



ILLINOIS EMPLOYMENT FIRST UPDATE June 13, 2018

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1. **SUCCESS STORY, PRERAK M.**



"I would say one of the best parts of having a disability is that it can be your greatest superpower."

What advice would you give to a job seeker who was struggling in their job search?

"My number one advice to any job seeker with a disability is never give up. This phrase is a very powerful one and something I live by. I have been told that I will never go to college, I will be in a nursing home and I will never succeed in a competitive job. Well, I received my Master's degree, I own a condo across from Millennium Park and I have been employed by a fortune 500 company for the last five years.

People will always tell you that you cannot do something. My advice is to make that 'something' into your number one strength and prove them wrong. It felt very good sending my high school teacher a copy of my Graduate thesis with a little note saying that, 'I proved you wrong.' Always believe in yourself and know that the possibilities are endless. All you need is the will to succeed."

How has work changed your life?

"Work has changed my life completely... when I go home and wake up to smell the roses I know that I have a sense of purpose. This sense of purpose has really helped me live the life that I want to live in the community."

What did you find most helpful in your job search?

"I think one of the keys to a positive job search is having valuable experience even if that is not what you are currently doing. You need to chase your dreams and find ways you can engage in activities that can get you that dream job. This could mean participating in clubs or organizations, networking with other professionals and keeping in touch with the contacts that you have. For example, I have accepted an offer from the State of Wisconsin as a VR Counselor and will be moving at the end of the month. This could not be possible without my VR contacts from Hines VA, Helping Hands and the Lighthouse. I have always maintained a professional relationship with them even to this day and it paid off in a big way as these contacts could be references in the future. I would always recommend networking to anyone even if it is attending happy hour socials in your apartment building you just never know who you will meet.

I also think internships help- a company that may not have the funds to hire an individual may take them on as an intern and those contacts can last a lifetime. If I ask my good friend Eric for a reference later on down the road he will remember me because I did an internship with him."

Was there anything specific tied to your disability that created challenges during your job search? If so, how did you overcome those challenges (specific tools/strategies/accommodations/etc.)?

"One of the key challenges for me is that I am a person diagnosed with a mild case of Tourette syndrome. Since my current job involves public relations, it can be hard to explain this to employers. I believe the key to managing this situation is an understanding employer and someone who understands that these symptoms are based on a medical condition and NOT reminiscent of your personality. I think that is the key to minimizing the tics and allowing people with disabilities to be successful in the workplace. Accommodations are one thing, but you really need to understand disability and the fact that every individual is different. Since Tourette's has a psychosocial component to it- many times understanding the manifestation of the disability and encouraging people to do the best possible job without worrying too much about the words that may come out of their mouth can help increase productivity and self-confidence.

When I go out there I know that my Tourette's and low vision automatically poses as my negative, but I always try to make them into my strengths. I have never received a bad review on my presentation style and I have presented from all the way to the CEO of the Fortune 500 Company where I work to Senators and Governors. I was reading an interesting book the other day written by one of my favorite wrestlers, AJ Lee, a woman diagnosed with bipolar. In the novel she discusses how bipolar disorder became her number one strength and it is 'her superhero'. I would say one of the best parts of having a disability is that it can be your greatest superpower. I think our disability can be our superpower and it is all about overcoming obstacles. "

What do you think are the most significant challenges for job seekers who have disabilities?

"I think it is the understanding of inclusion and diversity. Many times I feel that employers can read from a textbook on what the ADA is, but they do not understand its purpose connected to meaningful employment. Disability is the beauty of diversity in this country and I believe inclusion and diversity is not just about finding the right employee, but understanding the employee's story and empowering them to be successful. The employment of persons with disabilities is still not at the rate it should be as 70 percent of folks are still not employed. We need to start promoting inclusion and diversity not because it is the law, but rather the right thing to do.

I believe VR agencies should start thinking outside of the box and promote employment and inclusion/diversity to Managed Care companies etc. A wheel chair user who wants to be an actuary should be encouraged to do so and employers should be encouraged to think outside of the box. I still remember when I was an undergrad at UIC, I applied to be a research assistant in the Cognitive Psychology lab and the hiring manager told me 'I am not sure what

you could do based on your disability.' That semester I received a 100 percent in that instructor's course and he went up to me after class asking me if I was still interested in his lab. My response was, 'I am not sure what I could do based on my disability.' Had this instructor been educated about disability- the response would have been different, I am sure."

What would you tell an employer who was considering diversifying their workforce through a disability specific recruitment and outreach effort?

"I would tell the employer to 'lead on' and not only hire and retain persons with disabilities, but find ways to make them successful. Many times employees with disabilities need coaching or training to succeed on the job and my advice is not to give up on them. Hiring people with disabilities is a good first start, but I think you need to also have an understanding of disability that can help accommodate their needs.

Once you have some understanding of an individual's disability, I think it can lead to greater productivity for the employee and organization. It is understandable that in many cases employees may not want to disclose their disability. However, in the case that they are open about it, I feel they should be given the option to educate others and raise awareness."

Think back to when you were in school; did your teacher's or support team do anything specific that inspired your vocational goals?

"During open house at my school, Ms. C., the head of the department told parents that, 'this program is for individuals with disabilities and people who the system believes cannot be successful.' However, her number one goal was to make 50% of the students in the program 'college bound'. She believed in each of us. Fifteen years later, 25/40 students enrolled in the program obtained their undergraduate degrees and hold positions within the government, hospitals and school districts. It is a strong testament to the values of the IEP team and the instructors involved in the program.

Every year when I am asked to give a guest lecture at the High School, my key message to instructors and students alike is 'never give up' and always believe in yourself and your students. My second message to instructors is 'embrace the right to fail' because it can lead to success later on down the road."

What did your parents/caregiver do to help you succeed?

"When anyone asks me 'how have you been able to succeed at such a young age with a disability?' I always say that the number one reason is my parents. My parents are my super power and without them I do not know what I will be able to accomplish. When something fails, my parents help me devise a different game plan. During high school my parents never missed an IEP team. They were always actively involved in any activities I would engage in and always treated me as an individual not a disabled person. My parents are still involved in my life in so many ways- from driving me to work related events, counseling me when I get frustrated and helping me explore different career options. My parents have driven from Wisconsin to Washington to help me in my career goals.

When there were others who put me down as a kid, my parents encouraged me to rise above the hate and prove them wrong. I can recall one example in particular where my dad was sitting in a IEP meeting and my guidance counselor asked him 'what are Rak's plans after High School?', my dad responded by saying that 'I want him to go to a four year university'. While the instructors laughed and said 'Seriously?' my dad responded with two words I will never forget- 'Watch him'. At that time there was 1/100 chances I can be successful in college, but my dad believed and so did I.

A few years later, I received acceptance letters from the University of IL at Chicago, the Illinois Institute of Technology and St Xavier University. The kid who was the wild card proved them wrong and it was all because someone believed in me. My dad and mom continue to remain a strong support system and they 'complete me'."

2. WEBINARS

- **WEAAD Webinar Today at 4:30pm ET:** On this webinar, the Social Security Administration will share the latest on representative payees; the Department of Justice's Elder Justice Initiative will talk about the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act and new resources being developed to better respond to elder abuse; ACL will discuss guardianship grant programs and the importance of data collection for policy and programmatic enhancement; and the National Center on Elder Abuse will present some of the latest trends and resources that will help you to better respond to elder abuse. [Register now.](#)
- **Today Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program, Topic: Peer Mentoring in Mental Health & Beyond**
Community of Practice Monthly Webinar
June 13, 2018, 3:00-4:00 ET
<http://www.econsys.com/eflsm/copwebinar/>

Nationally, peer support has become an important employment opportunity for individuals in recovery from a mental health and/or substance use disorder that reduces recidivism, service utilization, and isolation for those who are attempting to enter or maintain their personal recovery. States, such as Ohio, are on the forefront of trying to expand the peer support workforce, increase professionalism, and maximize funding streams for sustainable services. As the role of peer support continues to evolve, so does the opportunity to expand the inclusivity of the service to employment teams and work incentive planners.

At the end of this webinar the participants will be able to:

- Identify the characteristics that define a peer and explain their relevancy to the work that peer workers perform;
- Explain how peers increase the effectiveness of programs designed to foster employability of people with disabilities by highlighting how their inclusion has increased the effectiveness of programs for people with disabling behavioral health disorders;
- Identify the steps required to make a business case for inclusion of certified peers as providers of services that are intrinsic to a supported employment program
- Discuss how the use of peers can be incorporated successfully into a supported employment program

Special Guests: Mindy Vance & William J. Hudock

Mindy Vance is the Bureau Chief of Recovery Supports within the Office of Treatment and Recovery at Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHAS). She has been an employee of Ohio MHAS for over eight years and previously worked as the Employment Administrator, Special Population Administrator, and Community Linkage Social Worker. She is a person in long term recovery, peer supporter, and a crisis text line counselor. She is currently a candidate for her Ph.D. student in Psychology.

William J. Hudock is a change agent and innovator in how healthcare is organized and financed. His career includes over twenty-four years experience working with major insurance companies, during which he was responsible for management training, creating organizational change, data management, strategic planning, and managing the applied economics of healthcare. Following that experience, Bill ran a successful consulting practice for eight years in which he worked exclusively on issues related to behavioral health care. Clients included providers, government entities and payors. His behavioral health experience includes running a major mental health provider organization, building a Medicaid HMO's behavioral health department, developing strategic plans for government entities and companies,

and restructuring numerous provider organizations that were in financial difficulty.

Bill recently served as Senior Public Health Advisor in the federal Center for Mental Health Services. In this capacity, he worked with federal departments, the states, providers, insurers, healthplans and private employer groups to address the strategic and operational issues that relate to the structuring and financing of behavioral health prevention, treatment and recovery support systems. Included in this portfolio was policy and regulation review pertaining to health reform, Medicaid and Medicare, as well as programmatic work on issues impacting access, benefit design and metrics of quality and impact. Bill earned both his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Connecticut.

Webinar Procedures

1. In advance of the webinar, we strongly recommend you test your connection and review the [Adobe Connect Instructions and Troubleshooting Tips](#).
2. On the day of the webinar, enter room here: <http://www.econsys.com/efslmp/copwebinar/>.
3. In the GUEST field, enter your **first and last name followed by state abbreviation (i.e., Jeff, Smith, DC)**.
4. To connect your audio, follow the prompts to enter your phone number (direct line), and the system will immediately call you back (see [step-by-step instructions](#)).
5. If you are unfamiliar with Adobe Connect, please review these [tips](#) before participating.

- **[Supporting Individuals with Serious Mental Illness in the Workplace – Wednesday, June 20, 1 p.m. ET](#), hosted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s Program to Achieve Wellness.**

- **[PEAT Talks: Facebook and the Accessible Workplace](#)**

Thursday, June 21, 2pm ET

In recent years Facebook has become a tool for professional networking and on-the-job workplace productivity through its enterprise collaboration software, Workplace. In this webinar, Director of Accessibility **Jeff Wieland** and Director of Policy **Monica Desai** will discuss why and how Facebook has made accessibility a priority.

Participants will learn:

- Facebook’s ethos around accessibility
- What accessibility groups Facebook is involved with and initiatives they support
- A summary of the accessibility features in Facebook and Workplace by Facebook
- How accessibility features have provided benefits for all

[Register Now](#)

- **ARCHIVED: EFSLMP Provider Transformation 2.0 Webinar Series**

The Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP) recently launched the Provider Transformation 2.0 Webinar Series, a new technical assistance opportunity. These webinars are designed for community rehabilitation providers (CRPs) who have already begun to transform their service delivery model to one with an emphasis on competitive, integrated employment as the priority outcome for individuals served. **Even though the call for participation in the live webinar series is closed**, the webinar recordings will be shared with the EFSLMP Community of Practice. The following webinars are available to review:

March 15, 2018 Webinar #1: Redesigning Your Organization: Board, CEO, CFO, Middle Management, Front Line Staff, Employers & Stakeholders [Leadership, Strategic Planning, Operations Focus]

Facilitators: Karen Lee; Thomas "Tom" Wilds

Recording Link: <http://econsys.adobeconnect.com/p7tkr58c4852/>

Meeting materials may be downloaded from the webinar recording link.
To download the unofficial transcript for this webinar click [here](#)

March 29, 2018 Webinar #2: Staff Development, Recruitment, and Restructuring: "How To" Examples of Effective Restructuring; Where to Focus Attention on Transformation [Operations Focus, Workforce Focus]

Facilitators: Dale Versteegen; Gail Fanjoy

Recording Link: <http://econsys.adobeconnect.com/pgsuopqrw5lr/>

Meeting materials may be downloaded from the webinar recording link.
To download the unofficial transcript for this webinar click [here](#)

April 12, 2018 Webinar #3: Staff Training Specifics: Developing Internal Trainers, Meaningful Day Integration, Best Practices, Transportation Solutions, Sample Job Descriptions/Work Day Schedules [Workforce Focus]

Facilitators: Genni Sasnett; Gail Fanjoy

Recording Link: <http://econsys.adobeconnect.com/pl75jxwpbinc/>

Meeting materials may be downloaded from the webinar recording link.
To download the unofficial transcript for this webinar click [here](#)

April 26, 2018 Webinar #4: Stakeholder Engagement: How to Listen; Considering Real Choices; Working Effectively with Families, Self-Advocates, Employers, Policymakers, and Advocacy Organizations [Customer Focus]

Facilitators: Sean Roy; Pat Rogan

Recording Link: <http://econsys.adobeconnect.com/pubg7d48k2yx/>

Meeting materials may be downloaded from the webinar recording link.
To download the unofficial transcript for this webinar click [here](#)

May 10, 2018 Webinar #5: The Importance of Effective Advocacy for Better Policy: Collaboration, Coalitions, Communities of Practice, and Capacity Building at the Local Level [Leadership, Strategic Planning Focus]

Facilitators: Rachel Pollock, Karen Lee

Recording Link: <http://econsys.adobeconnect.com/ptexej2px5on/>

Meeting materials may be downloaded from the webinar recording link.
To download the unofficial transcript for this webinar click [here](#)

May 31, 2018 Webinar #6: Funding Diversification: Local, State, Federal Examples + How to advocate for it; Phasing Out Reliance on Facility-Based Contracts [Strategic Planning, Operations Focus]

Facilitators: Rachel Pollock; Genni Sasnett

Recording Link: <http://econsys.adobeconnect.com/pg7vmjygn4d/>

Meeting materials may be downloaded from the webinar recording link.
To download the unofficial transcript for this webinar click [here](#)

3. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- [NIDILRR](#) has published a [Funding Opportunity Announcement for the Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects \(DRRP\) Program: Research on Opioid Use Disorder Among People with Disabilities](#). NIDILRR proposes to fund two DRRPs of three years each to conduct research on opioid use disorder among people with disabilities. The announcement follows a [Request for Information](#) published in January. A [report of comments](#)

[received](#) (PDF) was published on May 4th. Applications for this opportunity must be submitted by July 23rd. [Learn more about previous NIDILRR-funded research on substance use disorders and disabilities.](#)

- **CONCEPT BRIEFS DUE TODAY!**



**NEW FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT
Southern Illinois Transition Project
Call For Investment (CFI)**

The Council has a total of **\$1,000,000** for up to **4 proposals**. The Council expects Southern IL Transition Projects to begin **October 1, 2018** and end within **3 years**. The Council wants to see proposals which are cost effective and reasonable to meet the proposed project activities and reach the project's stated performance target.

For the purpose of this proposal, Southern Illinois (SI) will encompass a rough border of Interstate 70 south to the stateliness on the east, west, and south borders including the Edwardsville and Alton areas.

The purpose of the Southern IL Transition Project is to provide resources to southern IL to increase the likelihood that transition age individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) experience successful post-secondary transition from high school to adult life. This will be accomplished through a multi-faceted approach that includes targeted interventions for the following:

- Self-determination training for Transition age individuals with I/DD
- Person centered planning processes implemented for each individual with I/DD targeted to ensure post-secondary plans are in accordance with the individual's vision of their future
- Advocacy training for families/caregivers of transition age individuals with I/DD
- Transition best-practice training for teachers and school personnel of transition age individuals with I/DD
- Creating access to Post-secondary training options
- Creating access to Post-secondary employment options
- Including financial literacy education for families and transition age individuals with I/DD
- Creating or increasing access to local transportation options for transition age individuals with I/DD

Important Dates:

- The CFI webinar will take place at **10:00 am, May 31, 2018**
- Concepts Briefs are due on or before **5:00 pm, June 13, 2018**
- Invitation to submit a full proposal will be provided no later than **5:00 pm, June 20, 2018**
- Full proposals will be due by **5:00 pm on July 18, 2018**
- Telephone Interviews (if needed) will take place on **July 26, 2018 or July 27, 2018**

The webinar will be held at **10:00 am, May 31, 2018**. To RSVP and receive login information please email Mariel Hamer, Associate Director of Program and Policy at Mariel.Hamer@illinois.gov by **12:00 pm on May 30, 2018**.

How to Apply:

ICDD is requesting a brief 3 to 5 page Concept Brief (also called “white papers” in the government contracting sector) prior to submission of a full proposal. This process helps save time by eliminating ideas that are not likely to be funded. All Concept Briefs will be reviewed in the order in which they are received. An applicant cannot submit a full proposal unless invited by ICDD.

CONCEPT BRIEFS THAT ARE FAXED, MAILED, HANDWRITTEN, AND/OR LATE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

4. RESOURCES

- **County-Level Disability Prevalence and Employment Statistics Now Available**

The NIDILRR-funded [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Statistics and Demographics \(StatsRRTC\)](#) offers [State Reports for County-Level Data on Disability Prevalence and Disability Employment](#). These reports complement and provide greater depth to the topics found in the Annual Disability Statistics Compendium and Annual Disability Statistics Supplement. Each report provides statistics on the prevalence and employment of people with and without disabilities for each county in any given state in the US. Reports include a background and interpretive text specific to each state and are intended for advocates, policy-makers, and researchers to support programs and services for people with disabilities.

- **Mobile Accommodation Solution App**

The NIDILRR-funded project [Mobile Accommodation Tool: Development, Implementation, and Evaluation](#) has released the [Mobile Accommodation Solution \(MAS\)](#), a first-generation mobile case management app for iOS and Android. Employers, service providers, and individuals can use the app to effectively address workplace accommodation requests throughout the employment lifecycle, from application to onboarding to advancement. The app provides users with a suite of fillable, accessible forms and the capability to store, print, and email records that can be imported into enterprise-level information systems. MAS also includes emerging policies and best practices in workplace accommodations. The app is available free from the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#).

- **NDEAM 2018 Theme Announced: America's Workforce - Empowering All**

The [Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy \(ODEP\)](#) announced [America's Workforce: Empowering All](#) as the theme for this year's [National Disability Employment Awareness Month \(NDEAM\)](#) in October. NDEAM is a nationwide campaign that celebrates the contributions of workers with disabilities throughout America's history, and emphasizes the importance of ensuring that all Americans have access to the services and supports that enable them to work. This year's theme emerged from discussions with organizations that partner with ODEP, including those representing people with disabilities and their families, employers, and federal and state government agencies. More information about NDEAM, including related promotional materials, is available from ODEP's website.

- **Out and About: Laws That Protect People with Disabilities**

The NIDILRR-funded [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Promoting Interventions for Community Living \(RTC/PICL\)](#) has published [Out and About: Laws That Protect People with Disabilities](#), a series of six factsheets on the rights of people with disabilities under US laws. Each factsheet contains scenarios that show how understanding disability legislation helps people with disabilities to advocate for change. Topics include the Americans with Disabilities Act, the 2010 Standards for Accessible Designs, and the Fair Housing Act. You can turn to the [ADA](#)

[National Network Centers](#) for information and resources to understand your rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other laws. You can visit [AbleData](#) for the largest searchable collection of assistive technology products and manufacturers. If you're a researcher, you can turn to the [knowledge translation centers](#) to learn more about reaching the right audience for your research or [visit the model system data centers, and other centers to learn more about working with disability data and statistics](#)

- **LEAD Center Releases Guided Group Discovery Online Participant Workbook**

The LEAD Center is pleased to announce the release of the [Guided Group Discovery Online Participant Workbook](#). The Online Participant Workbook can be completed using any browser. This user-friendly tool allows youth and adults to create a personalized Blueprint for Employment. Each participant receives a private link that allows them to add to, edit, or review their information at any time. The Workbook can also be printed out to review with counselors, teachers and others.

The purpose of Guided Group Discovery is to lay the foundation for competitive integrated employment (CIE) as a Universal Design that can benefit all job seekers. For some people, Guided Group Discovery leads to Customized Employment. For everyone, the process assists job seekers in identifying employment that would be a good fit both for them and an employer.

With the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and ongoing systems change efforts like Employment First, formal adoption and implementation of CIE policies and practices are increasingly occurring in state and local agencies to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities and other significant barriers to employment. Discovery, which is a cornerstone of CE, is an effective strategy for any job seeker with barriers to employment.

The Online Workbook is a companion piece to a suite of resources for Guided Group Discovery. Other materials include a [Facilitator Manual](#), an accompanying [PowerPoint slide deck \(Introduction and Course\)](#), and a [Participant Workbook](#).

A [Self-Guided Discovery Facilitator's Guide](#) is also available and can be downloaded from the LEAD Center website. We encourage you to visit the website, where you will find extensive additional resources on [Customized Employment](#). There also are [archived webinars](#) on Customized Employment, Guided Group Discovery and Self-Guided Discovery.

- **National Academies Release Report on Improving Programs and Services for Children with Disabilities**
The [National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine](#) have released a report, [Opportunities for Improving Programs and Services for Children with Disabilities](#). The report provides a comprehensive analysis of health outcomes for school-aged children with disabilities and reviews and assesses programs, services, and supports available to these children and their families. It also describes overarching program, service, and treatment goals; examines outreach efforts and utilization rates; identifies what outcomes are measured and how they are reported; and describes what is known about the effectiveness of these programs and services. The report may be downloaded free of charge.
- **Regular exercise and healthy eating** are essential to maintaining a healthy lifestyle for everyone as they age, but particularly for people who are aging with a disability. As the population of older adults with disabilities is

increasing every year, senior wellness programs may want to investigate how to make their programs inclusive and welcoming for participants with physical, developmental, or psychiatric disabilities. Learn more about [aging well with a disability](#) and [inclusive fitness](#) with research and resources from the NIDILRR community and elsewhere in our Spotlight blog.

- **The Temple University Collaborative on Community Inclusion presents a new resource: “Leisure Education Toolkit for Parents with Mental Illnesses,”** developed by Debra Kubis and Gretchen Snethen. This toolkit is an evidence-based guide that will help parents better understand the importance of family leisure and develop strategies to participate in meaningful family leisure. Research on the need for family leisure, potential benefits, and strategies to increase participation are presented. This user friendly guide provides worksheets and activities that parents can use with their children to make the most out of family leisure. For individuals who want to receive additional support, each section also provides an opportunity to summarize goals and issues that can be shared with a mental health professional. Download now to learn more about: (1) the benefits of family leisure; (2) core and balance family leisure; (3) strategies to assess family leisure interest; (4) barriers to and facilitators of family leisure; (5) planning and making time for family leisure; and (6) using leisure to talk with your kids about mental illnesses. This toolkit can be used directly by parents with mental illnesses, or can provide an outline for a series of groups focused on supporting parents with mental illnesses.

To access the manual, click here: http://tucollaborative.org/sdm_downloads/leisure-education-toolkit-for-parents-with-mental-illnesses/

Some similar resources the Temple University Collaborative offers:

Our Online Parenting Education Website, a tool that will allow parents with children under the age of 18 to get information and strategies for improving their parenting. The site provides a great deal of information about parent with a psychiatric disability through an age-specific curriculum. To register for the Online Parenting Education Tool, fill out our registration form: [click here](#)



- **Data-**Workforce development providers in Cook County faced a problem common to many parts of the human services sector: **they had to use a fragmented collection of data systems focused on compliance, not on making their work more efficient and effective.** In response to this situation, the [Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership](#) embarked upon a project to create an integrated management information system, called [Career Connect](#), with the goals of providing organizations with the information necessary to serve the needs of jobseekers in Cook County, making it easier for providers to learn from their data, reducing the number of data systems used and time spent on data entry, and more. Career Connect launched in June 2017.

We have released our [evaluation of the Career Connect project today.](#)

The report contains **lessons relevant to any organization or sector interested in pursuing integrated data systems**, including lessons related to:

- What kinds of outcomes integrated data systems projects can reasonably hope to achieve
- How to staff integrated data systems projects effectively
- The importance of consistent change management and communications
- Considerations to think through when planning an integrated data systems project, from procurement to long-term sustainability
- Resources necessary to carry out data systems projects
- Potential technical pitfalls to plan for
- And more.

To find out more, [read the report today.](#)

For more information, contact [Amber \(Cason\) Crossen](#)

5. OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE

- **Non-Traditional Employment Experiences of People with Disabilities**

The NIDILRR-funded [Field Initiated Project \(Research\) on Contingent Employment of Individuals with Disabilities \(FIP-CE\)](#) seeks to [interview people with disabilities about their experiences with non-traditional work, such as temping, freelancing, contracting, or doing app-based jobs like Uber or TaskRabbit.](#) Participants must be over 18 years of age, able to understand and speak English or American Sign Language, have a disability, and engage in non-permanent full- or part-time work. Qualified participants will be interviewed by phone or video relay for 60-90 minutes and will be compensated for their time. For more information, contact Salimah LaForce at 404/894-8297 or salimah@cacp.gatech.edu.

- **Moving Out of Institutions to the Community: Documenting Long-Term Participation Outcomes**

The NIDILRR-funded [ADA Participatory Action Research Consortium \(ADA PARC\)](#) seeks to interview people with disabilities who have moved out of nursing homes and other institutions about their experiences with community living and participation during and after transitioning into the community. Participants must have a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), be between 18 and 64 years old, have lived in an institution, and recently transitioned out or planning to transition out of that institution. [See a description of qualifying institutions and other eligibility criteria](#) (PDF). Participation is open to individuals from all US states, particularly those served by the NIDILRR-funded [Pacific ADA Regional Center](#). Qualified participants will receive a \$25 gift card for completing the interview.

- **SEED Study Seeks Young Adults for Surveys**

The NIDILRR-funded [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center for Learning and Working During the](#)

[Transition to Adulthood](#) is recruiting [young adults to participate in a study about school and work activities](#). Participation in the Sequences of Employment and Education (SEED) study will include four online surveys and three phone check-ins over a 12-month period. Participants must be young adults between 16 and 25 years old who have a mental health condition. Participants may earn up to \$95 in compensation. Application and additional information are available from the SEED website. This project is also supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).



[About RespectAbility](#) | [Volunteer With Us](#)

- **If you care about quality employment for people with disabilities in your community and across the country, then this webinar is tailored for you:**

DATE: Wednesday, June 20, 2018

TIME: 1:30-3:00 PM (EST)

During this training session, our board members will:

- Prepare you to participate in key advocacy activities.
- Share how to have an impact on disability employment issue.
- Address how you and your civic engagement can advance key issues.

The Jobs for People with Disabilities Committee advances our ongoing efforts to promote disability employment through public policy, as well as engages with governors, workforce boards, agencies and other leaders to expand best practices at the state level.



If you care about quality educational opportunities and skills building for students with disabilities in your community and across the country, then this webinar is tailored for you:

DATE: Wednesday, June 29, 2018

TIME: 1:30-3:00 PM (EST)

During this training session, our board members will:

- Talk about educational issues and their impact on students with disabilities.
- Highlight specific activities that would benefit from your civic engagement.
- Address how you and your civic engagement can advance key issues.

The Education & Skills Building Committee works on projects to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for students with disabilities at the local, state and federal level.



- **Please Help Equip for Equality Identify the Legal Advocacy Needs of People with Disabilities in Illinois**

Equip for Equality is seeking your input on how we can best meet the legal advocacy needs of people with disabilities in Illinois. We have a priorities planning process and we ask the public to offer ideas that will help us implement priorities that are valued most in the disability community. Please share your thoughts with us. **There are 3 ways for you to let us know what you think.**

. **In Person:** We are hosting a Public Meeting in Chicago. This meeting allows people with disabilities, family members, advocates, service providers and other interested parties to provide us with input on how to allocate our resources.

Thursday, June 28, 2018

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Equip for Equality

20 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 300

Chicago, Illinois 60602

[Click here to RSVP and to request an accommodation.](#)

A sign language interpreter and real time captioning will be present.

. **Via the Phone:**

On June 28, at 2:00 pm, call 1-800-910-8278. When prompted, dial Participant Code 1940990.

. **Online:** You can also give your input online by [clicking here to fill out our online survey.](#)

- **In FFTI's 15 years of experience, we've learned what it takes to succeed in the workforce development field – join our Workforce Professionals Credential program and find out!** Through this year-long cohort experience, you will gain access to an exclusive small group learning environment, expand your relationships with peers committed to the work, and receive coaching and mentorship from a seasoned workforce leader.

Workforce Professionals Credential

You will also walk away with...

- Customer service skills to improve your job seeker and business relationships
- Sales techniques to engage new business partners
- Coaching skills to guide job seekers through your program
- Accountability strategies to help job seekers achieve their goals
- Recruitment techniques to engage new job seekers



Program Dates:

Monthly trainings from August 2018 to May 2019.



Location:

Chicago Jobs Council
[29 E. Madison, Suite 1700](#)
Chicago, IL 60602



Cost:

\$950 CJC members
\$1,350 non-members
Scholarships available.



Application Deadline:

June 22, 2018

Contact **Kaitlyn McGovern** at kaitlyn@cj.net or 312-252-0460 ext. 304.