

Postsecondary Education Success

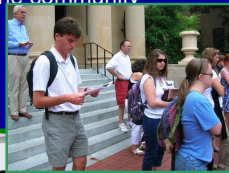
Stephanie Smith Lee

Chair, Think College Accreditation Workgroup
Chair, Postsecondary Experts Group
January 31, 2015

copyright ©2015 Stephanie Smith Lee
StephanieSmithLee@gmail.com

Opening Doors

To college, work, friendships, and living in the community



Plan for the Session - Learn About:

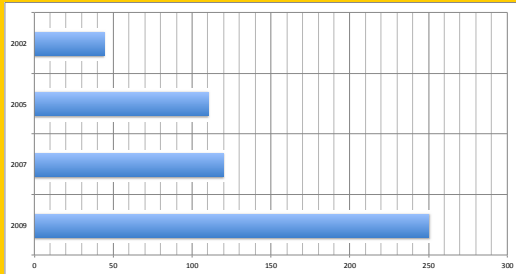
- Overview of postsecondary education (PSE) for students with intellectual disabilities (ID), how to find opportunities through thinkcollege.net.
- Types of programs and individual services and potential funding sources.
- The federal higher education law – what it means to you
 - Definition of student with ID
 - Definition of CTP program
 - 50% inclusive requirement

Learn More

- How to obtain financial aid
- Development of model accreditation standards.
- Tips for starting programs and state-wide advocacy
- How to prepare for college
- Resources

Growth of PSE Initiatives

Parents, self-advocates, advocacy groups, professionals and state systems change key to growth and success.



Where are we Now?

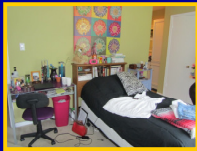
- Early research shows good outcomes in employment, social engagement and living more independently.
- Initiatives “popping up” independently in states
- Structure and composition vary and services coordinated in various places within colleges & universities
- Model demonstration projects funded in Higher Ed Act and by others
- 217 programs on thinkcollege.net and many receiving individual services on campuses
- Funding is a big issue – for parents, school systems and IHEs

Key Components of High-Quality Initiatives

- Academic enrichment
- Vocational experience and paid work leading to competitive or supported employment
- Social opportunities and skills
- Independent living opportunities/dorm



Key Features of High-Quality Postsecondary Initiatives



- Inclusion
- Individualization and person-centered planning
- Mentoring
- Educational Coaching
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Life-long learning

The National Picture: Affordability

- Some programs free to students (run by school districts)
- SSI asset limit of \$2,000
- Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) bill passed!
- HEOA work study and grants
- Scholarships & other sources



Possible Use of IDEA funds

- Dual enrollment: agreements between LEA and IHE take a variety of forms
- “Place” student in IHE through IEP process: LEA pays tuition and for the services IEP team determines necessary
- LEA services to “parentally placed students”

For info on parentally placed students, see:
<http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/%2Croot%2Cdynamic%2CTopicalArea%2C5%2C>

Other possible sources of funding support for students

- Vocational Rehabilitation: tuition assistance, assessment, job development, job coaching
- Developmental Disability agency funding
- Other sources such as Medicaid waiver, Social Security funds; scholarships, organization donations, national service projects

Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA)

Needs to be Reauthorized

- Allows students with ID enrolled in Comprehensive Transition Programs (CTPs) to be eligible for work-study jobs, Pell grants and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants for the first time. No loans.
- Authorizes inclusive model comprehensive transition and post-secondary programs (TPSIDs)
- Authorizes new coordinating center – at Think College, UMass/Boston

Requirements to Receive Financial Aid

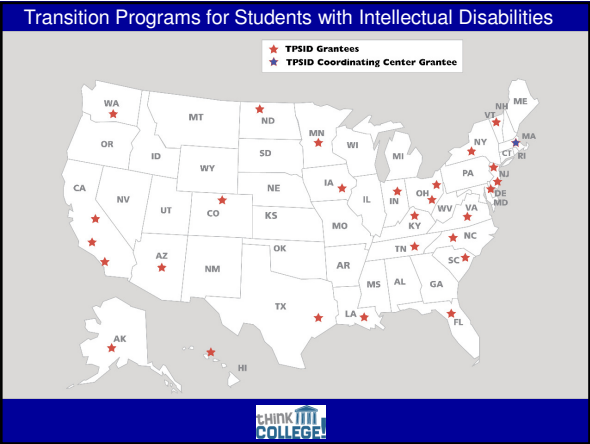
- Student must meet ID definition
- Student must be enrolled in approved CTP
 - IHEs must apply to US ED for CTP approval in order for students with ID to receive financial aid
 - FSA handles approval process
 - <http://www.thinkcollege.net/forprofessionals/professionals-financial-aid>
 - For list of approved programs:
<http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/CTPProgramList.jsp>
- Family must fill out FAFSA and meet financial need requirements

Inclusive Academic Opportunities

- At least 50% focus on academic opportunities with students without disabilities:
 - Credit-bearing courses
 - Auditing
 - Non-credit-bearing, non-degree courses
 - Participating in internships or work-based training with individuals without disabilities

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

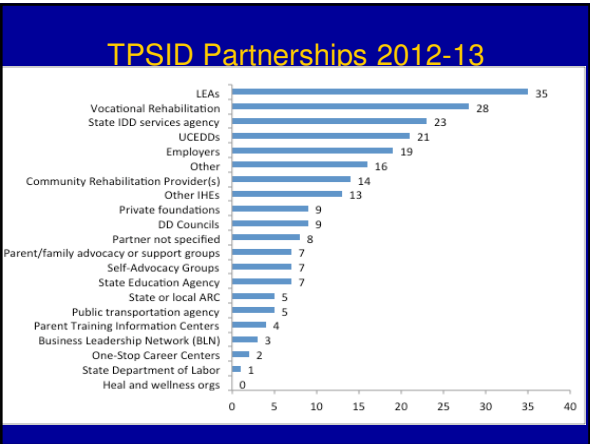
- Competitive grants to IHEs or consortiums of IHEs to create or expand high-quality, inclusive programs
- Administered by Office of Postsecondary Education in US Department of Education
- Grants awarded for 5 years – new grants to be funded.
- Experts Group leads effort to obtain appropriations. Watch for action alerts!



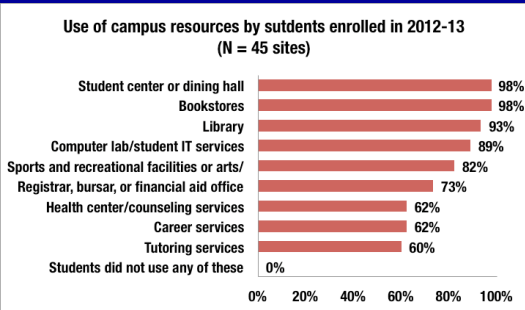
TPSID Program Snapshot 2012 -13

- TPSIDs at 27 IHEs across 44 campuses
- 15 TPSIDs at 2-year schools
- 30 TPSIDs at 4-year schools
- 838 students enrolled
- > 90% of TPSIDs use peer mentors

think COLLEGE



Student Use of Resources



Student Employment 2012-13

Of the 838 students who attended TPSIDs:

- Over 70% of students participated in career development activities including paid employment, other career development, or both
- 36% students held a total of 424 paid jobs
- 62% students participated in other career development activities
- 89% of jobs were paid minimum wage or higher*
- 42% of students employed in Year 3 had never held a paid job prior to attending a TPSID

*Wage status was unknown for 8% of paid jobs. These are omitted from the calculation described



How to Determine Quality?

Accreditation Standards

Think College is required to develop model accreditation standards. The Accreditation Workgroup is currently considering public comment and will report to the President by 9.31.15.

<http://www.thinkcollege.net/topics/draft-accreditation-standards>

Inclusive Higher Education Assessment Tool

Developed by Think College

<http://www.thinkcollege.net/topics/standards-survey>

Q & A

- In acronym overload? Alphabet soup?
- Clear as mud?
- Questions, comments?

State-Wide Systems Change

Joining together with other families and organizations in state-wide advocacy efforts can lead to success in opening doors!

- New Jersey
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Indiana
- Massachusetts

New Jersey

- A demo project funded by a grant from Laura and Steve Riggio through the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS)
- Task Force of experts recruited: family members, individuals with disabilities, educators, state agency administrators
- Task Force research and analysis of existing programs and policies, desired outcomes, key components
- RFP to all 2 & 4 year IHEs
- 2 colleges funded for 3 years each: The College of New Jersey and Mercer County Community College
- Task Force involved throughout grants
- Ongoing!

South Carolina

- Partnership with College Transition Connection and NDSS
- NDSS Project Director 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 funds for Roundtable and experts
- VR agreed to pilot tuition assistance for eligible students.
- CTC: <http://collegetransitionconnection.org/>

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. task force
- CTC Board visited 2 NJ colleges.
- RFP sent to all IHEs and Roundtable held
- Task Force reviewed applications, visited sites, recommended funding to CTC Board (5 grants awarded)
- Obtained funding from State – S.C. General Assembly
- Project Director provided ongoing TA
- Collaboration through Task Force
- General Assembly approved use of lottery funds for scholarships - \$7,000 per year

Tennessee

- NDSS GAC training: affiliates chose postsecondary as priority
- Invitation-only roundtable jointly sponsored by Down syndrome affiliates, other disability organizations. Funded by UCED, DD Council and NDSS.
- All key agencies & 9 colleges participated: agreement to form coalition
- Visited TCNJ and Mercer in New Jersey
- DD Council grant of \$525,000 over 3 years for to Vanderbilt
- University of Tennessee later awarded TPSID
- State-wide coalition ongoing
- General Assembly approved \$4,000 per year scholarships from lottery funds

Indiana

- Indiana GAC identified PSE as priority
- Spoke to large group of parents, self-advocates, others
- Visit to NJ, participated in State of Art PSE conference
- Indiana Postsecondary Education Coalition formed with key partners
- Advocacy role of Affiliates
- Indiana University received TPSID grant
 - IUPUI in Indianapolis
 - Vincennes University (2 campuses)
 - Emerging programs at Franklin College, Indiana Wesleyan, Ivy Tech-Anderson and Huntington College

www.thinkcollegeindiana.org

Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment

- A discretionary grant pilot program with the purpose of providing monies to school districts and state public institutions of higher education partnering together to offer inclusive concurrent enrollment programs for students with disabilities.
- Limited to students, ages 18-21, identified as having severe disabilities and have been unable to achieve the competencies necessary to pass MA high stakes achievement tests.
- Students offered enrollment in credit and non-credit courses that include nondisabled students, including enrollment in noncredit courses and courses for audit status

Strategies for State-wide Success:

- Join with other organizations in state to form a task force 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 in Task Force
- Identify funding sources
- Hold a Roundtable/Invitation only conference
- Develop an RFP for model funding and award \$
- Follow up with evaluation, technical assistance and support
- Repeat funding if possible somewhere else

What is Happening in Kansas?

- Johnson County Community College CLEAR Program

<http://www.jccc.edu/clear/>

- Excell still active??

<http://www.excelkc.org/index.php>

What is happening in Missouri?

- UMKC - Institute for Human Development, UCEDD Adult Continuing Education for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (ACED) Kansas City, MO
- University of Missouri-St. Louis SUCCEED St. Louis, MO
- University of Central Missouri THRIVE Program Warrensburg, MO_____

<http://www.thinkcollege.net/databases/programs-database/search?state=MO&typeSch=0&noneof=1&res=0>

Convincing Colleges and Universities

- Identify contacts at the IHE and find/develop a champion
- Identify benefits to colleges and universities
- Tie in to IHE missions: diversity, outreach, community, teacher preparation
- Collaborations with schools of education & related fields: practicums, internships, research
- Student, faculty and staff opportunities
- Students with ID bring a rich diversity of experiences and interests
- Develop a committee of interested parents, self-advocates, professionals, organizations
- Offer program development funds

Preparing for College

- Start early with a vision and share your vision
- Include postsecondary education and employment in IEP goals
- Inclusion in K-12
- Prepare academically – don't get stuck in life skills but do learn independent living (phone, social media, transportation, etc.)
- Self-determination and Self-advocacy

Resources

- College Transition Connection: <http://collegetransitionconnection.org/>
- "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
- Colorado Initiative for Inclusive Higher Education: <http://www.inclusivehighered.org/index.php>
- Information about postsecondary education from the project I directed at NDSS: <http://www.ndss.org/Advocacy/Legislative-Agenda/Improving-Education-Opportunities-for-People-with-Down-Syndrome/Postsecondary-Education/>
- info on state-wide systems change projects: <http://www.ndss.org/Advocacy/Legislative-Agenda/Improving-Education-Opportunities-for-People-with-Down-Syndrome/Postsecondary-Education/NDSS-Riggo-Transition-Postsecondary-Education-Initiative/Postsecondary-Education-Systems-Change-Case-Studies/>

More resources

- Think College, with funding from AIDD, supported \$15,000 mini grants to set state-wide systems change projects in motion in 19 states. This brief describes the activities in five of those mini-grant states. There are links to the strategic plans they developed. http://www.thinkcollege.net/images/stories/Insight_statewide_strategy_planning_23.pdf
- Think College: Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (Grigal & Hart, 2010) <http://www.thinkcollege.net/publications/think-college-the-book>
- State of the Art Conference <http://kih.d.gmu.edu/policy/conference/>

StephanieSmithLee@gmail.com
