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2022

# Annual Report of the Cohort 3 TPSID Model Demonstration Projects (Year 1, 2020–2021)

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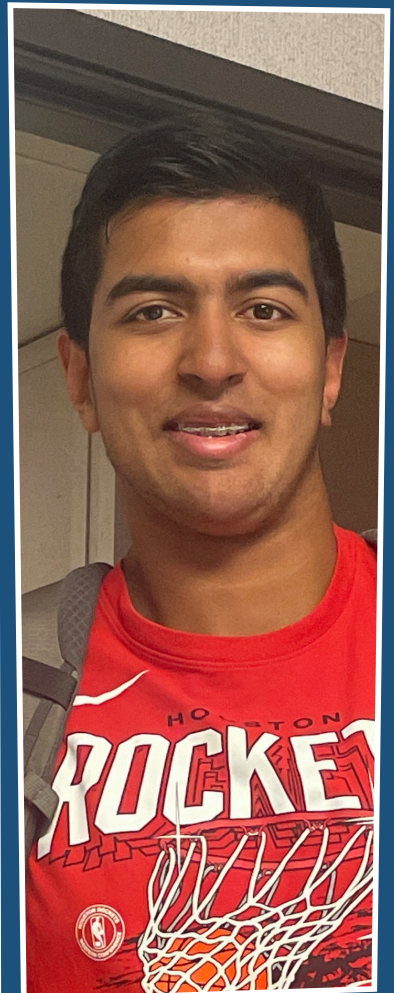
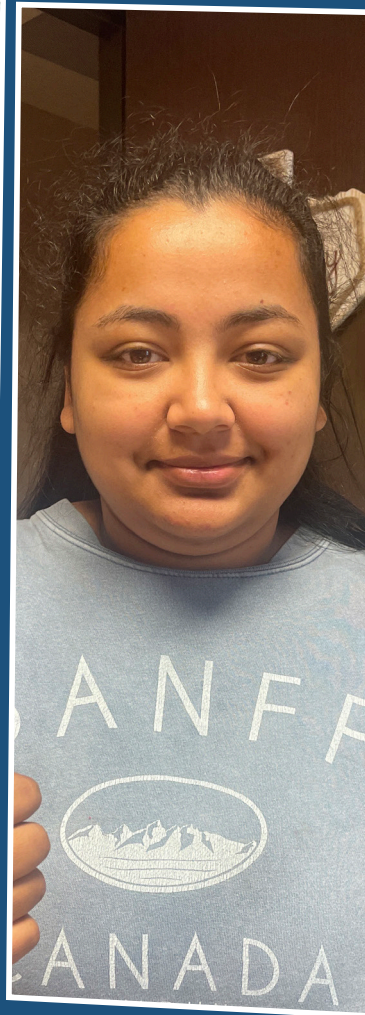


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# Think College **REPORTS**

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COHORT 3 TPSID MODEL DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS (YEAR 1, 2020–2021)**

**Meg Grigal, Debra Hart, Clare Papay, Belkis Choiseul-Praslin, & Rebecca Lazo**



ThinkCollege

**NATIONAL COORDINATING CENTER**

INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION, UMASS BOSTON

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Think College REPORTS present descriptive data in narrative or tabular form to provide timely information to researchers, practitioners, and policymakers. These reports provide summary data on specific elements of practice and are not intended to account for interrelationships among variables or support causal inferences.

For more in-depth analyses, readers are encouraged to review other Think College publications at [www.thinkcollege.net](http://www.thinkcollege.net)

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On the cover: Matthew Philips, student at Texas A&M University; Terrell Leeper, student at East Tennessee State University; Rida Fasih, student at Texas A&M University; and Hannah James, student at University of South Alabama

# Think College REPORTS

## Annual Report of the Cohort 3 TPSID Model Demonstration Projects (Year 1, 2020–2021)

### BACKGROUND

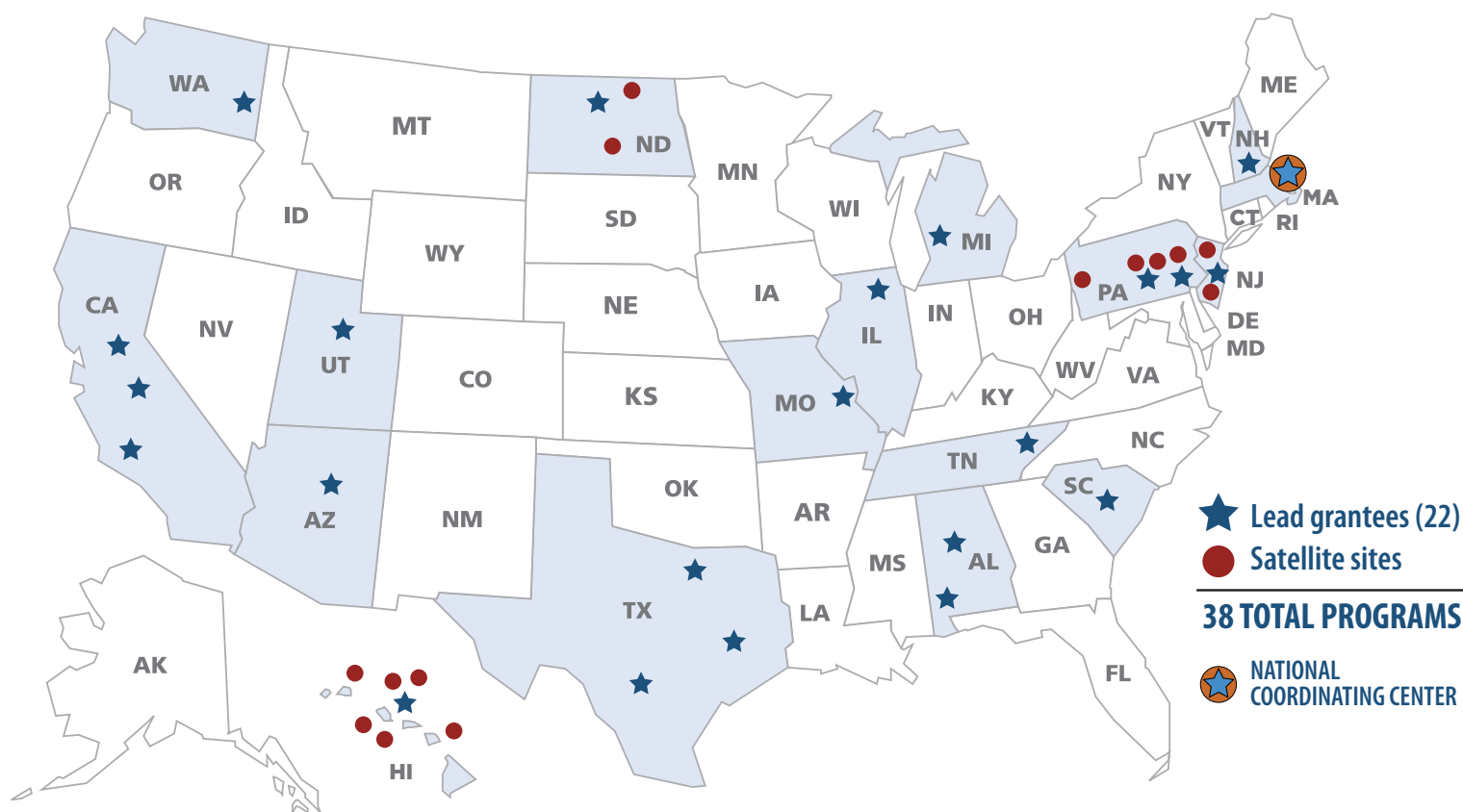
The Higher Education Act as amended by the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) contained several provisions to increase access to higher education for youth and adults with intellectual disability (ID). One outcome of these provisions was the appropriation of funds by Congress to create a model demonstration program aimed at developing and expanding inclusive higher education options for people with intellectual disability.

The Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSID) model demonstration program was first implemented by the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) in 2010 through five-year grants awarded to 27 institutes of higher education (IHEs) (see <https://thinkcollege.net/projects/national-coordinating-center/what-is-a-tpsid> for more information about these projects). The OPE awarded these grants again in 2015 to a second cohort of 25 IHEs to develop or enhance

TPSID programs between 2015 and 2020. In 2020, OPE awarded grants to a third cohort of 22 IHEs (see Figure 1 and Table 1). These IHEs were tasked with creating, expanding, or enhancing high-quality, inclusive higher education experiences to support positive outcomes for individuals with intellectual disability.

The HEOA also authorized the establishment of a national coordinating center for the TPSID programs to support coordination, training, and evaluation. This National Coordinating Center (NCC) was awarded to Think College at the Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts Boston. The mission of the NCC is to conduct evaluation of the TPSID projects and provide technical assistance and training to colleges and universities, K-12 local education agencies (LEAs), families and students, and other stakeholders interested in developing, expanding, or improving inclusive higher education for people with intellectual disability in the United States.

**FIGURE 1. MAP OF TPSID 2020–2025 GRANTEEES**





This report provides an overview of descriptive program and student-level data provided by Cohort 3 TPSIDs during the 2020–2021 academic year. Program data includes program characteristics, academic access, student supports, and integration of the program within the IHE during the first year of the 2020–2025 funding. Student data include student demographics, course enrollments, employment activities, and engagement in student life. This report also provides information on the strategic partnerships and financial sustainability of TPSID programs.

## System Approval and Development

The NCC was charged with developing and implementing a valid framework to evaluate the TPSID model demonstration projects. The Think College Data Network was developed for this purpose, reflecting the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measures that TPSID grant recipients are required to report on, and which are aligned with the Think College Standards for Inclusive Higher Education (Grigal et al., 2011). After extensive feedback and piloting, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved this data collection effort under the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501). We programmed an evaluation protocol into a secure online database using software purchased from Quickbase ([www.quickbase.com](http://www.quickbase.com)). TPSIDs in the 2010–2015 funding cycle used this evaluation protocol to gather and report student and program data. Collections approved by OMB must undergo a reapproval process every three years. To prepare for reapproval, the NCC team reviewed the collection tool and updated variables to reduce burden, enhance usability, and improve the clarity of data gathered from TPSID programs. We applied for reapproval to OMB in December of 2015 (approved July of 2016) and again in January of 2018. OMB approved the current collection protocol in September of 2019.

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**IHEs were tasked with creating, expanding, or enhancing high-quality, inclusive higher education experiences to support positive outcomes for individuals with intellectual disability.**

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## METHODS

TPSID program staff (e.g., principal investigator, program coordinator, evaluator, or data entry assistant) reported data for the 2020–2021 academic year between October 1, 2020, and September 30, 2021.

The NCC provided training and support to TPSID program staff to help them understand data reporting expectations and data entry systems. All staff responsible for data entry completed the onboarding process shown in Figure 2. We held a live webinar in December 2020 to introduce TPSID data reporting requirements and to explain the training and support offered by the NCC evaluation team. We held a second live webinar in July 2021 to provide specific information on reporting data on credentials.

We provided TPSID program staff with a data entry schedule that divided annual data entry into sections with six interim deadlines. For example, fall term course enrollments were due by January 14, 2021, and spring term course enrollments were due by June 30, 2021. The NCC sent reminders, set up deadline-specific data entry pages, and offered drop-in data entry support webinars prior to each deadline. Following each data entry period, NCC staff reviewed program and student data to ensure complete records were entered. When TPSID program staff did not fully complete data entry, we sent individualized reminders to direct them to address incomplete records.

At the end of the project year, NCC staff conducted data cleaning. We closely reviewed responses to questions about course enrollments and partners to ensure consistent understanding of the questions across all programs. For open-ended response choices (i.e., questions that allowed TPSIDs to enter a response for “other”), NCC staff reviewed responses to recode any entered responses that could be captured by one of the pre-specified response options.

We analyzed data in SPSS software to obtain frequencies and other descriptive statistics. In cases where data were missing and a response could not be obtained, we provided the number of programs or students for which data were entered.

**TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF TPSIDs 2020-2021**

STATE	TPSID	SITE	RESIDENTIAL TYPE			TYPE OF STUDENTS SERVED			Can offer financial aid as a CTP (as of 9/30/21)	Total # of students
			Residential campus open to TPSID students	Residential campus not open to TPSID students	Commuter School	Adults only	Dual enrollment	Both		
AL	University of Alabama	University of Alabama (CrossingPoints Tier 1)*		X			X			19
AL	University of Alabama	University of Alabama (CrossingPoints Tier 3)	X					X		12
AL	University of South Alabama	University of South Alabama (2 year program)*		X				X	X	14
AL	University of South Alabama	University of South Alabama (4 year program)								0**
AZ	Northern Arizona Univ.	Northern Arizona Univ.								0**
CA	Cal. State Univ. Fresno	Cal. State Univ. Fresno*		X				X	X	38
CA	Taft College	Taft College*	X					X		28
CA	Univ. of California (Davis)	Univ. of California (Davis)								0**
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa*	X			X				2
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	Honolulu Comm. College*			X			X		3
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	Kapiolani Comm. College*			X			X		4
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	Kauai Community College*			X	X				1
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	Leeward Comm. College*			X			X		6
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	Maui College*			X	X				1
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	Windward Comm. College*			X	X				1
IL	Univ. of Illinois Chicago	Univ. of Illinois Chicago								0**
MI	Calvin University	Calvin University		X		X				16
MO	Univ. of Missouri St. Louis	Univ. of Missouri St. Louis	X			X			X	46
ND	Minot State University	Minot State University*	X					X		7
ND	Minot State University	Bismarck State University								0**
ND	Minot State University	Dakota College at Bottineau*								0**
NH	Univ. of New Hampshire	Univ. of New Hampshire	X			X				1
NJ	Georgian Court University	Georgian Court University								0**
NJ	Georgian Court University	Bergen Community College*			X			X		27
NJ	Georgian Court University	College of New Jersey*	X					X	X	33
PA	Millersville University	Millersville University*	X					X	X	29
PA	Millersville University	Duquesne University*	X					X		3
PA	Millersville University	Gwynedd Mercy University*	X			X			X	6
PA	Millersville University	Lock Haven University								0**
PA	Millersville University	Temple University*		X				X	X	30
PA	St. Joseph's University	St. Joseph's University								0**
SC	Univ. of South Carolina	University of South Carolina	X			X			X	20
TN	East Tennessee State Univ.	East Tennessee State Univ.		X		X			X	2
TX	Texas A&M University	Texas A&M University	X			X			X	12
TX	Texas A&M University - San Antonio	Texas A&M University - San Antonio	X			X				5
TX	University of North Texas	University of North Texas								0**
UT	Utah Valley University	Utah Valley University								0**
WA	Washington State Univ.	Washington State Univ.	X			X			X	12
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>378</b>

\* Funded also as TPSID in 2010-2015 or 2015-2020

\*\* Site was in a planning year

CTP = Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) Program

FIGURE 2: DATA NETWORK ONBOARDING PROCESS

# TPSID DATA REPORTING ONBOARDING PROCESS

TPSID TASKS		NCC TASKS	
<b>PHASE 1</b>		<b>LAYING THE GROUNDWORK</b>	
<b>Principal Investigator/co-PIs and program directors will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch video: Welcome to the Think College Data Network</li> <li>• Review full evaluation tool</li> <li>• Review data entry schedule</li> <li>• Determine person(s) responsible for data collection</li> <li>• Determine person(s) responsible for data entry</li> <li>• Provide list of data entry persons to NCC</li> </ul>		<b>Evaluation Team will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide links to               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Video: Welcome to the Think College Data Network</li> <li>» Full evaluation tool</li> <li>» Data entry schedule</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Respond to questions about data collection, data entry accounts, and data entry process</li> </ul>	
<b>PHASE 2</b>		<b>LEARNING THE ROPES</b>	
<b>All data entry persons will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Data Entry Training by watching each video and practicing in Quick Base:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Video 1: Introduction to the Think College Data Network</li> <li>» Video 2: Entering Program Data</li> <li>» Video 3: Student Core and Annual Data</li> <li>» Video 4: Student Career Development and Employment</li> <li>» Video 5: Courses and Enrollments</li> <li>» Video 6: Student Exit Data</li> <li>» Video 7: Post-Exit Follow-Up Data</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Complete data entry certification quiz</li> </ul>		<b>Evaluation Team will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create Quick Base account for each data entry person</li> <li>• Email Data Entry Training link to each data entry person</li> <li>• Set up each new data entry account with a test site to practice</li> <li>• Monitor progress toward completion of data entry training</li> <li>• Respond to questions about data entry</li> <li>• Confirm to PI/co-PI when each new data entry person has completed training</li> <li>• Once training is complete, attach each certified data entry account in Quick Base to TPSID site(s) for which they will be entering data</li> </ul>	
<b>PHASE 3</b>		<b>READY TO LAUNCH!</b>	
<b>Data entry person(s):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect data throughout the academic year</li> <li>• Enter data following the scheduled deadlines</li> </ul> <b>PI/co-PI or program director(s):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor progress of data collection</li> <li>• Ensure data entry adheres to scheduled deadlines</li> <li>• Notify NCC whenever data entry person(s) leave</li> <li>• Notify NCC when new data entry person(s) start (return to Phase 1 for each new person)</li> <li>• (For consortia) Notify NCC when new sites join consortium</li> </ul>		<b>Evaluation Team will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to help requests</li> <li>• Monitor data entry accounts (remove/add accounts as requested, monitor inactive accounts)</li> <li>• Hold drop-in webinars prior to each data entry deadline</li> <li>• Send reminders for upcoming and missed data entry deadlines</li> <li>• Send automated reminders when it is time to report follow-up data</li> </ul>	

To address any continuing impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the NCC provided TPSIDs with modified response options in the Data Network. This allowed staff to note any COVID-19 impact on enrollment status, work-based learning and employment while enrolled, and reason for program exit. Our analyses of program and student data in this report will, when possible, describe the impact of COVID-19 on TPSID program implementation.

## TPSID PROGRAM OVERVIEW

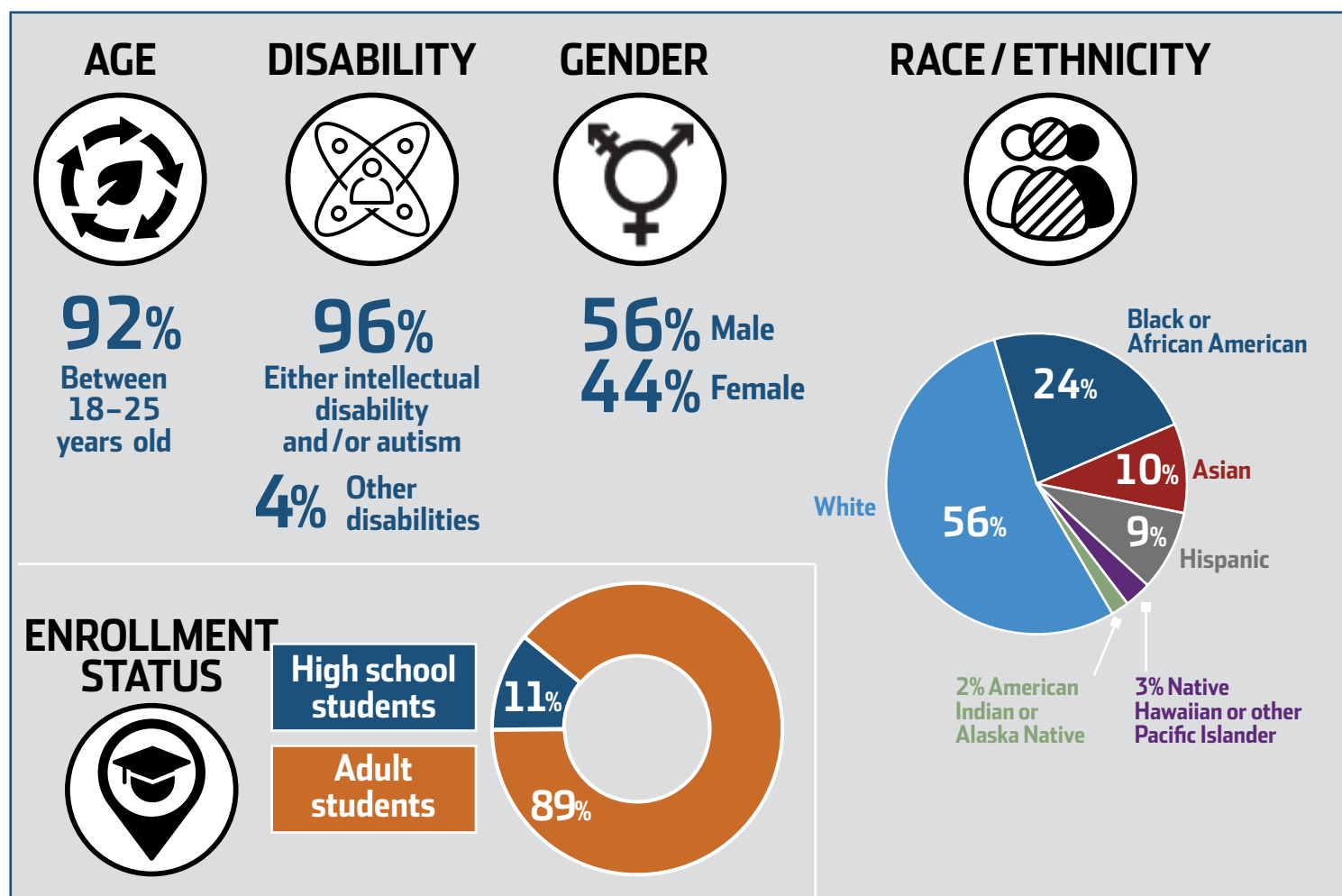
The first year of the Cohort 3 (2020–2021) Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSID) commenced on October 1, 2020. The 22 TPSID grantees planned or implemented services through 38 programs at 36 colleges and university campuses in 16 states. Twenty-five programs (66%) had served students before receiving the TPSID grant. Nineteen programs

(50%) were recipients of 2010–2015 or 2015–2020 TPSID funding. There were 378 students attending 27 of the programs. The remaining 11 programs were in a planning year in 2020–2021. See Table 1 Summary of TPSIDs 2020–2021.

## Types of IHEs

In 2020–21, 16 of the 38 TPSID grants were implemented via a single program at a single IHE. Four operated as consortia with various satellite IHEs (University of Hawaii at Manoa, Millersville University, Georgian Court University, and Minot State University). There were 18 programs across the four consortia. Two universities (University of Alabama and University of South Alabama) each operated two distinct TPSID programs on their campuses. Of the 38 programs, 10 were located at two-year IHEs and 28 were located at four-year IHEs. Eleven TPSID programs (29%) were approved as Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) programs, meaning they could offer eligible students access to certain forms of federal student aid.

**FIGURE 3: STUDENT PROFILE (N=378 STUDENTS)**





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**TPSID programs (29%) were approved as Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) programs.**

## Student Enrollment in TPSIDs

Student enrollment at TPSID programs ranged from 1 to 46 students. The 27 TPSID programs serving students (n = 378 total students) had an average of 14 students per site. Programs served adult students who were no longer attending high school, as well as transition-age youth who were receiving college-based transition services as part of their final years in high school. Equal numbers of programs enrolled only adult students (n = 13, 48%) or enrolled both high school and adult students (n = 13, 48%). One program enrolled only high school students. The percentage of high school students receiving college-based transition services was 11% (n = 41; see Figure 3).

The majority of students were white (56%). Twenty-four percent were Black or African American, 10% were Asian, 9% were Hispanic or Latino, 3% were Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and 2% were American Indian or Alaska Native. A slight majority of enrolled students were male (56%).

Most students (92%) were between the ages of 18 and 25, with ages ranging from 17 to 39. Almost all students (n = 362, 96%) had an intellectual disability and/or autism. Sixty-six percent (n = 251) had an intellectual disability but not autism, 20% (n = 76) had both intellectual disability and autism, 9% (n = 35) had autism but not an intellectual disability, and 4% (n = 16) had other disabilities.

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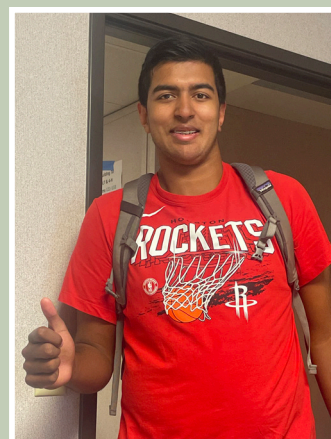
## Students from Texas A&M University Share What College Means to Them

*"College has helped me grow in my confidence and has helped me make lifelong friends."*



**Rida Fasih, Freshman**

*"College has helped me be confident and be successful. I am thankful for this opportunity!"*



**Matthew Philips, Sophomore**

## STUDENT PLANNING, ADVISING, AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

In 2020–2021, 26 out of 27 TPSID programs used person-centered planning with enrolled students (96%). Academic advising was provided in various combinations by the IHE's typical advising staff and by TPSID program staff. In four of the programs (15%), students received advising only from existing academic advising offices. Eight of the programs (30%) did not offer access to typical advising services and instead provided separate advising specially designed for students who attended the TPSID. Fifteen programs (56%) offered access to both the typical advising services and specialized advising by TPSID program staff.

Peer mentors provided support to students in 100% of programs with enrolled students. Peer

mentors provided several types of support, including social (100%), academic (93%), employment (48%), independent living (56%), and transportation (30%).

All 27 TPSID programs with enrolled students provided employment services and work-related direct support. The most frequently reported source of support was TPSID program staff (96% of programs). Employment supports were also provided by supervisors at the worksite (89%), career services staff at the IHE (70%), peer mentors (56%), state vocational rehabilitation (VR) staff (52%), coworkers at the worksite (48%), state intellectual and developmental disability agency staff (48%), a separate/contracted employment service provider (15%), and LEA staff for enrolled high school students (11%).

### Hannah James is Making a Difference

Hannah James, a student at the University of South Alabama, started her first year at PASSAGE USA in Fall 2020. During her first year at South, James enrolled in courses with an equivalent of 15 hours per semester. She also held a job on campus for two semesters working an average of 10 hours each week.

*"If you ever walk by the College of Education and Professional Studies there are picnic tables and you might hear a group of people laughing and socializing, there is a high probability chance that Hannah is part of the group,"* Alexandra Chanto-Wetter, director of PASSAGE USA, said.

In addition to her classes and on-campus job, James also participates in extracurricular activities. Because of the pandemic, extracurricular activities looked a little different this year. In January, she attended a South Alabama Civitan Student Association meeting and signed up to help the Learning Tree gather COVID-19 supplies to help those in need. Everyone who knows James knows that she loves to help others and make a difference.

*"Due to COVID-19, we have limited options for extracurricular activities,"* James said. *"However, I tried to schedule Zoom tutoring with classmates. In the fall, I helped one of my friends in PASSAGE USA with her homework during the weekend."*

James joined the Civitan student organization, an organization of volunteer service clubs around the world dedicated to helping people in their own communities, because she was inspired by her grandmother and wanted to follow in her footsteps. Other activities that James has participated in include feeding homeless women and preparing food at the McKinney House.

*"I believe that after COVID-19, I would like to organize an activity where my friends and I can volunteer to feed the homeless women and prepare food for them,"* James said.

Each year, the Alabama–West Florida Civitan District awards two \$1,000 scholarships: one to a high school senior and one to a college student who is currently enrolled in any accredited college, university, or technical school, or who intends to enroll by the next spring semester or quarter. James, who is a member of the South Alabama Campus Civitan Student Association, received the 2021 John Simpson Memorial Scholarship. The Alabama–West Florida Civitan District Board of Directors reviewed scholarship applicants, and James was selected for this year's award.

Portions of Hannah's story have been reprinted with permission from this resource: [www.southalabama.edu/colleges/ceps/news/hannahjames.html](http://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/ceps/news/hannahjames.html)

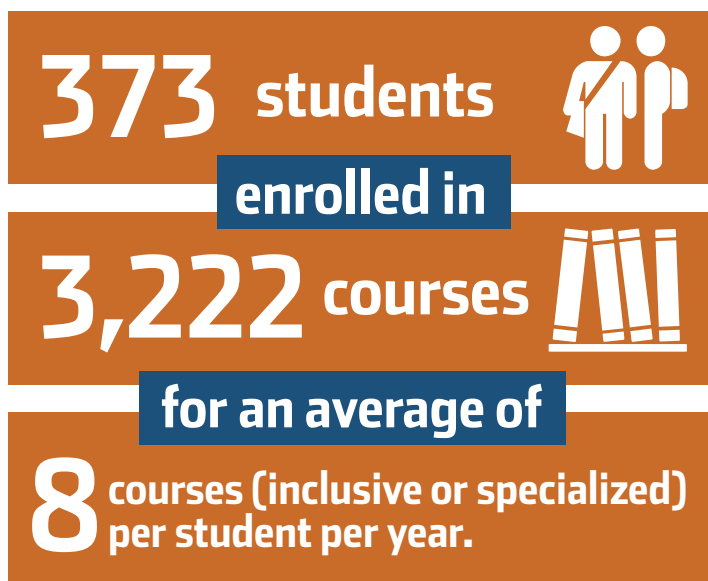


## ACADEMICS

### Course Enrollments

Course enrollments are reported in two categories: academically inclusive and specialized. Academically inclusive courses are defined as typical college courses attended by students with intellectual disability and other college students without intellectual disability. Specialized courses are courses designed for and offered only to students with intellectual disability, often focusing on topics such as life skills, social skills, or career development.

Course enrollments were reported for 373 of the 378 students who attended the 27 TPSID programs actively enrolling students<sup>1</sup>. These 373 students enrolled in a total of 3,222 college or university courses (both inclusive and specialized), with an average of eight courses taken by students during the year. Students took an average of seven courses at four-year IHEs. Students took an average of 13 courses at two-year IHEs.



Across all programs, 38% of enrollments were in academically inclusive courses. On average, students took three inclusive and five specialized courses this year. The percentage of enrollments in inclusive courses was higher at four-year IHEs than at two-year IHEs (45% of enrollments in inclusive courses at four-year IHEs vs. 23% of enrollments in inclusive courses at two-year IHEs).

Most students (n = 333, 88%) took at least one inclusive course during the year, and 67% of students took more than one inclusive course. More than a quarter of students (n = 102, 27%) took no specialized courses.

**88%** of students took at least one inclusive course



A closer look at the data on percentage of inclusive course enrollments by program showed three programs with substantial use of specialized courses. These three programs represented 34% of all course enrollments (n = 1,095) of which 92% were specialized courses. The percentage of inclusive course enrollments at these programs was 0%, 5%, and 13%. When data from these three programs are framed as outliers and removed from calculations, students enrolled in the remaining 24 TPSID programs had 2,127 course enrollments of which 53% were inclusive.

Three quarters of programs serving students (n = 20, 74%) had at least 50% of their course enrollments in inclusive courses, and 15 programs (56%) enrolled students only in inclusive classes. See Figure 4 for a list of programs.

**74%** of programs had at least 50% of their course enrollments in inclusive courses.



**15** programs (56%) had 100% of their course enrollments in inclusive courses.

**FIGURE 4. PROGRAMS WITH 50% OR MORE COURSE ENROLLMENTS IN INCLUSIVE COURSES (N = 20)**

California State University Fresno  
 Duquesne University\*  
 East Tennessee State University\*  
 Gwynedd Mercy University\*  
 Honolulu Community College\*  
 Kapiolani Community College\*  
 Kauai Community College\*  
 Leeward Community College\*  
 Maui College\*  
 Millersville University\*  
 Minot State University\*  
 Temple University\*  
 Texas A&M University  
 Texas A&M University – San Antonio\*  
 University of Alabama – CrossingPoints Tier 3  
 University of Hawaii at Manoa\*  
 University of New Hampshire\*  
 University of South Alabama – two-year program  
 Washington State University  
 Windward Community College\*

\* Programs that had 100% inclusive course enrollments

### Contact hours

A contact hour is a measure of the amount of time students spend in classes. Understanding the amount of time students spend in inclusive and specialized classes provides another method to determine the degree of academic inclusion in TPSID programs.

The contact hour data aligned closely with the course access data with 40% of all contact hours in inclusive courses. Eighteen of the TPSIDs (67% of programs serving students) had at least 50% of the contact hours in typical college courses attended by students with intellectual disability and other college students. Nine of the TPSIDs reporting contact hours had less than 50% of the contact hours in inclusive courses. The percentage of contact hours in inclusive courses was higher at four-year IHEs than at two-year IHEs (44% of contact hours in inclusive courses

at four-year IHEs vs. 26% of contact hours in inclusive courses at two-year IHEs).

As with enrollments, a closer look at the data on contact hours in inclusive courses by program showed the same three programs referenced above demonstrating substantial use of specialized courses. These three programs represented 29% of all contact hours of which 93% were specialized courses. The percentage of contact hours in inclusive courses at these programs was 0%, 5%, and 10%. When data from these three programs are framed as outliers and removed from calculations, students enrolled in the remaining 24 TPSID programs spent 52% of their contact hours in inclusive courses. Eighteen programs (67%) had at least 50% of contact hours in inclusive courses.

### Types of course enrollments

Forty percent of course enrollments were in courses offering credits that could only be used toward a TPSID credential, 32% were in not-for-credit or non-credit courses, 15% were for standard IHE credit, 13% of enrollments were for audit, and <1% were courses in which students unofficially attended/sat in. In 88% of all course enrollments, students earned credit toward their credential by taking the course. Students were reported to receive a grade in 77% of all course enrollments.

**18** programs (67%)  
had at least 50%  
of contact hours in  
inclusive courses.

### Course format

Online courses accounted for a slight majority of overall course enrollment formats with 54% of course enrollments being in online courses, 34% being in-person courses, and 12% in a hybrid format (online and in-person combined). For academically inclusive courses, 59% of enrollments were in online courses, 36% were in-person courses, and 5% were in a hybrid format. For specialized courses, 50% of course enrollments were in online courses, 32% were in-person, and 17% were hybrid.



## Motivation for course enrollments

For 79% of course enrollments, TPSID credential attainment was a reported motivator. Other motivating factors for course enrollments were the relationship between a course and students' career goals (38%), or the student had a personal interest in the course (37%). See Figure 5 for examples of academically inclusive courses taken by students.

**FIGURE 5: EXAMPLES OF INCLUSIVE COURSES TAKEN BY STUDENTS**

College Composition  
Cultural Anthropology  
Introduction to Criminal Justice  
Education in America  
Feminist Theory  
First Year Experience  
Fundamentals of Speech  
Hospitality for Guest Service Professionals  
Microcomputing Systems  
Sport Psychology  
The American Political System

## COVID-19 Impact on Course Enrollments

We asked TPSID staff to report any impact on course enrollment due to COVID-19. For 52% of course enrollments, the course was offered in an online format due to COVID-19. Slightly over 1% of courses were reported to have been canceled. All 27 TPSID programs enrolling students reported an impact from COVID-19 on at least one course enrollment.

## Academic Supports

Sixty-seven percent of students received support or accommodations from the disability services office (DSO) on their campus. Among the students who received support or accommodations from the DSO, only 7% received all their supports and accommodations from this office. The remaining 93% also received support or accommodations from TPSID program staff, faculty, peer mentors, and others. A small number

of students (n = 13 at University of Alabama) were reported to have been denied services from the DSO on their campus in 2020–2021. The reason provided for denial of services was the DSO on this campus will not provide services to anyone in the TPSID program.

## Students as Teachers

In October, two students from the UC Davis Redwood Seeds Scholars program<sup>1</sup>, Cristina Riegos and Ryan Fitch, were invited to speak to 150 first year medical school students at UC Davis about medical equity for people with Down Syndrome. Cristina and Ryan were welcomed by Dr. Hana Anderson, Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine in the School of Medicine. Working with Dr. Anderson, Cristina and Ryan shared their stories of growth and living, as well as sharing any medical needs they might have. Together, the group learned about the medical model of disability and the social model of disability and discussed the ways medical schools and medicine could grow in awareness about the needs and expertise of people with Down Syndrome, and people with intellectual disabilities more broadly. An exciting cross collaboration has happened because of that talk. Three first year medical students have become mentors to the Redwood SEED Scholars and will begin in Winter Quarter. Bridging the learning of all students and making connections that rarely happen is a possibility with inclusive college programs.



<sup>1</sup>The UC Davis Redwood SEED Scholars Program, which launched this fall with 11 students, is the first four-year, residential, inclusive college program for students with intellectual disabilities in the state of California.

## Credentials

Students were able to earn a credential at 26 of the 27 programs enrolling students (96%). The remaining program had one student enrolled in 2020–2021 and was in the process of developing a credential for its full two-year program launching in Fall 2021. TPSIDs reported a total of 64 credentials. At 15 TPSID programs (56%), a single credential was available to students. At 11 TPSID programs (41%), more than one credential was available.

The majority of credentials available to students were certificates (n = 51, 80% of credentials), but also included associate degrees (n = 7, 11%), industry certifications (n = 3, 5%), bachelor's degrees (n = 2, 3%), and licenses (n = 1, 2%). Eighteen programs (67%) offered a credential that was approved by the IHE. Five programs offered a credential that aligned with an existing labor market credential. See Figure 6 for examples of credentials available to students at TPSIDs.

The expected length of time needed to earn a credential ranged from 10 hours to four academic years. The most common lengths of time it took to earn a credential were two academic years/four semesters (n = 22 credentials), one semester (n = 9 credentials), and four academic years (n = 16 credentials).

The majority of students (n = 328, 87%) were reported to be enrolled in a credential program. Fifty-nine students (16%) were enrolled in two or more credential programs.

### FIGURE 6: EXAMPLES OF CREDENTIALS AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS AT TPSIDS

**Associate in Science – Teaching**  
**Certificate of Academic & Career Studies**  
**Certified Logistics Associate**  
**Comprehensive Certificate in Postsecondary Studies; Communication & Commerce Concentration**  
**Interdisciplinary Studies**  
**Program Completion Certificate**

## How the NCC uses TPSID data to support continuous improvement

The NCC uses a data-driven technical assistance approach with TPSIDs, meeting annually with staff from each TPSID site to review their respective data; identify evidence of inclusive practices in academics, employment, social, and residential services; and reflect on how TPSID practices align with requirements.



This iterative review process allows for two-way communication between the NCC and TPSID staff, supports program self-reflection, identifies TPSID technical assistance and training needs, and supports monitoring of demonstrated improvement each year.

The NCC convened its 2020 data-driven technical assistance calls with each TPSID site in March 2021. A team from the NCC met with 26 of the TPSID programs, sharing their early TPSID data results and following up on core issues, including:

- documentation of disability (when less than 100% of students enrolled had an intellectual disability)
- enrollment in academically inclusive college courses was less than 50%
- development of meaningful credentials

Of note this year, nine programs were exploring access to industry-recognized credentials and four were considering use of badging and micro credentials.

As a result of this data review and subsequent discussions, the NCC Technical Assistance team provided technical assistance through developing and sharing resources, initiating connections with other programs for issue specific supports, and developing an online planning year learning community. The NCC team provided technical assistance around CTP application development, documentation for intellectual disability, credential development resources, and alternatives to specialized courses.

## RESIDENTIAL

### Residential Options

In 2020–2021, seven (26% of programs enrolling students) TPSID programs were located at commuter IHEs that did not provide housing for any student. Of the 20 TPSID programs located at residential schools, 14 (70%) offered housing to students in the TPSID program and six did not. The primary reason for restricting access at three of these IHEs was students who are not regularly matriculating cannot access housing. Additional reasons provided for not offering housing to students in the TPSID program included housing access was being planned but was not yet available (1 program) and another unspecified reason (1 program). Three programs (two in a planning year and one enrolling students) were in the process of seeking access to housing.

### Residential Supports

The most common residential supports were those provided from a residential assistant or advisor (provided by 12 of the 14 programs that offered housing) and support provided from intermittent or on-call support staff (10 of 14 programs). Four programs provided residential support from an uncompensated roommate/suitemate. Three programs provided residential support from roommate/suitemates who received compensation. Five programs provided residential support from continuous support staff, and three programs provided other forms of support, such as life coaches or peer mentors.

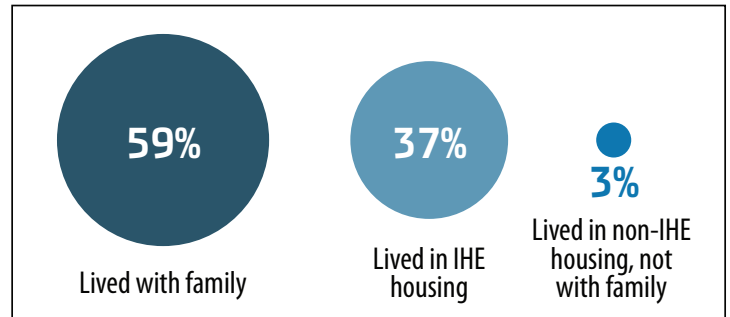
### Student Housing

Over half of students enrolled in TPSID programs ( $n = 224$ , 59%) lived with their family. Over a third of students ( $n = 141$ , 37%) lived in IHE housing, and thirteen students (3%) lived in non-IHE housing not with family (see Figure 7).

Most of the students accessing IHE housing lived in either residence halls ( $n = 72$ , 51%) or in on-campus apartments ( $n = 48$ , 34%). Twenty-one students lived in off-campus apartments. Eighty-nine percent of students who lived in IHE housing were in inclusive housing available to all IHE students (as opposed to specialized housing)<sup>2</sup>.

Of students not living with family or in IHE housing ( $n = 13$ ), two students lived in supervised apartments or in supported living, 10 students lived independently, and one student lived in a group home.

**FIGURE 7: STUDENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE**



## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The TPSID programs provide a wide array of employment services to enrolled students. The NCC collected data on these services and categorized them into the following types of activities:

### Career awareness and exploration

Career awareness and exploration (CAE) was defined as *workforce preparation activities that build awareness of careers as well as awareness of specific types of jobs within certain careers*. Activities involved visiting or learning about workplaces for the purpose of gaining information about an industry or job. Other activities included building general skills required for participating in job search activities.

### Work-based learning

Work-based learning (WBL) was defined as *paid or unpaid work activities that help students develop and practice workplace-specific skills as well as general employment or soft skills*. The primary purpose of WBL is to prepare for a particular job or improve general employment skills. WBL can be related or unrelated to coursework. Types of WBL include:

- *Internships*: temporary positions to develop specific job-related skills. Internships emphasize on-the-job training and can be paid or unpaid. Paid internships provide students with a supervised work or service experience where the individual has

intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what they are learning throughout the experience. In some instances, the student receives academic credit.

- **Work training:** individual or group work experience for the purpose of training that is not compensated under wage and hour regulations and does not resemble an employment relationship.
- **Unpaid work experiences:** exploratory and time-limited placements that offered students first-hand exposure to the workplace and the opportunity to explore different careers.
- **Service learning:** activities that integrate meaningful community service with classroom instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

### **Job seeking**

Job seeking was defined as *activities in which students apply for and gain paid employment, including completing and submitting job applications and participating in job interviews.*

### **Paid employment**

Paid employment was defined as *work with a primary purpose of earning income as opposed to performing work as part of a learning or career preparation activity.* Students in these positions earn wages at or above minimum wage. These positions do not need to be related to students' long term career intentions. Paid employment includes the following categories:

- **Individual paid job:** work in the competitive labor market paid for by an employer at or above minimum wage.
- **Federal work study:** part-time positions paid for by the federal work study program to assist students in financing the costs of postsecondary education. Hourly wages must not be less than the federal minimum wage.
- **Self-employment:** work conducted for profit or fees, including operating one's own business, shop, or office, and could include the sale of goods made by the student.

Almost all students (n = 351, 93%) participated in at least one of the employment or career development activities (employment, work-based learning, career awareness and

exploration, or job seeking). The majority of students (n = 262, 69%) were engaged either through paid employment, paid or unpaid WBL experiences (such as paid internships, volunteering, or service learning), or both. In the following sections, we provide data on student participation in each type of employment service activity.

## **Career Awareness and Exploration Activities**

TPSIDs reported information on career awareness and exploration (CAE) activities for each student in each term (i.e., semester, trimester, or quarter) of the academic year. A list of specific CAE activities reported by TPSIDs is displayed in Table 2.

### **Career Exploration: Job Shadowing**

Terrell Leeper, a student with the Access ETSU Program in Johnson City, TN is interested in security work. He has been taking courses in criminal justice to gain knowledge and skills to achieve his employment goals. In Fall 2021, he



had the opportunity to job shadow Officer Hudson, the resource officer at University School, ETSU's K–12 lab school. His responsibilities included patrolling the playground, ensuring upkeep of the grounds, and building rapport with teachers and students. Officer Hudson taught Terrell that becoming an officer is not strictly about security, but also about investing time and energy into others. Terrell noted, *"I loved this opportunity being in security. I gained a lot of knowledge about what to do in different situations, like if an emergency happens in the school. I would love to get more opportunities to work in public safety or something similar. I want to work full-time, help people, wear a uniform, and get a paycheck."*



**TABLE 2. CAREER AWARENESS AND EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES AND DEFINITIONS**

Activity	Definition	Data Collected
<b>Company tour</b>	A group excursion to specific work sites for the purpose of first-hand observation. Students learn about the business, meet employees, ask questions, and observe work in progress.	Number of times students participated during term
<b>Career fair</b>	An event that provides students and employers a chance to meet one another, establish professional relationships, and discuss potential job and/or internship opportunities.	
<b>Job shadow</b>	An on-the-job learning, career development, and leadership development intervention. This involves working with another employee who might have a different job, might have something to teach, or can help the person shadowing them learn new aspects related to the job, organization, certain behaviors, or competencies.	
<b>Informational interview</b>	An informal conversation with someone working in a career area/job that interests the student, who will give information and advice. It is an effective research tool in addition to reading books, exploring the internet, and examining job descriptions. It is not a job interview, and the objective is not to find job openings.	
<b>Labor market research</b>	Gathering information on particular careers, such as earnings, opportunities, and required education. The O*NET database is one example of a labor market research tool.	Whether student did or did not participate in activity during term
<b>Interest inventory</b>	An exercise used to help the student identify interests and how their interests relate to the world of work. It is used as a tool to identify what kinds of careers youth might want to explore.	
<b>Mock interview</b>	A simulation of an actual job interview. It provides students with an opportunity to practice for an interview and receive feedback.	
<b>Created or revised resume</b>	Students write a resume that can be used when applying for a job.	
<b>Gathered references</b>	Students gather names and contact information of people who can give a reference when they apply for a job.	
<b>Created, revised LinkedIn profile</b>	Students create a profile on LinkedIn that can be used when they apply for a job.	
<b>Other activity specified by TPSID</b>	Any other career awareness or exploration activity not listed here.	

## CAE participation during the year

Table 3 reflects participation in each CAE activity during the 2020–2021 academic year. The majority of students (n = 322, 85%) participated in at least one CAE activity. The most common CAE activity was creating or revising a resume (76% of students). More than 40% of the students participated in a mock interview, gathered references, conducted labor market research, attended a career fair, or completed an interest inventory during the academic year.

Examples of other CAE activities students participated in this year included taking aptitude tests, completing micro credentials, and completing accommodations fact sheets.

**85%** of students participated in at least one career awareness and exploration activity.


**TABLE 3. PARTICIPATION IN CAE ACTIVITIES IN 2020–2021**

	Number of students who participated in activity (N=378)	Percentage of students who participated in activity
<b>Create or revise resume</b>	286	76%
<b>Mock interview</b>	188	50%
<b>Gathered references</b>	172	46%
<b>Labor market research</b>	165	44%
<b>Career fair</b>	157	42%
<b>Interest inventory</b>	153	41%
<b>Informational interview</b>	135	36%
<b>Create LinkedIn profile</b>	87	23%
<b>Other activity</b>	27	7%
<b>Job shadow</b>	24	6%
<b>Other activity</b>	197	21%

We also collected information on the number of times students participated in four types of CAE activities (company tour, career fair, job shadow, and informational interview). The most frequent of these activities was attending a career fair. On average, students attended two career fairs per year. See information on the frequency of other CAE activities in Table 4.

TABLE 4. DESCRIPTIVE DATA ON CAE ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

	Number of participating students	Median number of times activities completed	Mean number of times activities completed
Career fair	157	1	1
Informational interview	135	1	1
Job shadow	24	2	2
Company tour	12	1	1

Work-Based Learning

The primary purpose of work-based learning (WBL) experiences is for students to develop and practice workplace-specific skills and general employment soft skills. These experiences can be paid or unpaid and may be related to college coursework.

Paid work-based learning

Paid WBL experiences included internships, student enterprises, and work training experiences. Nearly one-fifth of students (n = 68, 18%) had at least one paid WBL experience. These students had a total of 80 paid WBL experiences. Seven students had multiple paid WBL experiences during the year.

The majority of paid WBL experiences were paid internships (n = 76, 95% of all reported paid WBL experiences). The other types of paid WBL were service learning (n = 2) and work training (n = 2)<sup>3</sup>.

Wages and hours

The majority of paid WBL experiences (66%, n = 53) paid at or above the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, whereas 27 paid WBL experiences (34%) paid below minimum wage (see Figure 8). All the WBL experiences that paid below minimum wage were paid internships (n = 27). These 27 internships paid \$5 per hour and were at two programs operated by a single TPSID.

Most students (n = 70, 88%) worked between five and 10 hours per week at their paid WBL experience. Two students (3%) worked less than five hours per week and eight students (10%) worked 11 or more hours per week. Students were paid by the TPSID program (n = 45, 56% of WBL positions), another entity (n = 22, 28%), or the employer (n = 12, 15%). Information on the entity paying students was missing for one student.

FIGURE 8: PAID WORK-BASED LEARNING (WBL) EXPERIENCES BY WAGES EARNED



Unpaid work-based learning

Around one-third of students (n = 120 students, 32%) participated in 137 unpaid WBL experiences in 2020–21. The 137 unpaid WBL experiences included 80 unpaid internships (58% of all reported unpaid WBL experiences), 40 service-learning experiences (29%), 10 work training experiences (7%), and five unpaid work experiences (4%). All other types of unpaid WBL accounted for less than 2% of all unpaid WBL experiences<sup>4</sup>. Unpaid internships were about as common as paid internships (80 unpaid vs. 76 paid internships). Eleven percent of students (n = 15) participated in multiple unpaid WBL experiences in 2020–21. Figure 9 provides examples of unpaid internship sites.

FIGURE 9: EXAMPLES OF UNPAID INTERNSHIP SITES IN 2020–2021

- East Tennessee State University Media Relations
- Hawaii Foodbank
- Hopewell Valley YMCA
- Minnesota Disability Law Center
- Minot State IT Department
- National Down Syndrome Congress
- Peet’s Coffee Shop
- Turning Point
- University Accounts Payable

### COVID-19 impact on work-based learning

We asked TPSIDs to report on the impact of COVID-19 on WBL positions. Of the 142 paid and unpaid WBL positions for which this information was provided, 71% (n = 101) were reported to have had no impact. TPSIDs reported the following COVID-19 related impacts:

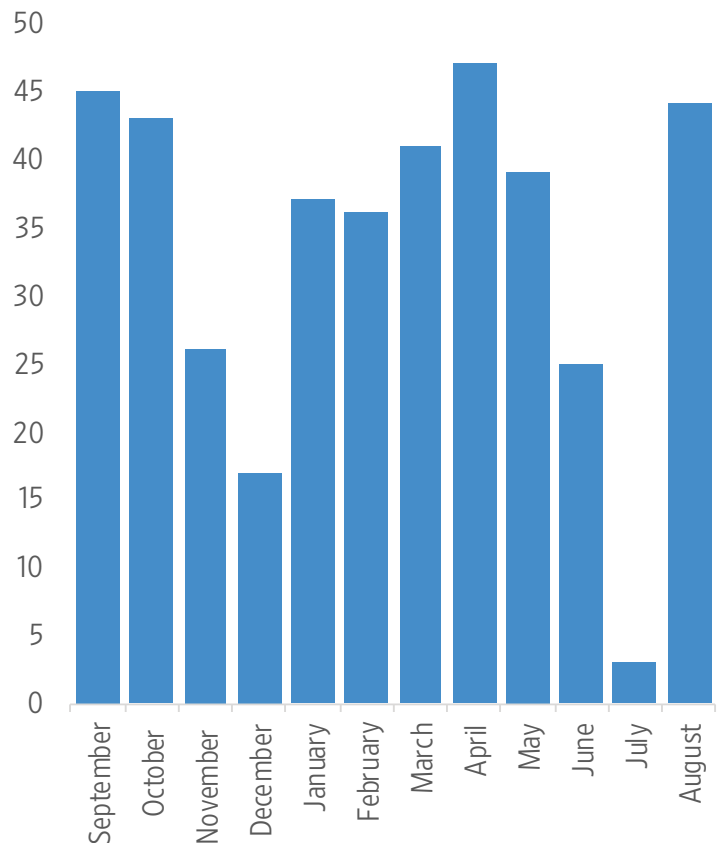
- WBL is on hold and will resume when employer reopens (n = 27, 19%)
- student continued working remotely (n = 11, 8%)
- other (n = 3, 2%)

Sixty-eight students were reported to have had no WBL this year because of COVID-19.

### Job Seeking

The data we have collected on job seeking activities reflects students' submission of employment applications, participation in interviews, and receipt of paid employment offers. Forty-three percent of students enrolled in 2020–21 participated in job seeking activities (n = 163). Of these 163 students, 157 (42% of all students) applied for paid employment in 2020–21, 130 students (34%) interviewed for paid employment, and 95 students (25%) reported receiving one or more offers for paid employment. Students attending TPSID programs were reported to have applied to 403 employment positions, interviewed for 248 employment positions, and received 122 offers. July was the least active month for submitting employment applications (n = 5) and April was the most active (n = 47). See Figure 10 for the number of employment applications by month.

**FIGURE 10. NUMBER OF STUDENT JOB APPLICATIONS BY MONTH**



### Paid Employment

Paid employment included individual paid jobs as well as other types of employment, such as federal work study and self-employment. Students who were engaged in paid positions for the purposes of training, such as internships or work training, are not included in this category but were previously addressed in the section on work-based learning.

In 2020–2021, 119 students (31%) were engaged in paid employment while enrolled. Students held a total of 153 paid employment positions. Twenty-three students (19% of students with a paid job) had more than one paid employment position (any type), with some students having three, four, or even five paid employment positions. Fifty-nine (50%) of the students who were employed had never held a paid job prior to entering the TPSID.

**43%** of students participated in job-seeking activities



## Returning to CarolinaLIFE for a Job that I Love

When I first came to CarolinaLIFE as a student, I was told that there was the opportunity for making change and for walls and barriers to be broken; I immediately took to the challenge. When the opportunity came for me to return to CarolinaLIFE for a full-time paid job, that's



exactly what I did. In a way, my return to the program as a Lead Coach in our College Agency Initiative is a way for me to help the current and future students understand what CarolinaLIFE can do for them, and their families based on my own experience. I believe that having a representative from an IPSE program with a disability is important because they have walked in those footsteps of navigating through an all-inclusive program and managing the university/college lifestyle.

When I'm not working at CarolinaLIFE, I'm still thinking about it! I'm currently working on creating a CarolinaLIFE Alumni chapter council with the help from my connections with the Alumni center here at University of South Carolina. The goal of this is to establish a way for our current alumni to connect, share, network, and help where they can with our current and future students after they graduate.

– Ruth Bollinger, 2020 Graduate Lead Coach of the CarolinaLIFE College Agency Initiative

### Wages and hours

TPSIDs reported wage information for 120 employment positions. All but one reported the position paid at or above the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour. Wage information was missing for 33 employment records.

Students worked between 5 and 10 hours per week at 33% of employment positions and between 11 and 20 hours per week at a 37% of employment positions. Students worked fewer than five hours per week at 15% of employment positions and more than 21 hours per week at 15% of positions. Data on hours worked was missing for 11 positions.

The employer paid the student directly at 88% of employment positions for which this information was reported (data were missing for 17 positions). In the remaining jobs, students were paid by the TPSID program (3%), the host IHE (2%), or another entity (7%).

### Individual paid jobs

Ninety students (24%) held 109 individual paid jobs and earned at least the federal minimum wage (wage data were not reported for 29 individual paid jobs). The remaining students were employed by federal work study positions (n = 9 students), self-employment (n = 4), or other job types (n = 1). See Figure 11 for examples of individual paid jobs held by students.

**153** paid employment positions were held by students.



**FIGURE 11: EXAMPLES OF INDIVIDUAL PAID JOBS HELD BY STUDENTS ATTENDING TPSIDS**

Afternoon aide/substitute teacher at Seagull School  
 Assembly/Machinist at Basic VI Technology Inc.  
 Baker at Hing's Donut Shop  
 Camp Counselor at YMCA  
 Cashier at Target  
 Door Dasher at DoorDash Logistics  
 Marketing Assistant at Minot State Athletics  
 Sales Associate at USC Bookstore

### COVID-19 impact on employment

We asked TPSIDs to report on the impact of COVID-19 on student employment. Of the 141 jobs for which this information was provided, 84% (n = 119) were reported to have had no impact. TPSIDs reported the following COVID-19 related impacts:

- job is on hold and will resume when employer reopens (n = 10, 7%)
- student continued working remotely (n = 8, 6%)
- student was laid off (n = 1, <1%)
- other (n = 3, 2%)



## Summary of Paid Positions

Here we offer a composite of paid employment and paid work-based learning data for the 2020–21 academic year to assist in comparisons with previous annual reports:

In Year 1, 47% of students (n = 176) had at least one paid position while enrolled. Students attending TPSID programs held a total of 233 paid positions. Thirty-eight students (22% of students with a paid position) had more than one position, with some students having three, four, or even five paid positions. The most common type of paid position was an individual paid job held by students (n = 109, 47% of all paid positions) followed by paid internships (n = 76, 33%). All other types of paid positions, including federal work study, work training sites, and self-employment, accounted for about 21% of all paid jobs (n = 48).

**47%** of students had a paid job or paid work-based learning experience.



### Vocational Rehabilitation services

In 2020–21, 119 students (31%) were enrolled in their state VR program, and 107 (28%) received services provided or purchased by VR during the year. VR denied services to 15 students<sup>5</sup>. The most common services provided by VR to students enrolled in a VR program were benefits counseling (64% of students who received VR services), self-advocacy instruction (47%), job coaching (31%), and work-based learning (29%). Students also received supported employment services (25%), job readiness training (25%), and social skills instruction (21%) from VR.

**28%** of students received services from a VR program.



VR agencies provided direct services to students at 11 of the 18 TPSIDs partnering with VR. In seven of the 18 programs partnering with VR (39%), VR provided funds for student tuition, and in three

of the 18 programs (17%), VR provided funds for other student expenses.

Eighty-five percent of the TPSIDs partnering with VR (n = 23 of 27 programs serving students) reported collaboration with VR to provide pre-employment transition services as defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA, 2014). In partnership with VR, TPSIDs offered these pre-employment transition services:

- work-based learning experiences (provided by 20 of the 23 programs that collaborated with VR, 87%)
- job exploration counseling (n = 20, 87%)
- counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs (n = 20, 87%)
- workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living (n = 18, 78%)
- self-advocacy instruction (n = 16, 70%)

## INTEGRATION WITH HOST INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Students attending all TPSID programs were able to join registered student organizations, and students joined these organizations in 93% of programs. In 100% of programs, students attending the TPSID had access to and were able to attend social events on campus that were only available to students at the institution of higher education (IHE).

Almost all the TPSIDs (93% of programs serving students) followed the IHE academic calendar, and 100% issued official student identification cards from the IHE and held students to the IHE code of conduct. Official transcripts from the IHE were issued in 59% of programs, and program transcripts (not officially from the IHE) were issued in 15% of programs. Twenty-two percent of TPSIDs issued both an official transcript from the IHE and a transcript from the TPSID program. One program (4%) reported students did not receive any transcript.

The most common types of campus resources students accessed were the library and the health center/counseling services (both resources were accessed by students at 93% of programs serving students). The registrar/ bursar/financial aid,

bookstores, computer lab/student IT services, and student center and dining hall were resources students used at 89% of programs. The disability services office (DSO) (82%), career services (70%), tutoring services (67%), residential life (67%), and sports and recreation facilities or arts/ cultural centers (63%) were also commonly accessed by students in TPSID programs. Off-campus housing services (22%) was the only resource accessed by fewer campuses. All programs stated students accessed at least one of these campus resources.

Twenty-two TPSID programs (81% of those enrolling students) reported that students attended the regular orientation for new students at the IHE. Family members of students attended the regular parent orientation at 48% of TPSIDs. The majority of programs provided a special orientation for students (74%) and for family members (70%).

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

We asked TPSIDs to report each instance of a partnership with an external organization. For example, if a TPSID partnered with more than one local education agency (LEA), they entered a record for each LEA. We asked programs in a planning year to report partnerships, therefore data in this section include all 38 TPSID programs. TPSID programs partnered with 156 external organizations in 2020–2021, which is an average of four partners per program. Fifty percent of programs partnered with LEAs, 47% partnered with state VR agencies, and 39% partnered with University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs). See Table 5 for the frequency of TPSID external partnerships.

Programs had the highest number of partnerships with education agencies including K–12, local, and regional (n = 36); community rehabilitation providers (CRPs; n = 27); VR agencies (n = 20), employers (n = 19); University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs, n = 15); state or county Intellectual and Developmental Disability agencies (n = 13); and developmental disabilities (DD) councils (n = 11). Other TPSID partners (n = 8) included statewide alliances for inclusive postsecondary education, Best Buddies, and charitable foundations.

**TABLE 5. FREQUENCY OF EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS.**

Partner type	Number of TPSID programs	Number of partnerships
Education agencies	19	36
Vocational Rehabilitation	18	20
University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs)	15	15
State or county IDD agencies	13	13
Community rehabilitation providers	12	27
Developmental Disabilities (DD) councils	11	11
Employers	6	19
Advocacy groups	5	7
Other	6	8

The three most common partner roles included serving on an advisory board or as a consultant (43% of all partnerships), providing services directly to students (35%), and conducting recruitment/outreach to potential students (33%).

## FINANCES

### Sustainability

Fiscal sustainability of TPSID programs includes consideration of both tuition and fees charged to students as well as external sources of financial support. Cost of tuition and fees differed based upon the type of institution (2-year or 4-year, public or private), whether residential options were provided, and whether the IHE charges were residency-dependent (e.g., in-state, out-of-state, city resident).

Annual costs of the TPSID programs varied widely, ranging from \$0–\$73,373.08 per year. Mean annual total cost of attendance (including tuition, required fees, and room and board) was:

- \$27,192.41 for programs that charge the same rate for all students attending the TPSID (n = 9)
- \$23,782.60 to attend a program as an in-state student at a program that had an in-state rate (n = 5)

- \$26,587.33 to attend a program as an out-of-state student at a program that had an out-of-state rate (n = 6)
- \$4,883.50 to attend a program that charged another type of rate (n = 16)

Five programs that enrolled students reported there was no cost to the students to attend the program in 2020–21.

In 2020–2021, 74% of TPSIDs (n = 28) received financial support from external sources, such as state VR agencies and state IDD agencies. Nine TPSIDs reported receiving no funds from external sources other than the TPSID grant. One program did not respond to this question.

Nine TPSID programs (24%) had external partners who provided funds for student tuition. Additionally, five programs (13%) partnered with organizations that provided funding for other student expenses, such as fees and room and board. Among the partners who provided support for these student expenses were community rehabilitation providers (n = 16), VR (n = 9), LEAs (n = 7), Developmental Disability councils (n = 3), and state IDD agencies (n = 2). Seven programs (18%) partnered with organizations that paid for program expenses such as operating costs.

TPSID projects are required to provide a match of at least 25% of the funds they receive from the US Department of Education. To meet these match requirements, programs used in-kind contributions such as faculty/staff time (68%), physical space (45%), or materials (18%).

## Student Financing

We collected information on sources used to pay for tuition expenses and non-tuition expenses (e.g., fees, room and board, books) for each student. For tuition expenses, private pay was the most cited source of funding (for 64% of students), followed by state IDD agency funds (20%), federal/state grants (12%), state VR agency funds (11%), scholarships (10%), LEA funds (8.2%), and Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Medicaid waiver (3%). Tuition was waived for three students. Private pay was the most used

source of funds to pay non-tuition expenses (n = 272, 72% of students).

Sixty-four percent (n = 242) of students were attending programs approved as Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) programs. These programs were able to offer eligible students access to federal student aid. Sixty-three students (17%) were reported to have received federal financial aid in the form of a Pell grant while attending a TPSID program with CTP status.

## STUDENT STATUS AT EXIT

A total of 69 students exited their IHE program during the reporting period. Of the students who exited, 84% (n = 58) completed a program. Among the 11 students who did not complete a program, the reasons given for exit included no longer wanting to attend the program (n = 5) and transferring to another postsecondary program (n = 3). One student who did not complete the program exited to pursue an undergraduate degree (n = 1). Exit reasons were not reported for two students.

## Credentials Earned

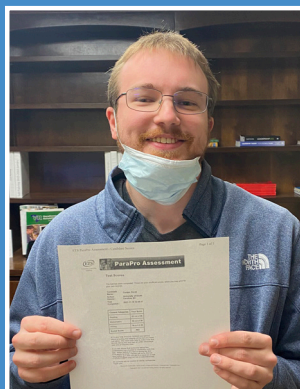
All students who completed a program earned at least one credential. Forty-six students earned a single credential, eight students earned two credentials, and four students earned three or more credentials. Of the 74 credentials earned, 96% (n = 71) were certificates. One student earned an associate degree in information technology and two students earned a credential that was an industry certification (ServSafe Food Handler). Of the credentials earned, 57 (77%) were approved by the IHE governance structure.

Credentials earned were awarded by the IHE (n = 29), the TPSID program (n = 21), the IHE continuing education division (n = 13), or another entity (n = 10). Twelve credentials awarded were reported to be industry-recognized. These credentials included ServSafe Food Handler Certificate, American Hotel and Restaurant Association: Front Desk Attendant, Heartsaver First Aid and CPR, and ParaPro paraprofessional certification.

## Paraprofessional Certification: Giving Back

David recently earned his paraprofessional certification. When asked what it means to him, he said: "This certification is a sense of accomplishment. It is a way to help me get involved in the field of education. It was stressful preparing for the exam, but it was worth it because now I get the opportunity to work in a classroom. [Getting this certification means that] I will be able to work in a classroom setting with special needs students. I will work with students and help them succeed and grow."

– David Canipe, junior, University of South Carolina.



Five students completed the coursework required to earn a credential but did not receive the credential. In each instance, students did not receive the credential because they did not complete the exam or practicum requirements. All five students earned another credential from their TPSID program upon exit.

### Activities at Exit

Most students who exited ( $n = 50$ , 72%) either had a paid job (at exit or within 90 days), were participating in unpaid career development activities, had transferred to another postsecondary education program, or were doing a combination of these activities at exit.

Thirty-four students (49%) were working in a paid job at exit or within the first 90 days after exiting, either in combination with unpaid career development experience ( $n = 10$ , 29% of those with a paid job) or a paid job only ( $n = 24$ , 71%). Eleven students (16%) were participating only in unpaid career development experience. Five students (7%) continued to advance their postsecondary education. Nineteen students (28%) were not engaged in any of these activities at exit (or within 90 days in the case of employment; see Figure 12).

**FIGURE 12: NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENGAGED IN EACH ACTIVITY AT OR WITHIN 90 DAYS OF EXIT**



Note: 10 students were engaged in both a paid job and career development experience. No paid job, career development, or postsecondary education activities were reported for 19 students.

## LIMITATIONS

Data from TPSIDs are self-reported, which may impact their accuracy. The NCC made every attempt to verify any discrepancies but was not able to check the validity of all data entered into the Data Network. Despite the NCC's best efforts to develop questions and response choices to fit the needs of TPSID respondents, and to define key terms in a way that allowed for consistency across reporting sites, responses may have been subject to respondent bias due to different interpretations of program operations and student experiences.

The amount of missing data differed across the dataset. The NCC takes several steps to ensure completeness of the data reported, but gaps persist in some responses. We note throughout this report where data are missing.

TPSID data do not provide a representative sample of all higher education programs serving students with intellectual disability in the US (Grigal et al., 2021). Therefore, generalizability may be limited. These limitations are important to keep in mind when interpreting the data presented in this report.

**Most students who exited ( $n = 50$ , 72%) either had a paid job (at exit or within 90 days), were participating in unpaid career development activities, had transferred to another postsecondary education program, or were doing a combination of these activities at exit.**



## A New TPSID Program Means New Life for Students

Andrew Strzykalski is a first-year student at a new inclusive postsecondary program and TPSID at University of New Hampshire. His mom, Barbara says *“He just loves it there so much. He’s more outgoing, he’s more confident. He has really just come into his own.”*



Such is the precise goal of the UNH-4U program, which has been more than five years in the making. It came to fruition thanks in part to individual donations and grants from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation John Vance A.C.C.E.S.S. Fund, the U.S. Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Education, the New Hampshire Council on Developmental Disabilities, the area agency system and the New Hampshire Department of Education–Vocational Rehabilitation. The program opens doors to a mostly traditional college experience that was previously closed to students with intellectual disabilities.

Students in the two-year program go through a nontraditional admissions process and don’t earn a traditional degree but enroll in classes matched to their academic interests with the intent of starting them on a path to gainful employment after college. Along the way, they gain experience and life skills that are difficult to replicate in other scenarios.

*“Now that we have launched and the students are actually here, it’s truly transformative,”* says Tobey Partch–Davies, project director at the UNH Institute on Disability. *“What’s going on with these students, it’s life-changing. They are experiencing a level of independence and academic success that many never dreamed possible.”*

## CONCLUSION

During the first year of the Cohort 3 TPSID model demonstration program, the 22 TPSID grantees planned or implemented access to higher education in 38 programs at 36 colleges and university campuses in 16 states. There were fewer grantees in Cohort 3 than in the two previous cohorts: Cohort 1 had 27 grantees, and Cohort 2 had 25 grantees. It is unclear why there were fewer grantees in Cohort 3. Twenty-seven programs were in operation, enrolling 378 students with intellectual and developmental disabilities; the remaining 11 programs were in a planning year. Half of the programs ( $n = 19$ ) were recipients of previous TPSID funding either during the 2010–2015 or the 2015–2020 TPSID funding periods.

Programs enrolled adult students and transition-age high school students in various combinations, some only serving adults (48%) and some serving both groups of students (48%). The percentage of high school students receiving college-based transition services was only 11%. This is lower than in previous years and reflects a continued reduction in the number of high school-age students receiving transition services in TPSID programs.

### Emphasis on Inclusive Course Access

The Cohort 3 Year 1 data on inclusive course access reflects some notable strengths and a potential area for concern. Most programs (74%) met or exceeded the minimum 50% inclusive course access required by comprehensive transition and postsecondary programs like TPSIDs. Fifteen programs enrolled students only in inclusive courses: a first in the 10-year history of this initiative. Strikingly, more than a quarter of students ( $n = 102$ , 27%) took no specialized courses. From previous studies, we know inclusive course access can influence students’ employment, credit accumulation, and credential attainment (Papay et al., 2018). We hope to see this strong emphasis on inclusive course enrollments continue to grow as those programs in a planning year also begin to enroll students in the upcoming academic year.

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## **Fifteen programs enrolled students only in inclusive courses: a first in the 10-year history of this initiative.**

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One potential area of concern is the programs with substantial use of specialized courses only for students with ID. Three programs represented 34% of all course enrollments ( $n = 1,095$ ) of which 92% were specialized courses. A hallmark of the TPSID program is the requirement that students are provided access to inclusive academic and career experiences. This abundant use of specialized classes does not align with the HEOA legislation and absolute priorities or intent of the TPSID initiative. Given the outsized influence these outliers have on the Cohort 3 TPSID programs' overall rate of inclusiveness, these programs must make substantial changes soon to ensure students with ID in their programs have access to inclusive academic courses.

### **Use of Federal Student Aid**

Less than one-third of the TPSIDs (29%) were approved as Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) programs, meaning they could offer eligible students access to certain forms of federal student aid. Sixty-four percent ( $n = 242$ ) of students were attending programs approved as CTP programs. Therefore, these TPSID programs were able to offer eligible students access to federal student aid. Sixty-three students (17%) were reported to have received federal financial aid in the form of a Pell grant while attending a TPSID program with CTP status.

To provide a sense of how the use of federal student aid in TPSIDs aligns with national usage, it is helpful to share the data from Federal Student Aid Office. In the 2020–2021 academic year, there were 140 approved CTP programs. Of these, 128 colleges and universities awarded federal student aid to 595 students with intellectual disability (ID). Students received a total of \$2,405,160 in Pell grants, \$106,308 in Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants, and \$53,762 in Federal Work-Study (personal communication, Lindsay Wertenberger,

December 14, 2021). Using these figures, the student aid recipients attending TPSID programs represent approximately 11% of the students with ID receiving federal student aid nationally.

### **Access to College Systems and Services**

Use of existing academic advising is a predictor of access to inclusive course enrollment for students with ID (Papay et al., 2018). Over half of the programs (56%) offered access to both the typical advising services and specialized advising by TPSID program staff, and 15% offered advising services only through the typical advising office. Eight of the programs (30%) did not offer access to typical advising services. As this report only reflects activities from the first year of this cohort, we hope programs expand the use of typical advising services in the coming academic year.

Approximately two-thirds of students attending a TPSID program received supports from the college or university disability services office (DSO). Of the 20 programs located at a college or university offering housing, 70% ( $n = 14$ ) provided access to students enrolled in the TPSID program. We expect increased access to existing IHE services in the coming academic year.

### **Decreased Impact of COVID-19 on Employment**

Year 1 offers a first look at work-based learning (WBL) and access to paid employment. We expect the Cohort 3 TPSIDs to build the capacity of WBL and paid employment over the coming years. Employment preparation includes both career awareness and exploration (CAE) as well as paid and unpaid WBL. Most students ( $n = 322$ , 85%) participated in at least one CAE activity and 68 students (18%) had at least one paid WBL experience. Just under one-third of students ( $n = 120$  students, 26%) participated in 137 unpaid WBL experiences.

Not quite one-third (31%) of students were engaged in paid employment while enrolled in their college or university program. This is lower than the Year 1 employment rate for Cohort 2 (46%), but higher than the first-year employment rate for students attending Cohort 1 TPSIDs.

While COVID-19 had a strong impact on access to WBL and paid employment during the 2019–2020, this year’s reported impact was substantially smaller, with the majority of TPSID programs indicating little to no impact on employment experiences due to COVID-19. The somewhat lower than expected rate of employment could be due to the developing nature of the Cohort 3 TPSID programs as well as the strange economic time we are witnessing in the job market. Regardless, the Cohort 3 TPSID programs will need to increase the employment rate of their students in the coming years.

### Poor K-12 Employment Preparation

It is worth noting that 50% of employed students enrolled in the TPSID programs had never held a paid job prior to entering the TPSID. This percentage has risen over the past 11 years with its lowest rated being 44% (Cohort 1, Year 1, 2010–2011) and its highest rate 56% (Cohort 2, Year 5, 2019–2020). Prior paid work experience is a long-standing predictor of future paid work for students with disability (Mamun et al., 2017; Wehman et al., 2015). Such a large proportion of students with ID lacking in this critical evidenced-based transition practice may be an indication of the overall quality of transition services students with ID receive in their secondary schooling.

The lack of paid work experience seen in college students in the TPSID program aligns with current national data. When looking at data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study, or NLTS, 2021 dataset, Lipscomb et al. (2017) reported only 32% of youth with ID had a paid work experience while enrolled in high school. The lack of employment experience of college students attending the TPSID means staff may have to address these gaps by offering additional CAE activities to assess interests and skills. Students may also need assistance with basic job seeking skills, such as developing job applications or determining how and if to address disclosure of their disability. The gaps in high school student employment experience leads to the need for additional time and services to address employment preparation skills from TPSID staff.

### Keep Striving for Success

Alaina is a freshman at East Tennessee State University, majoring in oncology nursing, while also a member of Access ETSU, a two-year postsecondary education program for adults with intellectual disabilities. Alaina is a self-advocate in the highly selective



Vanderbilt Consortium LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities). Even though the LEND program is comprised of mostly graduate students, Alaina has proven as a freshman that she can advocate for herself and has developed the necessary leadership skills to be successful. Alaina stated, *“No matter your disability, keep striving for success and don’t give up on hope towards your education. Don’t let others deter you from your determination. Be you and strive towards your dream.”*

### Final Thoughts

The Cohort 3 TPSID programs build on the infrastructure of knowledge and practice developed by the two previous cohorts. This Cohort begins with significant experience, as 50% of the programs have received TPSID funding in the past. Data reported by TPSID grantees here from the first year of FY 2020–2025 funding cycle suggest most of these programs are beginning with a solid base of effective practices. We anticipate college course access, integrated competitive employment, and access to housing will expand with each year, and will result in enhanced student academic, employment, and independent living outcomes.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Two of the remaining five students were engaged in paid employment (n = 1) or career awareness and exploration activities (n = 1). One student began the year but decided to postpone until classes were offered in person. No course enrollments or work-related activities were reported for the remaining two students.
- 2 N = 125 out of 137. Responses to this question were missing for four students who lived in IHE housing.
- 3 See definitions on page 12-13
- 4 See definitions on page 12-13
- 5 Reasons for denial of VR services included: student was determined ineligible due to financial or other reasons, student missed the window for appeal of the denial determination, and VR would not pay for program tuition.

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### DISCLOSURE OF POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The research team for this report consists of key staff from the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston. The organizations and the key staff members do not have financial interests that could be affected by findings from the evaluation.

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