A BOUT THE C ONSORTIUM

The GaIPSE Consortium began as an informal working group of advocates, parents, school personnel, transition specialists, and university professionals committed to increasing post-secondary opportunities in Georgia. The group came together in September 2011 and has held numerous education activities over the past year with the aid of a mini grant from Think College awarded to the Center for Leadership in Disability at Georgia State University. The GaIPSE Consortium wanted to build on the success of the Academy for Inclusive Learning and Social Growth at Kennesaw State University, which began in 2008 with support from the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities.

C ONSORTIUM MISSION

The Georgia Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Consortium seeks to create opportunities for students who have historically not had access to post-secondary educational opportunities. Members of the Consortium are committed to providing information and training resources for individuals, families, colleges & universities, and agencies to achieve the goal of inclusive PSE opportunities for all.

C E NTER FOR L EADERSHIP IN D ISABILITY

The Center for Leadership in Disability (CLD) serves as a bridge between the University and community in support of evidence-based practices designed to make improvements for people with disabilities and their families. The CLD educates current and future professionals, develops and promotes innovative and effective systems changes, conducts evidence-based research, and disseminates information.

The Center for Leadership in Disability is a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (UCEDD), and operates within the School of Public Health at Georgia State University.

C ONTACT U S

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Students with intellectual disabilities are limited in their post-secondary options, and it often means they are typically not leaving the comfort of their own homes. For some families, it can mean someone quitting a job to care for their child. For others, it is simply a strain when their child is getting little interaction or stimulation. Furthermore, education is an important pathway to employment. When individuals with Intellectual disabilities can work in real jobs and support themselves, it lifts unnecessary strains on their families.

Diverse workplaces are better at innovating, better at responding to external changes and more sensitive to the needs of all employees and customers. Employees with disabilities often face and overcome unique challenges, and their experiences allow them to lend an often under-represented perspective to organizations. As a result, employers can benefit from creating inclusive workplaces, often yielding new customers, new markets for goods and services or otherwise enhancing vendor or customer relations.

Universities and colleges have long recognized the importance of a diverse student body. However, many higher education institutions are missing critical opportunities to expand diversity among students by including students with intellectual disabilities. Creating a more inclusive environment and teaching using universal design can have a multiplier effect that will, in turn, attract more students.

"KSU Academy taught me to not be so short-sighted"

-KSU Academy graduate

Post-secondary educational (PSE) opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities have been expanding for decades. However, PSE remains a reality that few families consider – or are educated about. Some creativity may be needed to address issues of safety, supports, funding and access, but, attending college can contribute to growth among individuals with intellectual disabilities in many of the same ways traditional students benefit from PSE: academic and personal skill building, independence, self-advocacy, friendships, and, perhaps most importantly, employment skills.

"It is difficult for kids who are very social and very capable not to have a chance to attend college"

-Parent of high school student