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

JUNE 2019

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FEATURE STORIES

Self-Advocacy Online Adds Videos on Friends, Fitness, and Finding Competitive Work



ICI's [Self-Advocacy Online website](#) has added four new original videos—written by John Smith and produced by Sarah Hollerich—that support people with disabilities in becoming more active and finding competitive employment in the community. Launched in 2004 with funding from NEC Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation, Self-Advocacy Online provides content of interest to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), in particular those involved in the self-advocacy movement, a civil rights movement by and for people with IDD. Information, including some of ICI's research, is presented in accessible, entertaining formats. The website also includes a directory of self-advocacy organizations across the U.S., developed by John Westerman, and a story wall featuring interviews with dozens of self-advocates.

The videos [What is Employment First?](#) (pictured) and [How well is Employment First spreading around the U.S.?](#) inform self-advocates about a framework for systems change that is centered on the premise that all citizens, including individuals with significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life. [How can we be more active?](#) offers fitness suggestions, and [Can DSPs help you make friends in the community?](#) encourages self-advocates (and the Direct Support Professionals who support them) to broaden their social circles out in the community. These titles are just the latest additions to the site's numerous short films and lessons that provide self-advocates with useful information on topics ranging from the American with

Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 to youth leadership.

“Information is meaningless if it’s not understandable and accessible,” says Self-Advocacy Online director [Jerry Smith](#). “With over 250 videos, lessons, and translated research findings, we’re meeting a need few others are addressing. And by collaborating with Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered, Inclusion International, and The Arc, we are reaching a wide audience.”

ICI Supports Community-Based Employment of Youth with Disabilities in Bhutan



In May, ICI’s [Brian Abery](#) and [Renáta Tichá](#)—along with Christopher Johnstone from the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development at the University of Minnesota—received a \$148,000 subaward from the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom (U.K.) for a three-year project that will support the inclusive community employment of youth and young adults with disabilities in Bhutan, a mountainous kingdom in south central Asia. This program of research and development entitled, [Understanding, Developing, and Supporting Meaningful Work for Youth with Disabilities in Bhutan: Networks, Communities, and Transitions](#), will be conducted in collaboration with colleagues from the University of Birmingham and Royal Thimphu College in Bhutan. It will include Abery and Tichá developing and implementing tools to assess employment for people with disabilities in Bhutan, reviewing services that support this outcome, and determining which, if any, additional services they would recommend. This information will be used in conjunction with current policy and legislation to promote community-based employment in Bhutan for young people with disabilities.

“This work provides us an exciting opportunity to collaborate with a former ICI colleague, Matthew Schuelka [see Alumni Update below], and our colleagues at the University of Birmingham and Royal Thimphu College to determine how we might adapt strategies used in the U.S. and U.K. to a totally different culture and environment,” Abery says. “We expect that much of what we learn in Bhutan will help us strengthen the employment approaches and strategies we use here in the U.S.”

Tichá agrees. “It’s a real privilege to be able work in a culture that has unique values, history, and social structures,” she says. “This experience gives us an opportunity to not only share our knowledge and expertise, but to adapt our approaches to assessing employment environments and outcomes based on the local context.”

The project is funded by the U.K.’s Economic and Social Research Council through a subaward from the University of Birmingham that runs from May 2019 through April 2022.

MNLEND Fellows Complete “a Truly Transformative Year”

On May 14, 29 MNLEND Fellows (pictured) received their Certificate of Completion, recognizing the culmination of their year-long appointment with the [Minnesota Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities \(MNLEND\) Program](#) at ICI. Each year the MNLEND, which is funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, selects outstanding graduate/postgraduate students and community members to become Fellows. In partnership with other academic departments at the University, the MNLEND offers Fellows a unique interdisciplinary training experience that prepares them for leadership in serving children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and other neurodevelopmental and related disabilities (NDD) and their families in health care, education, human services, and policy settings.



When asked what they gained from their MNLEND experience, this year’s cohort had much to say. Here are a few quotes:

MNLEND has taught me three important lessons: (1) interdisciplinary work leads to the best solutions; (2) the perspectives of individuals with disabilities and their families and communities matter; (3) the LEND competencies really are a way of life. I am that MNLEND alumni who is guilty of over-enthusiastically promoting MNLEND to too many friends, family, and acquaintances. — Pang Chaxiong

MNLEND has helped me to see how important the voices of self-advocates are, as well as the ways that I can directly impact organizations and individuals by sharing my experiences. It has created bridges between my role as an autistic woman and the parents and providers I hope to work with as an advocate. — Olivia James

Not only have I learned much from families and people with neurodevelopmental disorders through the MNLEND program, I’ve appreciated the rich discussions with fellows from so many different backgrounds as well as the presenters and learned from all of them. I’m taking away considerations around the meaning of disability, self-advocacy, and policy that I will continue to explore and expand for years to come. — Mira Martin

The self-advocacy motto of “nothing about us, without us” is generally accepted as the right thing to do, but is rarely done. Methods should include music, art, stories, laughter, hugs, theater, lots of movement and big visuals. This culture is kinesthetic, energetic, and almost always includes food. This is the environment in which people with developmental disabilities can participate equitably with others and it leads to authentic disability leadership. — Patrick James

MNLEND has inspired me to collaborate with others to enhance the lives of kids with NDD. The opportunities MNLEND has provided have helped me take many steps towards my goal of becoming a champion of oral health for all kids. It has been a truly transformative year. I hope to keep in touch with all LEND fellows so that I can continue to learn from them. — Quentin Knutson

SOCIAL MEDIA SPOTLIGHT



Featured on [ICI's Facebook](#) on May 17, 2019

[Art for All: The Stephanie Evelo Fund for Art Inclusion](#), a program of the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, and [Interact Center for Visual and Performing Arts](#) are featured in this short profile on visual

arts.

NEW RELEASES



NCEO Report 413: Students with Disabilities in Educational Policy, Practice, and Professional Judgment: What Should We Expect?

Authors: Rachel Quenemoen and [Martha Thurlow](#)

[This report](#) provides a cross-disciplinary look at educational policy, practice, and law related to expectations for students with disabilities. It addresses three questions critical to a discussion of expectations for students with disabilities, viewing the questions from an educational perspective and a legal perspective. The report concludes with responses to each of the questions and then provides recommendations for action based on what thoughtful, informed professional judgment of appropriate educational opportunities for students with disabilities should be. Published by ICI's National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO).

NCEO Data Analytics 9: Percent of ELs with Disabilities from 2013–14 to 2016–17

Authors: [Yi-Chen Wu](#) and [Deb Albus](#)

[This interactive report](#) presents information on the percent of students with disabilities ages 6–17 who



are also English learners (ELs), and the proportion of these students by category for school years 2013–14 to 2016–17, for the 50 regular states. Published by NCEO.



NCEO Brief 17: Revisiting Expectations for Students with Disabilities

Authors: [Martha Thurlow](#) and Rachel Quenemoen

The purpose of [this brief](#) is to summarize some of the past exclusionary practices that resulted from low expectations for students with disabilities, and how those were addressed in policies related to standards-based reform. The brief is based on a comprehensive publication that takes a cross-disciplinary approach to examining expectations for students with disabilities, NCEO Report 413: Students with Disabilities in Educational Policy, Practice, and Professional Judgment: What Should We Expect? (see above). The authors highlight answers to critical questions about expectations for students with disabilities, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Suggestions are provided for policymakers, states, and technical assistance providers on how to work with districts, schools, and educators to revisit expectations for students with disabilities. Published by NCEO.



NCEO Newsletter: June 2019

Editor: [Martha Thurlow](#)

In the [June 2019 issue of the newsletter](#), NCEO highlights sessions in which the Center will participate during the upcoming National Conference on Student Assessment in Orlando, Florida. The newsletter also highlights recent NCEO reports, including two that address expectations for students with disabilities—one a longer report that examines what we know in the context of policy, practice, and evidence from the implementation of reforms (NCEO Report 413: Students with Disabilities in Educational Policy, Practice, and Professional Judgment: What Should We Expect?); and the second is a brief that provides suggestions for policymakers, states, and technical assistance providers (NCEO Brief 17: Revising Expectations for Students with Disabilities). A new Data Analytics that provides national and state trends on students with disabilities and their

categories of disability is also highlighted. A report that updates state graduation policies for students with disabilities concludes the NCEO reports highlighted in this issue. This issue of the newsletter concludes with a summary a new report from the DIAMOND Project: Additional Educators' Perspectives on Classroom Implementation of Accessibility Features and Accommodations. Published by NCEO.

Journal Article Published

"Active Support Training, Staff Assistance, and Engagement of Individuals With Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in the United States: Randomized Controlled Trial." (2019). By Xueqin Qian, [Sheryl A. Larson](#), [Renáta Tichá](#), [Roger Stancliffe](#), and [Sandra L. Pettingell](#). Published in the [American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#), 124(2), 157–173.

Book Chapter Published

"Physical Disability and Health Disparities." (2019). By [Lynda Lahti Anderson](#), Sarah MapellLentz, and [Sheryl A. Larson](#). Published by Springer Nature in [Advances in Exercise and Health for People with Mobility Limitations](#). Edited by D. Hollar.

EVENTS

Responses Sought for Online Survey About ICI Website

The ICI Web Team is asking our friends and colleagues around the world to take a moment today to let us know what you think of the [ICI website](#) and how it can better serve you in the future. The [short survey](#) takes only a moment to complete. We would love to hear from you by June 30. Thank you!



Family Focus Project Online Survey

Minnesota Department of Human Services and Disability Hub
MN



With assistance from ICI, the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) is [surveying Minnesota families who support a family member with a disability](#). DHS wants to learn more about

families' experiences about life planning for the family member and how they connect with, and learn from, other families. The state wants such families to tell DHS what resources for life planning and connecting families are most important to them. This builds on the work the [Family Focus Project](#) is doing to improve family supports across Minnesota. The online survey should take about 20 minutes to complete and will be available until the end of June 2019. Before taking the survey, please review the new resources available at [Disability Hub MN](#), which worked with DHS on the instrument.

AAIDD Annual Meeting



June 24–27

**InterContinental St. Paul Riverfront Hotel
11 East Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, Minnesota**

The AAIDD 143rd Annual Meeting is two full days of educational sessions, exhibits, poster presentations, and networking events. On Monday, June 24 from 4:30–6 pm, the Research and Training Center on Community Living (RTC-CL) is providing a complimentary screening of [Invaluable: The Unrecognized Profession of Direct Support](#), a documentary exploring the direct support workforce. A panel discussion, including ICI's [Amy Hewitt](#) and [Jerry Smith](#), will follow the film. On Thursday, June 27 from 9 am–12 noon, RTC-CL is presenting a post-conference session, "All Means All: Community Living for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities." This session will explore the pillars of community living for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities from housing to health, faith to citizenship, and everything in between. Presenters include Hewitt, Smith, [Kelly Nye-Lengerman](#), [Cliff Poetz](#), and [Katrina Simons](#). The fee is \$45 and includes a continental breakfast. This session is just one of many examples of ICI staff presenting at the annual conference, as can be seen in [AAIDD's preliminary program](#).

Check & Connect's Biennial Conference



July 24–25

**McNamara Alumni Center
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota**

ICI's [Check & Connect](#) presents the [2019 Student Engagement Conference: Solutions for Success](#)—its third national conference—on the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus. Participants will learn about student engagement as it relates to multi-tiered supports, outcomes, the classroom, the community, and multiculturalism. The keynote speakers are educator/researcher Kent Pekel and educational consultant/principal Kelvin Oliver. [Registration is open](#).

STAFF UPDATES

Claire Benway, Amy Hewitt, Barb Kleist, Mark Olson, Jerry Smith, and Laurie "Chet"

Tschetter: On May 6–8, [Hewitt](#) presented “Bridging the Gap: HCBS Outcome Measurement” and “Moving Mountains—a call to action” at the ANCOR national conference in Portland, Oregon. Also at ANCOR, [Smith](#) and [Kleist](#) presented and discussed the new Research and Training Center on Community Living (RTC-CL) film [Invaluable: the Unrecognized Profession of Direct Support](#). [Olson](#), [Tschetter](#), and [Benway](#) attended the ANCOR conference to staff the RTC-CL and DirectCourse vendor booths.

Maren Christenson: On May 11, Christenson (MNLEND Fellow, 2018–19) received the Public Policy Leader Award from The Arc Minnesota. This award is given to an outstanding policy advocate on issues of importance to Minnesotans with disabilities and their families. Christenson received the award for her work on special education and reducing the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act (TEFRA) parental fees.

Rachel Freeman and Jennifer Hall-Lande: On May 17, [Freeman](#) and [Hall-Lande](#) were among the ICI staff who presented at UMAI Day, an annual event sponsored by the University of Minnesota Autism Initiative (UMAI).



Kelly Nye-Lengerman: On May 27–29, [Nye-Lengerman](#) co-presented, “Using Technology in the Field to Enhance Effective Employment Support Practices and Organizational Capacity” and “Strengthening the Quality of Supported Employment Services” at the European Union Conference on Support Employment in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.



Renatá Tichá and Brian Abery: On May 27–28, [Tichá](#) and [Abery](#) conducted an Inclusive Education Research Methods workshop for the faculty of Kharkiv Academy of Humanitarian and Pedagogical Studies in Kharkiv, Ukraine. They presented two workshops on Co-Teaching and Instructional Strategies for Inclusive Education at the Educational Forum: Learning for All conference, sponsored by Inclusion without Borders, an inclusive education learning community founded by seven former ADA Inclusive Education Fellows. Along with several former ADA Inclusive Education Fellows, Tichá and Abery were interviewed for an hour-long radio program on Radio Kharkiv where they discussed inclusion at the university- and grade-school levels. Shortly afterwards, they traveled to Chennai, India, where they were invited to present on “An Introduction to Inclusive Education: Response to Intervention and Inclusive Education” and “Evidenced-based Practices for Supporting Inclusion” at a two-day national workshop on Enhancing Outcomes in Inclusive Education for Children with Special Education Needs.



Michelle Austin: On June 4 and 6, [Austin](#) led Check & Connect's first LIVE! Online Virtual Training. This two-day, interactive Preparation & Implementation training guided coordinators who watched online through the planning steps for implementing Check & Connect with fidelity. More [LIVE! Online training opportunities](#) will be offered throughout the year.

Shawn Lawler, Connie Burkhart, Chet Tschetter, Julie Kramme and Jonathon Walz: On June 6, [Lawler](#), [Burkhart](#), [Tschetter](#), and [Kramme](#) received a Maroon and Gold Award for the use of Read-it-to-Me in [Frontline Initiative](#). Developed by Lawler and [Walz](#), Read-it-to-Me is a read-aloud tool that can be added to most web pages to increase access to information. Maroon and Gold awards are presented by the University of Minnesota Communicators Forum to recognize staff whose work exemplifies the University's core values: excellence, innovation, effectiveness, integrity, diversity, collaboration, sharing of knowledge, accountability, stewardship, and service.

ALUMNI UPDATE



Matt Schuelka: Schuelka is an Assistant Professor of Inclusive Education at the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom (U.K.). He also is Director of the Inclusion and Special Educational Needs program that is run both in the U.K. and Dubai. Schuelka is also the principal investigator (PI) on grants from the Toyota Foundation and the European Union that focus on Bhutan. These projects explore the values and skills learned by students across the Bhutanese school system, as well as mental health and well-being concerns for higher education students, respectively. Additionally, Schuelka is developing an inclusive education school transformation project with partners in Malaysia. And he is the recent lead editor for The SAGE Handbook of Inclusion and Diversity in Education, edited along with Christopher Johnstone (mentioned above in the feature article on Bhutan) and colleagues from other universities.

But back in 2010–12, Schuelka was a Graduate Research Assistant to David Johnson, supporting ICI's transition team and working on various Institute projects, such as the Twin Cities and Zambia Disability Connection project; the NLTS2 survey; the College of Direct Support; and the Diploma Options, Graduation Requirements, and Exit Exams for Youth with Disabilities: 2011 National Study. "Putting together the Diploma Options survey certainly taught me how to collect survey data and put together a report for publication, as well as the valuable skill of respectfully chasing overdue participants!" he recalls with a laugh.

Schuelka graduated from the University of Minnesota in 2014 with a PhD in Educational Policy and Administration (Comparative International Development Education). "I really learned a lot from my time at ICI on research and project development," he remembers. "The trip to Zambia was particularly memorable and really informed the kind of work I do now. In Zambia, I learned from Amy Hewitt and Kelly Nye-Lengerman about the importance of local networks and community-driven development."

Schuelka is now the principal investigator for the Bhutan project featured above in this issue of FYI.

This email was sent to ICI staff by Institute on Community Integration, 109 Pattee Hall, 150 Pillsbury Drive SE, Minneapolis, MN, 55455, USA. The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

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