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Transcript of NCSET Conference Call Presentation

Youthhood.org: NCSET's New Interactive Curriculum for Youth

presented by:

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Ms. Stenhjem: Hi and welcome everyone. My name is Pam Stenhjem and I work for the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition. My focus is on the youth and family participation perspective at the National Center. Today we will present on our new Web site, Youthhood.org, an interactive youth Web site that is focused on planning for transition. The first half of this call will be an overview and we will give background information about the development of the Youthhood site.

During the second half of the call, Megan Dushin, our Webmaster and Information Technology Professional from National Center, will talk about unique technical features of the site. For those of you who actually want to look at the site as we're going through it, we have recommended that you register on the site as a teacher so that when Megan gets to her portion of the call, if you actually want to look at that site, you'll be registered and be able to view the site as she goes through those technical features. It's not a necessity, but it is if you want to actually view the site while she's talking.

A few other announcements: again, if you have a speakerphone, please put it on mute to limit background noise. Also, we will eventually have a transcript of this call online on the NCSET Web site.

So with that, we're going to begin. I will just start by saying a little bit about the background and development of Youthhood site. The Youthhood site, the concept, the development, the background of where it came from is kind of interesting. In our original grant proposal, there was a small little section that said that we would develop a youth transition Web site and there really wasn't a lot of information about what that Web page should be, could be, how it should look, what kind of information should be on the site, who the site should be for, whether it should be for professionals or for youth.

We really didn't have much direction and through a lot of collaborative brainstorming, talking, and visualization about what a site for transition could be, the staff decided that this site should actually be a site for youth. This site should be written in a way that youth would find friendly and that it would be something they would want to use. That it should be driven and developed with information, input, and usability testing by youth in particular, along with usability and information feedback from professionals and family members. So that's what we decided to do. We wanted the site to be a place where all youth could feel that they belong and because of that, we decided not to develop the site as a disability-specific or disability-only transition site but a transition site for *all* youth.

The site is really intended to be a site where youth can learn about themselves, where they can develop goals for the future, where they can really build upon their knowledge base about what it is they want and how they can get there when they make the transition from high school to adult life to postsecondary education and training and to a job and career.

We also wanted the site to be interesting, interactive, and fun and those were the requirements. We decided that if this site were to be for youth that there had to be a format and a function to it that youth would actually enjoy and like. We also felt that the site should have some personal features to it so that when youth were on the site they could customize things and personalize things and make it their own instead of having it structured in such a way that it was very generic.

We wanted to have alignment with the Individualized Education Program documents so that youth with disabilities who were using this site would be able to transfer information over to that

legal document without much trouble if they were using the tools on the site.

So, that's kind of the concept. Those were the things we were looking at. A couple of other things that we wanted to make sure of were that the site would be researched-based on best practice in transition and best practice in youth development and youth leadership and also that it would be curriculum-based. In other words, adults using the site with youth would be able to actually have a curriculum that they could follow and that the site could be used in a classroom by a teacher either in special education or general education, but it could also be used by community service providers such as those working at a Workforce Center, those working at Centers for Independent Living, the YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, places of worship, etc. Any adult or group of adults working with youth could use the site and use it in a curriculum-based way to help youth through the transition planning process.

We decided that we would develop the site as a neighborhood which is why we decided to call it "Youthhood." The Youthhood is a neighborhood with locations that youth can visit and every location in the Youthhood is focused on a different topic related to transition from high school to post-secondary training and education, work, adult life, and independent living. So, each location such as the High School, the Job Center, the Government Center, the Health Clinic, the Apartment, and the Community Center, are places that youth can visit to learn about a specific topic. Each location has very small segmented pieces of content. We did that on purpose because we didn't want youth to feel overwhelmed in having to read lots of content on one page. We wanted to break it down.

Each content section of the Web site, such as the Community Center, has activities that reflect and build upon the content in that area, so it might have a survey, it might have a questionnaire, it might have a profile to fill out, it might have scenarios that youth can answer from a multiple choice list. Lots of different interactive-type activities.

Each content area and each segment of those content areas have related Web sites where you can actually click on a link, go to a related Web site and learn more about that content area. And then each

of the content areas and their subsections have a coordinating Class Notebook and a Life Map. The coordinating Class Notebook is so that the adults working with youth can ask youth to go in and write in the notebook about what they're learning, what kinds of things relate to their life and their goals and then the adults can go in and actually view what youth have written and provide commentary on-line. And youth activities can be saved in a data base so everything youth write, they can save.

The Life Map is actually a planning tool that allows you to develop goals in each content area. So, if it were the Community Center and if it were on youth leadership and they wanted to develop a goal that they were going to get involved in some type of youth leadership organization, they could use the Life Map to develop that goal, all the steps related to that goal, what resources they can use to achieve that goal, and who can help them.

The Life Map parallels the Individualized Education Plan, so youth with disabilities that may be using the Life Map online as their own version of the IEP can also bring that with them to their IEP meeting and the person who is coordinating their plans can actually take the Life Map and transfer that information onto the IEP in a more formalized way. We purposely did that so that the Life Map is applicable to all youth.

And then finally, there's a private journal. And the private journal is a place just for youth. No one has access to the private journal but the individual youth. And it's a place for them to go and record their own personal thoughts about what they're learning. Adults working with youth have access to all of their activity pages, they have access to the Life Map entries, and they have access to the Class Notebook entries. But they don't have access to the private journal because we did feel that the youth needed their own private space to work online.

Finally, I'm just going to talk a bit about how to use the site and then I'm going to turn it over to Megan to talk more about some of the unique technical features of the site. First of all, the site can be used as a full curriculum such as in a transition program in a high school or a community setting or to supplement a curriculum that is already been used in that setting so just pieces of it could be used.

Pages can be printed out and used in hard copy or they can be used directly online such as in a computer lab in a school or a community center or a public library or anywhere that there is a computer the site can be accessed and the curriculum used.

You can use just one content area or as many as are applicable to the population of students or users that you are working with. So, if the whole site is applicable, you could work on the site over an entire year if you wanted to or you could just work on pieces of it depending on what else it is you're working on with youth.

The site is set up to be a progressive learning experience. In other words, each thing that youth do on the site and the more that youth do on the site builds upon their content base, their content knowledge and allows them to actually use the site more effectively. We have a basic philosophy about using the site in that you would go into a section, maybe explore and read some of the content. This could be done individually or as a group. You might try an activity or two to build upon the content you just read. You might have youth explore one or two of the Web sites that are related so they can learn even more about that topic. You might have a group discussion about what they're learning on that content. You might have them go into their Class Notebook and give them an assignment that they need to write about that activity and what they're learning and the content area, their thoughts about that and how it relates to their life. And you might even ask them to go in and write in their personal journal or they can write in it whenever they feel like it. And then you might try to work with them to identify the youth that may have a goal in that area. Youth that do have a goal in that area should then start using the Life Map to record their goals and the steps they are going to use to reach their goals.

So, just to review, the Class Notebook can be used for assignments, for reflections, for teachers that are thinking about working on the site, and the private journal is just for students. The Life Map is used to work toward and record goals and activities and resources and people who can help.

We're in the process of making continuous improvement, we're in a continuous improvement mode. We have our wish list for phase two for the

site. We'll probably have a phase three and a phase four, and a phase five, the way that we're going because there's a really dedicated staff that are really committed to the site. A couple of things we're doing right now is expanding two of the areas on the site: the Job Center and the Health Clinic. The reason we're doing this is that those two sections in particular were developed probably last in the content development process and because of that, they are not as extensive as they should be. They are kind of the bare bones. They need a lot of content added. We're working on that right now, expanding both sections to make them much more comprehensive.

We're also going to be adding a poll feature to the site so that youth can take an on-line poll in each of the content areas and see what other users are saying about that question. The poll will be a question about the content area. So, if it was, say, the high school, it might be a question related to what's your plan or do you have a plan for after graduation, or something like that.

We are doing some revamping with the Life Map and the Class Notebooks. We're working on the registration process to make it easier. Eventually, we'll have a feature that will allow students to create a group so that if they have additional people that they want to add to view their Life Map, to view their Class Notebook, to view their activities, they can actually create a group and add additional people that will be able to go in and have a read-only version of those documents.

We're also developing an online magazine that will be written by youth for other youth. We're in the process of getting that set up and that will be quarterly.

And then, finally, I just want to make a comment about the use of the word "teacher" on this site. Right now we use the word "teacher" a lot. We have the Teacher's Lounge which is the link to the curriculum guide for the site which tells you everything you want to know about how to use the site and the curriculum. And we use the word "teacher" with registration. It was just kind of a generic term that we tried to settle upon for any adult working with any youth on the site. So for us, teacher was kind of generic and any adult can be a teacher and that's where the adult will register. We've made a

decision that we're going to change that but we're not sure yet what we're going to call it. It may just be adult registration, adult curriculum area. I'm not sure but we've realized that a lot of people feel like that excludes them from being able to register on the site. They don't see themselves as a teacher and so we're going to make sure that they feel that they can use the site by changing that and making it more generic so that anyone that comes through the site that wants to work with youth on the site will feel welcome to register and use the site.

So, those are just some things that are coming out. I'm going to turn it over to Megan Dushin. Megan just said that why don't we ask some questions about what I just spoke about and then we'll turn it over to Megan. So, does anyone have a question they'd like to ask about the site?

Okay, then we'll go ahead and move on to Megan and if you think of questions you want to discuss about the site, feel free to go ahead and ask those when Megan's done. We also have a Youthhood e-mail address. And if you think of something later and want to ask, that will come directly to me, Pam. I can answer your questions then.

Ms. Dushin: And that e-mail address, we'll say it a few times, is *youthhood@umn.edu*. Youthhood is always spelled with two h's and two o's, and is one word, FYI.

So, it's exciting to be on this call and my name is Megan Dushin and I am the Web Technical Manager for the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition and Youthhood is part of that. We have a team of excellent developers here that have made the Youthhood site the success that it appears to be. We've had a lot of excellent feedback from people. Occasionally people e-mail us reporting bugs in the system, and we've worked these out very quickly. If you are finding any problems please feel free to let us know. The Web site itself has a Contact Us form that is linked on the bottom of every page. You can let us know by going through that or just by e-mailing us at *youthhood@umn.edu*.

So, in this half hour, I'm going to provide an overview of the site's technical and interactive features so that you can get an idea of how it is unique and how powerful it can be for youth and the adults they are working with. And just so you know, we

will be doing more extensive on-line demonstrations via a computer Web-based teleconference in July. Those will be July 12, 13, and 14 at 1:45 in the afternoon Central Time. We require you to RSVP so go to the NCSET Web site for more information. That's <http://www.ncset.org/>, under Teleconferences.

First of all, I just want to talk about the registration process. It is important for teachers and for parents to know that a Web site that is asking for you to register is secure. There's a lot of serious stuff going on in the Internet and we want to make sure that the process is secure and that people feel confident that it is secure. And what we've done is typical for the most secure site that, for instance, might ask for a credit card transaction. We have that same level of security in our site realizing that it's important to keep passwords secure. It's important to keep people's private information private. When you submit a registration, we don't know your password. It gets transferred into codes that even we can't decipher. So it cannot be grabbed or intercepted by a hacker as you submit it and nobody here can go into a machine and look at a database and find passwords.

We require that people confirm their registrations so we're not getting spammers in the system and we require that teachers confirm that they indeed wish their students to be part of their group. The way registration works is that a teacher or an adult working with a youth will register on the site, confirm their registration, and then they create a class or group. To create a group, the teacher simply types in a group name like, I don't know, give me a good name for a typical class: "First Hour." In our testing, it's always fun. We come up with silly class names like "Fishing 101" and goals like "I want to learn how to fish." So, you can tell we're here in the Land of 10,000 Lakes.

So, the teacher or adult creates a class and then the system generates a code for them. The adult then shares this code with their youth. The youth go in and register using that class or group code. So that way it links the teacher with the student.

The reason we link teachers and students is simply that when teachers log in with their own account, they can view their students' work. They cannot view their Private Journal and they never

will be able to view their Private Journal because that, as Pam said, is private. But eventually they will be able to view every other activity that the youth does on the Web site.

That's a little bit about the process of registration and if you have any more questions, we have a pretty extensive Frequently Asked Questions page on the Web site. If you go to Youthhood.org, on the right sidebar, you'll see two buttons. One says User Registration and one says Teacher Registration. If you click on the Teacher Registration button you will see a lot more information there about all the aspects of registering. We are always making improvements to the system so that page itself is getting a little bit of finessing.

Now on to the interactive features of the site. What does it mean to be interactive? Well, it simply means that somebody can go to the site, log in with their information, complete activities or write in the journal or a notebook, save it, come back at any other time from any other computer and edit it or print it. So by interactive, we simply mean that the person viewing the Web site actually submits information and gets a response from the Web site. It's like a two-way street. They're not just looking at information and clicking around. They are actually submitting information. Also, one of the neat features of having a registered set of students is that teachers, as we've said, can view and comment on their students' work. I keep saying teachers, adults, however we call it. Also, students can then look at the comments that were submitted and make further changes to, say, a Life Map. So, it has different levels of interactivity. But it also allows teachers and youth to communicate with each other and perhaps ultimately it may open up to have youth interact with other youth in their classroom via the Web site.

I think right now we'll go to the site and for those of you who've already registered, go to Youthhood.org and log in with your user name or e-mail and your password. For those who have not yet registered, we've created a guest account that we can all log in with using that same account and cross your fingers that nothing breaks in the process.

So, I'm going to log in with that guest account and this account will be available until tomorrow. We're going to delete this account tomorrow after-

noon. So if you want to look at it now or anytime in the next 24 hours, go to Youthhood.org. In the right-hand screen, where it says Login, where it says username and e-mail, type in "guest1". That's lower case and the number one. And then do the same for password: guest1.

For some of you, it may take longer than others but once you do that, you'll see a red message near the top of the page that says, "Welcome back, guest teacher." And if you're logged in with your personal account, it will say "Welcome back..." and whatever your first name is.

Now, for those of you who have not ever registered or logged in or seen this, you'll see that the right sidebar changes: that Login field disappeared and those registration buttons disappeared. Instead, what you see is a greeting at the top, "Hi..." whoever you are, guest teacher or your name. Then a link to edit your profile and one to log out. Then you see an orange box called "My Youthhood" with four icons to the four main areas of the interactive features of the site: Private Journal, Activities Folder, Life Map, and Class Notebook.

Anyone have any questions at this point or are stuck or not with us? Okay, I'll take that as a good sign. So, what we're going to do from here is I'm just going to show you what it might be like if you are a teacher or an adult working with youth and go into the site. This is what you might do.

Now let's say you want to work with your youth around making friends, keeping friends, social issues. On the left menu, you'll see about the fifth green box down, it says, "The Hangout." Go ahead and click on that, "The Hangout." We're calling these pages the content pages. We're not in an interactive area of the site just yet. We're basically in the pages for the students to read and get more information to introduce them to the contents. So, I'm on the Hangout page where it says, "Welcome to the Hangout" and I'm going to scroll down the page and where it says "More on the Hangout." Go to the link that says, "Knowing Myself." And then from here, we have more information about this subsection, "Knowing Myself" in "The Hangout."

Let me just talk a little bit about the navigation so we're clear. There are three navigation aides on these pages. One is at the very top of the page. You'll

see it says "Home" and then there's that "greater than" math sign or arrow pointing to the right. And then "Hangout" and then an arrow and then "Knowing Myself." We techies call those "cookie crumbs." Like if you were to be eating crumbs or... they're not cookie crumbs? "Bread crumbs," Okay. Well, I like cookie crumbs better. I always see it like if you are leaving a trail, where you came from. It's like you're a sloppy eater and you have crumbs on the floor. So, I guess techies are sloppy eaters. In any case, these will tell you where you are in the site. You're in "Knowing Myself" which is part of "The Hangout" which is a main section from the home page. And of course you can select any of these links to go back where you came from.

Another navigation aid is on the left sidebar under The Hangout, you notice a yellow box appears beneath the green "The Hangout" and it shows four areas: Knowing Myself, Having Friends, Having Fun, and Surviving the Lunchroom. Those are the main areas within The Hangout. And the third navigation aid is near the bottom where it says "More on..." whether it's more on Knowing Myself or The Hangout, and that provides additional links to go to within a particular area.

Okay, so what I'd like to do is let's say that you're a teacher and you're in this area and you want to know how to lead the kids through the site. Of course, you would have them read the information. Maybe have a class discussion about the topic. And then you may have them check out other Web sites related to the content.

Some pages have activities and I'll show you a page that has an activity, if you go to "Figuring Out Who I Am." Now, I'm finding this link on the "Knowing Myself" introduction page near the bottom where it says "More on Knowing Myself," "Figuring Out Who I Am" as the text link. I'm going to go there. Is everybody with me on "Figuring Out Who I Am"? Okay, there again are two paragraphs of information with what we're calling an "orange activity box" with that little person's face, a student's face and it says "Try these Youthhood activities." Sometimes it will say, "Check out these Web sites." Sometimes it will have both activities and Web sites for youth.

One of the first things you might have students

do is complete one of these activities because they were designed specifically to work with the content to enhance their knowledge of the content and to deepen it through personal action. Let's just go to "Developing My Personal Profile." Now, if you were not logged in and you clicked on that link, it would ask you to log in. It would tell you that you cannot view this activity until you log in. But since everybody's logged in, you go straight there. Now, you can just scroll down this page and see what kind of activity a student might be asked to do and some of these take longer than others. So, as an adult working with the youth, you would want to look ahead and see how long each of these would take probably.

Ms. Stenhjem: And actually, we did a lot of testing with youth to make sure that the site would actually be something they wanted like with youth and it was pretty much unanimous that they really did like it. And we really did a feasibility test with this particular activity and what surprised me was how long it took you to do this and I really thought that they would just breeze right through it. You know, answer the questions, be done, and they really put a lot of thought into their answers for this profile and many of them would go back and change their answers again and again and you could just tell that they were thinking so hard about how they really felt about this stuff, which I was really surprised. And so you know you may have to when you're doing activities like this, you may have to just gauge it by how the group of youth you're working with does. After you've done some activities, you'll kind of get a feel for how long it will take for them to do those activities. How long they may think about the content and you know, whether they're going to put that kind of thought into or not.

Ms. Dushin: One of the nice features is that you don't have to complete everything in one sitting. You can assign two or three parts of the activity, have them save it and then they can come back to it another day and finish it. So, if you wanted to, anybody there could go ahead and test that out, fill some of those fields out and click on the "Save Activity" button at the bottom of the page. Once you do that, you're taken back to the page you came from with a notice that says, "Your activity has been saved." So that's how the activities work.

Now I just wanted to have you click on some of the other possibilities, so why don't we go to the Private Journal. This is on the right sidebar under "My Youthhood" near the top of the page. There's an icon of a journal with a belt around it. Go ahead and click that. You can select "Write a new journal entry," give your entry a title and write new thoughts. And then you would click "Save your journal" and it will show you the title that you had provided. If you clicked on that title, you can go back and edit your journal.

Ms. Stenhjem: So, Megan, for people that are logged in using the Guest login, if they tried to bring this up, are we are going to get to see other stuff that other people are doing?

Ms. Dushin: Yes, good point. So don't write anything private because we're all logging in on the same account.

Ms. Stenhjem: This is not what will happen with students. No one shares an account. All the students have their own account and it would be unwise to have students share an account because that does not protect anyone's privacy. This is only for demonstration purposes for those who have not yet registered.

Ms. Dushin: So, now let's move on to the Life Map. So, under "My Youthhood" again, the third icon is a four-directional compass and it says Life Map. Click on that. We organized the Life Map by the sections and subsections of the site. So as a teacher, you'd probably would be working within an area, say The Hangout under "Knowing Yourself." Navigating from the Life Map, you can select The Hangout and it will show you all of your completed Life Maps in the various subsections of The Hangout. Each subsection has its own table. So under the "Knowing Myself" table, it shows a Life Map goal I wrote the other day, "Learning What's Important to Me."

Now you'll notice that in the next column, it says "Not ready for comment" in red. This is a feature we decided to implement that gives the students control over when their teachers or adult guides can view their work. For instance, say they're not quite done with a Life Map goal or a Class Notebook entry. You'll see when we go to the Life Map, at the bottom of the Life Map there's an area where you can select a checkbox that says, "This

Life Map is ready for my teacher to see." If you do not select that checkbox, this page that lists your Life Maps will alert you that your teacher or adult is not able to see this yet, because you said it was not yet ready for comment.

By the way, for youth who have not joined any groups, who appear to be exploring the site completely on their own, they won't ever see this checkbox because it isn't relevant to them. They don't have a teacher or adult guide assigning them activities.

So why don't we click on the Life Map goal I created, "Learning What's Important to Me" so you can see a sample Life Map, as well as this checkbox I just mentioned. When somebody creates a new Life Map, they pretty much get the same page, but with none of the fields filled out. So the Life Map is basically an area for students to create goals. It includes areas for them to think about things that they already know, their talents and skills, things that they will need to learn, steps that they will need to take to achieve their goals, people who they will need to help them achieve their goals, and resources they might look up and use to achieve their goal. And then here, at the bottom of the page, you see this checkbox, "This Life Map is ready for my teacher to see."

At this point, you can click "Save this goal." You want to make a change, that's fine.

Ms. Stenhjem: Another thing that I noticed in working with these Life Maps is like I said before one thing we recommend is if you're working with youth with disabilities and they're going to use this as a parallel to their IEP, we would strongly recommend that this be the youth version of the IEP and that youth fill out the Life Map, use it, bring it to the IEP team meeting and that the person managing the development of their IEP take what's on the youth's Life Map in the different goal areas and transfer that back onto the IEP document and put it in a more formal language if they need to for monitoring and compliance purposes. But if the wording is [unintelligible] for you to use for [unintelligible] their own meaning and to have their own document that is written in their own words that they can actually own and take responsibility for which is why we did it this way because the typical IEP document isn't written that way which I think causes many kinds of problems with youth actually

wanting to own that plan. We're thinking that this also would be the same for youth without disabilities—that having a document written in their own words with their own goals and their own stuff would be really useful for working with career guidance counselors. It would be something that they could own and take responsibility for.

Unidentified Participant: I have a quick question. I completed the same map, "Knowing Myself," and I'm not logged on as a guest but when I went to save it, it says you must have a valid date for this Life Map. But it doesn't tell me what to do.

Ms. Dushin: Alright. We'll make that clearer and just so that you know, the date format needs to be like, 05/10/2005.

Unidentified Participant: Okay, I guess I missed that. Where was I supposed to enter a date? In the registration?

Ms. Dushin: In the goal itself. It's the second field...

Unidentified Participant: Oh, Okay. I see. Yes.

Ms. Dushin: Okay, so that's what the Life Map is. Thanks for asking those questions. And just quickly we'll go to the Class Notebook. Then we'll take some more questions.

So, from here, go to the Class Notebook by selecting the icon in the right sidebar under "My Youthhood." You'll see it remembered we were in The Hangout, and there in the display, it looks similar to the one for the Life Map, but these are the Class Notebook entries. If you're logged in using our guest account, you'll see an entry I wrote called, "Knowing What I Want." You can click on that or you can write a new Class Notebook and see what happens.

The Class Notebook is very much like the Private Journal in that there are only two fields: the title and an area to write down some thoughts. In fact, this used to be the journal but we discovered that we wanted an area for youth to journal privately and then an area where youth can reflect on the content and share that with the teacher or the adult working with the youth. So, this is pretty much similar to the Private Journal, except that in the Class Notebook we provide some instructions for each area of the site. For instance, under Knowing Myself, there are questions:

- What are my goals and dreams?
- What do I want to learn about myself?
- What makes me scared and how can I deal with this?
- What am I most proud of in my life?

So there are questions or prompts for each section to get the youth started, unless you, the adult working with them, want to provide them something entirely different as an assignment. For instance, you might say, "Go to your Class Notebook and write about the discussion that we had in class today." Something like that. So again, we're in a previously written entry, which means this is where you could make changes and save it. To write a new entry, simply go back to the listing and select "Write a new Class Notebook entry." And that's how that works.

Now, as a teacher, you get special access to the youth activities and unfortunately I didn't finish setting this up but if you click on the Teachers' Lounge which is that icon on the left sidebar underneath all the green boxes, the main navigation. If you click on the Teachers' Lounge then scroll down the page, on the right is another orange box that looks very much like the My Youthhood box but it says "Teacher's Youthhood." If you clicked on the Portfolio, the purple file folder icon, it will show you first your classes, if you have more than one. And in this guest account we do have several classes. So select Friendship 101, and you will see Margaret Witherspoon. That's a fictitious character I just made up the other day. I logged in as a student and joined this class, and my name was Margaret Witherspoon. So if you click on her portfolio, unfortunately, Margaret hasn't done any work. She needs to get some work done on the site. I'll have to have a conversation with Margaret. In any case, this is where you would see Margaret's Life Maps and Class Notebooks and where you could comment on them.

That's pretty much all I have to show. Again, there are some more extensive demonstrations coming up in July if you'd like to participate in those. Please go to NCSET.org and look under teleconferences and you will see a link there to the Web conferences in July.

Ms. Stenhjem: Megan, one final thing before we open it up for questions. Just to let you know

that all the artwork on the site was done by youth. We hired two youth through an art contest that we held and they came up with the concept and did all of the artwork. So this site has been heavily tested by youth. They've provided feedback all the way along in development as well as art and developed all the artwork on the site. So, that's just another little thing to know about our space.

So, does anyone have any questions now that they'd like to ask, either about technical questions about the site, contents of the site or anything else?

Unidentified Participant: Yes, I've got one. Have you given thought to having any examples or let's say shared practices of you know, how to fill out forms or what a properly completed form might look like? Or ideas in case somebody's lost and is just not sure where to go? Or an example of what somebody's done before?

Ms. Stenhjem: Funny you should bring that up. Megan and I, just before this teleconference, had a discussion about the fact that, we could probably do this with each of the interactive areas but we were specifically talking about the Life Map and we kind of came to the conclusion that we want to have sample Life Maps on there so that when students try to fill out a Life Map, if they're not sure how to write a goal or are not sure what kind a step would be or what a resource would be, they can look at a sample Life Map and see one so that they know how to do that. And we could do that also for a sample Class Notebook or a sample of writing, a journal to give them a sample of how to use that tool. That's a great question.

Unidentified Participant: You've done a great job with the Web site overall. It's very impressive. Thanks.

Ms. Stenhjem: Well, you know, like we said, we're planning on expanding the contents and activities and all that stuff. It takes a lot of time to get the content ready, to program everything, to test it out, to refine it, and then get it online. So, I know there's a lot of areas that need to be beefed up and more stuff added but if you can just be patient with us, we're working as hard as we can to do that.

Ms. Dushin: We're always open to ideas so feel free to let us know what you think.

Ms. Stenhjem: Yes, a lot of the refinements that

we're making now actually came about because of people writing and saying I'm having trouble with this or could you make this easier to use or whatever.

Ms. Dushin: Other questions?

Unidentified Participant: Yes, if I may, it's just beautifully done. This is just a technical question. I'm logged in as a registered user. I'm on a laptop. I'm not on a system. On every page, I've had to go in and disable the firewall to get to the next page. So, it's been kind of a wild ride here keeping up with you by going back and forth to disable the firewall for each link. So I don't know if this is something totally in my laptop or if this is something other people might encounter...

Ms. Dushin: We haven't heard of anyone else encountering that issue. I would suggest talking to a technical coordinator person in your area. Because it must be something with your connection to the Internet.

Unidentified Participant: Okay.

Ms. Dushin: Sorry about that.

Unidentified Participant: Okay, thanks.

Ms. Stenhjem: You may want to for your own personal curiosity, try it on a home computer just to see what happens there.

Unidentified Participant: Well, actually, I have all this in my home. I work from a laptop in my home. So that's why I say I'm linked through Verizon DSL connection. But it's a new Sony laptop but for some reason every page had to disable a firewall to get to the next page.

Ms. Dushin: I would contact Verizon. Have you had this problem on any other Web site?

Unidentified Participant: No, I mean, to get into a secure site, yes. But once you're in a secure site, you can navigate without having to disable the firewall. But on this I had to, once I was in, I started getting the security alerts and I had to turn the firewall back on and then immediately when I was trying to go to the next page I had to go back and disable the firewall again to get to the next page.

Ms. Dushin: If you like, I would suggest contacting them and maybe contacting us if you're not getting anywhere because maybe we can help try and troubleshoot it.

Unidentified Participant: Okay, thank you.

Ms. Stenhjem: Additional questions? Okay,

well, we really want to thank you all for joining us on this call. We really appreciate it. And we truly are open to ideas, feedback, and recommendations/suggestions. A lot of the work we're doing on the Job Center and Health Clinic right now came from the fact that people e-mailed us and said, "You're missing a huge piece and you really need to put this on there," and we're like, "Yeah, you're right. We really need to do that and we're going to work on that." And so, we're very, very open to that and suggestions that will make it more user-friendly. And I would really highly recommend if you're interested in seeing this, you know, again, having navigated the site or that you participate in one of our July tele-conference calls because that's when you'll be able to see a PowerPoint presentation and then a live navigation with us doing the navigating of the site so you can kind of get a feel for how it works.

And I also want to really encourage anyone who wants to use this site with youth to use it. And just kind of ignore the fact that it says "Teacher" right now. We'll change it. Even if you want to use it yourself to develop a Life Map.

Thank you very, very much and feel free if you think of things after the call, e-mail us with questions. We will be happy to help you with technical issues or content usability issues.

Ms. Dushin: And again, that e-mail is youthhood@umn.edu.

Ms. Stenhjem: Thanks, everybody.

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