs assessment. Individuals seeking admission to the LDP must apply as teams of two-to-four persons and be supported by their employing agency(ies). After qualifying for admission to the Graduate College, participants may apply the credit earned in the LDP toward the completion of a master's degree (or other advanced degree) in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Program Objectives

Education/Employment
.To improve and expand career-related opportunities for youth and adults from special populations.

Leadership
.To build a diverse cadre of leadership personnel (including individuals from minority populations and persons with disabilities) who can develop, implement, and evaluate program improvement activities and inservice education
programs for students from under-represented "special populations" (e.g., disadvantaged, minorities, limited English proficient).

To engage practitioners in a comprehensive program that addresses current issues and trends in the area of special needs education (e.g., the impact of new legislation, new programs, approaches, state guidelines and mandates) as they work to assume greater responsibility in the development and delivery of programs for students.

Partnerships/Networking
To strengthen intra- and inter-agency collaboration and articulation efforts that reflect new and emerging issues and thrusts in special needs education.

.To foster business-education partnerships.

.To increase articulation and networking among academic, vocational, and special education personnel and between the university, public schools, and community colleges.

Professional Development
.To provide an opportunity for professionals in a variety of fields related to special needs education to work toward a master's or other advanced degrees.

Program Benefits
.class tuition and fees waived for each of the four graduate courses (each course is equal to 1 unit or 4 credit hours).

.A one-time fixed sum between $750-1000 is awarded to each team to assist in the completion of their program improvement project. An administrator from one of the participating institutions serves as fiscal agent.

.Local control of program improvement with technical assistance from university faculty as requested.

.Enhanced transition planning and student services through collaborative activities.

Program Sequence
VOTEC/SP 309
The topics covered throughout the course are designed to help participants build a strong knowledge base in the delivery of programs for students from special populations. A variety of instructional techniques are used, including lecture-discussion, media presentations, outside readings, a visit to the Illinois State Board of Education, and guest lectures. The major requirement of this course is for each participant team to conduct a local needs assessment of their sponsoring school, community college, or agency to determine access to and quality of services to students from special populations.

VOTEC 451
The major requirement of this course involves the analysis of
local needs assessment data and the finalization of the Action Plan for a Program Improvement Project to be implemented during the subsequent academic year. Students also develop competencies in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of staff development programs.

VOCTEC 456

Is a specially designed seminar course scheduled during the fall and spring semesters. Throughout this course, an in-depth analysis is made of current issues, problems, and trends in the field of special needs education and will involve participation in four two-day seminars between September and the following April. These four seminars will be organized by seminar planning teams and will cover topics selected by participants and staff (e.g., assessment, career awareness, transition, secondary and post secondary programming, cooperative learning, the marketing of special programs, and collaborative efforts with business and industry). Selection of seminar sites will be based on the geographical locations of seminar planning team members and the willingness to host these two-day meetings.
APPENDIX 5

THE BUSH/QUAYLE INAUGURATION
Becky Mazek, who has cerebral palsy, was thrilled to be given the chance to assemble artificial flower arrangements for George Bush's Presidential inauguration. So was Suzanne Marie Gonzalez, who suffers from Downs Syndrome. And so was Lalitha Murthy, who wasn't quite sure what her disability was. "I have trouble in math," she said. On Monday, Becky, 15, Suzanne, 20, Lalitha, 16 and some 50 other physically, mentally and emotionally handicapped high school students from the south suburbs went to work for the next President of the United States. "These flowers are going to make the President realize that people with these disabilities can do the job," said Larry Baran, a special education teacher at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, who sold the inauguration committee on the idea of letting his special students make the elaborate centerpieces and other silk-flower arrangements for one of the galas surrounding the day's festivities. With Baran and a handful of parents and other helpers to guide them, the "handicapable" students of Project Rainbow (Realistic Achievement for Individuals Needing Basic Occupational Workskills) showed what they could do. They painted display racks. They measured and cut ornamental ribbon. They cemented wire trees into papier-mâché containers. They tied together bouquets of artificial roses, tigerlillies and hollyhocks. They painstakingly assembled centerpieces flower by flower, making sure the sprigs of bluebells were bent just so and the top of the tigerlilly remained below the curved handle of the wicker basket. "Working on something like this gives you confidence," said Terry Creagan, who described himself as a slow learner. "It says that I believe in you, and I know you can handle responsibility." Creagan graduated in 1984 from Homewood-Flossmoor, which is part of the South Metropolitan Association cooperative that educates handicapped students from 150 south suburban school districts. He now works for a janitorial service in a Loop office building.

The floral arrangements originally were to have graced a rather informal pre-parade hot dog and popcorn party for U.S. senators. At the last minute the inaugural committee decided the decorations were better suited for a more formal reception in the Department of Commerce for some 3000
governors, mayors and state legislators. That meant that instead of filling a lot of bud vases, the young people would decorate more complicated table lanterns. That meant they would have to come in on the anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, a school holiday, to get the job done on time. Still no one objected, not even Becky Mazek, who had final exams starting the next day! "If Mr. Baran needs my help, I'm going to help him." she said. "He's been wonderful to me."

Mr. Baran got the inauguration committee's "business" which actually represented a donation by Project Rainbow of the student's work and about $1500 in materials, by placing a call to the committee's offices in Washington shortly after Thanksgiving. For several weeks he was bounced from staff member to staff member, each time patiently explaining how for ten years Project Rainbow had used floral arranging to teach job skills and build good work habits among hard to employ handicapped. In addition, he told anyone he could get to listen, that the student's work was so good that it was bought on a regular basis by churches, supermarkets and even McDonald's Corporation. Finally, one staffer said she would consider the idea if Mr. Baran got a picture of the centerpiece into her hands the next day. Instead, Mr. Baran hopped on a plane - using a ticket his brother-in-law had been given as compensation for being bumped - and brought a sample in person. "I'm very good at selling," he said. "I used to have my own wedding floral business. I was just very bad when it came to pricing." The committee liked what they saw. As a result of all of this, on Wednesday, Mr. Baran would take a day of personal leave from teaching, get into his car, drive to Washington D.C., and deliver the floral arrangements in person. In addition to the swans, lanterns and baskets that the committee ordered, there were seven other table sized swan baskets filled with more gaily colored silk flowers - and Project Rainbow's business cards. "It wouldn't be right," Mr. Baran said, "if the important people there didn't know who did all of this." *

THE AMERICAN BICENTENNIAL PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURAL

January 13, 1989

Dear Mr. Baran,

On behalf of The American Bicentennial Presidential Inaugural Committee, we thank you for your kind offer of assistance in our endeavor to make the Inauguration of President-Elect George Bush and Vice President-Elect Dan Quayle a celebration for the nation. Your interest and support is greatly appreciated. The Inaugural Committee reviewed the detailed information and qualifications that you submitted concerning your services. After carefully considering the needs of the Presidential Inaugural Committee, we, regretfully, are unable to utilize your services at this time. Thank you again for your interest and support.

Sincerely,

William D. Harris
Director of Operations
PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURAL PROGRAM

In Honor of Mayors
of U.S. Cities
and
State and County Officials
and Under the Gracious Sponsorship of
Anheuser-Busch Companies
The American Bicentennial Presidential Inaugural
Committee of the District of Columbia
requests the pleasure of your company
at a
Gala American Food, Beer and Wine Festival
at the United States Departmental Auditorium
on Constitution Avenue N.W. between 12th and 13th
on Friday, January 20th, 1989
from 11:30AM until 3:00PM
in the City of Washington

Robert Lawrence Balzer    William C. Anton    Michael Doud Gill
Food and Wine            Event Chairman       Chairman
Selection Chairman

American Bicentennial Presidential Inaugural Committee for
the District of Columbia
Larry Baran of Chicago leaped and jiggled and quivered with the joy of it all. "I did it!" yelled the high school special-education teacher as Vice-President Quayle disappeared behind the stage yesterday at the Departmental Auditorium. "I was not going to let him leave! I gave my life to this!" And so Baran besieged Quayle as the vice president was leaving the congressional reception and gasping, told him about the 100 disabled students who made all the silk flowers decorating the room. Baran gasped, his quarry listened, and before his entourage swept him away Quayle agreed to talk to Baran later and perhaps, to visit Baran's school. "That man's brilliant!" said Baran afterwards. "I heard many people make fun of him, people in the administration-Republicans, while I was working with them. He's no fool! He's brilliant!" Of such moments are rejuvenated reputations made. Quayle himself seemed almost as content as Baran, as the Vice-Presidential family from Indiana shook a hundred or so hands and posed for pictures with congressional families, friends and staff. "Today is not the day to extol all the problems and challenges ahead of us," Quayle, an extoller from way back, told the crowd. "Today is a day to celebrate." Along with celebrating, these days are also good for referring to all activities as The First Official Whatever-It-Is. The Quayles yesterday played the First Official Football Game at the Vice-Presidential residence. Quayle informed his guests that he and his sons "beat the adults. We were able to put on football clothes. They were in their suits and ties, and we had them facing the sun. One of my first Vice-Presidential decisions was choosing who was on the team." *

In Washington, D.C., January 21, 1991, at the new Vice-President's Reception for Members of Congress, one day after the Bush-Quayle Inauguration, while assisting Mr. Quayle as a co-host, I enjoyed talking with many Senators, Congressmen and members of their families, several of whom remarked on the wonderful arrangements of artificial flowers. So I looked for those responsible to pass along their compliments while offering my own. Meeting Larry Baran and the lady assisting him, Marionette Young, I felt the Holy Spirit working through us in a mystical way. I quickly realized in the closing minutes of the reception that Mr. Quayle needed to receive important information from Mr. Baran about the kids and their program that with Larry's leadership, produced these beautiful flower arrangements and more important--building more productive, fulfilling lives for these special people. So with my camcorder and lights capturing the moments, as the Secret Service and staffers escorted the Vice President and his family away, the Spirit brought these two men into a long handshake with very intense and auspicious exchange of words, as Dan Quayle responded with a promise to come to the school where he would personally thank the kids who contributed so much to this beautiful reception--the beginning of very productive years for Mr. Baran and his program, extending the kids productive work into national and international events, sharing the love and beauty carrying their Spirit to millions throughout the world.

Sincerely,

Bill Weir
Flowers for an inaugural event attended by Vice President Quayle were prepared by 50 special education students thanks to a tireless effort of florist and special education teacher Larry Baran of Homewood-Flossmoor High School in Homewood, Illinois. The flowers were prepared by students with a variety of handicaps as part of a vocational skills program in which students work closely with community businesses learning job related skills. The event, which was hosted by the Marriott's of Marriott Hotel fame, was given for mayors, and city legislators, and was attended by 3000 people, who, according to Baran, were impressed by the arrangements. Baran, who drove the flowers to Washington himself in a van, did not pass by the opportunity to introduce himself to Quayle, describe the program and extend an invitation to Quayle to come to the school and meet the students, which Quayle graciously accepted.*

Vice-President Dan Quayle was about to sneak out the back door at an inaugural reception last January when he saw a man running toward his secret service staff, screaming wildly, "Mr. Vice-President, Mr. Vice-President!" Quayle paused just long enough for out-of-breath Illinois special education teacher Larry Baran to blurt out a very important message: "My special education students at Homewood-Flossmoor High School made all of the floral arrangements for this reception!" The Vice-President, according to Baran, "just melted." He turned to his press secretary and said, "Do you understand? Special education students did this for me. I'll never forget that moment." How did this all come about? Baran, a sometime florist who teaches his students floral arranging as part of their educational and vocational training, "just picked up the phone one day and called the White House." A few weeks later, and 50 phone calls later, Baran's special ed kids were filling swans and lanterns with silk floral clusters, painting gazebos, and dressing teddy bears as First Family members in inaugural scenes. Quayle was so impressed with the display he told Baran he'd visit Homewood-Flossmoor to thank the students personally. Quayle watchers, stay tuned!

Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School got a taste of the national scene Monday as Vice-President Dan Quayle stopped by to pay tribute to students in the school's special education classes. The students, under the direction of Larry Baran, special education vocational teacher, had created silk flower arrangements that were used as table decorations for one of Quayle's inauguration parties in January. "I am here today because of your special education class and Larry Baran, who made a herculean effort to get me to come here" said Quayle, addressing an audience of more than 2,200 students, teachers and area municipal officials in the school's gymnasium. Quayle said the flowers were used at a reception given by him and his wife Marilyn for congressmen and their families the day after the inauguration. "And afterwards when Larry and I started talking about the decorations, I said I would really like to just say 'thank you' to those wonderful kids and he said, 'You can'," the Vice-President said. Baran suggested that Quayle come to Homewood-Flossmoor High School to visit with the students and personally express his gratitude, "and what Larry Baran says, I do" Quayle joked as the audience erupted in laughter. "So Larry, I am here in person ... to thank your special education class for a very special moment for Marilyn and me." Quayle said the school's team name, the Vikings, is also used by his high school in Indiana, Huntington High School. "So before I even got here, I knew we had a strong kinship," he said. Quayle also touched briefly on the problem of drugs in America, saying he is going to talk about it "until it's never a problem. It's your call and your choice and it's your future" he said. "Those people who become dependent on drugs will have less of an opportunity than those who don't and it's as simple as that."

Following the assembly, which included a poem read by a student and performances by the Viking Choir and the Homewood-Flossmoor Symphonic Band, Student Council President Brian Boersma presented Quayle with a red and white jacket bearing the school's name and emblem. Shedding his suit coat and donning the jacket, Quayle gave a thumbs up to the crowd before speaking with each of the 12 students in the special education classes sitting in the front row. "These kids have been lifted up over the United States," Baran said of his students at the conclusion of the program. "I hope they never forget it." Baran, who drove to Washington in January to deliver the flower arrangements created by his students, said the visit by the Vice-President was the culmination of 20 years of teaching for him. "I had a job
to do (in working with the students) and I am so pleased they came and said 'thank you'," Baran said. Before his speech and the school assembly in his honor, Quayle and his wife toured the school's cafeteria where the dozen students who created the centerpieces demonstrated for America's second couple how they put the arrangements together. According to Supt. Ed Rachford, Quayle spoke with each student and seemed "genuinely interested" in their work. "And the fact that he was a Viking didn't hurt either," Rachford added with a smile.*

Vice-President Dan Quayle delivered a personal "thank you" Monday to special education students at Homewood-Flossmoor High School for floral arrangements they made for his January inaugural celebration. The Vice-President and his wife, Marilyn, went to the school in south suburban Homewood after a morning speech downtown in which Quayle briefed those attending the annual meeting of the Associated Press on his forthcoming trip to the Pacific. Quayle and his wife shook hands with some of the students in the cafeteria before addressing an assembly of some 2000 students and teachers. "We had so many beautiful flowers and beautiful arrangements that came from that class,... and we are here in person to thank you for a very special moment for Marilyn and me," Quayle said. Some 50 special education students, parents and friends made about 100 floral arrangements after the school's special education teacher, Larry Baran, called the White House and volunteered their efforts. The flowers were used at a congressional reception hosted by the Quayles the day after the Vice-President's inauguration, which Baran attended. "I grabbed [Quayle] and told him about my students, and I said, "I know you have a special place in your heart for them, won't you come and thank them?" Baran said. "And he said he'd love to." For Baran, Quayle's visit was a "dream come true" because it helped him show people that his students can hold jobs. "These kids were lifted up in front of the United States today," he said. "Nobody recognizes these kids. Nobody gives them jobs, and that's the bottom line. But they showed today that they are job-worthy and ready for the world of work. If anyone wants to hire them, they're ready." *

Vice President Dan Quayle is a man of his word. Last January, Quayle told Illinois teacher, Larry Baran (pictured below) he'd visit Baran's special education students, who made arrangements for a Washington, D.C. inaugural reception. The kids attended Illinois' Homewood-Flossmoor High School and South Metropolitan Association, a cooperative for multiple handicapped students the public schools can't accommodate. Sure enough, in April, Quayle and his wife, Marilyn, visited Baran's class - and the Vice-President addressed all 2,100 Homewood-Flossmoor students in a special assembly. Quayle spoke of his upcoming trip to Asia and Australia, the importance of education, and the dangers of drugs. Sheer determination on Baran's part brought about both the floral project and Quayle's visit. The special ed teacher first repeatedly called the White House to get his students' project accepted, then told Quayle about it at the reception. "I'll never forget the sincerity of Vice President and Mrs. Quayle," says Baran. "They recognized that these special needs students were job-ready and job-worthy." *

APPENDIX 6

LETTERS FROM FIRST LADY BARBARA BUSH
APPENDIX 6
LETTERS FROM FIRST LADY BARBARA BUSH

The White House
December 18, 1989

Dear Students,

How thoughtful of you to send the lovely "Reading Tree of Knowledge." It is beautiful. It must have taken a great deal of time and effort. I especially like the fact that you included your favorite books. Thank you so much for thinking of me, and please keep up the good work.

With warmest wishes,
Warmly,

Barbara Bush
(Then she printed) Your tree fits right in with our decorations this year.
February 22, 1990

Dear Boys and Girls,

How thoughtful of you to send me a copy of the video tape made by your class. I so enjoyed watching the tape and seeing you hard at work. I especially appreciated the part that shows you preparing the flower arrangements for the Inaugural Reception -- they were so beautiful. Thank you so much for thinking of me and sharing your project with me.

With warmest wishes,
Warmly,

Barbara Bush

(Then she printed) Thank you so much.
APPENDIX 7

LETTERS OF CORETTA SCOTT KING
The Martin Luther King Jr. Center For Nonviolence Social Change, Inc.

May 4, 1984

Dear Mr. Rachford,

Mr. Larry Baran of your staff visiting The King Center, took a tour and met with members of my administrative staff, Rev. Leslie Carter and Mr. Percy Harden. During this visit Mr. Baran presented them with a Wreath made by the Special Education Class of Floral Design. I was very pleased to receive this beautiful wreath and I ask that you pass on to the children my thanks and appreciation for their thoughtfulness.

Sincerely,

Coretta Scott King
October 15, 1990

Dear Mr. Baran:

Belatedly, I wish to express my appreciation for the gift that you brought to The Center during your recent visit to Atlanta which students in your special education class made in memory of my husband. Indeed you are to be commended for the fine work that you are doing with these young people and I ask that you express to them my thanks and deep appreciation for sharing their talents with me. It is always heartening to learn of young people who believe in the teachings of Martin Luther King, Jr. It is my hope that they will continue to grow in the spirit of caring and helping others and that they will work toward the things that Martin Luther King, Jr. believed in -- love, peace, justice and brotherhood. Again, thank you and your students for thinking of me in such a special way. I extend best wishes and special regards for continued success in your most worthwhile endeavors.

Sincerely,

Coretta Scott King
APPENDIX 8

LETTERS OF J.T.P.A.
May 3, 1990

Homewood-Flossmoor High School District #233
Attention: Dr. D. Lambert

MODEL EXEMPLARY (S)
$15,098 Title IIB (July 1, 1990-September 30, 1990)
$39,902 Title IIA (October 1, 1990 - June 30, 1991)

Please be advised that your application(s) listed above has/have received an acceptable number of points during the competitive review process, thus making your agency eligible for immediate funding consideration and negotiations. The funding level(s) listed above is/are tentative pending approval by the Cook County Board of Commissioners at its meeting on May 7, 1990. In that no program may begin until such time as negotiations are completed and the contractual agreement is signed, it will be necessary for you to schedule an appointment with the Contracting & Evaluation Division at 312/201-3100 (as of May 7th) as soon as possible. As there are many programmatic issues which must be addressed immediately to ensure a successful program year, please refer to the enclosed meeting notice if you intend to begin your program on July 1, 1990.

Joseph P. Monaghen
Director
CHRONOLOGY OF FUNDING

Fall II C 1990/91 - $39,902
Summer II B 1991 - $15,098
Fall II C 1991/92 - $39,902
Summer II B 1992 - $40,000
Fall II C 1992/93 - $50,844.97
Summer II B 1993 - $80,000
Fall II C 1993/94 - $42,806.97
Summer II B 1994 - $61,300
Fall II C 1994/1995 - $75,000
Summer II B 1995 - $61,300
Fall II C 1995/96 - $75,000
APPENDIX 9
THE MOVING VIETNAM WALL PROJECT

Wall Mementos. Some 4,000 visitors to the Wall, the traveling replica of the Vietnam Memorial, will receive these flag and flower tributes created by students in the Homewood-Flossmoor High School special education program of Larry Baran. Among the young people putting together the mementos are (from left) Gina Norris, Keith Nelson and Sherri Klepper. They were assisted by Vietnam veterans at Hines Hospital. The Wall will be in Glenwood Plaza from Sunday through May 12, sponsored by the Glenwood Plaza Merchants Association.*

APPENDIX 10

THE WHITE HOUSE SIGNING OF THE ADA
A group of south suburban handicapped high school students will have special reason to cheer when President Bush signs into law the Americans with Disabilities Act at the White House on Thursday. The 20 students, who work in a job training program at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, made silk flowers that dignitaries, advocates of the handicapped and others will wear at the ceremony. The Americans with Disabilities Act, passed by the Senate this month, guarantees disabled people equal access to jobs, transportation and public facilities. "This bill is going to make my life better. It's going to give us opportunities. What do you have if you don't have opportunities?" asked Muhammed Ali Jr., a senior at the school, after he completed one of the silk boutonnieres. Ali is the son of the former heavyweight boxing champion. Each boutonniere, which will double as a souvenir of the signing, consists of three small red, white and blue silk roses surrounding an American flag. Behind the flowers and flag is a leaf with a red-white-and-blue ribbon containing the letters 'ADA.' "This is the civil rights act for the disabled. It will be as important to people with handicaps as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was to minorities" said George Covington, the adviser on the handicapped to Vice-President Dan Quayle. Covington, who helped arrange for the Homewood-Flossmoor students to make the boutonnieres for the signing, said the job training program at the school is an example of a new attitude toward disabled people that is reflecting the legislation. The training program is supported by a $55,000 federal Job Training Partnership Act grant. "This bill gets people away from thinking about the disabled as charity cases and gets people thinking that they are capable of productive work" he said. Teacher Larry Baran insists that the students learn good job habits in the program. Students in one of Baran's classes made floral centerpieces for a reception hosted by Quayle and his wife, Marilyn, at the 1989 Inaugural. That prompted the Quayles to visit Homewood-Flossmoor in April and helped lead to the invitation to create 1000 boutonnieres for this week's ceremony. "I feel proud about what we're doing," said Sheri Klepper, a senior. "Everybody
should work and be part of society." Baran said he intends to go to the ceremony and hopes to take a student with him.*

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE FOR WHITE HOUSE SIGNING OF THE ADA

Everyone needs a hero. And special education students at Homewood-Flossmoor High School have "Captain Rainbow."

Through a $55,000 Cook County grant, Larry Baran, a special education teacher at H-F for ten years, is preparing special education students for the world of work. Baran's students are learning how to make silk flowers in a work related program. The students sent 1,500 flowers to the White House last week in celebration of Congress passing the Americans with Disabilities Act. The red, white and blue flowers were sent to decorate the Rose Garden where the president signs all bills. The flowers were worn by government dignitaries as well as those specially selected disabled Americans who were present at the presidential document signing. Baran said, "And the last flower that was distributed will remain in the White House in an archive." Baran created Realistic Achievement for Individuals Needing Basic Occupational Workskills (RAINBOW) with a grant from the Job Training Partnership Act through the Cook County Commissioners President's Office of Employment Training. With the grant, Baran is able to pay students minimum wage, making those with reading disabilities, mild mental retardation and motor handicaps feel self-sufficient. Students enroll in special education classes during the school year applied for the summer RAINBOW program, and 20 were accepted. Although it has been the first year, Baran predicts there will be a waiting list next year. Baran's students were asked to design the flowers after Baran kept in constant contact with the Vice-President's office on the status of the bill. "My calling is to advocate for these students" he said. He coined the program RAINBOW because, "people who see rainbows are those who have experienced tragedies in their lives. Since the flowers donned the White House grounds, the students feel a part of something that has national ramifications" he added. Baran along with six students flew to the ceremonies. Parents with children enrolled in the program praise Baran's efforts. "There's nothing like feeling like you're earning your own way" said Joyce Nelson of Homewood. Her 17 year old son has reading difficulties but Baran has given him confidence to lead a normal life, she said. "He's never felt disabled. He finished sixth in the state last year in wrestling. And I've always told him to feel positive about himself" she said. "The kids learn about finishing a project, working together and responsibility. Baran really fights for these kids."

Baran's students have also made flowers for Barbara Bush,
who sent a thank-you letter. To celebrate the arrival of South African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela, the students decorated a statue of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with black and white flowers contained within a gold shadowbox. The statue was sent to Coretta King when Mandela arrived in Atlanta in June. Homewood resident Carolyn Benjamin's son Scott 24, who is mildly retarded, was one of Baran's first students at H-F. "I knew my son needed vocational training and Larry understood that" she said. "He needed not only academics but everyday lessons like paying attention and finishing tasks. So many schools let someone else teach that to the students after they graduate from high school." Upon returning to H-F Friday, Baran was flooded with calls of appreciation from the White House. "History is happening in this room" said an elated Baran.*

LETTER FOR WHITE HOUSE SIGNING OF ADA LEGISLATION

The White House

Dear Mr. Baran:

On behalf of President Bush, I want to thank you and the J.T.P.A.-R.A.I.N.B.O.W. participants for your gracious gift of boutonnieres for the Americans with Disabilities Act Ceremony. We are most grateful to the Vice-President for bringing your group to our attention. The colorful boutonnieres served as mementos for our guests to remember this very special and historic occasion. Thank you again for your participation.

Sincerely,

Bobbie G. Kilberg
Deputy Assistant to the President for Public Liaison
August 10, 1990

Dear Mr. Baran,

I want to take this opportunity to thank you and the Special Needs Students of Homewood-Flossmoor High School for providing me with red, white and blue boutonnieres to commemorate the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law. While I was in Washington, D.C. the week of the signing, I gave Senators Tom Hawkin and Edward Kennedy, both primary sponsors of the Act, each a boutonniere. As the Attorney General of Illinois, I am proud that I testified in support of the Act before the Senate Subcommittee on the Handicapped last year. As I said at that time, equal opportunity for people with disabilities is not just an Illinois principle; it is an American principle whose time is long overdue. I am thrilled that the Act is now a reality for our nation. Thank you again for the boutonnieres. I look forward to working with you and the Special Needs Students of Homewood-Flossmoor High School in the future.

Sincerely,

Neil F. Hartigan

Attorney General
Dear Mr. Baran;

Thank you, I will contact the White House....Keep up the good work!

Justin Dart

From The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
July 29, 1990

Dear Larry,

Thanks so much to you and your colleagues for the beautiful ADA pins for participants in the July 26 ceremony. Thanks too for the gorgeous wreath which you sent to me.

Sincerely,

Justin Dart
APPENDIX 11

THE POINTS OF LIGHT AWARD
Dear Ms. Adams:

I am writing to recommend Mr. Larry Baran for President Bush's Thousand Points of Light Service Award. I first knew Larry when he was an M.A. student in our graduate program in Learning Disabilities. It was evident then that he was a very caring individual who had a deep commitment to handicapped individuals. Since his graduation, I have followed his career and have been impressed with his boundless energy and drive to improve the lives of individuals with special needs. He is always willing to go the extra mile to make life a bit brighter for others. I hope you will consider him for this special award.

Doris J. Johnson, Ph.D.
Head, Program in Learning Disabilities
Professor of Learning Disabilities
Northwestern University
Dear Ms. Adams:

I am writing on behalf of Mr. Larry Baran. I understand that Larry is receiving your consideration to be nominated for President Bush's Thousand Points of Light Service Award. As you already know, Larry has made a significant contribution to our school and community and brought national recognition to those students requiring special assistance. I have worked with Larry for over 15 years. I was a dean of students for 10 of those years, and now hold the position of Director of Student Services. Both of these positions have brought me into close contact with Larry. His dedication, enthusiasm and vision are unparalleled. He believes in the students he assists and conveys that to all who will listen! Larry devotes many hours of his own time making sure that programs and materials are in place to assure the success of each of his projects. It has become an "expectation" that when our district needs floral creations, "Larry's kids" will do them -- and do them well. Their work has earned the respect it deserves. Larry even went so far as to have many of our handicapped students put on a skit at an all-school assembly -- a risky venture before a peer group of over 2000 students. But Larry believed that his students could participate successfully; consequently, so did they -- and their participation was a huge success! And it only happened because Larry was "running the show." While Larry's focus is students with special needs, he is truly a good-will ambassador for all. He comes to school in full Santa costume at Christmas, dragging Rudolf (full size and stuffed) with him. He also coaches our cheerleaders, and at the basketball and football games, Larry's "touch" is noticeable. His enthusiasm is contagious. His dexterity is awesome, and his goal of assisting special needs children to be strong productive citizens has taken him to the White House. I can think of no person more deserving than Larry Baran for this award. Larry goes where angels fear to tread -- and because of his vision and inability to take "no" for an answer, he has helped special needs children grow in self-esteem, given them courage to face great odds, and given them skills that will last a life-time. What more could you ask of one human being. I sincerely hope you will give serious consideration to Larry's nomination.

Sincerely,

Karen Rezny, Director of Student Services
Dear Ms. Adams:

I am recommending that your office consider nominating Larry Baran for President Bush's Thousand Points of Light Service Award. If one could stand back and view the thousand points of light coming from across the country, just as we gaze into the night sky, we would notice those that are the brightest. Larry's is one of the brightest. This is not just a kind observation by a friend but rather the same brightness that the White House has seen twice. The Vice President did not choose Homewood - Flossmoor Community High School to visit recently because it wasn't something special and the floral arrangements at the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act just did not happen by mistake. That bright star in America's heartland has been a one person crusade for Special Education students. Our family has known Larry and his family primarily through our church since 1976. From time-to-time I have discussed Larry's interests in Special Education and his approach to helping and teaching those students. I am not a professional in special education but Larry's ideas of providing meaningful vocational experiences makes a lot of sense. He has used his special talent of floral arrangements to prove his concepts associated with Special Education students. I have often wondered what Larry could do if he had the resources to really expand his efforts. I do not know what would happen but I do know that a lot of people would have their life improved. It's easy to anticipate because I have seen what Larry has done with limited resources. Those activities that have made that light twinkle were well beyond what is expected of a "Special Education Teacher." Larry is one of those exceptional people that have the dream, the talent and the passion to change his World.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Campbell
President/Campbell & Associates
Dear Mr. Baran:

Word has reached me of your outstanding record of community service. I congratulate you on your achievement. Many of America's most pressing social problems can best be solved through a renewal of the values on which our Nation was founded: duty, acceptance of personal responsibility, commitment, and a respect for every individual that expresses itself in direct or consequential action in behalf of others. Efforts such as yours are evidence that these values remain firmly embedded in the American character. I commend you for making a difference in the life of your community. Barbara joins me in wishing you every success as you continue to set a fine example for your friends and neighbors. May God bless you.

Sincerely,

George Bush

Mr. Larry Baran
R.A.I.N.B.O.W.
999 Kedzie Avenue
Flossmoor, Illinois 60422-2299
APPENDIX 12

FLAGS IN THE DESERT PROJECT
APPENDIX 12
FLAGS IN THE DESERT PROJECT

Larry Baran, the champion for the handicapped and students with special needs at Homewood-Flossmoor High School is reaching out to the troops in the Persian Gulf. On Monday from noon to 6 p.m., students enrolled in Baran's class will be making some 150,000 flag boutonnieres to be sent to each troop in Saudi Arabia as part of "Flags in the Desert," the brainstorm of Captain Rainbow. And community members are welcome to help out in the project at the school's South Cafeteria. Baran is a special education instructor at H-F and program director for RAINBOW. He also directs the Job Partnership Act, a $55,000 grant he received earlier this year from Cook County to give handicapped and special needs students real life experiences. Community members can also donate money because the project will cost $10,000, said Baran. Thirty local businesses are helping offset the costs, said Baran, including franchises: McDonald's, K-Mart, Dominick's, and Eagle Food Store, Van Drunen Ford and Shaver Chevrolet. "This is a different way to celebrate Columbus Day," said Chuck Campbell of Flossmoor. "We need all the support we can get," said Campbell parent of an H-F student who just wanted to help. We've got community groups volunteering to make the flags off-site, like the Boys and Girl Scouts and senior groups." Baran is no newcomer to causes. His 15-year crusade for the handicapped and people with special needs has attracted national attention. With the county job training grant, his efforts are beginning to pay off. But never did his students realize their work would put them in the national spotlight. In July, boutonnieres the students made graced the White House landscape as President Bush signed legislation protecting the rights of the handicapped. And Vice-President Quayle came to H-F to personally thank them for flower arrangements at the Vice-President's inaugural. Now Baran's students are making flag tributes for the troops, but this time the project is too monumental for the classroom; they need the community's help. Some H-F faculty will donate their hands to make the flags along with H-F students and school student groups such as the varsity football team, the varsity basketball team, the varsity cheerleading squad, parents of students involved in sports, the Key Club, the Spanish Club and the Student Government, he added. Also, the Irwin
Senior Citizens and students from Brookwood Junior High are pitching in. "And if parents have children that would like to participate, we'll supervise them and put them to work," he said. Many of the local sponsors are providing food and refreshments and a disc jockey will spin records. "He's going to play everything from Mahalia Jackson to Bruce Springsteen to Oak Ridge Boys," he said. "And there will also be record giveaways." But before embarking on his ambitious project, Baran received approval from the office of Gen. Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. When Baran's students heard about the latest project, they had many questions about Saudi Arabia, so Baran gave them a geography lesson. To help them understand the location and how the troops are stationed, Baran had the class paint a mural on classroom walls depicting the troops in the sand and in camouflage surrounded by tanks and artillery. To culminate the afternoon, there will be a 21-gun salute by the National Guard. And attached to the boutonnieres will be a note: "We appreciate you guys."*

The group included the school's varsity football coach, Kiwanis Club members, Girl Scouts and an energetic leader, all of whom made sure Monday that American soldiers in the Middle East were not forgotten. More than 500 people filled the cafeteria and adjacent hall of Homewood-Flossmoor High School to assemble 7,000 red, white and blue boutonnieres as part of "Flags in the Desert," according to special education teacher, Larry Baran, coordinator of the event. The goal is to make 120,000 boutonnieres, one each for the 120,000 soldiers stationed in Saudi Arabia, Baran said. The boutonnieres, each one complete with a green leaf and an attached card containing a brief note from its maker, will be mailed to the soldiers to let them know they are being thought of, said Baran. The project was born after Baran heard speeches while at school and his church about the crisis in Saudi Arabia and its effects locally. "And it was like a bolt of lightning hit me," said Baran, bedecked in camouflage pants, a shirt with the American flag on it and a hat with flags and patriotic buttons stuck on it. "I saw the concept from beginning to end." Anyone interested in helping the cause can still get in on the project, he said. "Flags in the Desert is not over today," he said as a Girl Scout troop leader approached with a shopping bag filled with more than 950 of the lapel decorations. "This is just the beginning." As Baran spoke, school officials, students on their day off, teachers and residents walked beneath a bamboo hut entrance decorated with palm trees, cardboard cut-outs of camels and camouflaged helicopters, and dozens of American flags to the cafeteria, where many more sat cutting, twisting and taping boutonnieres while listening to a disc jockey play today's hits. At one table sat varsity football coach John Wrenn, wearing an Uncle Sam hat, working away with nearly half his team. "I asked the kids to come out because this is a good cause," Wrenn said. "I've been here two and a half hours and I think I've done a zillion." Across the room sat a dozen members of the H-F Kiwanis Club, who came to help because their organization sponsors the school's Key Club, and requested they come out. "I think it's great," said Herb Bliese, chairman of the Kiwanis committee that sponsored the Key Club. "Being a World War II veteran, we would have appreciated anything like this." At the next table sat a handful of senior class officers, who said they had pumped out 2,500 of the patriotic posies themselves. "Knowing this could put a smile on (the
soldiers') faces means the hours (of work) paid off," senior class President Doug Lambert said.*

Viking Telegram!
10/9/90
Larry, It was wonderful! Thanks you are a gem!
Ed

Dear Larry,

The Board of Education wishes to thank you for the time and effort you have given to the "Flags in the Desert" project. We are proud of the honor you have brought to Homewood-Flossmoor High School. You have provided a special opportunity to our students to develop a concern for helping people outside our local area. This is an experience they will remember throughout their lifetime. We appreciate your dedication to our school and to our students.

Sincerely,

Beverley J. Atkins
President, Board of Education
The White House
Washington
December 14, 1990

Dear Friends:

I was delighted to learn from Secretary Derwinski what the Homewood-Flossmoor High School and the Homewood-Flossmoor Community have done to demonstrate support for the members of our Armed Forces serving in the Persian Gulf. I am heartened by the number of Americans like you who have initiated such projects. They serve as a source of strength as we work to enforce United Nations sanctions against Iraq's aggression. This is a difficult assignment for our service men and women, but through programs like yours, you are letting them know that they have the backing of the American people. Thank you for all you are doing in behalf of those who are defending the cause of freedom in the Persian Gulf and for their families.

Sincerely,

George Bush
The Vice-President
Washington
February 5, 1991

Members of the Flags In The Desert Project

Dear Larry,

I would like to commend you for your Flags in the Desert Project. Once again, you have demonstrated that young people with disabilities can participate in all aspects of our society. Patriotism is not just limited to able-bodied Americans. I enjoyed reading the letters of appreciation you received from our men and women serving in the gulf. I would like to add my praise to theirs. I have followed the work you and your students have done since the floral arrangements they created for the Bush-Quayle inaugural ceremonies. I was delighted to see you at the picnic following the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act on July 26th here in Washington. The boutonnieres your students created for the event were grateful appreciated by those in attendance. I am proud to have played a small part in your RAINBOW PROJECT through its funding by the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). When I introduced JTPA in the United States Senate, I hoped that it would result in such successful projects to help disabled people find employment. Your work has helped reach this goal. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

Dan Quayle
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff  
Washington, D.C. 20318-0001  
10 April 1991

Dear Mr. Baran,

Many thanks for your kind letter reporting your success in making and distributing more than 400,000 Flag Tributes to our brave men and women in the Gulf. In addition, I deeply appreciate the Liberty basket you sent for Easter, it was very thoughtful of you and your class. I have been overwhelmed by the love and concern shown by Americans for our GIs. In fact, support like yours was a major reason we won the war. Each time I went to Saudi Arabia, the GIs told me what it meant to them to have American support. They told me how much it improved their spirit, their morale and their belief in what they were doing. Consequently, you and your class can be justifiably proud of your contribution to winning the war. I'm afraid my heavily committed schedule will not permit me to visit your high school but please accept my heartfelt appreciation for all your support on behalf of the men and women of the Armed Forces. Best wishes for continued success with your very worthwhile program.

Sincerely,

Colin L. Powell  
Chairman  
Joint Chiefs of Staff
Dear Mr. Baran,

Thank you very much for the letter and the gifts. I am overwhelmed by the amount of work your support group did to support our brave servicemen and women who fought so hard to free Kuwait from Iraqi occupation. I can assure you that all your hard work and dedication brought a little bit of home to the troops during a difficult eight months. I am deeply touched by the total support of the American people for the men and women who fought so hard to free Kuwait from oppression. These fine Americans went to the Middle East and endured the uncertainty of war and separation from their loved ones. But they understood and accepted their mission when their country called on them to defend its national interests. Let me assure you that they answered that call magnificently. Again, thank you for the letter and the gifts. Your unwavering support and hard work has helped bring back a feeling of patriotism to our great nation. God bless you.

Sincerely,

H. Norman Schwarzkopf
General, U.S. Army
STATE OF ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES RESOLUTION FOR FLAGS IN THE DESERT PROJECT

Whereas, The House of Representatives is pleased to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to their State and their country; and Whereas, It has come to the attention of this Body that the Job Training Partnership Act Program at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School provides students in its special education classes with the opportunity to use their job skills to pay tribute to other individuals; and Whereas, These students have also made boutonnieres for the Vice President's Inauguration Reception for Members of Congress, the Moving Vietnam Wall, The White House signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Desert Storm "Flags in the Desert." .... Whereas, The achievements of these students confirm our belief that hard work and dedication are effective when you set goals and strive to achieve them; therefore be it Resolved, by The House of Representatives of the Eighty-Eight General Assembly of the State of Illinois, that we commend the students of this special education class at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School for their commitment to paying tribute at these occasions and that we extend to them our best wishes for continued success in their future; and be it further Resolved, that a suitable copy of this preamble and resolution be presented to Larry Baran, Director of the Job Training Partnership Act Program at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School on behalf of the students of the special education class.

Adopted by the House of Representatives on January 14, 1993
Michael Madigan, Speaker of the House
John O'Brien, Clerk of the House
LETTERS OF THANKS FROM THE ARMED SERVICES FOR FLAGS IN THE DESERT PROJECT

The Marines are proudly posting around the inside of our tents! Semper fidelis
L.L. Bonos USMC

I would like to thank you on behalf of the Weapons Company, 2nd Bn, 24th Marines based in Chicago. We recently returned from Saudi after five months. We take great pride in wearing our flags and are proud of the Americans who supported our efforts.
James Ready USMC

The pendants were distributed to the crew today on the mess decks and are proudly being worn on uniforms of sailors and Marines throughout the ship. Contributions such as yours make us proud to stand up and fight for the freedom of such caring and devoted people.
Hans Omasta USN

Our soldiers were pleased to receive it and went along way toward lifting the morale of this unit.
Charles White USA

I'd like to say that I thank you and greatly appreciate your campaign. My brother, Sgt. Cook, sent me one of your flags and it brought tears to my eyes. Not tears of sorrow, pain, nor fear, but tears of unbreakable pride that your generosity to over 400,000 Americans of all different backgrounds and origins. It's people like you that make us feel that our jobs are not in vain.
Sgt. David Cook USN

I want to send you all a special thanks from the soldiers of my unit and let you know we are ready for whatever lies ahead. Remember in all you do that your little flags and flowers are with us. Pray for us all in this moment that we may accomplish what we set out to do the least loss of life possible. God bless you all.
Jerry Rodriguez Jr.

I wear mine religiously. It makes me especially proud knowing that the younger generation is behind us during these troubled times.
Rick Gross
Thank you for giving me a gift that I will have forever and hope to share with other's, the gift of caring!
Capt. Steve Hernandez
USA

Thank you for making me and several of my friends feel so good. When we arrived here we were greeted by a military man who gave several of us a card with a lovely pin. Since we are not allowed to display our colors here the sight of those red, white and blue flowers was a very welcome sight.
SFC Carolyn Cantwell

They really meant a lot to all of us. The pins are a big hit out here!
SGT Dan Butkovich

You don't know how much it means to us all here to know that there are folks outside our own families that care the way that you have shown us.
W.M. Ritter USN

That was a terrific idea. A real good pick me up!
Sgt. DeCosta

Thank you for sending such a motivating symbol of our country's patriotism. Every little bit of support helps us get from day to day.
LCPL Salas USMC

I wear my pin at all times. Your support means the world to the 173rd Air Refueling Wing.
SSGT J. Semeraro

I've been carrying one in my pocket since I got it about a month ago.
2LT Chakldes

On board the USS Trenton the guys have them on their hats and shirts.
M. Beals USN

I'm wearing my small flag on my hat everyday!
Ron Mauel ANG

A lot of the guys here put the flags on their floppy covers and are wearing them proudly.
CPL Escamilla
Mine is pinned to the front of my helmet.

MSGT. Mueller

The Kuwait people love Americans and everything American and proudly wear U.S. Army stuff, and of course your flag pins!
CPT. Mark Brewer

I received one of your flags and was really impressed. They are the nicest thing anyone has sent me since my arrival last year. Many people in our camp wear them every day.
Mark McHugh USAF

Greetings from the desert kingdom! Our unit just received 100 of your flags and our men and women are wearing them proudly! We appreciate your initiative. You do make a difference!
LT Col Bill Sprole

For such a small thing it has a very large affect on us soldiers. We are so far away from home and alone in this strange land. When we receive an item like yours it is held close to the heart.
Sgt Donald Brown

Almost everywhere one looked he/she saw your little flag with red, white and blue roses.
Oakland McCullock

I am one of the many military personnel who has been touched by your kindness and support while deployed in support of Operation Desert Storm. The cards I received shortly after my arrival in theater brought a smile to an otherwise sad face. I was extremly impressed with the efforts of the children in your community.
Joseph Polanin USN

As a Captain of Marines I can honestly tell you that letters and gifts from sincere Americans like yourselves really make me feel great to be doing the job I am doing.
Capt. Grogan USMC

I got one of your flags. I can't express how it helped my morale. Others think they're really neat too.
A Lady GI

It really makes me feel good to see someone supports what we are doing out here. They guys really liked it also.
SPC Tim Meade
Thank you for thinking of us servicemen stationed in the Gulf. The flags are beautiful and we wear them with pride. God bless you!
Derrick Dutes

Thank you for making my son's return extra special. Everyone literally thousands had been given a "Flag in the Desert" pin to give to their sailors as they came ashore. Already overwhelmed by the massive and enthusiastic turnout, many of the sailors were moved to tears when they received your pins and read the personal messages on the backs.
Mrs. Dolan Buchanan

My son sent me his flags in the desert pin and I say it's my Christmas present from the desert from my wonderful son. I've been wearing it ever since I received it in January.
Carol Tamulinas

I'm taking it home to my family.
SGT Gilliland

I recently received a corsage from my husband he is in Saudi Arabia. It was one of the corsages that your school sent over from Columbus Day.
Elena Kaplan

A few of us Air Force troops are wearing them today as Christmas presents.
Sgt. Sacco

I have recently returned from active duty in Southwest Asia. I was pleasantly surprised to find one of your flag stickpins available for distribution at the King Khalid Military Airport in Saudi Arabia as my tank battalion was staging to return to the USA. Thank you for the sentiment you expressed.
Dan Peterjohn

Thank you so much for your support! I received your pin when I was leaving Saudi, the support is commendable.
SSG Parker

As I was flying back to the good ol' USA I got one of your cards and a flag. You can't possibly understand the feeling to see an American flag again.
SPC James Chapman
I must tell you that when I saw my husband on the flight line, departing the C-130 I immediately pinned one of your flags on his uniform. It is support groups such as yours that helped my sons and I get through this ordeal.
Mrs. Patricia Ehardt

When I came home from Desert Storm I didn't receive a "Flags in the Desert" I'd appreciate greatly if I could get one!
SGT Anthony Cross

I wanted one for my wife and mom back home. I was told that there was not anymore, but they provided me your address. Therefore, I would like to ask you about how I obtain two of them.
SGT Juan Reynoso

As a recent returnee from the Gulf war I am much interested in receiving one.
James Skuuls USMC

I am deployed with Fleet Hospital 15...I would like to receive a flag pin. My address follows.
J.D. Horton USN
APPENDIX 13

THE LT. GOVERNOR KUSTRA INAUGURATION
January 28, 1991

Dear Larry:

I wanted to thank you and all your wonderful students for your hard work at our inauguration earlier this month. The boutonnieres added a special touch to a very momentous occasion.

I was so proud to have the work of your students as part of this special event. I know that they worked diligently to prepare for the inaugural and I would ask that you pass on to them my sincere appreciation for their efforts.

Once again, thank you for your help.

Warm Regards

Bob Kustra
Lieutenant Governor
Dear Mr. Baran,

Thank you for letting us go to Springfield on Monday, January 14. Thank you for inviting us to go the Inauguration that day. I mean it from the bottom of my heart. Anyway, thanks for the invitation. I really mean it in the bottom of my heart.

Amy Reid
APPENDIX 14

MISSION OF ILLINOIS INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION
APPENDIX 14
MISSION OF ILLINOIS INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

• The Illinois Institute for Entrepreneurship Education has been created to educate Illinois citizens about the role and contributions of entrepreneurs in economic development and job creation.

• The purpose of the Institute is to design in-school programs and instructional strategies for all educational levels to assist teachers in directing the message: Entrepreneurship Represents A Viable Life-Long Career Option.

• To Achieve this objective, The Institute is helping create effective information networks involving entrepreneur participation in the classroom, business visits, student ventures and the development of improved instructional materials and creating more effective instructional programs.

• The goals of The Institute are to reach all areas of the state; all ages and all ethnic groups. However, initial emphasis is being directed at reaching at-risk youth before they make career threatening decisions without knowing the potential rewards of a dedicated effort.

• The organization's structure is built around the following premises: Entrepreneurship has been the key to the success of the American private enterprise system. Thus entrepreneurship education is a necessary component of the State's long-term economic development program.

• People who understand the risks and rewards of entrepreneurship will be more productive employees.

• The State's overall economy will benefit if more people recognize entrepreneurship as a viable career option.

• Entrepreneurship education must be included within existing student curriculums at all age levels.

• Dividends resulting from entrepreneurship education investment by business, foundations & government will
generate a strong return on investment through improved markets, increased employment, greater tax revenues and a marked reduction in poverty and welfare costs.
APPENDIX 15

THE VALLEY FORGE FREEDOMS FOUNDATION AWARD
Dear Mr. Baran,

It gives me a great deal of personal pleasure to inform you that you have been selected to receive a Leavey Award for Excellence in Private Enterprise Education. Now in its sixteenth year, this special program endowed by the Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Foundation permits the Freedoms Foundation to honor educators for their innovative efforts to help young people better understand the function and benefits of the American private enterprise system. Each year, Freedoms Foundation, in order to formally recognize the accomplishments of the Leavey recipients, hosts a special award ceremony. The 1992 event is being planned for Friday, June 18, 1993, at the Union League in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at which time you will receive your cash award of $7,500 and a commemorative plaque. As soon as plans have been completed for the ceremony, E. Katherine Wood, Vice President and Director of Awards, will send you detailed information. The public announcement of the 1992 Leavey Award recipients will be made at the time of the ceremony. Therefore, we request that you not release any publicity until that time. In the meantime, please complete the enclosed affidavit to ensure your eligibility and return it to the Awards Department by December 10, 1992.

Most Cordially,

Robert W. Miller
Mr. Lawrence J. Baran

Truly, one of the innovative examples of free enterprise in operation is within the walls of the Special Education Manufacturing and Sales Class at Homewood - Flossmoor High School. Here Mr. Larry Baran, alias Captain Rainbow, teaches entrepreneurship skills through the medium of floral designing. As the program grew over the past eleven years, Mr. Baran challenged his students to turn their dreams into reality. The various projects that were introduced began to get an enormous amount of publicity and awareness to the rights and abilities of the students with special disabilities. Their accomplishments center around their famous U.S. Flag Tribute boutonniere which has received wide distribution. Mr. Baran constantly advocates that his students are job ready and worthy if given the chance and opportunity! As Captain Rainbow says, "The Impossible Dream Isn't"
APPENDIX 16

THE NATIONAL VICTORY CELEBRATION
May 1, 1991

Dear Sirs:

This letter is a follow-up with the conversation I had today with Mr. Larry Baran. We have decided to use the Flags in the Desert for an event in Washington, D.C. on June 8, 1991. This event is a full day welcome home celebration for the troops. We planned on using your flags for the Memorial Service with the President and Mrs. Bush the morning of the troop's parade. Larry and I discussed this to be a contribution from your organization to this event. We also discussed our organization "Desert Storm Homecoming Foundation" to contribute a sum to your school for students to use for field trips. We thought both groups to benefit from this agreement. The final point we discussed was having twenty of the children who helped make the flags come to Washington for the event. The children could help pass out the Flags in the Desert to all attendees of the memorial service. We also discussed free housing at Catholic University, and I mentioned that I would make a call for Larry to see if that would be possible for one evening. I hope all of the items mentioned is as we discussed. If you have any problem with any of the above mentioned please feel free to contact me. I feel this a very exciting event for all of us and the troops but also for the President and Mrs. Bush. The children along with the Flags in the Desert will be a special touch to this special day.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Ganzi
Director of Marketing
July 24, 1991

Dear Friends,

It just occurred to me that I never thanked you for your beautiful pin. My brother was 28 yrs. old, and he flew Huey helicopters for the Marines. He was very proud to be a Marine, and he loved flying. I have your pin leaning against my favorite picture of him. He would have been truly flattered by the dedication you showed in preparing for the big weekend in Washington. Your compassion and support will never be forgotten.

Warmest regards,

Sally Herr

Dear Committee Members:

In June our family attended the Desert Storm National Celebration in Washington, D.C. At the breakfast for families of fallen soldiers, we were given your special little flag and flowers to wear. We just wanted to thank you for this special remembrance. Our son was a sergeant in Army Intelligence. He and eight other soldiers were killed when their Blackhawk helicopter was shot down over Iraq just prior to the cease fire. Lee was proud to serve his country. Three days before he died, he wrote, "It's great to know that people back home are supporting us over here. We've been getting mail addressed to 'Any Service Member' and hearing of people wearing yellow ribbons and showing support for us. That's great!" Thank you. We appreciate your efforts.

Sincerely,

Peter, Carol, and Amy Belas
Letters for the Desert Storm National Victory Celebration

Department of the Army
3rd U.S. Infantry (The Gold Army)
Fort Meyers, Virginia

9 June 1991

Dear Mr. Baran,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for affording me the opportunity to escort you and your students during your stay in our nation's capital. I assure you, the honor was indeed all mine. Although, as a member of the United States Army Honor Guard, I am in the public eye on a daily basis, it is very rare that I have a chance to interact with the citizens of our great nation on a personal level. These occasions are, to me, among the most gratifying experiences one may encounter during a military career, especially when these citizens are as patriotic, caring, and selfless as you and your students. You are all, indeed, very special people and I congratulate you all on your spectacular achievements with your Flags in the Desert program. Again, thank you and if, in the future, I can again be of service to you or your school, please feel free to call on me. I assure you that I will do all in my power to assist you in any way possible.

Sincerely,

Wade A. Huffman
Sergeant, U.S. Army Honor Guard
The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
Washington

June 24, 1991

Dear Mr. Baran,

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation for the contributions you and your students made to the National Desert Storm Homecoming Foundation here in Washington. I'm not sure how close we came to our ambitious goal of one of this country's most remarkable demonstrations of gratitude and respect ever held for our servicemen and women. I am sure we had an outstanding program with tremendous public participation; an outpouring of justifiable pride in America that served as a great tribute to all who have served in the uniforms of our Armed Forces. Because of contributions like yours and the youngsters who worked on this project, the Homecoming Celebration was an unqualified success. Your support helped all of us say "Welcome Home" in an unforgettable way to our unforgettable American heroes. Please accept my personal thanks and best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

Edward J. Derwinski
APPENDIX 17

PEARL HARBOR
Certificate of Flag Presentation
Homewood-Flossmoor High School
"Operation Aloha"

Flown on the 50th Anniversary of the Bombing of Pearl Harbor
In tribute to the American fighting men killed during the
attack on Pearl Harbor, the national ensign is flown daily,
8 a.m. to sunset, from flagpole mounted to the battleship
USS ARIZONA (BB39).

The battleship, resting in 38 feet of water at the bottom of
Pearl Harbor, is no longer in commission. It was stricken
from active list in 1942.

Special permission was granted by the Secretary of the Navy
to fly the United States Flag over this ship in memory of
the brave men killed during the attack on the morning of
December 7, 1941.

The United States Flag accompanying this certificate was
raised and lowered from this same flagpole on 07 December
1991 at 0134

Signed and authenticated this date 07 December 1991
Donald E. Magee
National Park Service Superintendent

W. A. Earner
Rear Admiral, U.S.N. Commander
Naval Base Pearl Harbor
December 24, 1991

Dear Larry,

On behalf of the UNITED STATES NAVY and the Pearl Harbor Survivors I would like to thank your kids for providing us with what became the most requested item here at Pearl Harbor. Your gold leaf and red, white and blue lapel device was the most requested of the 160 items the Navy had for distribution at the Consolidated Media Center. Thank you for helping make December 7th the success that was shown around the world. We have been told that close to a billion people saw what went on here. I am including with this letter a picture of the Arizona Memorial for your kids. Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely

"J" Wood
Captain
United States Navy
The Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
Washington  
November 6, 1991  

Dear Mr. Baran, Students and Faculty:  

I want to commend you for your efforts, through your workathon, to create the Golden Flag Tribute to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor and the entry of America into World War II. It is important for us to remember the dates and places, the men and women, and the deeds and sacrifices made in the name of a greater good for all people. I believe this 50th anniversary observance is more than just symbolic. Observances such as this provide us the opportunity to impress upon you how wonderful individual freedom and the right of self-determination are -- how easily they can be lost if we are not vigilant -- and how high the cost is of regaining them if we let them slip away. What you are doing in creating this tribute is more than just a commemoration of past deeds. This is an educational experience that instills the values we hold dear. I wish you all the very best and may God bless you.

Sincerely yours,  
Edward J. Derwinski
Homewood-Flossmoor High School students will gather today, Veterans Day, to remember the upcoming, 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Project Aloha will be a joint cooperative effort of the JTPA Special Needs Youth, the H-F Student Government, and class officers. These students will conduct a workathon from 10 a.m to 2 p.m. today in the school cafeteria to assemble 15,000 U.S. flag pins. The flag pins will be sent to Hawaii, where they will be distributed to Pearl Harbor Survivors and their families who will be honored guests at a commemorative service aboard the USS Arizona Memorial on Dec 7. President George Bush is expected to participate in the ceremony. The tributes will also be distributed at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, and given to West Point Cadets and Naval Academy Midshipmen who attend the Dec. 7 Army vs. Navy football game. The roots of Project Aloha date back to 1981, when special education teacher, Larry Baran, began a program to teach pre-employment skills through floral designing. Eventually, Baran's class designed and manufactured the floral centerpieces for the Bush's inaugural dinner in January 1989. In April 1989, Vice-President Dan Quayle visited the high school to thank the students. In the spring of 1990, the special needs class became the vendor for the flag tributes pins for the Moving Vietnam Moving Wall Memorial. Baran was then awarded a $55,000 grant from the Job Training Partnership program to fund his student work program. In July of 1990, Quayle asked the students to assemble 3,000 flag tributes to be distributed at the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The most recent "Flags in the Desert" program was the students largest, as they designed, manufactured and distributed flag pins to troops in the Persian Gulf between October 1990 and March of 1991. Some 400,000 pins were made and sent to the Gulf. Local and national media attention brought "Flags in the Desert" national recognition from Bush, Quayle and General Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf.

LETTERS AND ARTICLES FOR ANNIVERSARY OF PEARL HARBOR

Captain "J" Wood of the U.S. Navy recently visited the 50 young Americans with Disabilities in Larry Baran's Job Training Partnership Act Summer Program. Capt. Wood presented these students with the American flag that flew over the Arizona Memorial during the 50th anniversary commemoration of Pearl Harbor. The presentation was his way of thanking the youth for their work in making 25,000 Star Spangled Tributes for persons who attended the Pearl Harbor anniversary Commemoration. (A photo with Capt. Woods and students was pictured.)*

December 18, 1991

Dear Mr. Baran,

Please allow me to thank you for all the wonderful work you have done with your Special Education/Vocational Education Class. We are grateful and appreciative to you and your class for providing the Corps of Cadets those beautiful flags. We are in your debt. I am particularly impressed with the class project of providing flags to the various tributes for the men and women that returned from Desert Storm. We distributed them to the entire Corps for their personal use. We also provided a full explanation of the flags, their widespread use during Desert Storm return and the Pearl Harbor ceremonies, and the great patriotism shown by you and your classes. Please accept my sincerest thanks for all that you and your class have done for the military. And, thank you for thinking of the Cadets and Midshipmen.

Best Wishes from West Point!

Respectfully,

David A. Bramlett
Brigadier General, USA
Commandant of Cadets
December 13, 1991

Dear Students:

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to you for the time and effort put into making the corsages. On this 50th anniversary of Pearl Harbor, it is refreshing to know there are young people like yourselves who admire the many soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of this nation on that disastrous December day. As a future Army officer, I personally appreciate the support you have displayed for the men and women who are preparing to lead the armed forces. I am sure other servicemen, especially those who served and are currently still serving in the Middle East, feel the same way. To show our appreciation, the Corps of Cadets is wearing your gifts for the week 09 Dec. 91 - 13 Dec. 91. By wearing them, we are reminded of those who died at Pearl Harbor. I plan to keep the flower for future years as a reminder of the responsibility I have and the appreciation I owe this country. Let me thank you once again. BEAT NAVY!

Gratefully yours,

Cadet David M. Clolinger
Class of 1994

Dear Students:

Thank you for the lapel pin. As a survivor I wore it proudly during ceremonies at the 50th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor.

Russell J. Bailey
January 15, 1992

Dear Students,

We received your project - the beautiful handmade flag corsage - in Hawaii at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7th. I am writing this letter to thank you and to say, "What a wonderful job you did!" Your "Project Aloha" was such a great thing to do and we appreciate it very much and want you to know. We wore it in Hawaii and now that we're home, it is adorning our scrapbook as a front cover decoration! Thank you so much,

Sincerely,

James W. Smith
Lansdale, Pa. 19446

P.S. We also met your teacher while we were there and we spoke all about you! Ask him if he remembers talking to 2 ladies and 2 gentlemen on a bench on the USS Missouri?
An Open Letter to the Student Body of the Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School

Dear Fellow Americans:

On behalf of all the survivors of the heavy cruiser USS NEW ORLEANS I extend heartfelt thanks and gratitude for the effort and thoughts you put forth to create and manufacture the beautiful flower and flag lapel pin that were passed out during the ceremonies for the 50th anniversary on Pearl Harbor. Out of approximately 75 officers and men from this ship who survived the attack and the war that followed, 30 were able to make the trip to Hawaii and participate in the ceremonies. Each one was heartened to realize that our country has not forgotten that fateful day and that you, the future leaders of this great country of ours, were willing to take the time and effort to help make this special day more memorable; even though it is something you read about...I wish it was possible for me to thank each of you in person but since that is not feasible, I am enclosing a short poem that was passed out during the parade we held on December 6, 1991, in hopes it may let you know how we feel.

Sincerely yours,

Arthur J. Morsch, JOC. USN (Ret)
Past President, USS New Orleans Reunion Assoc.
January 3, 1992

Dear Ones,

My husband is a Pearl Harbor Survivor and we were in Hawaii for the 50th anniversary of the bombing. Prior to the most impressive flag raising ceremony on 12/5 at Fort De Russy, the enclosed grandfather of Tammy Kranz distributed beautiful corsages made by your students. This note is to thank you for this unique little gift on such an occasion. The little corsages were worn proudly and were in evidence throughout our stay. May God bless you with much joy, health, and happiness in 1992.

June and Hardley Johnson,
Blue Eye, Mo. 65611
50th Anniversary Consolidated Media Center  
1 Arizona Memorial Place  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96818  
November 30, 1991

Dear Sir,

Larry Baran, Teacher, Homewood-Flossmoor H.S. has been invited to take part in ceremonies at Pearl Harbor, 07 December 1991.

Captain "J" Wood,  
USN Media Center Manager

Office of the Vice President  
Washington  
December 5, 1991

Dear Captain Woods:

Please be advised Larry Baran of Flossmoor, Illinois has worked closely with our office regarding disability issues. Not only has he been helpful, but he has been a pleasure to work with. I would certainly appreciate any courtesies you could extend to him regarding Pearl Harbor events. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

David C. Beckwith  
Press Secretary to the Vice President
APPENDIX 18

THE DISCOVERY SPACE SHUTTLE
October 17, 1991

Dear Mr. Baran:

Your letter of October 8, 1991, to Mr. Don Puddy has been referred to this office for response. Thank you for writing on behalf of the special students of Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School. The background documentation you sent is very impressive, and the work the students are doing is commendable. As a courtesy, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration does include small mementos in the Official Kit (OFK) aboard space shuttle missions. Mementos such as small flags, banners, or patches are accepted from payload customers, the Agency aerospace contractors, state and local governments, and the academic community. All items manifested must be for an organization rather than an individual and must be of little commercial value. Mementos cannot be used for fundraising purposes or sold for commercial gain. All manifested items are subject to final approval by the Associate Administrator of Space Flight. In regards to your request, our guidelines prevent us from flying a memento for each of the students. However, I will be happy to manifest one item such as a small flag or banner, or some other small memento, which could be displayed in the classroom after flight. The OFK is limited in weight and volume, therefore, we request all mementos to be small, light weight, and non-breakable. Please let me know what you and the special young people of your class would like to do. We will try to accommodate your request on a Shuttle mission in the near future. If you have any questions, I can be reached at 713-483-2467. Thank you again for your support and interest in the United States space program.

Sincerely,

Frances M. McQuary
Administrative Officer
February 20, 1992

Dear Mr. Baran:

The items listed below are being returned to you after flight aboard a United States Space Shuttle mission.

a. One (1) 14" x 16" 6-photo montage
b. Two(2) 4" x 6" photographs of Vice President Dan Quayle

On behalf of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, I am pleased to certify these items were flown in the Official Flight Kit (OFK) aboard Orbiter Discovery, STS-42, IML-1, January 22-30, 1992. It is our understanding these photographs will be displayed in the special education class at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School. I am returning the additional items you sent which were not flown under separate cover. Thank you for your interest and support of the United States space program.

Sincerely,

Frances M. McQuary
Administrative Officer
May 8, 1992

Dear Mr. Baran:

This is in further response to your letter of January 31, 1992, regarding the payment of travel expenses to be incurred by Astronaut Stephen Oswald while on a public appearance in Flossmoor on May 12, 1992. Your offer to furnish lodging and local ground transportation in kind and to reimburse the Johnson Space Center for airline tickets, meals, and miscellaneous expenses attendant to his participation in your program is consistent with NASA travel regulations and may be accepted. No other reimbursements are authorized and none may be solicited on behalf of NASA or its employees. Your organization is responsible for payment to the place of lodging prior to commencement of travel. NASA's policy is to request prepayment of travel expenses associated with reimbursable arrangements. Expenses related to this trip, excluding lodging and local ground transportation, are estimated at $536. This estimate includes an administrative charge of 15 percent. (Please refer to enclosure for further information.) However, since you have indicated that this would not be in accordance with the regulations of your organization, we will notify you of the cost following completion of travel. Best wishes for a successful program.

Sincerely,

Daniel A. Nebrig
Associate Director
A real-life astronaut visited Jim Foster, 16, and his vocational special-education classmates at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, but Foster wasn't fazed. He was proud. "If you ask anybody," the sophomore explained Tuesday, "they probably know who we are." Foster, of Flossmoor, has reason to feel confident. He and two dozen students have become school and community celebrities for their aggressive marketing of boutonnieres and other floral arrangements to organizations in the Chicago area and across the country. The class taught by Larry Baran since 1980, has produced more than one million decorative items over the years. This school year alone, backed by $55,000 in federal funding, Foster and his peers prepared thousands of boutonnieres for projects with tags such as "Flags in the Desert" (for soldiers in the Persian Gulf war) and "Project Aloha" (to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor). In addition, boutonnieres have been special-ordered this year for the U.S. Japanese embassy and guests of the swearing-in ceremony of U.S. Supreme Court, Judge Clarence Thomas. Along the way, students have sent tributes to personalities such as Detroit Lions offensive lineman Mike Utley, who was paralyzed in a game last year, and met Vice-President Dan Quayle. One of the most recent projects of the students' job training program, called Project Rainbow, was "Flags in Space," which led to the visit of shuttle Discovery pilot Stephen Oswald on Tuesday. In January, the students petitioned NASA to place a model space shuttle filled with their boutonnieres aboard the space shuttle Discovery. Baran credited the creative brainstorming of Foster and two other students with the idea. The students were inclined to agree. "We were standing around here talking to Mr. Baran about the boutonnieres," said Lee Zuick, 15, of Chicago Heights. "And we said, Hey, we can put one up in space," continued Maurice Fisher, 17, a sophomore from Homewood, during an informal lunch to welcome Oswald. The idea resulted in more than just red, white and blue adornments in space. Oswald, who spent eight days aboard Discovery last January, chose to visit the class as part of post-flight community relations work required of all astronauts. "I thought this would be fun to do" Oswald said. "Besides" he added, "people are familiar with this group. I know I was." Oswald stood amid a ring of students and fielded a range of questions, serious and in jest, about his life as an astronaut: "Do they have any UFO's up there?" "What's it really feel like with that
hat on?" "Does the money fall out of your pocket when you go up?" Oswald, who was at school for three hours Tuesday, handled the questions with aplomb. He signed autographs, mugged for pictures and shook a lot of hands. In the afternoon, he visited with the regular education students. Baran said it was a day to savor. "These kids will have a memory for the rest of their lives I've met an astronaut." *

Dear Larry,

Thank you so much for the great Star Spangle Tributes you sent to the Clinton Campaign. We will be stuffing approximately 4900 bags with the "tributes." Each bag will be given to delegates who come to the convention from all over the United States. The extra tributes will go to our volunteers and staff. We hope that we have been successful in helping spread awareness that young people with disabilities are job worthy and ready to be put to work. This is an important aspect of Governor Clinton's platform. He believes that every person has some special skill to give and that every person should be used to his full potential. Thank you again and good luck!!

Sincerely,

Jess Sarimento

Dear Mr. Baran:

On behalf of the Republican National Convention Hospitality Committee, I wanted to write and let you know how thrilled we are to include your students' American flag boutonniere in the gifts being presented to the delegates. Our intent is to actually "pin" the delegates with this special boutonniere when they check into their hotel and receive their gift bag. We are in need of 6,000 boutonnieres to assure that no one will be excluded....We know what wonderful work programs, such as the Special Education/Vocational Education in your school provide for the youth in our society and applaud your efforts. We look forward to working with you on this project.

Sincerely,

Cindy Garbs
APPENDIX 20

THE MOCK DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN CONVENTION
APPENDIX 20
THE MOCK DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION

LIST OF POLITICAL SPEAKERS FOR MOCK CONVENTION

- Mr. Ronnie Bull, former Chicago Bears Running-Back
- Commodore Jones, Regional Director of the U.S. Department of Labor's Regional JTPA Programs
- Mr. Sam Pignatello, Director of the Cook County President's Office of Employment Training
- Ms. Loleta Didrickson, Director of the Illinois Department of Employment Security
- State Senator Aldo De Angelis-R
- State Senator William Mahar-R
- State Representative Frank Giglio-D
- State Representative Bill Shaw-D
- Mr. Mel Reynolds Democratic Candidate for U.S Congress District 2
- Mr. Ron Blackstone Republican Candidate for U.S. Congress, District 2
- Mr. Paul Scheeler, aide to Mr. Rich Williamson, Republican Candidate to U.S. Senate
- Mr. John Ostenburg-D Candidate for State Senate
- Mr. Chris Ganschow, Press Secretary to U.S. Representative George Sangmeister
July 31, 1992

Greetings:

As Governor of the State of Illinois, I am pleased to extend personal greetings to everyone attending The American Spirit and P.R.I.D.E. Convention 92 sponsored by the Young Americans with Disabilities in Action of the Job Training Partnership Act Summer Program at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School. Illinois' most valuable resource is you, our young citizens. You are to be commended for your desire to understand the political process and exercise one of your most precious freedoms, the right to vote. Through your hard work, determination and dedication to the successful activities and experiences at your school, you have laid the foundation to all you may wish to do throughout your life. Mr. Baran, you and your students' involvement in the outstanding "Star Spangled Flag Tributes" program is to be reflected on with great pride. I am honored to participate in the spirit of this occasion. Please accept my congratulations and best wishes for continued success.

Sincerely,

Jim Edgar
Governor
The White House
Washington
July 15, 1992

On behalf of President Bush, I want to thank Mr. Baran and his staff for their efforts for the mini convention. Please know that I appreciate your hard work and your efforts on the President's behalf. Keep up the good work.

Shirley Green
Assistant to the President for Correspondence

July 30, 1992

To the Students of Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School:

Thank you so much for your time and effort in putting together the Star Spangled Tribute for the party and our campaign. Programs like the JTPA are vitally important to this country. They provide our youth with the skills that they need to compete and win in an increasingly global economy. The work of the students at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School is crucial to our country's ability to create the best-educated, most highly trained work force in the world. It provides young people like yourselves with the opportunity to learn the dignity of work, the feeling of success and fulfillment with a job well done. We literally can't afford to waste one young person in this country -- every one of you represents the future of this nation, and we have a responsibility to make tomorrow better than today and to provide our people with the skills and training they need to be productive citizens. Thank you again for all your hard work and creativity, and best wishes for a successful political convention.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton
June 29, 1992

Dear Mr. Baran and Children of JTPA:

Thank you for contacting the Perot Petition Committee and for your interest in a possible Perot for President Campaign. The beautiful boutonnieres that you all will make and donate to us will without doubt be enjoyed by all! I am delighted to see the positive efforts of young Americans like yourselves. The knowledge you all will gain from your mock elections will teach you valuable lessons about the election process and how to make informed decisions. In the long run you will realize how absolutely necessary it is to register to vote on your eighteenth birthday. The right to vote is a very precious privilege that we all share in this country. Again, we all look forward to receiving your skillfully made boutonnieres. They will be distributed throughout our offices and to our volunteers. Thank you for contacting us and good luck to you all!

Sincerely,

Ross Perot
Dear Larry,

Congratulations on a simply outstanding JTPA Spirit and Pride Convention. I am absolutely overwhelmed with the number of people you got involved in this program and what you did for your students. Your knowledge of learning styles and your implementation is absolutely incredible. I'm sending a copy of all of this to Harvey and Bob because I think they'll be stunned when they see what a terrific job that you did. You really are a team player, and I can't tell you how much I appreciate that. Personally I appreciate your support and your smiling face and your willingness to go the extra mile for Homewood-Flossmoor High School. You are truly an outstanding teacher and an incredible human being. Thank you very, very much for the opportunities that you provide our students. They're simply wonderful. Enjoy the rest of summer.

Sincerely,

Laura F. Murray
It has all the makings of a political convention with Democrats and Republicans, red, white and blue bunting, and the hustle, bustle and excitement of nominating a new leader. But the scene was not New York or Houston, the site of this year's conventions. It was the cafeteria at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, where special education students held a mock convention and chose Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton over incumbent George Bush for President. The cafeteria resembled a political arena, with a central podium, a VIP section for local politicians and dozens of people with hats, buttons, and signs touting their favored candidates. Special education teacher Larry Baran, who also had about 50 of his students making red, white and blue boutonnieres to be worn by delegates to both conventions this summer, said the exercise was designed to introduce the electoral process to some who may be voting for the first time in November. "This is a dry run through the American political system," Baran said. The students are participating in the Job Training Partnership Act, a program that simulates a work place and helps students ready themselves for a real working environment. The students had the chance to listen to a number of real politicians. State Sen. Aldo DeAngelis (R-40th) of Olympia Fields loudly urged the crowd to "vote Republican." State Sen. William Mahar (R-19th) of Orland Park held up a clown's face during his explanation of what a Democrat looks like. On the Democratic side, State Rep. Frank Giglio (D-77th) of Calumet City told the students you "don't have to be a lawyer or be rich to be a politician, just have common sense." Loleta Didrickson, director of the Illinois Department of Employment Security and a Republican, gave a generally non-partisan speech urging students "to go past the promises and look at what they are going to do for you." The mock vote at the end of the afternoon saw Bill Clinton as the Winner with 18 votes, George Bush with 16 and independent Ross Perot, who dropped out of the race before ever officially entering with 2. David Hespel, 18, said he voted for Clinton because he felt "He's going to do something good for the economy." "Bush didn't do much, and I don't know why I took this sign," Hespel said, holding a Bush-Quayle campaign sign. Becky Mazak, 19, said she voted Republican because she felt "the country doesn't need a
change. I'm happy with the way things are right now," she said.

More than four dozen students with disabilities got a taste of the political arena Friday when their summer classroom was transformed into a convention hall packed with patriotic symbols, loads of guest speakers and a very potent message.

The some 50 Young Americans with special disabilities enrolled in the 1992 Job Training Partnership Act summer program at Homewood-Flossmoor High School were told:

You're not different. You shouldn't be treated unequally. You have a right to vote. And you have a right to work.

Keynote speaker Commodore Jones, a regional JTPA leader for the U.S. Department of Labor, emphasized the importance of "enhancing skills and abilities and work attitude" and said JTPA is "pointed toward making things happen" through a continuing partnership.

A first step toward equality can be seen on television nationwide because the patriotic boutonnieres adorning politicians' clothing from now until Nov. 3 symbolize more than a flash of red, white and blue spirit.

These emblems trace back to the dedicated work JTPA students have been aggressively plugging away at through the seven-week summer course that had its grand finale with Friday's mock mini-political convention - "American Spirit PRIDE (Predicting the Republican, Independent and Democratic Election) Convention 1992."

Students have been paid minimum wage for their summer efforts which have been funded through a $40,000 federal grant. About 26,000 red-white-blue flower and flag arrangements were made for the '92 presidential campaigns.

"It's an inspiration to do this because we're letting Americans know that we care," said student Shawn Reese, 15. He said it makes him "proud" to see political candidates flash a boutonniere he could have constructed.

"We're touching people all around the world," added student Yolanda Cleveland, 17.

Summer helper David Hespel, who assisted JTPA students, said assembling the star-spangled pieces "keeps me going. If you have problems, this takes your mind off them. It's one heck of a job."

Other mentors agree.

"We're trying to show others what these people can do in a job," said Shannon Smith, a volunteer helper and junior at the high school.
Smith said it's unfair the way students with disabilities are usually treated because "they're just like everybody else and they need the chance to work just like everyone else."

"Yeah" agreed fellow helper Emanuel Osafo, 15. "If people would just take the time to sit down and talk to them and find out how they really are and what they're really about."

That was a prime focus in Friday's get-together. An attentive audience made up of residents, school and JTPA personnel and many others listened to supportive speeches given by a variety of political figures.

After talks, people viewed a slide odyssey of JTPA "Flag Tributes" and then students participated in a Republican-Democratic game, nominations, acceptances and voting.

The vote tallies, taken by students were virtually split -- with Republicans stacking up 16 votes and Democrats pulling in 18. Former undeclared presidential candidate Ross Perot received two votes.

"These kids are all going to be at a voting age soon."
said Mary Mayer before the convention. Mayer works in career education for the physically-health impaired and visually impaired program.

"It's great to have them receive this exposure and this makes the more aware of what's going on politically, which is real important."

About one-third to one-half of enrolled students are of voting age, according to convention project leader Larry Baran.

"The impossible dream isn't," stressed Baran before the convention start. "We can do anything in this country. These kids have to have the guts and they have to have the amazing grace to do things. And they do."

"These kids are no different than anyone else," he continued. "They want to earn a wage and they want to live the American lifestyle."

Before afternoon speeches began, messages were read from incumbent President George Bush and Democratic Presidential nominee Bill Clinton, Publically thanking JTPA student for sending them thousands of patriotic symbols.

Gov. Jim Edgar sent regrets for not being able to attend the event.

"The Republicans and Democrats are recognizing these students today," said resident Marion Brown, who has a grandchild attending H-F.

"They're helping their self-esteem and making them feel like they are people, that they do make a difference and that they do have a future."

APPENDIX 21

THE CLINTON/GORE INAUGURATION
APPENDIX 21
THE CLINTON/GORE INAUGURATION

LETTER OF COMMITMENT

Presidential Inaugural Committee
December 15, 1992

Dear Mr. Baran:

Thank you for your letter offering your company's service during the 1993 Presidential Inauguration. I have forwarded your materials to the appropriate event directors for further consideration. We appreciate your taking the time to offer your service and would like very much for everyone to have the time to assist in the production of the inaugural events. Unfortunately, time and the number of events are limited. The event directors will review your proposal and determine if your company can be of service. The division will contact you if an appropriate spot is found. Again, thank you for your interest and support during this important event in American history.

Sincerely yours,

Debbie Willhite
Events Director
Dear Amy and the students at Homewood-Flossmoor:

We would like to thank you on behalf of the Presidential Inaugural Committee for the beautiful organizer baskets! They can be seen all over the building and everyone was thrilled to receive them. The President and Vice-President Elect are both extremely supportive of JTPA. We have passed on all of the information sent by Mr. Baran and are excited about Homewood-Flossmoor High School Workcenter being involved with the 1993 Presidential Inauguration. Someone will be contacting you soon as to what exactly you will be doing. We love your work and appreciate your enthusiasm. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Michelle Hornsby & Patrick Bridgforth
Presidential Inaugural Committee

Dear Mr. Baran,

Thank you very much for agreeing for participation in America's Reunion on the Mall. I'm sorry it has taken so long to work out the specifics on your organization's involvement within this festival. For the duration at the Reunion, the students will be making and distributing boutonnieres and other items. These activities will take place in a 10' by 10' area in the Public Information Tent, located on 12th street, between Washington and Adams Drive.....Load-in time for JTPA and all other vendors is 8 a.m. on Saturday, January 16. Load-in time should take place on Madison street. I look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,

Noah Shachtman
She emerged from a black car. They screamed a bit - the thousands gathered behind barricades to catch sight of her - and that should have given it away, right then, that Hillary Clinton is now like Madonna or the Princess of Whales. Screams for the First Lady-in-waiting! She walked oh-so-slowly, Her Almost First Ladyship, in a very long, thick, black Gothic sort of Eleanor of Aquitaine coat, feet seeming to hover above the gravel of the Mall, floating, then waving. She smiled warmly, and often. She had what people of an older generation call "bearing." This was her visit to the Mall, her public visit with the public, her moment to shake the hands of people who would, for the rest of their lives, be boring people with the retelling of the story. "Hello" she said, eyes watering from the wind........ potentially blocking their view of Our Lady of Great Poise. There were between 5,000 and 6,000 in their shiny hats and shearing. They waited an hour in the freezing shadows for her. "Hillary! Hey, Hillary!" She stopped at the "Americans with Disabilities in Action" booth, which featured seven challenged kids and their very dedicated and talkative teacher named Larry Baran, who calls himself Capt. Rainbow and who was, it's fair to say, quite overwhelmed by the Official "Drop-By" from Our Lady of Great Poise and Blondness and Billowing Scarf. "I have known for years," Capt. Rainbow said in a little maniacally afterwards, "that these young people would be lifted up in front of the Capitol for their job skills, and that day has come." Bizarre, and disturbing... Why does everybody collude with this strange reality? All the reporters pretend to watch a simple, spontaneous "event" of the First Lady-in-waiting strolling bits of the Mall. The First Lady-in-waiting pretends not to notice that the press is there - standing behind a little nylon yellow rope. Her entourage of 10 press handlers and advance people and Secret Service stand by, unimpressed, as crowds groan and bulbs flash and their boss keeps gracefully handing them all the stuff that the challenged kids have handed her: a basket of flags and flowers, a bag of school jackets, pamphlets and papers and
other sorts of informational jazz. Everybody, it seems, has things to give Hilary Clinton....

LETTERS AND ARTICLES FOR CLINTON/GORE INAUGURAL
LIST OF SPECIFIC INVOLVEMENT IN DECORATIONS

6,000 star spangled tributes for the Democratic National delegates.

65 desk organizer baskets for the Inaugural Committee Office complex.

15,000 star spangled tributes for the Reunion on the Mall.

150 red, white and blue centerpieces made as a demonstration to showcase their talents at the Reunion at the Mall.

50 custom-made centerpieces for the 50 "Faces of Hope" honored guests.

3,000 remaining star spangled flag tributes that were accepted by the First Lady for the Inaugural Ball entitled "The Finance Ball" at the historic Civil War Pension Building.
APPENDIX 22

WORKING IN THE WHITE HOUSE
APPENDIX 22
WORKING IN THE WHITE HOUSE

LETTER OF CONFIRMATION

The White House
Washington
June 15, 1993

Dear Mr. Baran,

I am delighted that six of your high school students at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School will be volunteering at the White House this summer. They will be working in the Department of Correspondence from July 6th to August 6th. It is my understanding that the students will be coming on a rotational basis. Their primary responsibilities will be opening and stapling incoming correspondence and processing outgoing correspondence. I am working on getting a parking pass for your group's van. I will let you know as soon as I hear something. I look forward to meeting you and the students. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at 202-456-7756.

Sincerely,

Lori Krause
Director of Interns/Presidential Correspondence
LETTERS AND ARTICLES FOR WORKING IN THE WHITE HOUSE

April 7, 1993

Dear President Clinton,

Greetings on behalf of your constituents, young Americans with Disabilities in Action, of the JTPA Program for Special Education Students at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School. We are the same group who made the 15,000 Flag Tribute Boutonnieres, not only for the Democratic National Convention, but we were asked to participate in the wonderful Reunion on the Mall where we again gave out 15,000 Flag Tributes for the Inaugural Festivities. Your wife, the First Lady, took the time to visit with the ten of us and learn about our job skills program. It was a wonderful moment for all of our disabled youth involved. Sir, as you know, the JTPA funds for this summer are currently tied up in a filibuster and debate while waiting for spring break to end. After four years under this funding source, we are used to this uncertainty. Yet, we are still planning for our summer community service program. We seek out specific non-for-profit facilities to place a four-member work crew under the supervision of a college job coach. The students came up with a very unique idea. I asked them where we could go and seek out other job sites and one response was, "Why couldn't we work for President Clinton in the White House? They must have tons of jobs we could do!" With that I always encourage my students to believe that the impossible dream isn't! Also with all of the other wonderful experiences we have done to serve our country through this program while at the same time learning pre-employment skills, we are wondering if this could not be seriously considered as a truly model exemplary program for JTPA as a summer internship for disabled youth with the White House as one of our job sites. Enclosed is a proposal as well as a back up documentation. We hope you enjoy the Spring Easter floral gift we made for you Family.

Sincerely,

The JTPA Program/Larry Baran
Office of the Vice-President

I have heard a lot about the wonderful work of the JTPA Summer Program, and I know that the White House Correspondence Office has depended upon these students to help them complete their work this summer. Beginning a new Administration is not an easy task, but the students from Homewood-Flossmoor High School have helped to make our first months very productive ones. I hope you will convey my gratitude and appreciation to all of the JTPA participants, we couldn't have made it without them.

Sincerely,

Al Gore

The White House

Thank you for the wonderful desk organizer and tool box. They are wonderful examples of the hard work and talent your students put into their projects. I appreciate their thoughtfulness in presenting me with this gift and am grateful for their dedicated efforts to help with White House correspondence. Please extend my thanks to all the students involved.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton
The teenager from suburban Chicago fidgeted in his seat at a White House reception, waiting for his chance to talk to President Clinton. He had rehearsed all afternoon. When his turn came, he told the President, "My name is Brian Bolakowski, and I am totally blind from birth." Then he asked a favor: "Mr. President, I would like to invite you to Illinois to meet the other 100 handicapped students who were not able to attend this reception." Clinton, speaking to Bolakowski in front of guests gathered for the third anniversary of the ADA, said he had a lot of invitations but promised to attempt a visit. Bolakowski, wise to the way of politicians, asked him to put his intentions in writing. The 15-year old student from South Holland, who spent a week working in Washington this summer, considered himself special to have a meeting with the President. That's generally how Bolakowski views his life too. When asked about the restrictions his blindness imposes, Bolakowski seems oblivious to a negative side. "There are things I do that a lot of other people can't do," he responded. Sitting behind a table stacked with letters, he explained how he got the week long job in the White House and on Capitol Hill after a teacher encouraged him to apply for the Homewood-Flossmoor high School JTPA Program. He polished up his interview skills and talked with the program director, whose classroom was next to his locker. Ultimately, the program accepted him and about 40 other students from Chicago suburbs....Students worked in the Old Executive Office Building, next to the White House, and on Capitol Hill. For the President they opened, sorted and stapled some of the thousands of letters the White House receives daily. They also performed similar tasks in the offices of Illinois Democratic Senators Simon and Mosely-Braun and U.S. Rep. Reynolds (D-Ill.). The students were paid $4.25 per hour for their work in Washington, and the government grant also picked up their travel expense and some of the expenses from back home - $70,000 in all for the summer. Baran calls the student service corps, "Americans with Disabilities in
Action" and says meeting the President topped all previous honors for the group.*

APPENDIX 23

THE FRANCIS SCOTT KEY FOUNDATION
Be A Part of History... and have your name recorded at a national monument! K-Mart is a founding sponsor of the Star Spangled Banner Monument, a historical landmark giving tribute to Francis Scott Key and the American Flag. The monument will be built in Washington D.C. by the fall of 1993. Preserve your name and the names of your loved ones on the Honor America Roll, a computerized listing that will be placed at the monument for future generations to see. All you need to do is come into K-Mart from May 24–July 1992 and make a small donation to the Star Spangled Banner Monument. Donations can be made at the jewelry counter in all K-Mart stores. See store for details. GO AHEAD - SHOW YOUR COLORS! Net proceeds of all contributions, after actual expenses are deducted, will go directly to the Francis Scott Key Park Foundation.
September 25, 1992

Dear Larry,
Thank you so much for the beautiful boutonnieres! They became part of the table decor, and many people both commented on them and wore them. You were good to get them out on such short notice. I will send you a photo of the tables when the prints arrive, but as a "Thank You" to your fine students, the Francis Scott Key Park Foundation would like to present you with a replica of the original "Star Spangled Banner" -- the fifteen-star, fifteen-stripe flag that flew over Ft. McHenry when our National Anthem was composed.....Good luck in the new school year - in my view, all teachers make an enormous contribution to our country. Take care ...
Sincerely,
Jonda McFarlane
President

June 15, 1993

Dear Larry,
Thank you for your reply to my last letter. It sounds like you are keeping yourself busy between the program and working on your doctorate. Good luck to you! We also have been busy at the Foundation and are working toward making the dedication of the Park a success. It sounds like the best way for us to have the boutonnieres made would be by the disabled kids. We would be happy to provide them with some summer work while also reducing our costs! We would like to order 1000 of them which I believe you said would be $175. The Park is scheduled to be dedicated on September 14, 1993; therefore, we would like to have the boutonnieres some time before that date. I appreciate your help and interest in this project.

With warmest regards, I remain
Sincerely Yours,

Jonda McFarlane
President
Dedication Events
Community Service - 10:00 A.M.
St. John's Episcopal Church

The boutonnieres you received today were made by Young Americans with Special Needs, a program sponsored by Americans with Disabilities, Inc., which allows children to build self-esteem and practice pre-employment skills. Their "Star Spangled Tribute" is distributed today by students from Francis Scott Key Elementary School in Arlington, Virginia (celebrating its 25th anniversary this year). Francis Scott Key Elementary School in the District of Columbia and Francis Scott Key Middle School in Silver Springs, Maryland.
Homewood-Flossmoor High School's Americans with Disabilities in Action has coordinated an inclusion-initiated activity by inviting peers from other classrooms across the U.S. to assist in the construction of Star Spangled Tributes. The more than 10,000 boutonnieres will be distributed to participants at the Nov. 11 dedication ceremony of the Vietnam Women's Memorial Project in Washington, D.C. H-F senior Katie Slobig who has epilepsy, came up with the idea for the project while visiting the Vietnam Wall memorial this summer. Working with chairman of the Women's Memorial, Diane Carlson, Slobig is the chairman of the local project. Since mid-September, 24 states have responded positively to the project, and more than 30 Illinois schools received kits for making tributes as well as requests that a lesson on the role of women in Vietnam be given. The Homewood-Flossmoor JTPA Work Program also requested that special education and regular education students work together on the project kits. To bring young students together for a lesson in history and a day of working as a team, a China Beach Workathon has been scheduled at Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School from 8:30 - 1 p.m. on Saturday. The objective of this event is to complete the remaining 5000 flag tributes while learning about the role of women in the Vietnam War. A panel of guest speakers, men and women who served in the war, has been invited to this event. A static, military MASH unit display with a helicopter will be on site to complete the experience. For additional information about Saturday's event, interested readers may telephone Baran at 799-3000, Ext. 318 or 799-8420.

Women who served in Vietnam received special attention from a group of students of all ages who banded together at the high school on Nov. 6. The cafeteria was alive with busy hands creating patriotic flag boutonnieres that will be handed out at the celebration in Washington, D.C. today to honor the Vietnam Women's Memorial. While students sat at cafeteria tables working in assembly fashion, they listened to emotional speeches that came from the heads and hearts of men and women who served in Vietnam and in more recent conflicts. Katherine Ling, who served with the American Red Cross in Vietnam, told the students that war is not glamorous. "There is nothing fun about working with young, wounded soldiers day after day. There is nothing fun about helping patients recently blinded or traumatized write home. "I've been talking to the kids and they ask what I did and if it was hard," said Constance Edwards, a Frankfort resident who served as a nurse in Vietnam. "I told them I was only a little older than some of them when I went into the Army," she said. Special needs student Katie Slobig conceived the project idea while touring Washington, D.C. and seeing the Vietnam Wall last summer. She noticed a banner announcing the dedication of the memorial and suggested to her teacher Larry Baran that they give tribute by making their flag boutonnieres for all of the attending women. Slobig, a senior, took down the phone number on the banner and contacted Diane Carlson Evans, the chairman and founder of the memorial. Evans accepted Slobig's offer and the project was underway. During the workathon, Slobig was awarded a certificate of appreciation by the United States Air Force. "I now know what my program is about. Now I know why people are so confused by myself and my program and my students, because they can't comprehend that these kids can do something like this," said Baran, special education teacher at H-F. "I believe in their ability; they have touched America and the world." Baran is most excited about this project because the special needs students have networked to include regular education classes and the National Honor Society. "We thought that taking time out of our day wasn't too bad, because the people (speakers) took all that time out of their lives," said National Honor
Society member Laura Krichilsky, as she busily twisted a boutonniere together. Five students from Parker Junior High School said they were participating in the workathon for extra credit, but that they had learned from the experience. "I didn't know much about it, but hearing them talk made it seem more real," said Sarah Keller, a fifth grader from Parker. Girl Scout Troop 438 of Tinley Park worked diligently with Laura Murray, H-F principal and Acting Superintendent, and Terry Walsh, Assistant Principal, to make the flag tributes. They have further networked the project to include states all over the nation. Twenty states have participated and boxes from Alaska, Hawaii, Mississippi, Maryland, and Arizona to name a few, were stacked and ready to make the trip to Washington. Today, some 15,000 boutonnieres will be handed out by Baran and students Matthew Moxley and Chris Clark. Several others from H-F High School will attend the ceremony including chaperone Megan Tipton and student Charlie Berg, senior director of special events, and Josh Berk, a freshman who has put a lot of time and effort into the project. Project China Beach was successful, says Baran, because so many students, teachers and administrators worked so diligently. "The impossible dream isn't!" said Baran.

LETTERS AND ARTICLES FOR WOMEN'S VIETNAM MEMORIAL PROJECT

Katie Slobig of Homewood is a Very Important Person, and this was brought to the attention of the Homewood-Flossmoor High School Board at its last meeting. Three Vietnam veterans presented Slobig, a senior special education student, with a bouquet of yellow roses, a T-shirt, and a plaque in appreciation for her thoughtfulness. Slobig, a student in Larry Baran's floral design class, designed the boutonniere that was distributed to people who stopped at the Women's Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. But she was not able to attend the dedication on Veterans Day. "We were in Washington for the dedication and we saw a young man passing out these boutonnieres," Jim Murray of Warrenville said. "We talked to him and found out that 15,000 had been passed out, so we just wanted to come here and personally thank Katie." Besides the three veterans at the School Board meeting, veterans from across the country contacted H-F about the boutonniere and express their appreciation, the board was told. Although the boutonniere - three flowers, a leaf and the American flag - was Slobig's idea, it was a cooperative project involving high school students across the country. "This boutonniere was actually made on Saturday, Nov. 6 as part of our China Beach Day," explained Laura Murray. High school students far and wide as well as approximately 400 people from the community made the boutonnieres that day. Baran got a military helicopter to land on the field near the stadium so students and residents could inspect it between 8:30 and 12:30 p.m. Vietnam veterans Murray, John Ploense of Bolingbrook, Jim Stepaniak of Winfield and Rick Parker of West Chicago (who was not present) said they were so touched by Slobig's boutonniere idea that they wanted to appear at the board meeting and tell her personally what the boutonniere meant to them. "It makes my heart feel good to know that today's youth has not forgotten what freedom is all about and what we did," said Ploense. "There are 21 million veterans and 21 percent of them are women. "Ploense added that 8,500 women served during the Vietnam War, mostly as nurses and air controllers. They all volunteered, he said. Stepaniak was particularly pleased by the boutonniere because when he and other Vietnam veterans came home, "the atmosphere was not
the greatest." The men explained that the yellow roses given to Katie symbolized peace. *

December 10, 1993

Dear Homewood-Flossmoor High School,

The dedication of the Vietnam Women's Memorial was very touching for all of us who served in Vietnam and attended the ceremony in Wash. D.C. It was a bitter-sweet day filled with many memories both good and bad. There were reunions, hugs, tears and smiles. Lots of media coverage, speeches, Vietnam widows, orphans and Gold Star Mothers. There were thousands of VN Vets who came to share this day with us and offer their love and support. There was a contingent of American Indian Vietnam Vets who walked (each and every one of them) from wherever they lived in the US to show their appreciation and respect. However, of all the happenings of that day, the one that touched me most was when they handed out (to each of us) the "Star Spangled Tribute" corsage made by the youth of America to remember and recognize the role of Women in the War. Every woman vet I saw had one on and many left hers on or at the foot of the beautiful bronze memorial statue. I kept mine and have it safely tucked away with a few other mementos from that day, all stored away with my old pictures, combat boots, hat and tears. Many - many tears. Thank you, beautiful youth of America. Thank you for caring and for remembering and for your recognition and concern. In a round about way we all went to war for YOU. Never - Never forget "No one wins in war. Everyone loses." Thank you from all of us and may God Bless and Keep everyone of you.

Live Long and Prosper,

Betty Kim Linton
13633 Flagstone
Dallas, TX 75240
November 15, 1993

Dear Katie,

I was at the Vietnam Women's Memorial in Washington, D.C. for the dedication ceremonies on Veterans Day, November 11, 1993. As I approached the memorial, a person was handing out these little boutonnieres. I was so deeply moved by this gesture of love and kindness that I just had to find out who was behind all of this. You see I am a combat veteran of the Vietnam War. I was a machine gunner with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. When I came home 23 years ago, no one ever said thanks nor even had a kind word of support to offer. But you Katie... you have touched my heart because you were the one behind this project that has touched so many other veterans as well. As a proud veteran of the Vietnam War, I want to say thanks and God Bless you. Your expression of love and kindness has gone further than you may ever realize. I was there. I know. Perhaps our paths will cross someday and I will have the opportunity to give you a big hug and shake your hand. If that never happens, just know that I am grateful for your love and support. You are a very special person! Thanks again Katie!!

Sincerely,

Dennis W. Bowen
December 1, 1993

Dear Friends:

As I stood waiting for the unveiling of the Vietnam Women's Memorial last Veterans Day in Washington, D.C., someone handed me one of your star spangled tributes. I was very touched that a group of young people put all of this work into something they probably don't even remember....... but as a woman in Vietnam I remember. I want to thank you for your caring, warmth and most of all for the time and effort you put into this project. I have two of your tributes now ... one on my Vietnam jacket and one on the wall of my office at work. They remind me of a group of people in Flossmoor, Illinois that love and support America. May God bless you all and keep you safe. Thank you!

Sincerely yours,

Lynne M. Wilson
"Women in Vietnam"
Vietnam Women's Memorial Project, Inc.
2001 S Street, N.W, Suite 302
Washington, D.C. 20009
February 3, 1994

Dear Katie,

Please accept our deepest gratitude for your participation in the dedication ceremonies of the Vietnam Women's Memorial. The boutonnieres were beautiful and were truly appreciated by the thousands of Vietnam vets who received them. With the placement of the Vietnam Women's Memorial, the circle of healing has been completed. It is heartwarming to know that America's young people care enough to come out and show their support for veterans. We understand that you will be working on a similar project for future events. Please know that your efforts and all the hours you contribute are meaningful and do make a difference.

Sincerely,

Adam Drzal
Assistant Director
APPENDIX 25

THE AMERICAN HORTICULTURE AWARD
February 24, 1994

Dear Mr. Baran,

I am very pleased to inform you that the Awards Committee of the American Horticultural Society has selected Americans with Disabilities in Action to receive the Special Recognition Award for 1994. The Horticultural Honors Award for 1994 will be presented during the 49th AHS Annual Meeting in Arlington, Virginia, October 13-16. The Awards Banquet will be held on Saturday, October 15, starting with a reception at 6:30 p.m. To confirm your acceptance, please send biographical information, along with a recent black-and-white photograph of any size, which will be used for publicity purposes announcing the awards. We will be sending our press releases nationally and would be happy to include any publications of your choice if you provide us with names and addresses. Please send all of the information to Lisa Wolfe at the above address by March 21. Again, our warmest congratulations to you.

Sincerely,

Sherran Blair
Chair, Awards Committee
With the help of the man they call "Captain Rainbow," students at Homewood-Flossmoor High School in Illinois have combined floral craft and business acumen to found a thriving enterprise. Their "Star Spangled Tributes" - floral boutonnieres with American flags - accompanied Desert Storm troops and were blasted into space aboard the space shuttle Discovery. Their most recent project, and biggest order to date, was for the 50th anniversary of D-Day celebration in Normandy, France, where 40,000 of the commemorative pins were distributed to veterans. The manufacturers, marketers, and suppliers of the floral pins are special needs students who have been diagnosed as learning disabled, emotionally disturbed, physically challenged, developmentally delayed, and multiple handicapped. They built their business under the tutelage of Larry Baran, AKA Captain Rainbow. Hired as a special education teacher by the school in 1980, Baran planned to teach occupational skills to special needs youth through floral design, a sideline of his teaching job. The students, who would come to be known as Americans with Disabilities in Action, Inc., began by filling orders for corsages, boutonnieres, and centerpieces for the school. As their reputation grew, local government, businesses, and community groups sent in orders. Their big break came during the Bush/Quayle Inauguration. The students were commissioned to provide floral decorations for the Commerce Building and for a reception held by the Vice-President. The later resulted in a visit to Homewood-Flossmoor by the Quayles in April 1989.
APPENDIX 26

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF WORLD WAR II COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE PARTNERSHIP
Department of the Army
Office of the Secretary of the Army
Washington, D.C. 20310-0207
23 Nov 1993

Dear Mr. Baran,

This letter is to confirm that the Department of the Defense World War II Committee will meet with you in December at a time to be decided to plan the design and use of your products during the Normandy Landing Commemoration on June 6th, 1994. The Committee is currently in the process of preparing the necessary documents to contract the materials, and should have the preliminary documents ready for the review in December. We are looking forward to working with you.

Your respectfully,

Kevin T. Hanretta
Colonel, U.S. Army
Chief of Staff
Illinois Chapter Asks for Help

The NHS of Homewood-Flossmoor Community HS in Flossmoor, IL, is working on a joint service project with disabled students at their school. These students are making patriotic boutonnieres which will be used during the 50th Anniversary of D-Day Normandy Landing Commemoration in France June 6, 1994. The high school wants help making the 20,000 boutonnieres needed and is calling on NHS chapters across the country. If interested, contact Pamela Allen-Tucker, NHS Sponsor, Homewood-Flossmoor Community HS, 999 Kedzie Ave., Flossmoor, IL 60422-2299; (708) 700-3000, ext 396.

June 6th marks the 50th Anniversary of the allied invasion of France. That event marked the beginning of the end of World War II. The project you begin today, Hearts From the Homefront, marks the remembrance of that event.

This idea began with a single JTPA student at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, Lee Zuick. Through his efforts and those of groups like yours across the United States, veterans of Normandy will be remembered. As you construct these tributes you will learn about the sacrifices these Americans made to protect and defend the life, liberty and happiness you enjoy today.

As Vice-President and as a veteran of the United States Armed services, I want to thank you for undertaking this project. As you learn the lessons of D-Day, remember it is only by looking at the past, we can move into the future. Your effort today surely show "A Grateful Nation Remembers."
It was an emotional moment for a Homewood-Flossmoor High School teacher and four of his students Friday as they watched a U.S. Air Force plane leave O'Hare Airport for Washington, D.C. On board were two memorial wreaths and 14 cases containing thousands of boutonnieres - items made by students across the country and destined for D-Day ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery and the National Cemetery in Normandy, France. "I got very emotional when I saw the plane taxi down the runway," said Baran, a special education teacher at Homewood-Flossmoor and coordinator of the "Hearts from the Homefront" project. The reality Baran spoke of were the 15,057 toothpick sized American flags with gold ribbon roses that decorated each of the 4 foot wreaths, and the 35,000 red, white and blue boutonnieres. They will help mark the 50th anniversary of D-Day on June 6. The number 15,057 was significant because it represents the number of U.S. servicemen who died in the European theater during WW II. The 35,000 tributes will be given to survivors who will attend ceremonies June 6 at Arlington and Normandy, Baran said. Students in 250 classrooms across the nation helped assemble the toothpick flags and boutonnieres after kits were sent to them. With Baran at O'Hare were Lee Zuick, Michael Ehman, Inam Shalati, and Leslie Roth, all HF students.*

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Larry Baran's class of special education students at Homewood-Flossmoor High School has once again achieved special honors.

Over the past few years, his students fashioned thousands of flag boutonnieres for Persian Gulf War troops, the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor, two national political conventions and two presidential inaugurations.

The students now are making two 4-foot diameter wreaths. President Clinton will take one to Normandy, France, for the June 6 ceremony to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the D-Day landing.

That observance will take place at the American National Cemetery in Normandy. Vice-President Gore will present the second wreath during the ceremonies June 6 at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

The wreaths are made of 15,057 gold roses and 15,057 toothpick flags in remembrance of the 15,057 dead and missing in the battle for five bloody beachheads.

The students are also making thousands of boutonnieres to be passed out at D-Day observance ceremonies in France and in Chicago.

Those boutonnieres consist of American and French flags bound together with small red, white and gold flowers.

The project is known as "Hearts from the Homefront" and it is a cooperative effort between the Department of Defense 50th Anniversary of World War II Commemoration Committee and the federally funded Americans with Disabilities in Action Job Training Program.

The H-F students were busy Saturday packing and sorting boutonnieres and getting the wreath ready.

The idea for the project originated with student Lee Zuick.

"Both of my grandfathers were in WWII, and I think knowing that helps me understand the importance of this, which I think is a great project," he said.

"And I think we need to remember what these men did for us 50 years ago. Many students these days enjoy their freedoms, but they need to think about the soldiers who paid the price for those freedoms. It makes me feel real good to do something to help recognize the veterans."
Baran said the project is a learning experience for the students. Students are learning about the history of the war and gaining marketable skills.

The students, he said, are learning how to organize a project from start to finish - gathering materials, producing a finished product and getting that production the hands of consumers.

"In this program, special needs students learn employment skills," Baran said. "They're job-worthy and ready, given the opportunity."

"Homewood-Flossmoor High School is proud to sponsor Hearts From the Homefront," said Laura Murray, District 233 Superintendent. "The Normandy veterans will appreciate the time you spent remembering what they did long ago."

Gore sent the students a video thanking them for their work. "By understanding the past, you help shape the future." Gore said. "I want to thank you for undertaking the project."

Another video thanking the students came from Bruce Thiesen, national commander of the American Legion.

"On behalf of the 3.1 million veterans I represent, I wish to thank you," he said.

"Every time our youth perform a service for the veterans, it proves the sacrifice the veterans made was worth it." *

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LETTERS AND ARTICLES FOR WORLD WAR II COMMEMORATIVE
LETTERS OF THANKS

The patriotic contributions provided by you and your students make Armed Force Service members, like me proud.
Leon E. Salomon
General U.S. Army Commanding

I want to convey my sincere thanks for the support you provided the U.S. Coast Guard's National WWII 50th Anniversary Commemoration at the Coast Guard Yards......You and your students received many wonderful compliments. The boutonnieres were truly appreciated by all of our attendees.
R.J. Marafioti
Commanding Officer
United States Coast Guard

They were just beautiful.
Mrs. L. C. Elliot

I believe encouraging students of today to participate in the commemoration of this valiant day of 50 yrs ago, goes a long way in restoring my faith in today's youth.
Cal Carrier

It's nice to know that there are people "out there" who are teaching the meaning of patriotism and what a little word like "thanks" can do to lift the spirits.
Mrs. Meryl Crozier

Minister of State for the Armed Forces, Mr. Jeremy Hanley recently attended the D-Day service at Cambridge American Cemetery. During the event he was given a buttonhole supplied by your organization and he has asked me to pass on his thanks for your kind gesture and also that his appreciation be passed on to the students who made it.
Minister of State for the Armed Forces/The United Kingdom, Great Britain
I feel highly honored wearing it.
Carl Betcher

I do hope in some way they can be made aware of how very much my husband, a D-Day vet, appreciated the lapel pin.
Betty and Ed Raymond

Thank you so much! It was comforting to know, that even after 50 years, some remembered!
Albert Orton

I write thanking you for putting together and making available the delightful cards and Anglo-American tributes that I was given on May 18. The event was a special garden party in the grounds of the British Embassy. Representing the Queen was her daughter, Princess Anne, and the guests included both U.S. and British servicemen. The party was hosted by Ambassador and Lady Renwick.
Leonard Prossor

Your salute to WWII Vets as very well received by male and female veterans at Normandy in early June. I observed the men pinning their bouquet on themselves.
M. Hughes

We were deeply touched by the fact your students were grateful.
Ervin Aden

I received my pin at the American Cemetery at Coleville-Sur-Mer, France on June 6, 1994 which was 50 years after our landing at bloody Omaha Beach. Since I was one of the fortunate survivors, I made the trip back to honor all the brave men who did not.
A.B. Vernon
Everyone who received them were proud to wear them.
William Binder

A real surprise that young American students think about European veterans.
Joke and Cor Boon/Nederland

We were very touched to be given your super "American flag tribute" which I wore with pride.
P.J. Cash/Britain

Thank you very much for the pin you made for us to wear for D-day ceremonies in France. We wore them all over Europe and had many compliments on it. I was a nurse and landed on Omaha Beach on July 11, 1944. Never forget, honey, the price in blood these veterans paid for our freedom.
M. Abraham

I want to thank you, too, for sponsoring such a project. You must have made a lot of flag lapel pins.
Corrine Townsend

I am greatly impressed with the cards that were done by the students of the midwest and sent to France for the D-Day celebrations. It is very special.
Virginia Bilward

I was given the card as I entered Colliville Cemetery. I wore it proudly!
Janet Stiplienson

Everyone in Europe loved them!
John Hickey
Thank you for the lapel pins which we received when we went to the ceremony at Omaha Beach. The ceremony was magnificent. We were excited to see Pres. Clinton, Queen Elizabeth of England, Queen Beatrice of the Netherlands, Mr. Mitterand of France...

James Townsend

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department wishes to thank you and all of those children who contributed to our efforts to show appreciation to our WWII veterans who came to our nationally sponsored event,...Among this group was the returning crew of the U.S.S. Texas, which is berthed at our park as a memorial museum ship now.

Dale Martin
Superintendent
APPENDIX 27

THE IWO JIMA MEMORIAL CEREMONY
APPENDIX 27
THE IWO JIM MEMORIAL CEREMONY

LETTERS OF THANKS

US Navy and Marine Corps WWII
Commemorative Committee
The Pentagon, Room 2E352

The Executive Director of the Navy and Marine Corps WWII Commemorative Committee takes pleasure in commending Mr. Larry Baran and the faculty and students of The Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School for exceptional service and dedication in remembering the veterans of World War II, especially those who fought on Iwo Jima, by donating your time and energy to ensure veterans across the country received commemorative boutonnieres. The efforts of Mr. Baran and his students, the National Honor Society, members of the football and basketball team, and all those at the school who spent time working on the project, are truly appreciated. Your good deeds will touch the hearts of nearly 20,000 veterans and family members who receive them. They will feel secure in knowing that the leaders of tomorrow have not forgotten the sacrifices World War II veterans once made. Fifty years ago, young people like yourselves took up the call to arms to defend this country and her people. Fifty years later it is appropriate to remember the sacrifices those men and women made to preserve the freedoms we enjoy today. Thank you for a job well done!

Semper Fidelis!

Jack Gallant
Executive Director
The White House
Washington
March 23, 1995

Dear Mr. Baran
Thank you for your thoughtful gifts and the information I requested about your organization.

I am touched by the support and encouragement that I have received from the Americans with Disabilities in Action - JTPA Program.

I am very grateful that you took the time and effort to let me know that you were pleased with my message and with the work of members of my Administration.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton
Dear Mr. Baran,

I couldn't believe my ears when you said a miracle is going to happen when we were at the ceremony in Washington. You made my wish come true. I always wanted to meet President Clinton. That was my first time. You're the one who made it happen. You're the best, you're the greatest, you're the neatest guy in the whole wide world. You are a very special person to me and I value my friendship with you, we will always be friends forever. Thank you my sweet friend.

With Friendship

Love,

Candy (a 30 year old Downs Syndrome young woman and Alumni of RAINBOW)
And it was inscribed "American Students salute" And with a lump in my throat the only thing I could say at that time was a very modest 'thank you' I found it most sincere, thoughtful and patriotic.
John H. Moran

It was a beautiful touching memento which I will keep always. P.S. I am enclosing an extra flag I took from the Island of Iwo Jima which was attached to the card for you to keep as a memento if you wish, after all, they have been to Iwo Jima and back. Thanks.
Stephen Scassero

It means a great deal to us veterans to know you young people care and appreciate what the veterans have done over the years.
Francis Didier

Bless your wonderful heart for your thoughtfulness!
Joe DeSalvo

I was moved to think a teenager would make such a gesture of appreciation to a Marine who had participated in the action on Iwo Jima.
Arthur Koskiner

I am writing to you to thank you for your thoughtful and wonderful memento.
Adolph Brusa

I will cherish it forever.
Ralph Covington
It was a little thing like that made a 70 year old man cry.
Paul Clinton

We wore them with pride and will be remembered as an important part of this solemn commemoration.
Bill Brock

There have been times during the past 50 years that I felt the nation, especially the younger generation, did not understand or appreciate the significance of WW II and the savagery of that was as exampled by Iwo Jima. That concern was put to rest when we were handed the card conveying "American Students Salute WW II Veterans of Iwo Jima."
Dick Donnelly

Just the thought that a student from Flossmoor, Illinois would take the time to participate in a project of this nature brought a tear to my 71 year old eyes.
Harold Carlton

The thought behind this kind gesture means even more, something that we will always cherish.
Herbert Karner

Thank you for the Iwo Jima card, so thoughtful of you. You are a real American!
Tibor Torok

Receiving your flag made me not only proud but warmed my heart that someone I don't know is thanking me for something so long ago.
Felton Owens
I and several men around me were touched deep down when we opened the packet given to us on Saipan just prior to boarding the plane bound for Iwo Jima and found this card with paper flowers attached thanking us for protecting the freedoms we all enjoy.

Bill Hastings

No words could describe the pure pleasure I enjoyed while passing out over 1100 cards and flags... your students are extremely talented and we consider them disabled in name only.

Jack Claven

During a recent Iwo Jima Day 50th anniversary ceremony in Boston, I was privileged to wear a flag and floral lapel memorial made by students at Homewood-Flossmoor High School. I would commend the school and the students who participated in this worthy program... Well done!

The Fleet Surgeon/U.S. Atlantic Fleet
J.H. Black
Rear Admiral, Medical Corps, U.S. Navy

What a wonderful gesture and much appreciated by me. After all these years it was a good feeling to know that someone remembered and cared.

Harry Crandell
The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
Washington
May 20, 1995

Dear Mr. Baran,

In Europe, WWII came to a long-awaited, hard fought end on May 8, 1945. To commemorate this day, fifty years later, veterans of WWII gathered at Fort Meyer in Arlington, Virginia, on May 8, 1995. They came to remember the thousands of American soldiers who died fighting for the world's freedom from the tyranny and oppression of the Axis powers during WWII. For those who fought in WWII and for those who understand the weight of their sacrifice, V-E Day is also a day to celebrate the peace our veterans won for the world long before many Americans were even born. To say thank you to the Veterans of WW II for their service is every American's duty, but many will never have the opportunity or take the time to do so. By making the cards and boutonnieres you sent the veterans for V-E Day, you made a personal statement of appreciation to them that I know they will not forget, and I saw first-hand how moved they were to have young people like you take an interest in what they did fifty years ago. Thank you so much for your effort, and God bless you in all that you do toward the achievements of your future goals.

Sincerely,

Jesse Brown
APPENDIX 28

THE KOREAN WAR VETERANS MEMORIAL
July 23, 1995

Dear Mr. Baran,

I write to thank and commend Americans with Disabilities in Action for its tremendous amount of hard work in the Dedication of the Korean War Veterans Memorial. The Thank You Tributes are an excellent expression of thanks and I am sure all veterans will be touched by the kids' sign of appreciation.

You will be provided the space necessary to distribute the tributes to Korean War Veterans and we look forward to seeing you on July 27th. Your spirit of volunteerism and involvement will truly commemorate the Memorial and give veterans the special honor they deserve. Once again, many thanks to you and the kids for all of your efforts.

Sincerely,

Everett A. Ham III
APPENDIX 29

RECOGNITION FROM THE WWII COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE
APPENDIX 29
RECOGNITION FROM THE WWII COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE

Department of the Army
Office of the Secretary of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310-1010
Aug 2, 1995

Dear Mr. Baran,

It is with great pleasure that our Committee presents you with the Department of Defense's World War II Commemoration Committee Certificate of Appreciation. We were delighted to learn that your "Star Spangled Tribute" activities have also earned you a 1995 Golden Apple Award. Please extend our best wishes to the students who have done such a magnificent job ensuring that "A Grateful Nation Remembers" our World War II veterans and home front supporters.

Very respectfully,

Claude M. Kicklighter
Lieutenant General
United States Army Retired
Executive Director
• Services provided under the act were for handicapped children aged 3-22 inclusive.

• State allocations were to be made using a percentage formula. Allocations for the first fiscal year, ending September 30, 1978, were determined by multiplying the number of handicapped children in the state by five percent. This amount was to be prorated upward to a maximum of forty percent for the fiscal year ending September 20, 1982.

• States had to identify and establish objectives that would contribute to providing a "full educational opportunity" to all handicapped children, a timetable detailing when these objectives were to be attained, and a description of the services, facilities, and personnel needed to attain the objectives.

• An appropriate educational program had to be made freely available to all handicapped children aged 3-18 by Sept 1, 1978, and to all handicapped children aged 3-21 by Sept 1, 1980.

• Where applicable, the state had to provide a least restrictive environment (mainstreaming of handicapped children aged 3-21 by Sept 1, 1980).
students into regular school programs) for handicapped children aged 3-21.

- Each state had to establish procedures to test and evaluate handicapped students so that they could be properly placed in an educational program. Steps had to be taken to assure that these students would not be discriminated against because of testing procedures.
- The state had to provide procedures for conducting annual evaluations of the effectiveness of various programs meeting the needs of handicapped students.

Provisions had to be made to fully inform parents of the programs or services which their children were enrolled in or using. Furthermore, the records diagnosing the status of a student's condition had to be made public to the parent or guardian. Several amendments have been added to give specific boundaries and extension of services. These include:

- Public Law 95-49, Education of the Handicapped Amendments of 1977, which gave a continuation of authorized appropriations and also extended certain programs.
- Public Law 95-561 and 96-341, Education of the Handicapped Amendment of 1978 and 1980, which gave continued federal funding, legislated special education into the Department of Education, and continued special education services and programs for colleges and
universities and programs for youth from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- Public Law 98-199, Education of the Handicapped Amendments of 1983, which further funded centers and services for handicapped youth and provided for additional training of personnel for special education services.
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VITA

The author, Lawrence Joseph Baran, was born in Chicago, Illinois. Mr. Baran attended Saint John Fisher Grammar School and Mendel Catholic Preparatory High School within the parochial schools of the Archdiocese of Chicago. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree from Chicago State University, with a major in Special Education. The author holds a Masters Degree conferred by Northwestern University, with a major in Learning Disabilities.

Mr. Baran has been employed by the Chicago Public Schools from 1970 - 1980 and he has been employed by Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School since 1980. He is married to Catherine Ann Baran and has two children, Heidi Marie, B.A., Illinois State University; Amy Melissa, B.A., University of Illinois - Champaign.

Mr. Baran has been awarded to 1992 Valley Forge Freedoms Foundations Leavey Award for Excellence in Private Enterprise Education, the 1995 Golden Apple Award and the 1995 Reader's Digest American Heroes in Education Award.

Mr. Baran became a Cancer Survivor on March 28, 1995.
The dissertation submitted by Lawrence J. Baran has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation, and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dec. 10, 1990
Date

Janis Fine, Ph.D.
Director's Signature