

Building a Movement Toward Inclusive Postsecondary, Employment & Community Living



**COALITIONS, PARENTS, AND YOUTH ARE
A VITAL FORCE FOR ACCESS AND
CHANGE**

PRESENTED BY

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**ADULT TRANSITION SUMMIT:
COLLEGE AND CAREER SUCCESS FOR ALL**

**ALL BORN (IN) CONFERENCE : PORTLAND, OREGON
APRIL 5, 2019**

Agenda



- Role of Families & Youth
- National Perspective
- Higher Education Opportunity Act
- State Coalitions & Success
- What You Can Do!

An Ongoing Movement towards Postsecondary Education, Employment and Life in the Community



Families and youth are playing a critical role in the national movement to create and expand postsecondary opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities and the systems change needed for high-quality services and sustainability.



The Power of Advocacy



- Creating demand and a vision
- Turning awareness and dreams into reality
- Creating partnerships and coalitions
- Advocating at the national, state, local and college level

Laura Jean Elizabeth Lee

1982-2016



Graduation from George Mason LIFE program 2002

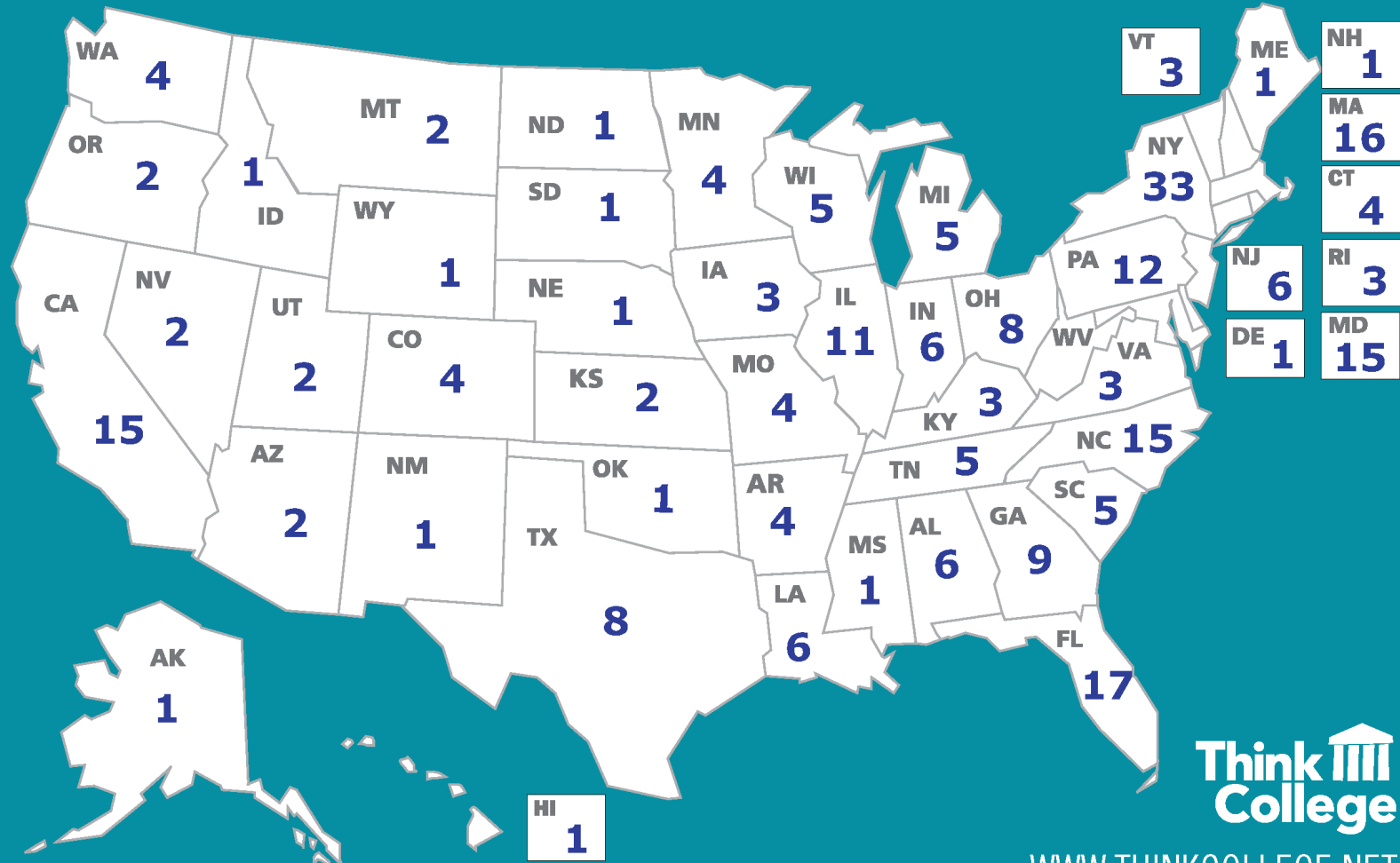
Progress Since 2002!



- Families and student advocacy key to new opportunities!
- Research and Think College evaluation shows good outcomes in employment, social engagement and living more independently
- Initiatives “popped up” independently in states. Now federal funding, state-wide success and Think College
- Structure and composition vary: 2 year colleges, 4 year colleges and universities, vocational
- Services coordinated in various places within colleges & universities
- 266 programs on thinkcollege.net
- Funding is still a big issue – for parents, school systems and IHEs. Now have ABLE Act!

COLLEGE OPTIONS for PEOPLE with INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES, March 19 2019

TOTAL NUMBER OF PROGRAMS: **266**



Think College

WWW.THINKCOLLEGE.NET

Riggio Inclusive Transition and Postsecondary Initiative*



- Promote public policy and systems change
- Promote: federal research, model demos, TA & outreach (NIDRR & ADD)
- Promote public awareness
- Riggio grant: New Jersey model programs
- SC partnership and model programs
- Support development of state PSE coalitions & TA
- Higher Ed Act changes: financial aid, models, national coordinating center

*A 10-year project at the National Down Syndrome Society funded by the Riggio family ended in 2012

Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA)



- **Federal Student Aid:** Eligibility for Pell grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants and Work-Study jobs.
- **Model Demonstration Programs:** Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSIDs) authorized to enable institutions of higher education (IHEs) to create or expand high-quality inclusive programs for students with ID.
- **National Coordinating Center (NCC):** Authorized to provide technical assistance, coordination between and evaluation of TPSID projects, and create recommended model standards for programs through an Accreditation Workgroup.

Definition of a Student with an Intellectual Disability

A student—

'' (A) with a cognitive impairment, characterized by significant limitations in—

- '' (i) intellectual and cognitive functioning; and*
- '' (ii) adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills; and*

'' (B) who is currently, or was formerly, eligible for a free appropriate public education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

If a student is not identified as having an ID during K-12, the regulations state how to demonstrate a student with another disability also has an intellectual disability

Comprehensive Transition & Postsecondary Programs for Students with ID (CTP) (Sec 760 paraphrased)



Eligible program: a degree, certificate, or nondegree program that is—

- *offered by an institution of higher education;*
- *designed to support students with ID who are seeking to continue academic, career and technical, and independent living instruction ...in order to prepare for gainful employment;*
- *includes an advising and curriculum structure; and*

At least 50% focus on academic components with nondisabled students in:

- *Regular enrollment in credit-bearing courses, or*
- *Auditing or participating in courses for which the student does not receive regular academic credit, or*
- *Enrollment in noncredit-bearing, nondegree courses, or*
- *Participation in internships or work-based training in settings with nondisabled individuals*

Financial Aid

(Grants & Work Study, not Loans)

- Student must meet definition of “intellectual disability” (ID)
- Student must be enrolled in approved Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP)
 - IHEs must apply to US ED for CTP approval in order for students with ID to receive financial aid
 - For list of approved programs: <http://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/eligibility/intellectual-disabilities>
- Family must fill out FAFSA and meet financial need requirements

Other *Possible* Sources for Student Funding



- IDEA: Dual enrollment, IEP placement, services to parentally-placed students
- Vocational Rehabilitation: tuition assistance, assessment, job development, job coaching
- Developmental Disability agency funding
- Corporation for National and Community Service
- Other sources such as Medicaid waiver, Social Security funds; organization donations, scholarships
- The ABLE Act 529A funds!

Model Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSIDs)

(SEC 767)

- Competitive grants to IHEs or consortiums of IHEs to create or expand high-quality, inclusive programs
- Administered by Office of Postsecondary Education in US Department of Education
- Grants awarded for 5 years
- Current appropriations - \$11.8 million per year, requesting \$12.3 mil for FY 2020

TPSID 2010–2020 Grantees



WWW.THINKCOLLEGE.NET

Report on Model Accreditation Standards for Higher Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability: A Path to Education, Employment, and Community Living

The National Coordinating Center Accreditation Workgroup

September 30, 2016



 ThinkCollege
NATIONAL COORDINATING CENTER

REPORT TO:

THE HONORABLE JOHN B. KING, JR., UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
THE UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR AND PENSIONS
THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY AND INTEGRITY

Report on Model Accreditation Standards for Higher Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability

Available:
www.thinkcollege.net/images/stories/acc%20accrediation%20report_F.pdf

Highlighting South Carolina State-wide Change



- Partnership with College Transition Connection
- I provided national expertise, grant administration, technical assistance. CTC provided local and state expertise, contacts, funding and obtained almost \$1.5 million from State
- Center for Disability Resources (UCEDD) a partner
- Developmental Disabilities Council provided funds for Roundtable and experts
- VR agreed to pilot tuition assistance for eligible students.
- CTC: <http://collegetransitionconnection.org/>
- Donald Bailey' s book: <http://amzn.to/1LXpjsD>

SC Action Steps Summary



- CTC Board raised substantial funds, obtained non-profit tax status, developed website
- Task Force reviewed N.J. model, RFP and speaker from N.J. at task force
- CTC Board visited The College of New Jersey and Mercer County Community College
- RFP sent to all IHEs and Roundtable held
- Task Force reviewed applications, visited sites, recommended funding to CTC Board (5 grants awarded)
- Project Director provided ongoing TA
- Collaboration through Task Force
- General Assembly approved use of lottery funds for scholarships - \$7,000 per year

South Carolina CTC Grants



- University of South Carolina, Columbia
- Clemson University
- Coastal Carolina University
- College of Charleston
- Winthrop University (dual enrollment)
- \$155,000 to each over 3 years
- Additional funds for research, attending State of the Art conference

State-wide Change in Tennessee



- Invitation-only roundtable organized by the Vanderbilt Kennedy University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities and Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities and co-sponsored by Down Syndrome affiliates and other organizations. All key state agencies and 9 colleges participated with agreement to form a coalition. Coalition sponsored a visit to The College of New Jersey and Mercer in New Jersey, taking a high-ranking official of the Tennessee Department of Education.
- Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities offered a three-year grant to develop a Tennessee program. Vanderbilt University was selected and combined that funding with a gift from a private donor whose own daughter with Down Syndrome had not been able to find a program when she was in her 20s.
- Vanderbilt University was also awarded a mini-grant from Think College to continue to work to develop inclusive postsecondary education across Tennessee.
- University of Tennessee in Knoxville was later awarded five-year TPSID federal funding

TN Inclusive Higher Education Alliance



- Programs start opening doors in Jan. 2010 on the Vanderbilt Campus
- Task Force became the TN IHE Alliance
- Work of Alliance includes:
 - Networking supports for existing universities and colleges
 - Technical assistance and support for emerging college programming for students with ID
 - Informing/collaborating with Tennessee and federal policy makers
 - Quarterly meetings

Tennessee Inclusive Higher Education Alliance

1. Lipscomb University

IDEAL, *

Nashville, TN

2. University of Memphis TigerLife

Memphis, TN

3. University of Tennessee FUTURE*

Knoxville, TN

4. Union University

EDGE

Jackson, TN

5. Vanderbilt University

Next Steps*

Nashville, TN



*Programs which are currently two-years and expanding to three and four in upcoming years

Tuition Assistance for Inclusive Higher Education



Financial Aid Opportunities:

- STEP UP Scholarship: \$3,500/year if enrolled in PSE within 16 months of completing high school
- Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA): Federal grants available for eligible CTP program participants who have demonstrated financial need
- Program Scholarship Funds: Awards given per semester to students who demonstrate financial need (as available)
- Vocational Rehabilitation: funding for Transitional Learning Services for VR clients of \$4,800 for four semesters, TN VR is rising as a national leader in collaborating with making college more affordable to students
- Vanderbilt University Faculty and Staff Dependent Tuition Assistance -faculty and staff may also be eligible for the Dependent Tuition Assistance benefit. This benefit may also be applied to a dependent's tuition at other Comprehensive Transition Programs (CTP) throughout the country
- 529 College Savings Plan: Families can set up an account for their child with I/DD or utilize funds saved for another child
- Individualized Education Account Program - TN.Gov New state program that could provide educational funds to help pay for postsecondary education, <https://www.tn.gov/education/section/iea>
- Disability Specific Scholarships- Many organizations are now providing scholarships to students for college (Ruby's Rainbows, The ARC, Down Syndrome Association, Autism Speaks, etc.)

TN Community Partners



- Vocational Rehabilitation – Transitional Learning Services funds
- New opportunities with state and city government:
 - Internship at Governors' Office, Dept. of Education, Dept. of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Dept. of Economic and Community Development
 - Internship at Davidson County Clerk's Office and District Attorney's Office
- Many employers across Tennessee: Best Buy, YMCA, Gardner School, Walmart, WAKM, Country Music Hall of Fame, Vanderbilt University, Michael's Art Supply, Pope John Paul III, Publix, Nashville Sounds, McDonalds, Una Baptist Church Daycare, Sweeny Swifts, Walgreens, Nashville Convention and Visitor's Bureau, All God's Children Learning Academy, Susan Gray School, TJ Maxx, High Hopes Inclusive Preschool, Fidelity Printing, Fleet Feet Running stores, Lipscomb University, Cross Point Church, The Well Coffeehouse, Nashville Predators, Tennessee Titans, Woodard Brothers/Westwood Marketing, Thiftsmart, DivineArt café, Sevier Park Community Center, Warner Parks, Lipscomb Academy

What You Can Do in Your State



- Join with others in state to form a coalition with parents, self-advocates, and disability leaders
- Involve UCEDD, DD council, VR and DD agencies, Higher Education, Special Education Director, Parent Training Centers, and others
- Identify funding sources/raise funds
- Hold a Roundtable/Invitation only conference
- Share info about TPSID grants and other funding
- Develop an RFP for model funding and award \$
- Continue building relationships with state agencies, developing funding sources and partnerships and promoting systems change and policy improvements

What Can You Do Locally?



- Develop a committee of interested parents, self-advocates, professionals, organizations
- Check thinkcollege.net for existing programs
- Contact local school districts to participate
- Research quality services, national picture and possible start-up funding
- Consider how this will fit into the mission of the IHE and how IHE would benefit
- Identify contacts at IHE and find a champion
- Ask for an exploratory committee to consider a pilot

Identify Benefits to Colleges and Universities



- Tie in to IHE mission: diversity, outreach, community, teacher preparation
- Collaboration with schools of education and related fields: practicum and internships
- Student, faculty and staff opportunities
- Students with ID bring a rich diversity of experiences and interests

Reauthorization of ID Provisions in Higher Education Act



- Inclusive Higher Education Committee led advocacy efforts for changes in HEOA 2008 and appropriations since then. Co-chair on behalf of NDSC.
- NDSC now working with Congress to ensure ID provisions, with improvements, stay in HEOA in reauthorization.
- If TPSID model demos and National Coordinating Center are not included in reauthorization, the programs will end.

Keep the ID Provisions in the Higher Education Act!



- IHEC developed recommendations for Congress to retain and improve ID provisions in the reauthorization. Sent letter to Senate and House Committees signed by 100 organizations: <https://www.ndsccenter.org/wp-content/uploads/Senate-HELP-Com-ID-letter-3.22.2018.pdf>.
- Senate HELP Committee staff now negotiating.

Appropriations: requesting a \$500,000 FY 2020 appropriations increase from \$11.8 mil to \$12.3 million

Key Inclusive Higher Education Committee (IHEC) Recommendations



- Specific legislative language included in recommendations chart. Key recommendations include:
- Revise the definition of a “Comprehensive Transition Program” to
 - Change “gainful employment” to “competitive integrated employment”
 - change “curriculum” to “program of study”
 - require both academic and career development components.

IHEC Recommendations Continued



- Increase inclusive housing opportunities
- Strengthen requirements for meaningful credentials
- Strengthen requirements for outcome data collection
- Address problems with the use of IDEA and vocational rehabilitation funds if the Department of Education does not issue requested guidance

Guidance needed: *Addressing the Policy Tangle: Students with Intellectual Disability and the Path to Postsecondary Education, Employment and Community Living:*

<https://www.ndsccenter.org/wp-content/uploads/Addressing-the-Policy-Tangle-Report-PDF.pdf>

What's Next & What You Can Do



- ***Congressional “Ask”:*** *Retain and improve the ID provisions in the Higher Education Act reauthorization as recommended by the Inclusive Higher Education Committee.* Appropriate \$12.3 mil for FY 2020.
- Let your Members of Congress know this is important to you!
- If one of your Senators is on the HELP Committee, it is especially important you contact them. See list here:
<https://www.help.senate.gov/about/members>

Advocate with NDSC!



- Sign up for information and action alerts by joining the NDSC email list at <https://www.ndsccenter.org/stay-up-to-date-with-ndsc-news/>
- “Like” the National Down Syndrome Congress Governmental Affairs FB page at <https://www.facebook.com/dsadvocates/>
- Follow NDSC on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/thendsc/> and Twitter @policyupdates

Resources



- “She inspired those with Down syndrome as unstoppable — until she wasn’t” ; Washington Post , March 17, 2016;
https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/she-inspired-those-with-down-syndrome-as-unstoppable--until-she-wasnt/2016/03/17/f983fe5e-ea21-11e5-a6f3-21ccdbc5f74e_story.html?utm_term=.3da49bdobf4c
- Laura Lee goes to work at the World Bank video:
<https://masonlife.gmu.edu/video-life/life-video-laura>
- 2019 State of the Art Conference o Postsecondary Education and Students with Intellectual Disabilities. November 13 & 14, 2019. Reno, Nevada
<https://www.sotaconference.com>
- Universal Design for Learning: <http://www.udlcenter.org/> and <http://www.cast.org>

Additional Resources



- “ LIFE Learning Is For Everyone: The True Story of How South Carolina Came to be a Leader in Providing Opportunities for Postsecondary Education to Young Adults with Intellectual Disabilities” : Amazon
- National ABLÉ Resource Center
<http://www.ablenrc.org>
- Ruby’s Rainbow: Scholarships for Youth and Adults w Down Syndrome
<https://rubysrainbow.org>

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