



THE CONSORTIUM IS A NATIONAL RESOURCE FOR KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, MATERIALS AND DISSEMINATION ABOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.

### Announcing New Completely Redesigned Website!

The new Think College website has been launched! Utilizing input from project advisory members, students, parents, staff and executive committee members, the new site has been completely revamped, adding resources and new features. And it is only

the beginning! Over the next several months, we will be adding searchable databases of literature and training materials, new interactive features for students, and more. Same web address, but a whole new site!

[www.thinkcollege.net](http://www.thinkcollege.net)

### National Survey

Think College has begun a comprehensive national survey of postsecondary initiatives for students with intellectual disabilities. If you are associated with an initiative, but have not yet received the survey, please visit the Think College website (<http://thinkcollege.net/national-survey-of-postsecondary-options>) to view and complete the survey. The on-line survey can be completed in approximately 20 minutes, and will provide Think College with invaluable information about the state of the practice currently. All completed surveys will be entered into a raffle to receive one of five \$100.00 gift certificates from a vendor of your choice.

### New Report on Career Focused Services for College Students with Disabilities Available

The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth has released a new report called: *Career-Focused Services for Students with Disabilities at Community Colleges*.

The authors report: We know that barriers to educational and career opportunities need to be removed so that individuals, including those with disabilities, can succeed in a changing economy that requires higher job skills of its workers. Positive impacts have been made by policymakers and disability advocates in assisting students with disabilities succeed in postsecondary education and enter the workforce, but it is clear that more systematic efforts must be made. Two year community and technical colleges have a critical role to play in addressing this imperative.

This report examines the efforts of these schools to function as intermediaries in meeting the local workforce development needs of employers and promoting career opportunities and job attainment for students, including those with disabilities. Research was conducted in two stages. First, state-level policies that affect job attainment for students with disabilities were analyzed and recommendations and promising practices from key state-level leaders on two-year colleges were gathered. Second, guided discussions were conducted, including staff working in services for students with disabilities, workforce development and adult education. The whole report is 81 pages and available for download at <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/assets/background/disabilities-and-community-colleges.pdf>.

### Program Profile: The Western Connection (Connecticut)

Western Connecticut State University and the Greater Danbury Area School Districts have collaborated to create a program in an integrated college setting that supports a diverse population of students with intellectual disabilities in gaining the skills and experience needed to achieve success during adult life in the areas of employment, self-determination, and post-secondary education. Students who participate in the program are 18–21 years of age, have met the high school academic requirements but are still enrolled in high school, and have demonstrated interest/motivation to attend and complete assigned work in classes at WCSU.

Generally a two year program, students audit one class per semester (for a total of four class experiences), and have one different work experience per semester (for a total of four different vocational experiences). Currently, two Western Connection alums are attending WCSU and another has been accepted for the 2009-2010 academic year. Other students opt for community college, certificate programs, or the work force.

A significant emphasis is on developing social skills appropriate to college age students. Students participate in a social skills group for one hour weekly. Western Connection students are encouraged to join clubs and attend special college presentations. There are at least two social or cultural events held per month—shared by both Western Connection and WCSC students. Over twenty WCSU education and social work students are currently involved with the program as paid mentors or interns. These students tutor and support WC students in their audited classes at WCSU, participate in weekly social skills groups, and attend social functions with WC students.

The Western Connection Program is also in the fourth year of a five year PERC (Post-Secondary Education Research Center) Project, which is coordinated by Transcen Inc. through funding from The US Department of Education. For more information, contact Rich Emmett, Western Connection Coordinator at (203) 837-8218 or [emmettr@wcsu.edu](mailto:emmettr@wcsu.edu) or visit [http://www.transitiontocollege.net/western\\_connection.html](http://www.transitiontocollege.net/western_connection.html).

### HELP US IDENTIFY POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

If your college and/or school system has a program or if you know of any programs or services that exist in your community, region, or state, PLEASE let us know, even if you are not directly involved.

- Call Cate Weir, Project Coordinator, at 617.287.7596 or email her at [cathryn.weir@umb.edu](mailto:cathryn.weir@umb.edu) Include the name of college or school system, their address, the college or program Web site, the name of a contact person, and his or her phone and email address.

### Program Profile: Coastal Carolina University LIFE Program (South Carolina)

The Coastal Carolina University LIFE (Learning is For Everyone) Program, at the Biddle Center for Teaching, Learning and Community, is a four year post-secondary education program for students with intellectual disabilities. The LIFE Program is designed to provide both residential and non-residential options to enrolled students. The purpose of the program is to promote a smooth and effective transition from secondary schools to a four-year higher education institution and allows students' full inclusion within the campus community, as well as provides supportive and developmentally appropriate scheduling and coursework.

The LIFE Program is designed to emphasize student independence and personal development, choice making, individualized work environments, communication skills, money skills, integration within the university community, and transition to an integrated work environment. It is structured around a schedule that includes college classes, career exploration, functional living skills training, campus events, job training, com-

munity experiences, and extracurricular activities. The program allows students with intellectual disabilities the educational and social development opportunity to address four key primary areas: academic enrichment, socialization, independent living skills, and competitive or supported employment.

The specific components of the program include: a certificate program, on-going assessment and guidance, a personal development plan, four year program non-residential and residential experience, career exploration apprenticeship (on-campus), internships (on-campus and off-campus), academic mentors, social mentors, developmental core course offerings (across academic areas), and a LIFE Portfolio (culminating inclusive representation of development, growth, and completion of program). For more information, contact Emma Savage-Davis, Director, 843-349-2672, [esavage@coastal.edu](mailto:esavage@coastal.edu) or visit their Web site at <http://www.coastal.edu/cec/LIFEprogram.html>.

### Partner Profile: Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota

The Institute on Community Integration (ICI) is Minnesota's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD). Established in 1985, its mission is to improve the quality and community orientation of services and supports available to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

While many UCEDDs provide direct services to individuals with disabilities and their families, ICI seeks to build the capacity of existing agencies. To this end, it collaborates with service providers, policymakers, educators, researchers, families, advocacy organizations, and individuals with disabilities throughout the world on research, training, evaluation, consultation, and information sharing activities.

ICI's approximately 130 staff members and 80 projects are organized into four lifespan program areas: Early Childhood, School-Age, Transition, and Adult Services.

The Transition Program Area works to enable schools, community service agencies, and families to better prepare youth with disabilities for life as productive, respon-

sible adults in the community. This goal is pursued through applied research, technical assistance, professional training, and information sharing that improve educational and employment services. It provide tools for families, youth, and professionals to support positive and meaningful transition outcomes for young people with disabilities. Particular areas of emphasis include dropout prevention, career preparation, and cross-cultural transition planning.

For more information on ICI at the University of Minnesota, contact Joe Timmons at 612-624-5659 or [timm0119@umn.edu](mailto:timm0119@umn.edu) or visit their Web site at <http://ici.umn.edu/>.

Note: the University of Massachusetts-Boston UCEDD also uses this acronym, ICI, but it stands for the Institute for Community Inclusion.

**THE CONSORTIUM FOR  
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION FOR  
INDIVIDUALS WITH  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

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*The Think College Web site is designed for students, family members, and professionals. It is undergoing a complete redesign and more features and resources will be added in the next several months.*

*Currently, the site includes a searchable database of postsecondary education programs that support people with intellectual disabilities, a resource section that contains links to other sites, and a bibliography listing related publications. We encourage Individuals to submit suggestions for additional links and publications.*



**[www.thinkcollege.net](http://www.thinkcollege.net)**

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**CONSORTIUM PARTNERS—**

**THE UNIVERSITY CENTERS FOR EXCELLENCE IN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AT:**

**University of Massachusetts Boston (primary) University of Minnesota  
University of Hawaii University of Delaware The Ohio State University  
Vanderbilt University University of South Carolina  
University of California Los Angeles**

In conjunction with the **Association for University Centers on Disabilities**

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To subscribe electronically, please send your email address to Shari Barr at [leigh071@umn.edu](mailto:leigh071@umn.edu).

Please distribute widely to interested parties.

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