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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

CEHD COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
+ HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

ICI INSTITUTE *on*
COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

Ensuring that all children, youth, and adults with disabilities, and those receiving educational supports, are valued by and contribute to their communities of choice.

APRIL 2019

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FEATURE STORIES

Podcast Series to Assist Families with Autism

On April 30, MNLEND Fellow Tera Girardin (pictured) will launch her podcast series for families with children who have been recently diagnosed with autism or other developmental disabilities, as part of her [Minnesota Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities](#)

(MNLEND) project. The podcast will be hosted by Beth Dierker (MNLEND Fellow, 2018), Executive Director of

Communities Engaging Autism. Girardin and Dierker are both parents of children with autism and the podcast series will provide useful information to families who are wading through the information and decisions that accompany a diagnosis of autism or other developmental disabilities.



Conversational in tone but grounded in research, The Oxygen Mask Podcast will have six episodes in its first season. The series title refers to airline safety procedures that advise families to put on their own masks before assisting others. “We want to provide families an oxygen mask, or a breath of fresh air and a pause, for parents who are navigating their families’ journey with autism or other developmental differences,” says Girardin, a photographer who also wrote and illustrated the book *Faces of Autism*. Themes for the planned podcast include self-care while caring for others, person-centered thinking, advocating for the child, relationship strains, avoiding burnout and information overload, and learning to trust one’s instincts. The podcasts will be distributed through the

[Communities Engaging Autism website](#), [Tera Photography website](#), and other podcast and social media platforms.

New Toolkit Helps Educators Include Students with Disabilities

ICI has launched [Inclusive Education Strategies: A Toolkit for Armenia](#). Developed by faculty and staff from the University of Minnesota—including ICI’s [Renáta Tichá](#) and [Brian Abery](#)—and Armenian State Pedagogical University (ASPU) in the Republic of Armenia, the toolkit will help educators include students with disabilities in regular classrooms and after-school activities. Significantly, the toolkit contains a textbook that is the first inclusive education resource in the Armenian language that was co-authored by Armenian academics and educators working in the field. The toolkit is a valuable resource for implementing inclusive education practices in post-Soviet countries like Armenia and countries on the path to a more inclusive society.



The toolkit includes the following:

- [Inclusive Education Strategies: A Textbook](#).
- Webinars on [Assessment for Students with Significant Disabilities](#), [Assessment for Students with Mild Disabilities](#), and [Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies and Data-based Instruction](#).
- Learning modules on the topics of Universal Design for Learning, Co-teaching, and Instructional Strategies for Inclusive Classroom (to access these modules, contact Renáta Tichá at tich0018@umn.edu).
- [Education for Every Child: Armenia's Path to Inclusion](#) (27-minute film).

Funded by UNICEF Armenia, the faculty and staff from the University of Minnesota and ASPU developed these inclusive education materials to be relevant to both U.S. and Armenian contexts. Each chapter in the textbook was co-authored by U.S. and Armenian authors to ensure the inclusive strategies could be implemented meaningfully in the Armenian education system. The film, *Education for Every Child: Armenia's Path to Inclusion*, highlights some of the milestones toward inclusive education in Armenia. All materials are or will be available in both English and Armenian.

Reflecting on the project that produced these inclusive education materials, Tichá said, “True international collaborations take much time and effort. This project and its products represent two years of work, spanning two countries, two cultures, and two languages. The result is a comprehensive toolkit of cross-cultural resources that support educators who will include students with disabilities in a meaningful learning process and environment.”

SOCIAL MEDIA SPOTLIGHT



Featured on [ICI's Facebook](#) on March 19, 2019

Erin Sheldon's commitment to her daughter Maggie's safety is also a commitment to inclusive education for Maggie. Read about their journey in the new Impact issue.

NEW RELEASES



NCEO Report 409: Diploma Options, Graduation Requirements, and Exit Exams for Youth with Disabilities: 2017 National Study

Authors: [David Johnson](#), [Martha Thurlow](#), and Lindsay Anderson

[This report](#) presents the results of a study undertaken to update what is known about the status of graduation policies across the nation. Three research questions served as the focus of this national study of high school graduation requirements and diploma options for students with and without disabilities: (a) What is the range and variation in state graduation requirements and diploma options across the United States for students with and without disabilities? (b) What are the intended and unintended consequences for students when they are required to pass exit exams to receive a high school diploma? and (c) What are the intended and unintended consequences of using single or multiple diploma options for students with disabilities? This study found great variability in state graduation requirements for students with and without disabilities, and offers several recommendations to help guide state and local district decision making when implementing state graduation requirements and different diploma options for students with disabilities. Published by ICI's National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO).

Journal Articles Published

"Weekly Wage Exploration of Vocational Rehabilitation Service Recipients: A Quantile Regression Approach." (2019). By Youngsoon Kang, Derek Nord, and [Kelly Nye-Lengerman](#). Published in [The](#)

[Journal of Rehabilitation](#), 85(1), 4–14.

"Putting the Pieces Together: Perceptions of Longitudinal Wraparound, Systems of Care, and Positive Behavior Support Implementation." (2019). By Kris Matthews, [Rachel Freeman](#), and Matt Enyart. Published in the [Community Mental Health Journal](#).

EVENTS

Film Screening and Panel Discussion



April 30–May 1

**Positive Behavior Support Collaborators Forum
Minneapolis, Minnesota**

A community planning team composed of ICI, the Minnesota Department of Education, and many other community members, including educators, family members, and other advocates, are working together to host a free screening of the film [Intelligent Lives](#) at South High School at 3131 19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, on April 30 at 6:30 p.m. *Intelligent Lives* stars three young adults with intellectual disabilities who challenge perceptions of intelligence as they navigate high school, college, and the workforce. Academy Award-winning actor and narrator Chris Cooper contextualizes their lives through the story of his son as the film examines intelligence testing in the U.S. *Intelligent Lives* was created by filmmaker Dan Habib of the Institute on Disability at the University of New Hampshire.

At 9 a.m. on May 1, Habib will facilitate a discussion on the issues raised in the film at the John B. Davis Center at 1250 W. Broadway Avenue, Minneapolis. This panel discussion will also explore collaboration among many Minnesota organizations to advance education, employment, and housing for people living with disabilities throughout the state. The screening and discussion are co-sponsored by the [Minnesota Positive Behavior Support Network](#). The events are free and open to the public, but [registration is required](#) and space is limited.

UMAI Day 2019

May 5, 1–4:30 p.m.

Wilf Family Center

**University of Minnesota Masonic Children's Hospital
Minneapolis, Minnesota**



UMAI Day is a free educational event hosted and sponsored by the [University of Minnesota Autism](#)

[Initiative](#) (UMAI). This event is open to all who are interested in the support, research, and treatment of individuals with autism and related developmental disabilities, including individuals with autism, family members, advocacy groups, educators, students, and service providers. Among the presenters are ICI staff members, who will deliver the presentations, "Employment for Individuals with Autism: Supporting Best Practices" ([Kelly Nye-Lengerman](#)); "Positive Behavioral Support for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities Including ASD" ([Rachel Freeman](#)); and "Living a Life That Is Meaningful to Me... Using Person-Centered Practices to Achieve My Dreams" ([Jody Van Ness](#) with her son, Andy Hofer). [Registration is required.](#)

WINGS MN Summit

May 17, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Lutheran Social Services Minnesota

1605 Eustis Street

St. Paul, Minnesota



Working Interdisciplinary Network of Guardianship Stakeholders in Minnesota (WINGS MN) is an interdisciplinary network of members interested in building systems that prioritize supported decision-making and less restrictive alternatives to guardianship for people with disabilities, and that maximize autonomy for persons under guardianship. ICI's [Barb Kleist](#) is a WINGS board member who represents academic faculty and staff in fields that relate to guardianship/conservatorship and alternatives. The event will address various topics, including person-centered practices and supported decision making, guardianship and supported decision making, guardianship complaint advocacy, the supported decision making legislative process in Wisconsin, and strengthening protections for Social Security beneficiaries. Join guardianship, legal, social services, health care, advocacy, and other colleagues to learn more about trends and opportunities to improve guardianship and learn more about supported decision making. [Registration is now open.](#) Seating is limited.

ICI Staff Member to Co-present AAIDD Webinar on Improving Employment Outcomes for Job Seekers with IDD



May 22, 3–4 p.m. CDT

"Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Supporting Quality Practices to Improve Employment Outcomes"

This free webinar from the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) is about improving employment outcomes for job seekers with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD). The webinar focuses on employment consultants, a group who play

a critical role in connecting job seekers with IDD to employers. Employment consultants are where "the rubber meets the road" when it comes to improving employment outcomes, but organizational culture and structures can influence how employment consultants practice their duties. Data-informed decision making can facilitate quality supports and outcomes. Join John Butterworth from the University of Massachusetts Boston and ICI's [Kelly Nye-Lengerman](#) to explore strategies that can enhance supports at the organizational and employment consultant level. Research examining individual and organizational practices and the use of data-based decision making and micro-learning will be discussed. [Registration for this webinar is open.](#)

Check & Connect Mentor Training



June 19–20, 8:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

University of Minnesota Continuing Education and Conference

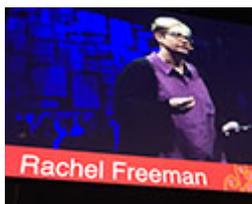
Center

1890 Buford Avenue

St. Paul, Minnesota

[Check & Connect](#)'s two-day Mentor Training provides participants with the information, competencies, and skills needed to be an effective Check & Connect mentor at their local site. Check & Connect is an intervention developed at ICI for use with K–12 students who show warning signs of disengagement with school and who are at risk of dropping out. At the core of Check & Connect is a trusting relationship between the student and a caring, trained mentor who both advocates for and challenges the student to keep education salient. This training is designed for those assigned the role of Check & Connect mentor as well as those interested in Check & Connect mentoring principles and practices. Check & Connect site coordinators and administrators are also encouraged to attend. [Register by May 29.](#)

STAFF UPDATES



Rachel Freeman: On March 14–15, [Freeman](#) spoke at the Changing the Climate 2019 Conference at the Victoria Department of Education in Melbourne, Australia, where she presented plenaries and workshops on "The Importance of Meaningful Interventions Which Build Student Skills" and "Measuring Holistic Student Outcomes with Data."

Claire Benway, Barb Kleist, and Laurie ("Chet") Tschetter: On March 7, [Benway](#) and [Tschetter](#) presented a webinar, "Workplace Assessment to Inform Retention Strategies," for ANCOR as part of the DSP Toolkit Webinar Series that they manage in partnership with ANCOR. The speakers were ICI's [Kleist](#) and former ICI staff member Lori Sedlezky who is now Director of Knowledge Management at Seeking Employment, Equality, and Community (SEEC). On March 11, Tschetter

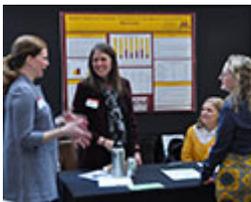
facilitated a training in Rochester, Minnesota on the topic of "Friends: Connecting with Members of the Community" for Cohort 3 of the Organization-wide Implementation of Person-Centered and Positive Support Practices Model. This training, which is built upon the work of retired ICI staff member Angela Amado, is designed to help supporters think about how to help the people they support to build friendships with people in the community as well as become part of their community.



Jennifer Hall-Lande: On March 10–11, [Hall-Lande](#) attended the 2019 AMCHP National Conference Presentation in San Antonio, Texas, where she presented a lecture titled, "Using 'Learn the Signs. Act Early.' to Strengthen Family and MCH Workforce Capacity to Identify Developmental Delays Early: Strategies from Four States" as well as a poster titled, "Building a Sustainable Network of Act Early Community Leaders to Support Early Developmental Screening: Minnesota Act Early Delegate Network." On March 20, she also presented, "Autism Prevalence and Identification in Minnesota" at the Minnesota Social Service Association Conference in Minneapolis.



Renáta Tichá: On March 19, [Tichá](#) was informed that she would receive a Commendation Award from NARRTC (formerly known as the National Association of Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers). According to the award letter, the NARRTC Executive Committee, "enthusiastically voted to confer a 2019 Commendation Award in recognition of [Tichá's] important contributions that have strategically advanced the field of disability." She will receive the award during the NARRTC Conference in Arlington, Virginia, April 23–24.



Libby Hallas-Muchow, Jennifer Hall-Lande, Jenny Poynter, Amy Esler, and Amy Hewitt: On March 26, "Autism Spectrum Disorder Prevalence in Immigrant Communities in Minnesota"—a poster co-authored by [Hallas-Muchow](#) (left), [Hall-Lande](#) (second from left), [Poynter](#), [Esler](#), Anab Gulaid, and [Hewitt](#)—won the People's Choice award in the Autism and Developmental Disabilities category at CEHD Research Day on the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus.



Jerry Smith: On April 2, [Smith](#) premiered the Research and Training Center on Community Living documentary, "[Invaluable: The Unrecognized Profession of Direct Support,](#)" at the Crest Theatre in Sacramento, California. The film screening and panel discussion followed a direct support workforce summit hosted by California advocacy and service organizations. The film will be released for purchase in June 2019.



Kyung Mee Kim: On April 2–5, [Kim](#) co-presented, "Effectiveness of Social Skills Training for Adult Burn Survivors in Korea," at the 51th annual meeting of the American Burn Association in Las Vegas. The presentation was judged best in category.

Linda Goldstone, Kristin Liu, Martha Thurlow, and Yi-Chen Wu: On April 4–8, [Wu](#) and [Thurlow](#) presented, “Trends in Participation, Performance, and Accommodations Received by Special Education Students,” at the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME) annual conference in Toronto, Canada. On April 5–9, [Goldstone](#), Thurlow, and [Liu](#) presented, “Challenges Teachers Experience in Making Decisions About Accessibility Options in Instruction and Assessment” at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) annual conference, which was also held in Toronto this year.

Carolina De La Rosa Mateo, Faviola Estrada, and Ruth Evangelista: On April 6, [De La Rosa Mateo](#), Estrada, [Evangelista](#) (all Fellows from the [Research and Training Center on Community Living Diversity Fellowships](#) project), attended Grupo Salto's Educating and Empowering conference in Chicago. Grupo Salto is an advocacy organization that was founded by Latino parents of children with autism and Hispanic program staff from the University of Illinois Chicago Developmental Disabilities Family Clinics in 2003. The three Fellows attended the conference to learn inclusive disability practices and services that parents can use—lessons the Fellows intend to share with their clients at La Red, a Minnesota organization for daycare providers that Evangelista started with Estrada's early support.



Kelly Nye-Lengerman: On April 10, the Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies at the University of Maine posted on its website the keynote speech that [Nye-Lengerman](#) delivered in November 2018 for the “Equity, Access and Inclusion: A World Usability Day Event” conference in Maine. Nye-Lengerman's address was titled, ["Tapping into Potential with Expectations: Making Employment and Post-Secondary Education the New Norm for Individuals with Disabilities."](#)

ALUMNI UPDATE



Julia Anderson: Anderson (MNLEND, 2016–17) is the Family Programs Associate at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. In this position, she conceived of and directs the museum's first sensory-friendly program, applied for and manages a three-year Institute of Museum and Library Services grant of \$250,000 that promotes equitable family programming, and presented on disability inclusion at the American Alliance of Museums' annual conference last year. Anderson is also a personal care attendant for a teenager with autism.

Anderson began work at the Walker in 2015, but it was when she was a [Minnesota Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities](#) (MNLEND) Fellow that she developed Sensory Friendly Sunday, a program for families with members who have developmental disabilities; it launched in May 2017. She formed a community advisory group of parents, professionals, and self-advocates to inform program development. The makeup of this group was inspired by MNLEND's interdisciplinary model.

And before that, Anderson was inspired by other people. "When I was in college, I served as a therapist for an elementary-age student with autism. During breaks, we would draw together. It turned out that he and I both loved making art. He was very creative, and was a great communicator through drawing. Our

mutual appreciation of art made me wonder if art museums were serving students with autism—so I began to research the topic. My mom is also a special education teacher, so I grew up learning about her work."

"Now I want to build relationships with parents of children with disabilities, self-advocates, service providers, and teachers in order to understand and translate people's needs into systemic change, at both organizational- and city-wide levels." That sense of mission is taking Anderson to the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, where she begins her master's degree in public policy this fall. Her studies at Harvard will focus on social, urban, and disability policy. "I'm committed to helping build a society that provides equal opportunities for people with disabilities and distributes more benefits to the most vulnerable," says Anderson.

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