

**Objective:** *Seasoned counselor, teacher and tech-savvy program manager with disability, cross-cultural, returning student and veteran experience seeks Counseling position with Hawai'i Community College*

**Key Strengths:**

- Resourceful career counselor with 15 years of counseling experience focusing on students and clients with barriers to education and employment
- Professional post-secondary teacher and trainer, adept at working with adult students from diverse socioeconomic and multicultural backgrounds
- Effective writer and solutions-finder, as visible in grants received from state and city governments to fund career development programs

**COUNSELING/ADVISING EXPERIENCE:**

- Provided career counseling for returning, non-traditional and veteran students of UC Berkeley with and without disabilities who faced barriers to continued education and employment
- Monitored and evaluated students' career related needs and readiness; provided and coordinated appropriate interventions, resources and recommendations
- Planned and implemented student resource orientations and mentoring events, program information sessions, career development and job search workshops as part of a counseling team and individually
- Bridged connections between university services (financial aid, veteran services, general career counselors and academic advisors) and community-based and government organizations to ensure students received the full range of financial, academic and emotional support necessary to complete college
- Advocated on students' behalf as necessary by coordinating crucial accommodations, disability transportation, benefits planning and employment-related services and referrals
- Taught career development courses at UC Berkeley for students and recent graduates
- Assisted with "drop-ins" and advising for all students including special populations, on job search techniques, resume and cover letter development as well as opportunities for success and obtaining workplace support through community and campus resources
- Identified and recruited target populations to participate in career, personal and professional development programs as well as student mentoring programs
- Maintained student records to track progress and provide appropriate services
- Served on campus, community and employment-related committees and worked with other campus and community departments on special projects and events

**PROGRAM MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE:**

- Recruited, interviewed and trained career development student advisors and peer mentors
- Managed the peer mentoring program: coordinated pairing between students and student advisors, coordinated records, reporting, scheduling and outreach, including the peer blog
- Served on Career Center recruiting and interview teams, hiring new career counselors
- Monitored, negotiated, allocated and evaluated \$280,000 budget, oversaw monthly invoicing and review reporting accuracy for UC Berkeley financial systems as well as the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Successfully identified and cultivated relationships with local businesses and community-based organizations which led to internship opportunities and careers for students

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE:**

- English as a Second Language (ESL) educator for adult students ranging from Tokyo corporate clients and Macanese continuing education students to Taiwanese rural rice farmers
- Designed and implemented hundreds of cross-cultural, business skill and language development training programs for over 20 multi-national corporations
- Developed and delivered cross-cultural, post-arrival, pre-departure and re-entry trainings
- Facilitated the education of approximately 150 students from 21 countries as a full-time general 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher and 5<sup>th</sup> grade social studies teacher
- Designed and delivered website development classes for grades 3-12, teaching students to build their own websites and develop personal online portfolios
- Taught beginning American Sign Language (ASL), ESL, and Japanese from grades pre-K-12
- Substitute-taught from 9<sup>th</sup> grade through 12<sup>th</sup> in bi-lingual (Spanish/English, Mandarin/English) and standard-English schools

## **BLOGGING/SOCIAL MEDIA/TECHNICAL EXPERIENCE:**

- Research, design and write blog posts on disability, parenting and resources, reaching 30,000-100,000 readers a month
- Utilized expert SEO practices to build website, readership, and subscribers
- Huffington Post regular contributor, featured writer for news.com, Scary Mommy and other web-based publications
- Self-structured Word Press website, Google rank of 40 (out of 100); social media connecting accounts reaching a minimum of 5,000-10,000 people daily

## **EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

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Blogger, Meriah Nichols, meriahnichols.com, 2008-present

Independent Career Development Specialist, California State Department of Rehabilitation, 2010-2018

Career Counselor and Program Coordinator, University of California, Berkeley, CA, 2003-2010

Employment and Development Coordinator, International Institute of the East Bay, Oakland, CA, 2003

Substitute Teacher, Antioch Unified School District, Antioch, CA, 2001-2003

Training and Development Consultant, East West Institute, Inc., China, 1996-2002

Communications Specialist/Corporate Trainer, Phoenix Associates, Tokyo, Japan, 1999-2001

Educator, ESL/Curriculum Designer, English Studio, Tokyo, Japan, 1998-2001

Educator, ESL/Teacher Trainer, New Era School, Yu-Li, Taiwan, 1991; 1996-1997

Human Resource Manager, Tucson, Arizona, USA, 1995-1996

Teacher, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade, School of the Nations, Macau, China, 1993-1995

Tutor, Hawai'i Community College, Hilo, Hawai'i, 1992-1993

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## **EDUCATION:**

School for International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont, USA

Master of Arts, International and Intercultural Management with a focus in Human Resources, 2002

*Recipient of World Learning Scholarship*

University of Hawaii at Hilo, Hilo, Hawaii, USA  
Bachelor of Arts, Liberal Studies with a focus in Education, 1993  
*Self-financed while working full-time, graduating in 3 years*

International Language Academy, Fukuoka, Japan  
Certificate of Japanese Proficiency (2<sup>nd</sup> Level), 1991  
*Self-financed while working full-time*

Waiakea High School, Hilo, Hawaii  
Obirin High School, Tokyo, Japan  
Yat Sen School, Suva, Fiji

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## SKILLS:

**Language:** Japanese (proficient: reading/writing/speaking), Mandarin Chinese (conversational speaking, reading); ASL (conversational), Spanish (elementary)

**Computer:** WordPress, Expert social media management, HTML, MS Office, Adobe Creative Software, superior Internet and SEO research skills, savvy with a range of reporting and data collection systems

**Career Assessment Tools:** Myers Briggs Type Indicator, Skill Scan, Strong Interest Inventory

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## AWARDS, GRANTS, PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS:

### Website Publications:

Deaf Life, Outdoor Family, Homeschool Today, Offbeat Families, What to Expect When You Are Expecting, Parents, Brain Child, Mamapedia, The Village Voice, Huffington Post, Scary Mommy, BlogHer

### Book Publications:

Deaf. Me. *A Student's Guide to the Deaf Experience*, Edited by Michelle Jay, Judea Media, LLC  
Corporate Training in Japan, *Being Abroad in Japan*, Edited by Caroline Pover, Alexandra Press  
Choosing Moxie, *Gifts: 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition*, Edited by Kathryn Lynard, Woodbine House

### Grants:

California State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, \$280,000/Year, Awarded: 2003, '04, '07, '10  
Community Development Block Grant Program, City of Oakland, \$20,000, Awarded: 2002, '03

### Presentations:

Voice of the Year: *Disability Awareness Presentation*, Orlando, FL, 2017  
The d/Deaf Experience, *Society for Disability Studies*, Atlanta, GA, 2015  
Community Supports in Counseling Students with Disabilities, CAPED, Sacramento, CA, 2008

### Awards:

Voice of the Year (2017, SheKnows Media), Parents Blogger of the Year (2012)

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## AFFILIATIONS:

**California State Council**, California State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation  
Appointed by California Governor Brown, 2016-17

**Disability Rights Education Defense Fund**,  
Board Member, 2017-present

San Francisco Mayor's Committee for Employment, 2004-2010