Seth Kadlec...On the Fast Track to Living His Dreams!

Seth Kadlec is sure to become a very recognized and familiar name in the near future. Seth has an amazing voice and enthusiasm that is truly contagious. He is a freshman who comes to NCECBVI from East Butler Public Schools and is on the fast track to living his dreams!

Seth loves country music and has a career goal of becoming a DJ at a country music station. To help Seth learn more about his career interest and to explore this opportunity, Seth has been working at B103 in Nebraska City as part of NCECBVI’s Career Education class. He began by shadowing Keith Andrews and Hunter Arterburn, B103 DJ’s, to learn the on-air and behind the scenes preparation that goes into being a DJ. Mary Farris, Teacher of the Visually Impaired and Katie Whisler, Job Coach, work with Seth to help him develop segments that are announced on the radio.

Currently, Seth is focusing on the weather, blindness hints, helpful tips and NCECBVI fun facts. He has expanded on his skills by announcing the players at the Nebraska City Lourdes basketball games. Not only did he announce the players and coaches, he did it with his own unique flair!

Seth’s story and talent was quickly noticed by Malorie Maddox, Anchor/Reporter at WOWT Channel 6.
News out of Omaha, Nebraska. Malorie came to Nebraska City to shadow Seth at B103 and NCECBVI. The news report aired on February 27, 2017. Congratulations Seth!

Gary Sherman Honored for 50 Years of Service

After 50 years of dedicated service to those with disabilities, Gary Sherman retired from the Nebraska Department of Education in December 2016. For the last 41 years, Gary led the Nebraska Department of Education, Office of Special Education, as the State Director of Special Education. From 1971 to 1975, Gary started at NDE as the Director of Federal Special Education Programs. Before moving to NDE, he began his career as the Education Director at the Nebraska Orthopedic Hospital in Lincoln, NE, from 1966 to 1971.

“Gary Sherman served a lifetime advocating for students with disabilities. It is rare to have someone in a leadership role such as this for so many years. Gary has a true understanding of low incidence disabilities and his support for NCECBVI was immense. He has left a large, statewide footprint of his work, commitment and service and we thank him,” Sally Schreiner shared.

Steve Milliken has been named the new Director of Special Education. Steve spent 30 years as a local Director of Special Education in both a rural community and the metro area. He has also served as President for Nebraska Association of Special Education Supervisors (NASES) and President for the International Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE), where he formed new partnerships and gained valuable information that he brought back to Nebraska.

In August, 2016, Amy Rhone was named Assistant Director of Special Education. Amy has worked in a variety of settings in education and was recently the PBiS Coordinator/Director at NDE. She has spent many years working with foster and adoption families with pre and post placement, services and advocacy. In addition, she has served as a Director of Special Services within a school district. She is also currently pursuing her Doctorate Degree in Educational Leadership.

“Steve and Amy have been traveling to meetings and various areas of the state to meet with school administrators, increase communication and collaboration and share their vision of special education in Nebraska. They have been to NCECBVI to discuss our programs and services and we look forward to working with Steve and Amy and their leadership team in the future,” Schreiner added.

Seth Kadlec…On the Fast Track to Living His Dreams!

Seth enjoys visiting with Malorie Maddox about his new talent and living his dreams!
Longtime NCECBVI Employee Says Farewell

After almost 40 years of service, Nels Wilton retired in December, 2016. Nels started working at the Nebraska School for the Visually Handicapped as a part-time maintenance worker. It wasn’t long after that and he was given a full-time position in the maintenance department.

Over the years, Nels witnessed numerous changes in the school, the facility operations and his job duties. He has worked with a large number of people, both staff and students and has enjoyed his work.

At this year’s student holiday program, Nels celebrated his retirement with his family, friends, staff and students. In his honor, there was a surprise performance given by the Nebraska City Apple Corps Barbershop Chorus, a group in which Nels enjoys being a member of and performing. “We honor and thank Nels for his longevity on the job, his dedication, dependability, service and the role he played in hundreds of students’ education at both NSVH and NCECBVI – a job well done,” Sally Schreiner noted.

Becky Rieken Receives the Markussen Scholarship

Each year, the Karen Markussen Trust Fund is administered by the Nebraska Center for the Education of Children Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired and the Nebraska Department of Education. Ms. Markussen served as a teacher of the visually impaired in Central Nebraska for many years.

Ms. Markussen passed away on July 16, 2006, but it was her wish to assist teachers, pursuing a degree to teach children with visual impairments in Nebraska, with scholarship funds. An annual $500 scholarship is awarded to a student in his or her Senior year of a vision or orientation/mobility endorsement/degree program for the purpose of completing such endorsement/degree. This scholarship is intended to assist teachers professionally, utilizing funds for resources to build a professional toolkit, college course costs, memberships in professional organizations, costs related to professional development conferences and other opportunities.

The 2016 Karen Markussen Scholarship recipient was Becky Rieken. Becky serves as a teacher of the visually impaired at ESU 1. She shared this note of appreciation with the Karen Markussen family and NCECBVI.

It is a privilege and an honor to be the 2016 recipient of the Karen Markussen Scholarship. It has been a very busy year for me. Within this last year, I started a new job, moved and completed my Masters with the
NCECBVI Goes to Washington!

NCECBVI was well represented recently at the 2017 American Foundation for the Blind Leadership Conference in Washington DC. Sally Schreiner, NCECBVI Administrator, is currently serving as a Board of Trustees member for AFB. Also, congratulations to NCECBVI’s very own Rachel Zahn who was nominated by Dr. Mackenzie Savaiano, UNL, and was selected as a Delta Gamma Foundation Graduate Student Fellowship winner to attend this year’s Conference.

Becky Rieken Receives the Markussen Scholarship

Visual Impairment endorsement through the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. I will be starting my second year as a teacher for students with visual impairments with ESU #1 this fall. Because this last year was so crazy, I look forward to focusing mainly on my students this year. I appreciate the monetary support of this scholarship that will assist me in paying for my last semester of tuition for student teaching and more importantly, I value the meaning of this scholarship because it represents the desire to keep the love

and passion of this profession alive. I would like to thank the Karen Markussen family and the committee from NCECBVI for selecting me to receive this scholarship. It is my desire to teach my students with this same love and passion that others have and do display and to continue to take advantage of an amazing support system that has taught me to be a better teacher, colleague and friend.

Becky Rieken

Senior Spotlight

Jeffrey Davis
Jeffrey came to NCECBVI from Glenwood, Iowa and his parents are Stan and Mary Jo Davis. Some of the things he loves include asking questions, listening to stories and music, giving hugs and pats on the back, swimming, being physically active and jokes. His favorite song is “Kryptonite” by 3 Doors Down and his future plans includes working at VODEC (Vocational Development Center) and taking part in a variety of activities in his community. Congrats Jeffrey!

Randy Meyer
Randy came to NCECBVI from Council Bluffs, Iowa and his parents are Randy and Theresa Meyer. He loves to listen to music, rocking, jumping, dancing, yoga, laughter, jokes, mashed potatoes and being physically active. His favorite song is “The Ballad of Curtis Loew” by Lynyrd Skynyrd. Randy’s future plans include working at AmeriServ International and taking part in a variety of activities in his community. Way to go Randy!

Audrey Graves, Sally Schreiner and Rachel Zahn at the 2017 AFB Leadership Conference
Let’s Go To Work!

NCECBVI transition students have had the opportunity to work at a variety of off-campus jobs throughout the 2016-2017 school year. Career Education is important to students so they can develop independence, explore interests and pursue employment or additional schooling as they transition from school to adult life. Here are some of the off-campus jobs that NCECBVI students explored this year:

**Grimm’s Garden**

Students began their year with some outdoor job experiences at Grimm’s Garden. There were a lot of new skills to learn, including orientation and mobility, a key factor in being successful at this job site. The students learned that working outside meant lots of unpredictable situations which involved changing inventory, maneuvering safely through plants and trees, using heavy hoses to water plants and working in inclement weather. The students learned that there are benefits and challenges to working outside.

**Kimmel Orchard**

With a visit scheduled in September and during Applejack Weekend, students quickly realized, this is a very busy place! The students worked in the Apple House assembling hundreds of donut boxes for delicious apple donuts, a local favorite in apple country. The job required being organized, accurate and working at a consistent pace. The students learned that they could count and keep track of their progress and engaged in some friendly competition to see who could fold the most boxes in a set amount of time.

**Nebraska City Care and Rehabilitation (NCCR)**

NCCR provided students with a variety of opportunities to do cleaning jobs in the facility, along with preparing and participating in recreational activities. These included: reading stories to residents, doing crafts, sharing current events and Christmas caroling during the holidays. This job site has allowed students to work on their social skills while learning new work skills.

The Keeping Room

This job site allowed students to continue practicing skills learned at previous job sites. Tasks such as placing silverware into napkins, then folding and rolling them up nice and neat, along with cleaning chairs and tables, were important when you are expecting customers. Students also learned how small privately owned businesses are different from larger fast food chains.

**B-103**

Look out world, here comes Seth on B-103 Big Apple Radio! Seth has the goal of becoming a radio personality, (aka DJ Seth), and is working on his talking talents one day a week at a local radio station. He shares the weather forecast and is hosting his own spot called “Seth’s Segments.” During his radio show, Seth educates listeners by sharing some great school history along with social hints and tips when interacting with someone who is blind or visually impaired. Seth has also learned that there is a lot of planning and work that goes on behind the scenes to make things happen on a radio station.

What great learning experiences and skill development the community offers to our Career Education Students.
Established in 2000, Outlook Nebraska, Inc.’s (ONI) mission is to positively impact everyone who is blind or visually impaired. The vision of ONI is to be the premier provider of choice for exceptional employment training and experiences that allow the blind and visually impaired to realize their personal and career goals.

Located in Omaha, Nebraska, ONI is an operation that supplies a full line of 100 percent recycled fiber content tissue and towel products to the U.S. Government and other customers. It is the largest employer of the blind and visually impaired in Nebraska. While it’s primary service is employment, they also offer additional services in the community, including social activities, education, technology and adaptive aids training, and health and wellness programs.

Transition students from NCECBVI had the opportunity to tour the facility and experience a day in the life of an Outlook Nebraska Employee. Students began with a lesson in the factory on how toilet paper and other paper products are made and packaged. The students found it very interesting that everyone entering the factory area had to wear safety equipment such as eye protectors. They also learned there are many loud noises, beepers and other signals used while traveling on the factory floor to keep them safe. Everyone was impressed by the pathways lined with metal strips to keep cane users safe and away from moving machinery as they walked to their workstations.

After the tour, each student was given the opportunity to work at a station along the assembly and packaging line. Everyone agreed that the conveyor belts moved very quickly and it was difficult to keep up. This was a great lesson on what is expected at a paid job. Students also had a good laugh at all the toilet paper that ended up on the floor and didn’t make it into the shipping boxes. Each student received a sample to take with them.

During lunch the students had the opportunity to eat with the other factory workers. This was followed with the opportunity to visit different departments within the company. The visit to ONI was a terrific learning experience about the world of work for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. The most important lesson for the day was learning that having a disability does not mean you are disabled. What a great chance for the students to network with such great role models!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall Foliage Statewide Conference</th>
<th>Spring Fling Statewide Conference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct 26-27, 2017  •  NCECBVI  •  Nebraska City, NE</td>
<td>Apr 12-13, 2018  •  NCECBVI  •  Nebraska City, NE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For most participants to attend the Braille Challenge this year, many had to battle the ever-changing Nebraska weather and only a few had to succumb to the flu. For the 19 students and their parents who were able to make the trip to Nebraska City on February 8, the 11th Annual Nebraska Regional Braille Challenge carried on!

Students who are blind or visually impaired, took part in this competition, a national program of the Braille Institute of America. The contest serves to encourage children of all ages to demonstrate their braille skills, which are important to their future academic and employment success. During the competition, participants competed in five challenging categories requiring them to transcribe, type and read braille. Each category was designed to test their braille skills in several areas—reading comprehension, braille spelling, chart and graph reading, proofreading, and braille speed and accuracy.

Parents participated in an all day workshop presented by Dr. Sharon Sacks, Superintendent of the California School for the Blind. Having a visual impairment herself, Dr. Sacks’ presentation focused on “What it Takes to be Successful in Life,” focusing on practical and real-life situations. Parents also had the opportunity to network with each other throughout the day and were anxious to be reunited with their students at the awards ceremony at the end of the day, where every student was recognized for their participation.

The Nebraska Regional Braille Challenge is the first step on the road to the national competition that will be held in June at the Braille Institute’s headquarters in Los Angeles. Students from across the nation completed preliminary testing this winter in hopes of qualifying for the 50 spots available in the national competition. The top scorers in the preliminary round will advance to the finals and have the opportunity to compete against the top students from across the United States and Canada.
The Lourdes Central Catholic marching band visited the Nebraska Center for Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired on Wednesday Oct 26, 2016 to perform their halftime field show and to give the NCECBVI students a chance to try out different instruments and feel the band uniforms. This was a great experience for all staff and students from each school.

Above, NCECBVI student Guillermo Ramirez examines a multi-tenor drum set while Madison Radley readies her mallets to test out a bass drum with a little encouragement from Laura Box of Lourdes Central Catholic. Pictured in the center, NCECBVI student Kasen Sipple tries out a drum held by Lourdes Central Catholic’s Mason Lee. In the third photo, Joshua Wichman examines a xylophone during the visit. Also pictured is TVI Tim Lockwood. (Photos taken by Julie Mancini, Nebraska City News Press.)

TVI in the Spotlight: Jenn Nantkes

Jenn Nantkes always knew she wanted to be a teacher; she loved kids and enjoyed working with them. One year, while teaching in a special education classroom, Jenn served a student who was legally blind. At that time there was not a teacher of the visually impaired in the district, so services were limited to when the TVI was able to come. Jenn wanted to learn more to help this student, so she started investigating what she would need to do to get her endorsement in teaching students who are blind or visually impaired and that’s when she enrolled in the vision program at UNL.

For several years now, Jenn has worked as an itinerant TVI, assisting students and staff to modify or adapt curriculum and classrooms to make learning accessible for students. In particular, Jenn enjoys teaching Braille, although she truly enjoys working with all students. She is motivated to work hard and keeps really busy with her two little girls. Her students are what motivate her the most and Jenn enjoys helping students succeed, as well as helping the entire team.

A ‘typical’ day for Jenn includes waking up early to complete paperwork or prepare for working with students. As soon as she gets her girls ready for daycare and preschool and drops them off, she drives to one of the many districts she serves. Every day is different with scheduling, but Jenn enjoys the time she spends with students at various schools. Most days she attends a meeting after school, then heads back to pick up her girls for some fun family time.

Outside of teaching, Jenn spends a lot of time helping her grandparents, coaching Special Olympics Basketball in Seward and is an active leader in 4-H. She

continued on page 9
Nebraska Instructional Resource Center Materials at Work!

Addison Johnson, along with her teacher Mrs. Brandy King, from Fullerton Public Schools, were introduced to and started using the JAWS program, (Job Access With Speech software), this last Fall. Addison loves to use electronics and they were trying to figure out a way for the electronic world to be more adapted for her and her education. That is when Mrs. King, with the help of the vision teaching community, found the JAWS program.

Addison began using JAWS with another program, Fun With TypeAbility, to learn the keys of the keyboard, along with learning how to navigate through the computer functions. Addison loves to be on the computer and her computer skills are blossoming nicely. She loves to practice and enjoys being on the computer when given a break or playtime. She also likes the instant verbal feedback that she gets while practicing.

Addison was able to type out a story she wrote on the computer and hang it on the bulletin board for the rest of her peers to read. Her classmates love to look, feel and listen to her stories that she has typed in braille. They are also amazed that she has not only learned her braille keys to type, but that she has also learned the computer keys too.

As Addison and Mrs. King learn more about navigating through the internet, Mrs. King looks forward to assigning her some research projects that she will be able to do independently. Currently, when Addison is researching a topic, her teachers are navigating through the internet and finding information for her. Eventually, Addison will be navigating through the internet and finding her own information on assigned topics. How exciting!

Addison is also excited to be getting a personal computer for her birthday this year. Mrs. King will be able to install JAWS on her home computer so she is able to practice and use a computer at home like her peers. They are absolutely loving this program and are just starting to learn and find all of the shortcuts. They cannot wait to see where Addison’s computer skills are a year from now!

TVI in the Spotlight: Jenn Nantkes

is the oldest of four children and has lived on a farm for most of her life.

Jenn is actively involved with several opportunities provided through NCECBVI. She frequently brings students to the Low Vision Clinic, regularly attends Regional Conversations and is often present for both Fall Foliage and Spring Fling Annual Conferences. For several years, Jenn volunteered at Braille Challenge and this year, with her interest in Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI), she has been involved in the CVI workgroup in addition to attending the Pediatric CVI Conference in the Summer. Jenn was present at the First Annual Back-to-School Blast at NCECBVI in August and refers students for psychological evaluations on campus. Thank you for your collaboration and hard work Jenn!
The mission of NCECBVI is to improve the learning of children who are blind or visually impaired through a commitment to communication, accountability, and leadership.

Calendar of Upcoming Events:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 13, 2017</td>
<td>Work Group Meeting – Orientation/Mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 14-17, 2017</td>
<td>Closed for Easter Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 20, 2017</td>
<td>Work Group Meeting – Braillists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 20, 2017</td>
<td>Prom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 27, 2017</td>
<td>Work Group Meeting – TOAST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2, 2017</td>
<td>Spring Music Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 9, 2017</td>
<td>Hosting Midwest Outreach Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 10, 2017</td>
<td>NIRC Advisory Committee Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 11, 2017</td>
<td>Low Vision Clinic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 19, 2017</td>
<td>NCECBVI Graduation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 24, 2017</td>
<td>Student Last Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 25, 2017</td>
<td>Teacher Workday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 8-9, 2017</td>
<td>Pediatric Cortical Visual Impairment Conference in Omaha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 19-23, 2017</td>
<td>Sizzling Summer Camp at NCECBVI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 17-20, 2017</td>
<td>Deaf-Blind Summer Institute at UNL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBD (Late Summer)</td>
<td>Back to School Blast for TVIs, Braillists and Administrators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership Team:

Sally Schreiner  
Administrator

Audrey Graves  
Principal

Tanya Hilligoss  
Outreach Director

Susan Pope  
Nebraska Instructional Resource Center Coordinator

Dana Welch  
Homelife Supervisor

Karen Kindred  
Food Services Coordinator

To be added/removed from the mailing list please call:  
402.873.5513  
800.826.4355

Newsletter Editor: Cheryl Wichman  
Cheryl Wichman  
jcwichman@msn.com

Graphic Designer: Stacee Milan  
Humble Grace  
humblegrace@cox.net