nTIDE Season 8 - Episode 8 - 8/4/2023

**Recorded Introduction:** Hello and welcome everybody to the National Trends in Disability Employment or nTIDE Lunch and Learn series. Just a few housekeeping items. Before we begin, this webinar is being recorded. We will post an archive of each webinar each month on our website at www.researchondisability.org/nTIDE.

This site will also provide copies of the presentations, the speaker's bios, full transcripts, and other valuable resources. As an attendee of this webinar, you are a viewer.

To ask questions at the speakers. Click on the Q and A box on your webinar screen and type your questions into the box. Speakers will review these questions and provide answers. During the last section of the webinar.

Some questions may be answered directly in the Q and A box. If you have any questions following this recording, please contact us at disability.statistics@unh.edu or toll free at 866-538-9521 for more information. Thanks for joining us. Enjoy today's

**Andrew Houtenville:** webinar.

 Hi everybody, this is Andrew Houtenville from the University of New Hampshire. A couple zoom tips, although you might not be hearing us now. But you can select your audio settings by clicking on the arrow and selecting from your different audio systems.

Also, there is closed captioning. You can click on the closed caption icon, then select subtitles, or you can actually view a running transcript down the side or wherever you happen to put it.

About today's lunch and learn. The lunch and learn occurs at noon eastern time on the first Friday of each month. When we release the nTIDE report, it's a joint effort of the University of New Hampshire Kessler Foundation and Association of University Centers on Disability, AUCD. We have four parts to the nTIDE program.

John and I will present and talk about the numbers. Denise will provide the nTIDE news. Then we have our guest speakers, Clare and Rebecca from Think College at UMass Boston.

Then we'll have Q and A. You can always add your question and answer, your questions into the Q and A box. Sometimes we can answer them along the way, but we'll collect whatever we don't answer along the way and provide some answers and some feedback in the fourth part of the program. All right John O'Neill, take it away part.

**John O'Neill:** Thank you. Thank you, Andrew. The monthly nTIDE report is a press release, as Andrew had mentioned, has infographics and we're actually looking at the latest employment statistics. We are focusing today primarily on the month to month statistics.

But the nTIDE report also has the year to year. It uses the data from the jobs report, which is released by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics on the first Friday of each month. Next slide. The source of the data, the source is the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, or the CPS. It is the official source of the unemployment rate, which many people make a lot of fuss about but we don't necessarily,

**Andrew Houtenville:** Fuss, fuss.

**John O'Neill:** (laughing) Necessarily report the unemployment rate. It's embedded in one of our statistics. But the problem with it is you don't know why it's going up and down.

The data is on civilians, age 16 to 64, not living in institutions. And it's been available since the information on individuals with disabilities has been available since 2008 onward. That's when the six disability questions were added to the CPS.

The data we report is not seasonally adjusted, at least in terms of the traditionally we reported the current month to the month last year in terms of the statistics. And that controls somewhat for the seasonal adjustment.

But since Covid we've been really focusing on the month to month and so that way the seasonality is in the date. And Andrew often comments on that as well. Back to you Andrew.

**Andrew Houtenville:** Okay, great. Thank you, John. All right. The first is the employment population ratio. This is the percentage who are employed. It could be part time, full time, one job, multiple jobs. But the percentage of the population that's employed, this is the time trend from 2008 to the current period, except for the most recent month, July.

This is up until June. Currently, in June, it was 37% for people with disabilities and 75.5% for people without disabilities. The employment gap is pretty substantial. We have seen gains. What the slide shows is the Standard Business cycle.

There's a decline during the Great Recession and then a slow march up for people without disabilities until we hit the pandemic. Then for people with disabilities, the decline after The Great Recession continued pretty much up until 2014, and then started to turn around.

It's hard to detect in this chart, but there was a period of time in 2017 and early '18 and '16 where the gap between people without disabilities actually narrowed. That narrowing continued after the recovery from the pandemic. People with disabilities recovered after the first year and a half from the pandemic.

The lockdown was really was the big decline for both people with and without disabilities. People with disabilities recovered and have reached past their historic highs back to 2008. This is great news. However, there's still a long way to go because the gap is still pretty big.

My children call me a downer all the time because I mentioned, anyway, people without disabilities really didn't recover until very recently from the pre pandemic levels up to their pre pandemic levels.

Let's put in July. Drum roll. John, you're supposed to be the drum. For people without disabilities, it stayed the same. Too late. John, missed your cue. It stayed the same. Employment to population ratio stayed the same for people without disabilities. For people with disabilities, it went up three tenths of a percentage point. That's not a lot. It's better than it going down. It may be within the margin of error.

What we're seeing in this trend this morning for the general economy, there was talk about a soft landing. That the Federal Reserve is trying to slow the economy to dampen down inflationary pressures. There's talks of we really don't want to push us into recession like the 1981 and '83 recessions were in part to fight inflation.

For those of us who remember those days, the interest rates on mortgages went up to what, 17 something percent on a mortgage? It was a very hard landing for the economy they're hoping for, just dampen the economy. So that inflation doesn't spin out of control.

**John O'Neill:** Yeah, we also see the soft landing in the number of jobs added this month under 200,000 for the first time and several months for the overall economy.

**Andrew Houtenville:** This trend line since say, the beginning of 2023. It's been pretty flat other than that big drop, which could be sampling error that we're really seeing a slowing. That said, we're still historic high. This is the historic high. 37.3%. 32.7% was the high around the Great Recession, in the midst of the Great Recession. Still good news.

Let's look at the labor force participation rate. The labor force participation rate is not just those who are working, but it also adds in those who are actively looking for work, who might be considered unemployed, they're actively looking for work. This percentage is higher than is by definition always going to be higher. It's the labor force to population ratio, that's probably the labor...

**John O'Neill:** Andrew, we don't see the graph.

**Andrew Houtenville:** I haven't switched it yet. Holding out on people John. You'll get your cue for your drum roll, John.

**John O'Neill:** There we go.

**Andrew Houtenville:** Yeah. Again, the similar pattern in terms of the Great Recession. There's slow recovery from the Great Recession. One thing to note is that during the pandemic, people with disabilities really didn't leave the labor market. Certainly it slowed labor force participation declined a little bit. But this is one of the double edged swords of labor force participation, is that people enter the labor market or stay in the labor market because of the need to stay and to try to stay as much as you can.

Remember that 30% of the population with disabilities live below the poverty line. Live in families with incomes below the poverty line. Labor force participation could be a double edged sword.

However, since the pandemic, we've seen a rise for people with disabilities. And right now in June, it was 39.7%. And for people without disabilities, it was 78.4% . So we're still seeing that massive gap between people with and without disabilities. Let's add in John. John, drum roll. Oh my gosh.

**John O'Neill:** I got to work on that.

**Andrew Houtenville:** All right, so again, it stayed the same. If we went out decimal points, it wouldn't be the same for people without disabilities, but it stayed the same at 78.4% For people with disabilities, we broke 40% for the first time, it's at 40.4%. So again, historic high, next week, next month it could go down.

There's always going to be some sampling variation, some saw tooth movement, in part due to sampling variation. The fact that it's not the entire population, we're surveying, we're only surveying a portion of the population.

Again, this is mixed news. We're leveling off around 40%, 39% This could be, in part the soft landing that we're talking about. That's where we stand. I'm happy to answer questions later on, but it's now over to you Denise.

**Denise Rozell:** Hey, everybody. So let's go to the first slide Andrew. It's good to be here. Good to see you all so to speak. Go ahead. I'm Denise Rozell from AUCD.

**Andrew Houtenville:** I'm sorry.

**Denise Rozell:** It's okay. So the first thing we have, as we always do, is talk federal policy. There are a couple things to tell you about that have happened in the last month. First, and they're all around appropriations, so money.

So in the house I'm going to take them in order. What's actually the news is the Senate stuff, but what's happened in the House, the appropriations bills have still not passed the subcommittee level. They're still sitting there.

There's still a disagreement about how to fund, where to fund, how much to fund, et cetera. There is a sentence in the drafts that says, and this is the quote I literally put the quote in for you all, "Maintains funding at the FY23 enacted levels for programs for certain vulnerable populations, such as Americans with disabilities"

It seems to indicate that the house numbers are going to be flat funded. The only problem is I can't tell you what programs they're talking about. I don't know if that's on the programs, I don't know if that's certain very specific programs, we just don't know. But the indication is that the House intends at least the majority in the House, which is where these drafts are coming from, tend at least to have slap funding, okay, in the Senate.

This is the news. For the first time in five years, all 12 the Appropriation Bills were moved in a bipartisan manner through the appropriations committee. Before the August recess, Congress passed all 12 appropriations by the committee, passed all 12 of the Appropriation bills that are due to go into effect.

Basically, you have to have appropriations and you have to have stuff to keep the government from shutting down, right? You have to have money. And that happens October 1st. Everything has to be done by September 30th or the government shuts down or you get a continuing resolution, whatever.

For the first time this has been done, actually, somewhat early. I don't want you to all get too excited about that because ... I still don't remember. It doesn't really matter, just what the Senate does.

The House also has to pass theirs. They have to pass together. Theoretically, it has to be done by September 30th. I am not. They're on recess now. They will be back in September. Can they get all of this stuff done by the end of September? I don't think so. I'm doubtful. If they don't, they need to pass a continuing resolution, as we have talked about before.

But as of right now, the House committee passed the Labor HHS Education Bill, which is the appropriations bill for most of the programs that we talk about. More or less, the disability programs in there are level funded.

Not every program in there is level funded. There are cuts, there are increases, whatever. But for the most part, disability programs are level funded. That's the news.

The follow up to that is they are on recess. So if there's anything you want to talk to them about, your senators and representatives are all home. Go for it. Okay. Let's move on.

Next slide. A couple of things that I want to raise for you guys this week. Our friends at EARN, the Employer Assistance and Resource Network out of ODEP, have a new web page around disability and diversity at work. Really nicely done.

The face page of it is around introduction to the concepts of intersectionality in the workplace. Tips for supporting employees, et cetera.

And then there's a very specific document on intersectionality in the workplace, which looks at disability as an intersection with race, gender, sexual orientation, whatever else. And give some steps that businesses can take and action steps specifically. In other words, for employers it's nicely done.

It's a good one for people where you're trying to explain intersectionality to employer. It's a nice thing to share with employers and talk a lot about things I'm going to have in my file, on my desk, or on my computer, in my file. This is one of them. Because I think it's a really nice way to be able to share.

Sometimes it's hard for people to understand that people with disabilities might also be gay, might also be female, or male, or trans, or whatever. People with disabilities might also come from the African American community. People with disabilities are not a monolith and sometimes that's hard to have people understand, and this helps with that.

Okay, next slide, Andrew. Mathematica, our friends at Mathematica have a whole series of documents and I've started to share these before, and then new ones come out and the new ones come out.

This time I decided I would just tell you they have a project called the REYAAS, the Research Support Services for Employment of Young Adults on the autism spectrum. Out of that, they have a series of documents that they've created, particularly around vocational rehabilitation and young adults with autism. There's a whole series of them.

The new one this month is an infographic which is really nicely done. I love infographics. And it's looking at young adults who have applied for autism services. What that means, what it looks like. The one, and Andrew said this earlier, the interesting thing in talking to VR.

There's another one that came out as well, which is their insight brief or whatever they call it. It's more of a white paper.

They've talked to VR counselors looking for barriers to young adults with autism getting employment. And again, not a surprise, but interesting that having low household incomes was the most common barrier to young adults with autism getting employed. Interesting something we all probably know.

Certainly we've seen in other research that's been done, everything for promise to a lot of other things, but this is another place to find out. So I would, I would recommend all of these to you, go poke around in them if this is a topic that you're interested in. Because there's fact sheets, infographics, white papers, all kinds of things. And really nicely done.

Okay, next one. Interestingly enough, this time I came up with a whole series of things around self-employment. And I'm going to put a quick plug in here because it just so happens that the nTIDE, oh, it's not the nTIDE, that the mid month on August 18th is going to have as a speaker, Russell Stein who he started a company to support deaf entrepreneurs. He also runs the pizza business. We were just debating how to say this. Mozz-a-ria, Mozz-a-ria.

**Andrew Houtenville:** Motes-a-ria.

**Denise Rozell:** Thank you. Which there are a variety of run by deaf adults and there's one in DC. I know I have not been there. Started in San Francisco, but he's going to be on the mid-month. So make a note and join us on August 18.

But in the meantime, there are a series of - JVR has a special issue [Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation] around Self-employment. I've highlighted a couple of things here.

This one is understanding, it's a policy review, what are the policy barriers that keep us from supporting people as much as we could in self-employment via the VR system? Policy changes, recommendations, how could we improve that? It's by the folks at the Harkin Institute, so I thought that was really nice.

And again, it's policy. It's policy, of course, I'm going to share it with you around, how can we share more market analysis? We do things that help you be an entrepreneur and be self-employed.

This was one next slide, another one that I was going to share is on this one is summary of outcomes. I literally pulled the quote from the description because I thought it was fascinating.

Self-employment outcomes are predominantly achieved in VR system by homogeneous population of older age 50 or above, participants whose race is white, and gender is male. Clearly, in terms of self-employment, we have way more work to do, and there's only 2% who exit VR, just in general, with self-employment as the outcome.

But that statement as well says we have a lot more work to do, not just in self-employment, but who's getting the self-employment and why that...

**Andrew Houtenville:** I bet it reflects assets too

**Denise Rozell:** oh, yes!

**Andrew Houtenville:** It probably reflects assets.

**Denise Rozell:** Absolutely. There's another one, and then I put in another one. This is the one that's the focus group with vocational rehab counselors. And what that looks like and how is it going, what are you learning that stuff. Next one. And then I had one more on self-employment. They all showed up this month.

This one is DETAC the Disability Employment TA Center. They got a whole series of podcasts. If you haven't looked at them, they're really nice. But this is the newest one, which is by Sue Babin of the Rhode Island DD Council, talking about, again, establishing a self-employment program for people with IDD in your state.

Very nuts and bolts. How do you do it? What are the funding sources? Who are the partners? How do you create it? How do you help people participate in a program that helps them successfully operate their own business?

There are two parts. I gave you the links on here and it also gives you the link to the Rhode Island program that they've actually developed. So you can see that too. I thought that was really interesting too, all coming in one month.

Next one Andrew, the next one. This is on self-identification. This is an interesting article, it's from DisabilityIN. It's talking about a paradigm shift. What if companies were to actually, and how do we move the people there? What if companies were to see disability differently such that employers valued, and therefore we encouraged people because the employers valued people with disabilities being in their employment.

That would actually encourage people to self-identify more frequently. And what would that be if we shifted that paradigm so that people excited about, if you want to use that word, being it, didn't see it as a risk to self-identify with disability. What would that mean for employment? What would it mean for inclusion strategies? What would it mean for corporate cultures?

I just thought from a paradigm shift idea, from a 30,000 foot. It was a fascinating read. I will pass that along. Next one, Andrew. Again, we have this is a little esoteric, but just let me tell you it's there. OFCCP, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance has come out speaking of self-identification, with a new voluntary self-identification of disability form.

Those of you who are federal contractors or subcontractors. It updates language, it does additional examples of disability. Andrew's opening it. Okay, Andrew. Okay. It's on the Section 503 information page. Section 503 is the federal comes out of the Rehab Act and it's the piece of legislation or the section that requires federal contractors and subcontractors, says you cannot discriminate against people with disabilities in federal contracting.

Right? So you know, and then employers have to take certain actions if you're a federal contractor, or subcontractor to recruit, hire, promote, retain people with disabilities. So I don't think I've talked about 503 before, but I started thinking about how many people actually probably work for subcontractors. At least.

**Andrew Houtenville:** I do.

**Denise Rozell:** It’s, exactly, there's a new voluntary identification form. There's a nice FAQ on the 503 page sharing,

**Andrew Houtenville:** It's similar to if people have worked for the federal government. It's similar to what the targeted disability list is. And it's, it's nice to see that substance, substance abuse is, substance use disorder is included.

**Denise Rozell:** That's exactly, they added additional examples. They used the word language for disability, which has not been there before. Give them credit. Next slide. There's an online dialogue going on from the folks at the Department of Labor, and I want to make sure I raise this with you. Department of Labor and their federal partners, the other agencies. It's an online dialogue about how to enhance services for youth and young adults with disabilities for that transition into adulthood.

I know we all have lots of ideas about how to improve that. So visit the dialogue it's on through August 14. Just log on your register. You submit your ideas, you comment on other ideas. You can go on 24 hours a day. You can go on as many times as you want. You can put up as many ideas as you want. I think when the departments ask for help, we should provide that help. We have that knowledge and a bunch of you certainly have the on the ground knowledge of things that could be improved. Absolutely. Go on for the next couple of weeks. It's up there.

Then I think the last slide it is. Social Security. This is another one that's a little esoteric, but anytime I see something that Social Security is talking about, I think you might want to know about or that we should know about it, at least Social Security has, it's actually a full day thing. But the disability piece of it is in the middle about the future of mortality disability and work hoping to inform the Social Security Trust Fund projections.

It's a whole panel talking about how they do them for those of you who are into Social Security and SSDI and how they do it and the numbers. Well, I keep saying I'm a policy geek. I know there are lots of research geeks and data geeks on this call. I'm given this one to you because I'm guessing that's for you. This is ...

 We appreciate it.

 I'm not going to go listen to it, but I'm guessing some of you will. There you go. That's me. I am really excited to get to introduce our speakers today who are friends of mine, frankly, because of the work that I do with Think College, Rebecca Lazo and Clare Papay are here.

And I specifically asked Rebecca for your titles. And now I can't find where I put them. You have to give them to me. I know that Rebecca is knowledge dissemination translation manager. That I know Claire does a lot of things, but I think of Claire as the research person and the data person for Think College. I am really excited to have them here. And I'm going to toss it to them. Welcome you guys.

**Clare Papay:** Thanks Denise for that great introduction. I don't know if official job titles matter. Senior Research Associate is mine. We're really excited to be here with you today. Thank you for the invitation. I think you may have heard from one of our colleagues in the past about the work that Think College does around higher education access for students with intellectual disability.

We're here today to share a new initiative that we have, which is called Think Higher. Think College. This is a public awareness campaign that we're hoping will spread the word about the amazing impact of higher education for folks with intellectual disability even further than we've been able to spread that word in the past.

That's what we're going to do today and we're going to show you our campaign video as well. Next slide please. All right. If you haven't heard of Think College before, we help with everything you can think of around higher education access for students with intellectual disability.

We help people develop college programs and college options for those students. We help folks who want to improve their existing college programming. We support students and families to help them understand how to prepare for college, and we help them in their college search as well. We have a directory of Colleges and Universities.

On our website that enroll students with intellectual disability. And our website, if you're not familiar, is thinkcollege.net Next slide please. We've been doing this work for quite a while now. But we know, despite all of our efforts so far, that even though there are more than 420,000 school age students with intellectual disability in the US, fewer than 2% of them are likely to attend college after high school.

A very small proportion of all those students are actually attending college after they leave high school. Next slide, please. Okay. Did this skip? There we go. Okay. It is this one. All right. We know this won't be any surprise to those of you on this call today.

For the 98% of adults with intellectual disability who don't go to college, outcomes are not especially great for them when we look at aggregate numbers, when we look at data from the National Core Indicators, we see only 15% of adults who are trying to get, I should have brushed up on my data sets before I talked to this group.

Adults who are being served by intellectual and developmental disability agencies, only 15% of them have paid employment in the community. We see high numbers, 42% attending a day program or sheltered workshop. We also see substantial numbers reporting that they feel lonely, they feel disconnected from their communities. 44% report on the National Court indicators that they often sometimes feel lonely. We also see substantial poverty within this group of individuals as well. 29.3% live below the poverty line.

Let's go to the next slide. What we know from the individuals who are getting the opportunity to attend college after high school, that 2% we're seeing much more promising outcomes. I'll talk to you a little bit later about some of the data that we collect at Think College.

But when we look at our data on students who have attended and completed a college program, we're seeing that 59% are finding competitive integrated employment one year after completing that college program.

Other data sources as well are supporting that these individuals are earning higher wages. 51% earn higher wages than those who did not access a post secondary credential, a post secondary education. We're seeing that high numbers of these individuals who attend college are leaving with credentials. Again, when we look at some of our data, we're finding that 87% of the students that we've collected data on were enrolled in a credential program.

We're also seeing a lot of peer support. Much greater access to their communities and to support from friends and natural support. All the programs that we collect data from have peer mentoring available to support students as they proceed through college.

But despite all of this great data, we know that the options for people with intellectual disability who want to go to college are limited. Let's go to the next slide. When we ask ourselves, why is it so difficult for these students to go to college?

There are three things. One, it's a lack of preparation. We know that college preparation is minimal or absent for individuals with intellectual disability in most middle and high schools. It's just not considered, not put on the table as an option when transition planning is happening.

We know that there's a lack of awareness. We know that students and families are unaware of the opportunities that exist. We know that teachers and transition professionals also not be aware of the opportunities that already exist within colleges and universities.

Then on the other side of things, we see that there are fewer options even though we get very excited, because we currently have 323 programs listed in our directory of colleges and universities that are enrolling students with intellectual disability.

That still represents only 7% of the over 4,000 colleges and universities. Nationally, we see we need to increase both the supply and the demand around higher education for students with intellectual disability. With that, we can go to the next slide. I'm going to hand it over to Rebecca.

**Rebecca Lazo:** As Clare was just saying, this is where we could use another drum rule because \*drum roll\* thank you. This need for more supply and more demand was one of the reasons that we created the public awareness campaign. We've been working on how to roll this out for the last 18 months or so. In the spring, we launched the, thinkhigher.net website where you find basic information that we hope reaches a very large audience.

We are targeting our reach in the K 12. Sector, in the private sector with families and students, and in higher education, primarily those three areas. And all the folks that fall into those categories, we've created resources specifically for them. And probably the coolest thing that we're most excited about is the video. And we're going to watch that right now. And then I'll share a little bit more.

**Andrew Houtenville:** Are you seeing the video?

**Rebecca Lazo:** Yes.

**Martha Haythorn:** Hi everyone. I'm a student here at Georgia Tech. We're asking students with intellectual disabilities around the country. What's fun about going to college?

**Nolan Smith:** It’s a chance to not be around your parents.

**Lauryn Woolfolk:** The best thing about being in college is the food. Being in a dorm, getting to meet new people.

**Isaac Rodriquez:** You have a bed, you have a sink, you have a desk, you have a TV, and you have a refrigerator. You can also hang up posters anywhere.

**Dylan Shemitz:** Great mocha latte, the best mochas latte I ever have.

**Martha Haythorn:** There are more than 420,000 school aged students with intellectual disability, but only 2% of them are likely to attend college after high school.

**Alyssa Juracek:** I wanted to come KU because of the classes, and I wanted to take choir, and also I took the American sign language.

**Derrick Medina:** The classes I'm taking right now are Business Law 1, Intermediate Algebra, and English Composition 2.

**Jaylen Walker:** It's cool to meet new people. It's fun to chat with the guys and the managers in the coaches.

**Monae Hylor:** I wanted to be more independent and to join the sorority as my mom did.

**Brett Cohen:** I like to hang out with friends, watch sports. And I joined the southernmost Coral Restoration Club.

**Fudia Kameika:** In high school, I have to be with a teacher all time, so it was not like any independent there. I was excited to have at the college life.

**Martha Haythorn:** There are more than 300 inclusive postsecondary education programs around the country.

**Dr. Gregory Anderson:** Having students with disabilities in classes has compelled our faculty to reflect on their practice. It actually makes us better teachers. Makes us better professors. Makes us better scholars and researchers.

**Dr. Jonathan Gueverra:** It's really got people to realize that we have to focus on universal access and doing things in universal design. Everything that we do.

**Dr. Barbara Bichelmeyer:** The great thing about including intellectual disabilities at KU is actually it makes the entire university a better university. It teaches students to appreciate difference and it creates a more caring environment because students support each other.

**Dr. Michael McPherson:** This has united, I think, our campus faculty staff and students. They have the opportunity to network and get mentors and other social skills and career development that their peers have had for many years now they have.

**Lauryn Woolfolk:** I want to go into real estate in the future.

**Nolan Smith:** My goal is to be a teacher, a preschool.

**Monae Hylor:** I've always known I wanted to run a bed and breakfast .

**Derrick Medina:** Political science is one of three career goals I have in mind.

**Dylan Shemitz:** My career goal is maybe work in Kansas state capital.

**Isaac Rodriquez:** I would like to have my own food truck because I want to have like pizza, have some burgers, maybe have some tacos. Nachos.

**Brett Cohen:** College has changed me because it's helped me grow up, like getting a job or living on your own.

**Lauryn Woolfolk:** It's great and you'll have a lot of support when you get here.

**Jaylen Walker:** If I can do it, you can do it. You know?

**Nolan Smith:** It's a time to be serious. It's a time to learn. I have the skills, I have the skills to live on my own one day.

**Martha Haythorn:** Think Higher. Think college for students intellectual disability. Think. Access. employment, equity, options, diversity, Independence, Confidence, Friendship. College is possible for students with intellectual disability. Take the first step at ThinkHigherEd.net, a project of Think College.

**Andrew Houtenville:** All right, back to you.

**Rebecca Lazo:** Yeah, you can go to the next slide. Thank you. Oh, it got very small. Um, that's okay. I'll talk and Clare very helpfully, put the website in the chat.

I'm just going to tell you a little bit about what is on the public awareness campaign website. As Martha said in that video, college is possible for students with intellectual disability. And I would say that was like our number one message here. We want people to think higher, think higher ed, think higher expectations, and encourage and support students with intellectual disability to access college options.

All the materials that are on that website are meant for sharing as widely as possible. And we hope we've made it easy for folks to do that. You can visit.

The website has sections by those different audiences that I mentioned, and there are specific publications designed for those different populations of people. People like to see people like themselves. We have voices from teachers, we've got voices from higher ed professionals. We have information for families about how to communicate with the other people in their audiences about the benefits of college for students of intellectual disability.

We have a dissemination tool kit and a page on our site called Share Our Campaign, which is exactly what it says it is. There are sample social media posts. There are graphics you can use, there are bits of information you could include on a web page or in communications with your networks. We're trying to make this as easy as possible for as many people as possible to support this campaign and get the word out.

I also want to note that we have created a web page on the main ThinkCollege.net website that includes our resources in Spanish. The whole page has been translated to Spanish. And there are about a dozen different resources right now available for families. We started to get questions about that and so we've made some things available.

We could go to the next slide. I may have just covered everything on this one slide. Yeah, I sort of did. I was going to say one more thing, though, I've just forgotten. But I'll let Clare is going to share a little bit more about some of the data that supports this work and suggest that students that actual disabilities really benefit from going to college.

**Clare Papay:** Thanks Rebecca. Denise just pointed out that although I've been putting some things in the chat, they were only going to the hosts and panelists. If you could describe those things that I put in the chat and make them available to everyone, that would be great.

In the last 2 min that we have here. I understand that there are many data lovers, data geeks, as Denise likes to say. If you go to the next slide, please, if data is what you're interested in, we have lots of that for you at the Think College National Coordinating Center.

We collect data on college students with intellectual disability from the TPSID projects. Those are federally funded transition and post secondary programs for students with intellectual disability. We collect data on the programs, we collect student data and we collect follow up data.

You go to the next slide. In the 12 years that we've been collecting data from the TPSIDs we have collected data that tells us that the students have had 3,675 paid jobs while they have been attending college programs. They have enrolled in almost 6,000 college courses.

Almost half of which have been inclusive college courses. By which I mean existing courses that are offered and part of the course catalog at a college or university. We know that over 2000 students have completed college programs at these federally funded programs and they have earned a credential. We're seeing some fantastic outcomes for these individuals.

If you could go to the next slide. And again, there's that number that we're seeing when we look at our data. 59% of these individuals who complete TPSID programs are employed one year after graduating. Compared to a much lower national average, which is 19% on this slide, but somewhere 15-19%.

I think we have one last slide here which also got very tiny in translation. But if you're interested in more data, we have a page on our website, which is our research products. You can drop the link in there. We have annual reports from the TPSID projects. We have fast facts, different data reports, and we have journal articles as well. We're here for all of your research and data needs.

Thank you Becky. That's it from us if you want to get in touch again. Our main website is ThinkCollege.net Our public awareness campaign is ThinkHigherEd.net If you have questions, you can reach out to us anytime. ThinkCollegeTA@gmail.com is our help desk. And reach out to us there. We'll be happy to answer your questions.

**Andrew Houtenville:** Great. There are lots of questions in the Q and A box. Turn my video on and I will go through them. You guys can answer them. Whoever wants to jump in and answer.

People who are able to attend college skew the CEI status for the truly disabled low functioning. This likely gets at the different level of severity between people who attend and people who don't attend college. Can you say anything about that?

**Clare Papay:** Yeah, it's certainly something that we think about. We don't have a good databased answer for that.

**Andrew Houtenville:** Correct.

**Clare Papay:** As we know, it is a difficult, almost impossible, to try to accurately describe a level of disability. Right. A level of functioning and we stay away from that. Within our own data, we've met students with a range of abilities who have been enrolled in college. And we certainly believe that there's a college option for any student who wants to attend. I can't speak about the CEI stats though.

**Andrew Houtenville:** Yeah. All disability statistics have two big difficulties. One is severity is not well defined, nor is onset, any statistic you see on disability is going to have some issues.

Similar question about the programs. What about people who lack the capacity to make decisions? Which colleges will accept them? What accommodations have you seen around decision making and things like that?

**Clare Papay:** Yeah, this is a question that comes up frequently because obviously in a college setting, communication is intended to be with the individual who's enrolled in the college. There are some programs. I'll tell you what we encourage the colleges and universities that we work with.

We believe it is possible to enroll individuals, even those who are under a guardianship situation. We certainly try to do as much educating as we can with families around supported decision making.

And we have some colleagues at the ICI who we connect with around that work. There are some colleges who have decided not to accept individuals who have guardianship. We certainly try to do as much educating as we can to help explain that it is possible to work with an individual in whatever situation they're in.

The number one enrollment criteria that we see across college programs. Enrolling individuals with intellectual disability is that the individual themselves is motivated and wants to attend college. It's not that there's somebody else in their life who is guiding things and pushing them into it, but that they understand what it means to go to college. And that it's part of their goal.

Again, it's about empowering individuals to be able to articulate what their own goals are and to pursue those through whatever means they need to get there.

**Andrew Houtenville:** All right. Do you have any data on whether students taking TPSID programs are coming from inclusive secondary settings?

**Clare Papay:** We do. I'm not sure if I have enough of that in my head to be able to answer right now. But if you reach out to us, I can give you the accurate data-based answer. But we do have that.

**Andrew Houtenville:** [joking] Just do what I do, make it up: 37.3%

**Clare Papay:** Absolutely. I will do it this way. We know that there are students enrolling in the TPSID programs who come from the full range of educational background. So it's not only those individuals who have been in inclusive secondary settings.

We know there are many individuals who are coming from a very segregated separate high school setting. And it's phenomenal to see those individuals in particular, how different it is for them in college. And how they become empowered. And it's one of the coolest things that we get to see happening.

**Andrew Houtenville:** That would be a fascinating study, interesting idea. Okay. I think that ones ... somebody's answering questions. I would like to learn how you distinguish. How is disability defined? I know that by legislation, TPSID are for intellectual disability, not necessarily developmental disability by statute. In terms of the programs that you serve, TPSID plays a big role in it. But do you also address the DD part of a groups that are commonly put together like IDD?

**Clare Papay:** That's a great question. The work that we do at Think College through our two centers, is also governed by statute also. All the work that we do comes from the Higher Education Opportunity Act in which there is a definition of intellectual disability. The same federal funding that supports TPSID programs. We're under that same definition.

All of our work is primarily focused on individuals with intellectual disability as that is defined in the Higher Education Act. Which is tied very closely to the AAIDD definition of what an intellectual disability is. We certainly know that there are many college programs that take a broader approach. In particular those that aren't receiving that federal funding. They can be a bit more flexible.

We do know that there is a population of individuals with developmental disabilities who can really benefit from the supports that are provided in these dedicated programs for students with intellectual disability.

There is a lot of overlap there, and we receive a lot of questions from families, in particular students with autism, who see the promise and the potential of what is being designed for individuals with intellectual disability. And saying that that is also would be a great support system. Gets a little tricky for funding, but it works out.

**Andrew Houtenville:** Yeah, learning disability and intellectual disabilities, autism per se by statute, is a developmental disability, but not necessarily an intellectual disability. It has to be co occurring with an intellectual disability similar with learning disability is not by statute, a intellectual disability but can be in combination with intellectual. Am I correct in that?

**Clare Papay:** Yes.

**Andrew Houtenville:** Yeah, that's one of the issues, UNH just started at TPSID three years ago. We're starting our third year coming up. That was one of the big issues that we've talking to parents who are looking to apply.

Their child has a developmental disability or perhaps a mild intellectual disability that hasn't been diagnosed or officially designated. Sometimes takes a while to get their application because they have to seek that diagnosis. They've been avoiding that diagnosis for a long time. Intentionally, perhaps, but have sought that.

We have a residential component where students live in the dormitories. As one of the senior administrators on the program. I can tell you that, um, I can tell you that the guardianship issue, for me, it's more of a coordination issue. It adds another layer of coordination such that if a student encounters difficulty, say has a touch point with campus police,

Right. Just leads to another layer of communication that we have to really reach out to the parents immediately. The guardian, whether their parent or part someone else, and that's where we fell. Guardianship doesn't play a role in our decision making. It plays more of a role in our planning. Guardianship can be correlated with communication and decision making, but not necessarily.

We also have a pre-program online only at this point. Program that's designed to help get students and families ready. Okay. So the program that we have, so I'm sorry someone asked a question. I'm thinking of the question at the same time. So just to hear from you guys, how is disability defined in relation to intellectual learning, autism? How is it defined? I mean, I know how we operationalize in our TPSID of program. So I mean

**Clare Papay:** Right, so, we don't, we don't prescribe how colleges and universities decide which students they want to admit to their programs.

Like I said, the work that we do at Think College is funded through all the great language in the Higher Education Opportunity Act, which does give us a definition of intellectual disability.

Our resources and our work is primarily focused on intellectual disability, individuals with intellectual disability as it's defined in the Higher Ed Act, but we don't run any programs ourselves.

We are a place where people can come for information support resources. And so there are many colleges that are using broader definitions that.

**Andrew Houtenville:** Yeah. Under TPSID, it's intellectual disability. And one of the issues is that intellectual disability is really a functional definition of disability. It's not, it's not say, a chromosomal or some other kind of, let me use my old terms, it's not necessarily a health condition or pathology. It's a functional definition.

So many other things can be underneath it and co occurring with it. One of the attendees put in the Q&A a book they have an Amazon. It's by Harris Capps, C-A-P-P-S It's Parents and Guardians. Essential Lexicon and Resources. Intellectual disability, intellectual developmental disability, and autism. That's a paperback for 17 bucks. Three bucks on a Kindle.

Wow, we're almost exactly out of time. Thank you, Clare, and Rebecca, and John, and Denise for participating today. We appreciate hearing from you. Thank you. All right. All right. So I am going to call it a day. Thank you very much, everybody.

If you can reach out to us if you didn't get the connection to the thing. College folks, it's a great program. It's a program that I didn't know much about until UNH received the TPSID grant. And it's just such an impression I can tell you. You see how that students grow just the first three months.

It's just unbelievable growth. It's not simply that they're higher functioning because they can go to college. The growth within each individual is just phenomenal. Just phenomenal. If we could collect that all with data perfectly, that would be too cool. But it's really hard to collect that stuff in data.

**Denise Rozell:** And the change with other students on the campus and the change in faculty and the changing

**Andrew Houtenville:** change in faculty. I don't know about that.

**Denise Rozell:** All right.

**Andrew Houtenville:** Associate Deans, I'm not so sure there's a lot of change there, but they face a lot of other difficulties and we found that UNH that there's such a big, big attention on anxiety disorders and supporting students through the pandemic that resources are becoming more scarce.

Basically, it's the attention span of the upper administration. I wouldn't want to be starting the program today when we started it three years ago.

**Denise Rozell:** Go start a program.

**Andrew Houtenville:** Kids call me a downer. All right. Thanks everybody. Have a good afternoon.