

**Westfield State University & the Massachusetts
Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative
PRESENT**

EMERGING TRENDS

A Conference on High-Impact Transition Practices

**An exploration of theory & practice supporting high-impact
practices in the transition process for young adults with
disabilities to post-secondary opportunities**

**Westfield State University
June 9, 2015**

9:00:00 AM	Welcome Address: Dr. Elizabeth Hall Preston Orientation: Lyndsey Nunes & Glenn Gabbard SCANLON				
9:30:00 AM	Keynote Melissa Jones, PhD Northern Kentucky University SCANLON				
10:30:00 AM	BREAK				
	LIVING ROOM	ELY 044	ELY 17	SCANLON	
10:45:00 AM	Supporting the Movement toward Inclusion Jones	Widening the Circle Brennan	Employment Soft Skills Applebaum	Coordinator's Conversation Gabbard	
12:00:00 PM	LUNCH Lunch Address: Tom Sannicandro SCANLON				
1:00:00 PM	College & Career Hill	Rethinking College with Inclusion Cook	Person-Centered Planning Pakos	Preparing Transition Specialists Paiewonsky	College Housing Options Carlson (ELY 341)
2:00:00 PM	BREAK				
2:15:00 PM	Building Envable Lives Butler	Careers through Classes Battaglino	Educational Coach Panel Gross	Parent Perspective on Transition Surprenant	Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative Gabbard (ELY 346)
3:15:00 PM	BREAK				
3:30:00 PM	Westfield State Peer Panel: Friendships and Facilitation SCANLON				
3:45:00 PM	Closing Remarks: Glenn Gabbard				

Acknowledgements

Emerging Trends 2015 wishes to thank the following groups and individuals for their many contributions to the Conference:

Northern Essex Community College
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Elizabeth Hall Preston, President, Westfield State University
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James Peyser, Secretary of Education
Tom Sannicandro, Chairman, Joint Committee on Higher Education
Massachusetts State Legislature
The Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative Advisory Group

Glenn Gabbard, ICEI Program Coordinator, Executive Office of Education
Lyndsey Nunes, ICEI Program Coordinator, Westfield State University
Ian Witherby, Conference Coordinator



Agenda

9:00 AM	Welcome Address Orientation	Dr. Elizabeth Hall Preston Lyndsey Nunes, Glenn Gabbard
9:30 AM–10:30	<u><i>Inclusive Campuses: A Vision for Institutional Change in Higher Education</i></u>	Melissa Jones, Ph.D.
	BREAK	
10:45 AM–11:45	BLOCK I	
LIVING ROOM	<u>Supporting the Movement Toward Inclusion: Looking Within and Planning Ahead</u>	Melissa Jones, Ph.D.
ELY 044	<u>Widening the Circle: expanding opportunities for friendships between people with and without disabilities</u>	MaryAnn Brennan & Nate Johnson
ELY 17	<u>Overcoming Barriers to Soft Skills Gain for Employability</u>	Jennifer Applebaum
SCANLON	<u>ICEI Program Coordinators: Mandatory Session</u>	
12:00 PM–1:00	Lunch	
12:15 PM–12:45	<i>Lunch Address</i>	Tom Sannicandro, Chairman, Massachusetts Joint Committee on Higher Education
1:00 PM–2:00	BLOCK II	
LIVING ROOM	<u>College and Career? Using Collaborative Partnerships to Prepare Young Adults for the Workforce</u>	Lea Hill
ELY 341	<u>College Housing Options</u>	Carole Carlson

- ELY 044 Rethinking College: Moving Toward a More
Inclusive Community
Amy Cook, Aimee D'Avignon,
and Colleen Regal
- ELY 17 Person-Centered Planning and Transition
Pat Pakos & Kerry Mahoney
- SCANLON Preparing Massachusetts Transition Specialists:
Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions
Maria Paiewonsky

BREAK

- 2:15 PM–3:15 BLOCK III
- LIVING ROOM Building Envable Lives
Joyce Butler
- ELY 044 Careers through Classes
Lisa Battaglino, Mary Price, and Christina Raeke
- ELY 17 Powerful Collaborative School-Campus Relationships:
Campus Coordinators and School Ed Coaches in the
Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative
Dawn Gross, R. Steve Pierce,
Karen Walker, and Jack McCauley
- ELY 346 The Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative
Glenn Gabbard
- SCANLON Parent Perspective on Transition
Linda Surprenant & Leslie Leslie

BREAK

- 3:30 PM–3:45 Peer Mentor Panel Discussion Lyndsey Nunes
Westfield State University Peer Mentors
- 3:45 PM–4:00 Closing Remarks Glenn Gabbard

Abstracts & Speaker Biographies

Inclusive Campuses:

A Vision for Institutional Change in Higher Education

Inclusion is not a place, or something we do, but a set of principles and values that drive our practices. In inclusive learning communities, there are no “inclusive classrooms” or “inclusion teachers,” but rather an ongoing demonstration of an inherent value of human diversity, with the benefits of inclusion for all involved fully recognized.

However, not everyone agrees as to what the foundational principles and values of inclusion are, often causing discrepancies in how we envision individuals with disabilities being meaningfully included. That has led to the misrepresentation of inclusive practices as budding programs fall short of the inclusive ideal. As we move toward inclusive campus communities, it is imperative to gain a common understanding of those principles and values that should be governing our work. What we do, how we talk about individuals with disabilities, the procedures we create, all matter as we model to others the values and beliefs at the foundation of our various programs.

In this session, the guiding principles of inclusive campus communities will be shared, along with an analysis of the policies, practices and traditions that hinder our work toward building inclusive communities. How to work through barriers and lead others toward an understanding of inclusion will be shared, as well as a self-assessment tool for determining the inclusiveness of campus communities, initiatives and programs.

Supporting the Movement Toward Inclusion: Looking Within and Planning Ahead

In this session, participants will have an opportunity to have an informal conversation with the keynote speaker, Dr. Missy Jones, about their work promoting inclusive communities. Participants will engage in collective brainstorming concerning barriers and solutions, and will have an opportunity to engage in a self-assessment of their own programs and initiatives. Come prepared to share your ideas and concerns, barriers and strategies.

Melissa Jones

Professor of Special Education, Northern Kentucky University

Melissa “Missy” Jones, Ph.D., is a Professor of Special Education at Northern Kentucky University (NKU). She is a co-principal investigator for the Supported Higher Education Project, a federally funded grant to support the development of accessible campus access programs across the Commonwealth of Kentucky for individuals with

an intellectual disability. She also facilitates such a program on the NKU campus. With the help of students on campus, both with and without disabilities, she produced a video on the development of mentoring partnerships, has co-presented a national webinar on peer mentoring to support individuals with disabilities, and co-facilitates the Think College special interest group on Building Inclusive Campus Communities.

Widening the Circle: Expanding Opportunities for Friendships between People With and Without Disabilities

The topic, "Widening the Circle, expanding opportunities for friendships between people with and without disabilities," validates through research that individuals with friends live happier, healthier and safer lives. A perfect place to look at encouraging and supporting friendships between people with and without disabilities lies in our schools and on our college campuses. This presentation will look at the extraordinary benefits of these types of friendships and offer through proven examples and participant discussions practical ways to not only support students in making friends but how to reach out and invite people without disabilities to connect.

MaryAnn Brennan

The Arc of Massachusetts

Mary Ann Brennan has spent her entire professional career in human services working on behalf of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Currently her work focuses on looking at the most natural ways to encourage and support friendships between people with and without disabilities. Mary Ann strongly believes that these friendships are an important ingredient for real inclusion and community integration.

Nate Johnson

Coordinator, North Quabbin Citizen Advocacy

Nate Johnson has always been passionate about serving people and community. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from UMass Amherst. Throughout his career Nate has worked with people who have disabilities and/or other challenging circumstances. He is a coordinator at North Quabbin Citizen Advocacy (NQCA), a non-profit that develops and supports helpful friendships between a person with a mental disability or disorder and an ordinary citizen.

Overcoming Barriers to Soft Skills Gain for Employability

Employer research indicates that all young adults lack crucial employability soft skills such as initiative, dependability, communication, collaboration, problem-solving and grit. These very same skill deficits also undermine learning, but for students with multiple barriers and intellectual disabilities soft skill gain can be even more inconsistent and hindered by larger issues of accessibility, engagement, and personal ownership over domains of learning. The session will explore specific strategies for overcoming both traditional employment barriers and those employment obstacles that have emerged in the wake of increasingly risk-averse hiring practices and complex online screening practices. Additionally, colleagues will have the opportunity to examine the application of strategies most relevant to their current student populations.

Jennifer Applebaum

*Senior Program Manager, Curriculum Development and Training,
Commonwealth Corporation*

Jennifer Applebaum is the Senior Program Manager for Curriculum Development and Training at Commonwealth Corporation, where she supports youth employment initiatives by developing career readiness curricula and providing professional development to instructors. A former math and science teacher with a broad range of curriculum and training experience, Jennifer works closely with workforce development professionals and educators to bridge the gap between school and career. In addition to her work at CommCorp, Jennifer has over 12 years of experience in urban education with diverse populations, including health education, adult ESL instruction, and as a co-founder of an educational technology start-up. Jennifer completed her undergraduate degree at Barnard College of Columbia University and holds a masters of science in education from City College of CUNY.

Janel Granum

Instructional Coach, Commonwealth Corporation

Janel Granum is an instructional coach at Commonwealth Corporation. She provides professional development to youth workforce development professionals. With over ten years in education and as a former New York City public school teacher, Janel has received training and developed classroom supports to help students with varied abilities. Janel has earned an undergraduate degree in Neuroscience and a master's degree in education.

Lunch Address

Representative Tom Sannicandro

7th Middlesex District, Commonwealth of Massachusetts

State Representative Tom Sannicandro represents the 7th Middlesex District, which consists of South Framingham and Ashland. Sannicandro grew up in Framingham and attended both Framingham South High School and Marian High School. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English from the College of the Holy Cross, received his JD from Suffolk Law School, earned a Masters of Public Administration at Harvard, and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. at the Lurie Institute for Disability Policy at Brandeis University. Sannicandro opened his law practice in Framingham and Ashland in 1983. His practice focuses on special education and legal issues that surround transition to adulthood for people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

College and Career? Using Collaborative Partnerships to Prepare Young Adults for the Workforce

This presentation will provide an overview of the new College and Career Access Project (CCAP) that is jointly administered through North Shore Community College and the Northeast ARC. The presentation will focus on the collaborative process, components of the program, structure, and outcomes. Attendees will learn specific success strategies to help create new programs or integrate with existing ones.

Lea Hill

Coordinator, College & Career Access Project, North Shore Community College

Lea Hill, MBA, is a Faculty Member and Coordinator of the College and Career Access Project (CCAP) at North Shore Community College. She administers programs for young adults with intellectual, developmental, or learning disabilities. Ms. Hill is also the author of *The Society of Sylphs*, a fantasy novel involving a sylph (an elemental being of the air) and a non-verbal boy with autism. Her book is available at Amazon.com in Kindle and paperback formats.

College Housing Options

The college experience offers much more than academic learning. Many college students “go away” to college, living on or near the campus, providing a full immersion experience in independent living. Free from parental influence, students have to learn to balance freedom and responsibility and cope with different expectations than in high school all while juggling a whirlwind of social opportunities, academics and doing their own laundry! How can college housing be developed and supported for college students with intellectual and developmental disabilities? Carole Carlson, former housing coordinator for the Cutting-Edge program at Edgewood College in Madison WI, will share how the housing component was developed, how students are supported and provide some ideas about how to develop a residence life component on your campus. Janet Vetterli, parent of a student in the Cutting-Edge program, will share the parent perspective on supporting college living. There will be time for discussion so please bring your questions!

Carole Carlson

Training Associate, Institute for Community Inclusion

Carole Carlson serves as a Training Associate for the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts - Boston and is currently working to help develop a model for community-based transition services in college settings. She helped develop the first fully inclusive residential program in Wisconsin at the Cutting-Edge program at Edgewood College in Madison and is consulting on the development of a residential component to the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment program at Bridgewater State University. Carole has worked with people with a variety of disabilities for 19 years, in the community, in their homes, at their jobs and in college.

Rethinking College: Moving Toward a More Inclusive Community

There have been significant advances in educational programming and postsecondary planning options targeting the development and improvement of self-determination skills among students with intellectual disabilities. Presenters will: (a) provide a description of the development and implementation of an inclusive concurrent enrollment (ICE) program; (b) describe findings related to student outcomes on the acquisition of self-determination skills, including, independence, self-confidence, and self-advocacy; and (c) share reflections on the process and outcomes of program implementation with a focus on implications for inclusive PSE options. The ICE program held to the ideal of being “of” the community rather than being “in” the community. This ideal was achieved by maintaining an inclusive college experience instead of a program separated from mainstream courses and activities.

Amy Cook

Assistant Professor, Counseling and School Psychology, University of Massachusetts, Boston

Amy L. Cook is an assistant professor in the Counseling and School Psychology Department, College of Education and Human Development at the University of Massachusetts Boston. She received a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Connecticut Storrs. She has worked in urban schools and mental health agencies, providing counseling services to students, clients, and families. Her research interests focus on inclusion, social justice, educational equity, and school-family-community partnerships as they pertain to counseling practice, post-secondary transition, and counselor educator preparation.

Aimee D'Avignon

Director, Student Services Center, College of Education and Human Development, University of Massachusetts, Boston

Aimee D'Avignon is the Director of the Student Services Center for the College of Education and Human Development. She advises and supports the students enrolled in the ICE program.

Colleen Regal

University of Massachusetts, Boston

Colleen Regal is a graduate student in the College of Education and Human Development at University of Massachusetts Boston. She is a research assistant with the ICE program.

Person-Centered Planning and Transition

Person-Centered Planning is a process that assists people with disabilities and their families to plan for a desirable future. The person or individual with a disability is the driving force with a focus on their interests, strengths and preferences. Practical uses of the tool highlights pertinent events in the individual's life; identifies important people, community relationships, and potential job opportunities; and lays out an action plan and support needs.

When students are transitioning from school to either post-secondary education, some type of employment or other activities in which they are interested, a Person-Centered Plan can be extremely helpful by enhancing the quality of assessment and planning activities, creating a positive relationship between the family and professional, strengthening better coordination between educators and service agencies, ensuring services support youth's goals, and cultivating natural supports in the community. The PCP does not replace the formal IEP or transition planning process, but it can complement and enhance these plans. It helps to define a vision and post-secondary goals so that the final outcome is realization of someone's dreams.

Pat Pakos

The Arc of Massachusetts

Pat Pakos holds an MS in Severe Special Needs from Simmons College. Currently, she is employed as a Transition Specialist and Support Broker for The Arc of Massachusetts. Pat has conducted workshops on Transition throughout the State since 2007. Additionally, she participated in the committee which developed the Certificate for Transition Specialist in Massachusetts. Pat is a member of the State Advisory Committee for the Department of Developmental Services.

Kerry Mahoney

Director of Outreach & Education, The Arc of Massachusetts

Kerry Mahoney is currently the Director of Outreach and Education at The Arc of Massachusetts. A graduate of Emmanuel College, she received her degree in Psychology/Rehabilitation Counseling. Since college, Kerry has directed residential programs for adults, worked in a special needs classroom, and coordinated a national transition best practices project funded through The Arc and The Walmart Foundation focused on person centered planning. As a director of two major family support centers, Kerry managed contracts with state agencies, supervised staff and expanded services through the provision of Personal Care Assistance and Adult Family Care programs. From these experiences, Kerry has developed a broad knowledge base of the state, federal and private resources that support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Preparing Massachusetts Transition Specialists: Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions

In March 2012, the transition specialist endorsement H. 3720 (formerly H.159) An Act to Promote the Successful Transition of Students with Disabilities was signed into law. The purpose of this law is to ensure that special educators and rehabilitation counselors who work with transition-aged youth have the skills, knowledge and dispositions to effectively prepare young adults with disabilities to pursue their postsecondary goals. The University of Massachusetts Boston was determined to be an approved course of study for candidates pursuing the transition specialist endorsement in MA. This session provides an overview of the competencies, outlined in the MA DESE Guidelines for the Transition Specialist Endorsement, that are expected of transition specialists to work with students, families, colleagues, employers, college staff, state agency personnel and community providers.

Maria Paiewonsky

Program Director, Transition Leadership, Institute for Community Inclusion

Maria Paiewonsky, Ed.D., is a transition specialist at the Institute for Community Inclusion. Over the last 17 years, Maria has coordinated and implemented numerous research and professional development activities on behalf of the Education and Transition team at the Institute for Community Inclusion. Since 2004, Maria has been coordinating professional development high school and college staff to develop inclusive postsecondary education and employment opportunities for students with disabilities. She is also director of the Massachusetts Transition Leadership Initiative, a personnel preparation program that prepares Master's Level Transition Specialists at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

Careers through Classes

Growth for students enrolled in the ICE program at Bridgewater State University not only fosters learning the subject matter of the class, but also creates career opportunities, increases independence, and hones in on social skills. This presentation will highlight the campus internship and career connections developed in college courses. Such are the skills necessary to succeed as adults working and living in the community. An additional value of this program is what it has added to the college experience for the huge number of non-disabled students that share courses and career exploration with their disabled peers. They not only receive a richer academic experience, but also experience directly the tremendous value of working and participating with people with disabilities. It is this tremendous benefit that will produce better scholars and citizens in the student body at Bridgewater State University.

Lisa Battaglino

Dean, College of Education and Allied Studies, Bridgewater State University

Dr. Lisa Battaglino is the Dean in the College of Education and Allied Studies at Bridgewater State University. Prior to that, Dr. Battaglino was a faculty member and chairperson of the Special Education and Communication Disorders Department at BSU. She has fostered several inner city partnerships between BSU and Brockton and Taunton, Massachusetts and spearheaded an international partnership between BSU and Belize. In addition, Battaglino implemented a major tablet initiative at BSU resulting in the prestigious honor of the College of Education and Allied Studies becoming one of only two New England colleges to receive Apple's Distinguished Program recognition.

Mary Price

Director, Center for Pre K–12 Educational Outreach, Bridgewater State University

Mary Price has been with Bridgewater State University as the Director for the Center for Pre-K to 12 Educational Outreach for 11 years. Mary's primary focus is working with public school districts throughout Southeastern Massachusetts, Cape Cod and the Islands, where she delivers professional development programs for educators. She has written professional development programs for districts to assist in finding topics for staff development days. She is also active in working with high needs school districts in writing grant proposals to increase teacher knowledge in the Math and Science areas. Prior to coming on board at BSU, Mary taught middle and high school in the public school sector. Mary's most recent achievement is her role as Director of the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment (ICE) Program at Bridgewater State University. This program allows students with intellectual disabilities to audit college level courses participate in Education Coaching sessions, Career Workshops and experience extra-curricular activities on campus.

Christina (Tina) Raeke

Program Implementation Specialist/Education Coach, Bridgewater State University

Christina (Tina) Raeke, M.Ed., is the Program Implementation Specialist and Education Coach for the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Program at Bridgewater State University. Tina joined the BSU community in November, having previously worked as a special education teacher in Plymouth, MA. Bringing her a passion for working with young individuals with disabilities, Tina quickly embraced her role as Education Coach. When the students expressed a desire to get more involved on campus, Tina immediately responded by creating a BSU ICE Program Facebook page. The

Facebook page has led to increased communication and ICE student engagement on campus. Along with the Peer Mentors, Tina organized a successful ICE Program Relay for Life team this Spring. The event was a great success; ICE students enjoyed partaking in many of the Relay for Life events alongside their peers. Tina looks forward to continuing this exciting momentum when the students return this fall!

Building Envable Lives

Related Resources

Our traditional educational approach of teaching students to learn discrete skills is an important component of the learning paradigm. This, however, is not enough. Our work with students must go beyond this focus and must embed these skills within the cognitive processes of planning and attention. In this way, students will dream about their future. They will plan, set goals, create the discrete steps toward attaining those goals, and make adjustments to their plan. Effectively crafted IEPs can support the development and implementation of the cognitive skills of planning and attention within all settings. Building the bridge between the heavily supported high school years toward the significantly less supported adulthood years can be done when we craft action plans that require the students to lead and plan for the path of their dreams.

Joyce Butler

Social Thinking Boston; Lecturer, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Member, Partnership Leadership Team, ICE Program, Holyoke Community College

Dr. Joyce Butler has been working in the field of special education for 38 years. She has been a general education teacher and a special education teacher (11 years), a principal (15 years), a Director of Teaching and Learning (2 years) and a Director of Pupil Personnel Services (8 years), all in the public school setting. Dr. Butler has been a lecturer at UMASS Amherst for the past nine years, teaching courses on instructional strategies and supporting the practicum students who are working toward their special education teacher licensure. She is currently also working at Social Thinking Boston, was a mentor in the Transition Certification program offered through UMASS Boston, and is a member of the board for the HCC ICE program. She is also a board member of Riverbrook, Inc., a residential facility for women with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

Powerful Collaborative School-Campus Relationships: Campus Coordinators and School Ed Coaches in the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative

In Massachusetts inclusive concurrent enrollment programs, the relationship between the campus-based coordinator and the educational coach (often employed by the school district) is critical to the success of individual students and to the programs as a whole.

This panel will discuss:

1. The role of the college coordinator and the educational coach and the critical skills, knowledge, and dispositions for each;
2. How the collaboration between coordinator and educational coach works and examples of how the collaboration affects the educational experience of specific students; and,
3. Challenges that have emerged and opportunities for development.

Dawn Gross

ICEI Program Coordinator, Middlesex Community College

Dawn Gross, M.Ed. is the ICE Program Coordinator at Middlesex Community College. During the past decade, she has enjoyed a career in higher education disability support services at Middlesex Community College. Her previous roles include: Assistant Coordinator for the Transition Program, Disabilities Counselor for the TRiO Program for Student Achievement, and Adjunct Instructor for the Transition Program. Dawn enjoys a simple lakeside lifestyle with her three teenagers, two labs, and spouse of 25 years.

R. Steve Pierce

R. Steve Pierce graduated from UMASS Amherst with a degree in Theatre, and has been working in Special Ed full time since 2010. He has explored many positions in the Westfield school system, from an elementary school ISS classroom to one-on-one work in the high school's DLP room. He found his home in the ICE program while working at Westfield's Transition program, where he accommodated students at Holyoke Community College and Westfield State College. He was delighted to participate in the LABBB ICE program's inaugural year at Middlesex Community College. Steve is a proud new father: his son Henry was born in late April.

Karen Walker

Coordinator, Gateway Scholars Program, Roxbury Community College

Karen Walker is the Program Coordinator for the Gateway Scholars Program at Roxbury Community College. Before her tenure at Roxbury Community College, Karen worked as the Program Director for the Education and Career Development Component at Bridge Over Troubled Waters, Inc., a multi-service youth agency in Boston, Massachusetts that serves homeless and at-risk youth. Karen also worked as an Educational Team Leader and a School Psychologist in the Cambridge and Needham Public School Systems.

Jack McCauley

Community Connection Facilitator, Boston Public Schools S.T.R.I.V.E.

Jack McCauley is a Community Connection Facilitator for the Boston Public Schools S.T.R.I.V.E. / Transition Department. He supports student participation in the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative at the University Of Massachusetts Boston, Roxbury Community College and Bunker Hill Community College.

The Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative

After a brief overview of the national and state options for programs supporting post-secondary educational opportunities for Individuals with intellectual disabilities, this session will focus on Massachusetts' Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment (ICE) program. The Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment initiative offers academic and social learning opportunities in public two- and four-year colleges across the Commonwealth.

Glenn Gabbard

Coordinator, Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative

At the Massachusetts Executive Office of Education, Glenn serves as the state coordinator of the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment initiative, a state-funded effort to support more young adults with intellectual disabilities attending public colleges and universities. He has also led national technical assistance efforts supporting leadership development for family members of children with disabilities, interagency collaboration, family involvement in policy design, and post-secondary programs in multicultural and developmental education. Dr. Gabbard has served as a community college faculty member in critical literacy and as a university professor of higher education administration. He is the parent of two adult children, both of whom received special education services.

Parent Perspective on Transition

Parents have a key role in preparing their son or daughter for the transition from school to work and adult life. The parent has always been an essential partner with the school district throughout the entire special education process, and this is especially true during the transition planning process. The parent's most important role in the transition process is to ensure that the student's voice is heard, and that all team members listen and support him/her in developing the skills he/she needs to live as independent and meaningful an adult life as possible. How can you help a parent understand their new role in the transition process?

Linda A. Surprenant

Information Specialist, Federation for Children with Special Needs

Linda A. Surprenant is the Federation Western MA Information Specialist and has a special interest in the transition process for students with disabilities. Her daughter attended Holyoke Community College for 3 ½ years through the ICE program. Linda has personally seen the incredible growth in her child because of this opportunity.

Leslie M. Leslie

Project Coordinator, Federation for Children with Special Needs

Leslie M. Leslie is a Project Coordinator at the Federation for Children with Special Needs, working on transition under the LINK Center and supporting local Special Education Parent Advisory Councils through MassPAC. Leslie has two young adult sons who were on IEPs in High School and attended four year colleges.

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