

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

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POSTSECONDARY OPTIONS IN THE US

- 149 currently listed in the ThinkCollege Programs Database
- In 37 states
- Countless individuals accessing typical services

The VISION

- Social connections with family and friends
- Living as independently as possible
- Paid employment in an integrated community setting with appropriate supports
- Connected to adult support systems
- Increased independence & responsibility
- Access to postsecondary education or adult learning

THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPLOYMENT

- For youth with disabilities, one of the most important research findings shows that work experience during high school helps them get jobs at higher wages after they graduate. *NCWD/Youth, Hot topic: Work-Based Learning, 2003 Volume 2*
- Secondary school students with disabilities who worked for pay outside the home in the preceding year before exit and/or have participated in a work-study program at school, have an increased chance for employment in their post school years. *Changes over time in the Early Postschool Outcomes of Youth with Disabilities: A Report of Findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS) and the NLTS2.*

THE IMPACT OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION ON EMPLOYMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH ID

- Data from the national vocational rehabilitation database (RSA 911) show that youth with ID who participated in postsecondary education were 26% more likely to leave vocational rehabilitation services with a paid job and earn a 73% higher weekly income.

Migliore, A., Butterworth, J., & Hart, D. (2009). *Postsecondary Education and Employment Outcomes for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities*. Think College, Fast Facts, No. 1.

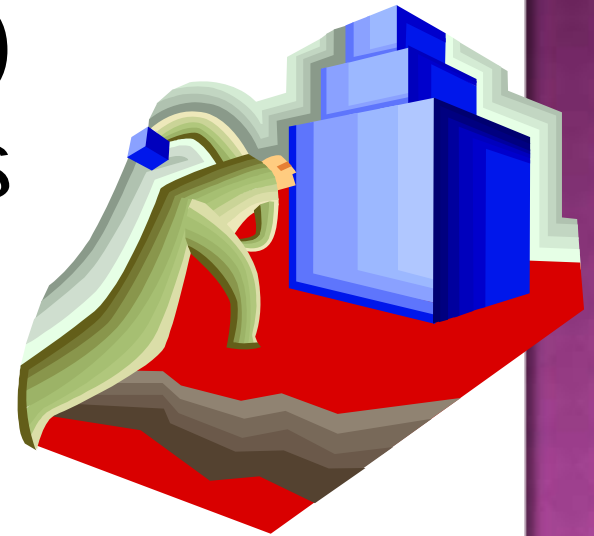
PSE CAN INCREASE EMPLOYMENT

- Review of RSA 911 data (from VR) showed:
 - Of Youth with ID who did NOT receive PSE services, **32% acquired paid work at \$195** per week on average
 - Of Youth with ID who DID receive PSE services, **48% acquired paid jobs at \$316** per week on average
 - Of Youth with ID who, after PSE service attained a higher level of education, **58% acquired paid jobs at \$338** per week on average

Migliore, A., Butterworth, J., & Hart, D. (2009). *Postsecondary Education and Employment Outcomes for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities*. Think College, Fast Facts, No. 1.

CURRENT FORMS OF ACCESS

- Dual enrollment (18-21)
- Full or Part-time access to existing PSE options
- Full or part-time enrollment in special program sponsored by IHE or agency



NEW FEDERAL INITIATIVES

- The Higher Education Opportunity Act Amendments 2008-Allows students with ID, attending postsecondary programs to be eligible for Pell Grants, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants and the Federal Work-Study Program. (IHE's need to apply)
- The Center on Postsecondary Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (2008-2011) Partnership between ICI-UMASS & TransCen, Inc. Research (national survey, secondary analysis) & TTA materials
- The National Consortium of University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities to Enhance Postsecondary Education for Youth and Adults with Developmental Disabilities-5 year Project by ICI/UMASS Boston with UCEDD Partners nationwide.

NEW FEDERAL INITIATIVES

- ◉ Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID): Federal money through OPE was awarded to 27 IHE's or IHE consortia to create or expand inclusive PSE experiences for SWID
- ◉ National Coordinating Center: ICI at UMASS-Boston was awarded money to support these TPSID awardees, developing standards, best practices and evaluation systems

FOCUS OF SERVICES

- Course Access
- Independent Living
- EMPLOYMENT
- Community/Social Access

General Outcomes

- 30% of people with disabilities report being employed full or part-time, compared to 70% of those who do not have disabilities (NOD/Harris, 2004)
- Youth with MR exiting high school are the only disability category not experiencing an increase in earnings above minimum wage (NLTS2, 2004)
- 34% of individuals with disabilities say they are satisfied with life, compared to 61% of individuals without disabilities

NLTS2

Employment of Youth with Intellectual Disabilities in their last year of Secondary School:

- 50.9% earned less than \$5.15 per hour
- Only 15.2% earned over \$7.00 per hour
- 43.8% worked 5 hours per week or less
- Only 17.6% worked 15-20 hours per week

NLTS2

Employment of Youth with Intellectual Disabilities in their last year of Secondary School:

- ◉ 17.6% work in janitorial or maintenance jobs
- ◉ 0% worked in clerical/computer jobs
- ◉ 23% worked in food service
- ◉ 0% worked in retail sales

THE PERC PROJECT

The purpose of the PERC Project is to demonstrate and research exemplary practices supporting students with intellectual disabilities ages 18-21 in postsecondary settings.

MIXED OR HYBRID MODEL

- Program Center and Coordinator
 - Dual Enrollment
 - *EMPLOYMENT (defined as competitive, community-based, employer paid - at least minimum wage)*
 - Course access
 - Individualized planning and support



PERC DATA

- Project 2005-2010
- 2 States
- 3 School Systems
- 5 Program Sites
- 36 High Schools
- 112 students

DATA IN MARYLAND AND CONNECTICUT: 5-YEAR RESEARCH STUDY OF 5 PSE PROGRAMS

- 91 of 112 students were employed in 122 different paid jobs during their PSE program
- After exit, 83% of students in CT and 72% of students in MD were engaged in paid work
- Variables that contributed:
 - Expectation of work
 - Trained job developers w/dedicated time
 - Flexible staff scheduling
 - Person-centered career discovery

DISCUSSION POINTS

- PERC Students work more hours
- PERC Students make more money
- 22.5% of PERC Students worked in retail sales, compared to 2% NLTS2 data
- Only 2.9% of PERC Students worked in cleaning jobs, compared to 8 & 16% in NLTS2 data
- 11.6% of PERC Students worked in clerical jobs, compared to 4 & 6% in NLTS2 data

HOW DO WE MAKE EMPLOYMENT HAPPEN?

- Know your students
- Know your campus connections
- Know the businesses
- Negotiate to win

STRUCTURE

- ◉ Paid employment is a PROGRAM GOAL
 - Students know
 - Families know
- ◉ Dedicated Job Development Staff
 - Flex time
 - Trained
- ◉ College Coursework tied into CAREER PLAN
 - Classes based on job interests
- ◉ Scheduling and Transportation
 - Job supports
 - Getting to and from work!
- ISSUES: insurance, tax incentives, work study...

PROCESSES

- Career Assessment
 - Person-centered planning
 - Community-based
- Matching coursework/extracurricular
 - Connect classes to career
 - Explore interests through clubs, etc.
- Soft skills
- Career exploration, search, and acquisition
 - Internships, job try-outs, on-campus experiences
- Support and Follow along
 - Post-hire consulting
 - Staff support for job maintenance

STAFF ROLES

- ◉ Teaching
 - Skills
 - Self-Determination/Independence
- ◉ Marketing
 - Community/campus liaison
- ◉ Supporting
 - Guidance
 - On-the-job/classroom
- ◉ Coordinating
 - Schedules/Activities
 - Program management
- ◉ Consulting
 - Customer support (students, employers, professors, families...)



TYPICAL SEQUENCE

Discovery



Job Search Plan



Local Research



Negotiation



SUPPORTS



BUILD A “POSITIVE PERSONAL PROFILE”

- ◉ Believe in your job seeker
- ◉ Focus on skills – not deficits
- ◉ No prerequisites
- ◉ Everyone is “job ready”
- ◉ Look for talents
- ◉ What will employer value about the job seeker?



GET TO KNOW STUDENTS: HOW PSE SETTINGS HELP

- ◉ Student groups
 - ◉ Campus activities
 - ◉ Extracurriculars
 - ◉ Peer mentors
 - ◉ Coursework
-
- ◉ MANY DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS

BEGIN TO DEVELOP A JOB SEARCH PLAN

APPROACHING EMPLOYERS: WHERE DO YOU START LOOKING?

- Career Center
- Colleges or Departments
- Work Study
- Campus internships
- Student groups
- Yellow Pages
- In your neighborhood
- Industrial parks; strip malls; office buildings
- Places where you are a customer
- Carpools/elevators/dinner parties
- Your own PERSONAL NETWORK

In PSE settings

In General

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS WANT TO HEAR FROM US?

- Hire the Handicapped
- Charity orientation
- Selling disability

We represent...

- Motivated employees who are excited about working
- Candidates with skills sets that add value to their workforce.
- Business solutions that improve the company's productivity and/or workflow.

Old Marketing

New Marketing



INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

- ◉ Foot in the door
- ◉ Low pressure
- ◉ Chance to make a great first impression
- ◉ Start of working relationship
- ◉ Uncover possible opportunities



DURING YOUR VISIT, FIND OUT THESE THINGS ABOUT THE EMPLOYER...

- ◉ Known for; proud of
- ◉ Array of skill sets required
- ◉ Production/operations challenges
- ◉ Work culture



SPOT WAYS TO HELP THE EMPLOYER...

- ◉ Serve more customers or improve services
- ◉ Increase efficient use of...
 - Resources
 - Time
 - Staff
- ◉ Save money
- ◉ Earn more money



BE ON THE LOOKOUT...

- ◉ Possible ways to improve work flow
- ◉ Employees bogged down with important yet non-essential tasks
- ◉ Core staff who struggle to manage their work loads
- ◉ Customers unhappy
- ◉ Duties that might be performed in a different way – but will yield excellent outcomes
- ◉ Degree of flexibility of the workplace
- ◉ Seasonal fluctuations
- ◉ Reciprocation with college entities (teaching, research, internships)

EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS

- Paid work is the goal from day one
- Hire dedicated, trained staff person for job development
- Practice customized employment strategies where appropriate
- Include in job description specific duties and flex time
- Ensure that students understand and can communicate their support needs.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

- Connecting college experience with employment
- Providing access to college coursework
- Connecting the experience to real outcomes

PERSON CENTERED PLANNING

- Student-driven goals
- Careers based on student interests, strengths and support needs
- Students monitor own progress
- Eliminate barriers to desired experiences
- Help students connect achievement in college with adult outcomes
- Plans change! Allow room for that change and adjust future plans

POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS

- ◉ Ability to access adult learning opportunities
- ◉ Expanded social networks
- ◉ Opportunity to connect learning to personal desired outcome
- ◉ Individualized and Enhanced Employment outcomes
- ◉ Socially valued roles and experience

POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR IHE'S

- ◉ Mission of Diversity
- ◉ Enhanced collaborations
- ◉ Increased revenue
- ◉ Student Opportunities
- ◉ Opportunities for faculty and staff
- ◉ Funding opportunities