

# ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COHORT 2 TPSID MODEL DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS (YEAR 5, 2019–2020)

## Think College **REPORTS**

### AUTHORS

Meg Grigal  
Debra Hart  
Clare Papay  
Xiaoying Wu  
Rebecca Lazo  
Frank Smith  
Daria Domin



CINCINNATI



 ThinkCollege

**NATIONAL COORDINATING CENTER**

INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION, UMASS BOSTON

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On the cover: Lawrence is a 1st year student at University of Cincinnati and is training to be in the 2021 Paralympics.



# THINK COLLEGE REPORTS

## Annual Report of the Cohort 2 TPSID Model Demonstration Projects (Year 5, 2019–2020)

### 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. 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, or TPSID, model demonstration program was first implemented by the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) in 2010 through 5-year grants awarded to 27 institutes of higher education (IHEs) (see <https://thinkcollege.net/resources/think-college-publications> for more information about these projects). Grants were awarded again in 2015 to a second cohort of 25 IHEs to develop or enhance TPSID programs between 2015 and 2020 (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.

This report provides an overview of descriptive program and student-level data provided by TPSIDs during the 2019–2020 academic year. Program data includes

program characteristics, academic access, student supports, and integration of the program within the IHE during the fifth and final year of the 2015–2020 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. Additionally, the report provides trends over time as well as descriptive data on the outcomes of students who exited TPSID programs in previous years. Finally, the report will highlight the impact of COVID-19 on student experiences and outcomes.

In mid-March of 2020, the emergence of COVID-19 throughout the United States led to changes in the implementation of services in most institutions of higher education, including those involved in TPSID projects. Many universities and colleges closed their campuses, requiring students who lived on campus to either return home or find other living arrangements. In-person learning experiences transitioned to online or virtual instruction over a matter of weeks. The National Coordinating Center (NCC) sought to meet the needs of the TPSIDs by establishing weekly online support sessions to share challenges and strategies. Additionally, we established a private online group for program staff for ongoing communication and resource sharing. The TPSID project staff sought creative solutions to ensure these college and university experiences continued and students' academic, employment, and social and emotional needs were addressed.

FIGURE 1. MAP OF TPSID 2015-2020 GRANTEEES

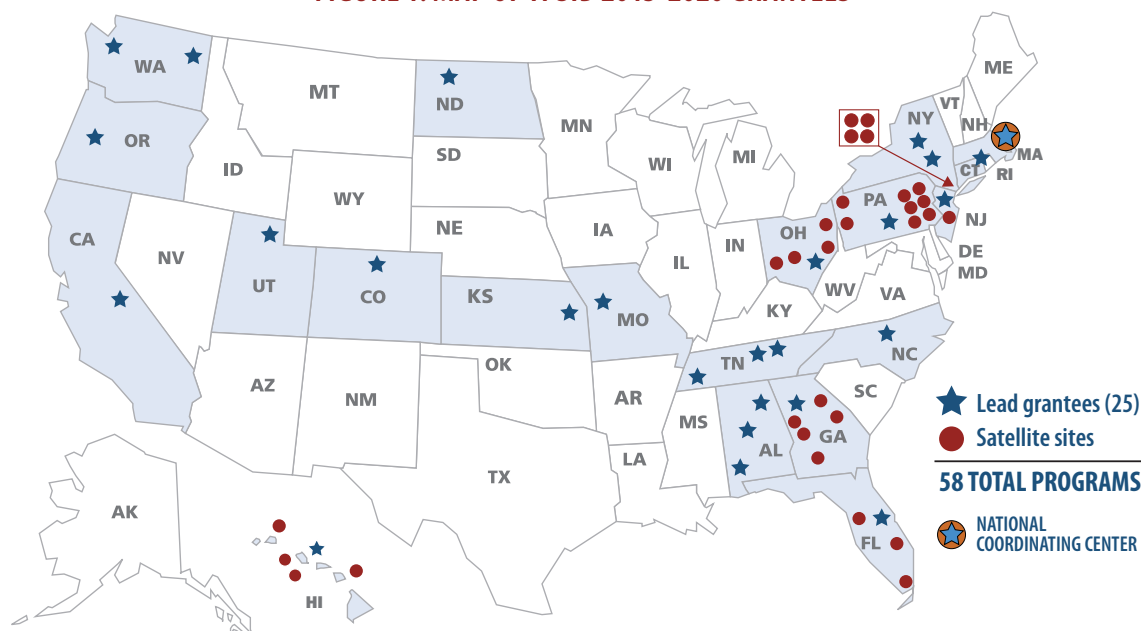


TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF TPSIDs 2019-2020

STATE	TPSID	SITE	RESIDENTIAL TYPE			TYPE OF STUDENTS SERVED			Can offer financial aid as an approved CTP (by 9/30/20)	No. of students served in '19-20
			Commuter school	Residential options open to TPSID students	Residential options not open to TPSID students	Dually enrolled	Already exited high school	Both		
AL	Jacksonville State University	Jacksonville State University		X				X		5
AL	University of Alabama	University of Alabama (CrossingPoints Tier 1)		X		X				26
AL	University of South Alabama	University of South Alabama			X			X	X	12
CA	California State University Fresno	California State University Fresno*			X		X		X	41
CO	Colorado State University	Colorado State University (Opportunities for Postsecondary Success)*		X			X			29
FL	Univ. of Central Florida	University of Central Florida		X			X		X	17
FL	Univ. of Central Florida	Florida International University (Panther LIFE)			X			X		17
FL	Univ. of Central Florida	Florida International University (Panther PLUS)		X			X			13
FL	Univ. of Central Florida	Florida State College at Jacksonville	X					X		17
FL	Univ. of Central Florida	Indian River State College	X				X		X	16
GA	Georgia State University	Georgia State University		X			X		X	10
GA	Georgia State University	Albany Technical College	X					X	X	7
GA	Georgia State University	Columbus State University		X			X		X	4
GA	Georgia State University	East Georgia State College		X			X		X	10
GA	Georgia State University	Georgia Southern University		X			X		X	8
GA	Georgia State University	University of Georgia			X			X	X	10
GA	Georgia State University	University of West Georgia		X			X			4
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	University of Hawaii at Manoa		X			X			1
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	Honolulu Community College*	X					X		4
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	Kapiolani Community College	X					X		5
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	Kauai Community College	X				X			1
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	Leeward Community College*	X				X			5
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	Maui College	X				X			3
HI	Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa	Windward Community College	X				X			1
KS	University of Kansas	University of Kansas		X			X		X	8
MO	University of Missouri-Kansas City	University of Missouri-Kansas City (Propel)		X				X	X	46
NC	Appalachian State	Appalachian State University*		X			X		X	10
ND	Minot State University	Minot State University*		X				X		18
NJ	Bergen Community College	Bergen Community College*	X					X		26
NJ	Bergen Community College	College of New Jersey*		X				X	X	44

\* Funded also in 2010-2015 TPSID Program

CTP = Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) Program

**TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF TPSIDs 2019-2020 (continued)**

STATE	TPSID	SITE	RESIDENTIAL TYPE			TYPE OF STUDENTS SERVED			Can offer financial aid as an approved CTP (by 9/30/20)	No. of students served in '19-20
			Commuter school	Residential options open to TPSID students	Residential options not open to TPSID students	Dually enrolled	Already exited high school	Both		
NY	University of Rochester	City University of New York - Borough of Manhattan Community College	X				X			15
NY	University of Rochester	College of Staten Island			X		X			18
NY	University of Rochester	Hostos Community College	X				X			20
NY	University of Rochester	Kingsborough Community College	X				X			20
NY	University of Rochester	Queens College			X	X				10
NY	Syracuse University	Syracuse University (InclusiveU/Access)		X				X	X	66
NY	Syracuse University	Syracuse University (OnCampus)			X	X			X	8
OH	Ohio State University	Ohio State University*		X	X		X		X	27
OH	Ohio State University	Columbus State Community College	X				X		X	9
OH	Ohio State University	Marietta College*		X				X		12
OH	Ohio State University	University of Cincinnati*						X	X	25
OH	Ohio State University	Youngstown State University*			X	X				3
OR	Portland State University	Portland State University		X				X	X	20
PA	Millersville University	Millersville University		X				X	X	25
PA	Millersville University	Arcadia University		X			X		X	9
PA	Millersville University	Duquesne University		X			X			2
PA	Millersville University	Gwynedd Mercy University		X			X		X	2
PA	Millersville University	Lehigh Carbon Community College	X					X	X	8
PA	Millersville University	Penn State Harrisburg			X		X		X	12
PA	Millersville University	Temple University			X			X	X	23
PA	Millersville University	Widener University			X		X		X	3
RI	Rhode Island College	Rhode Island College		X				X	X	13
TN	Lipscomb University	Lipscomb University		X			X		X	19
TN	University of Memphis	University of Memphis			X			X	X	47
TN	Vanderbilt University	Vanderbilt University			X			X	X	35
UT	Utah State University	Utah State University		X			X		X	15
WA	Highline College	Highline College*	X					X	X	50
WA	Spokane Community College	Spokane Community College	X					X	X	22
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>17</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>956</b>

\* Funded also in 2010-2015 TPSID Program

CTP = Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) Program

## 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, Hart, & Weir, 2011). After extensive feedback and piloting, this data collection effort was approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501). An evaluation protocol was programmed into a secure online database using software purchased from Quickbase ([www.quickbase.com](http://www.quickbase.com)) and used by TPSIDs in the 2010–2015 funding cycle 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. An application for reapproval was submitted to OMB in December of 2015 (approved July 2016) and again in January 2018. The current collection protocol was approved by OMB in September of 2019.

## METHODS

Data were reported for the 2019–2020 academic year by TPSID program staff (e.g., principal investigator, program coordinator, evaluator, or data entry assistant) between October 1, 2019, and September 30, 2020. Training on data entry was provided via webcast demonstration and on-demand video formats. NCC staff also met individually with staff from each TPSID site to review their respective data and to provide individual technical assistance prior to the data entry deadline. Following the data entry period, NCC staff reviewed the program and student data to ensure complete records were entered. Where data entry was not fully complete, TPSID program staff were sent individualized reminders to direct them to address incomplete records.

Once all data were entered, NCC staff conducted data cleaning. Responses to questions about course enrollments and partners were reviewed closely 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.

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

## Impact of Pandemic on Data Entry and Analysis

The NCC recognized the pandemic could impact student experiences in TPSID programs. We provided TPSIDs with modified response options in the Data Network to allow staff to note any COVID-19 impact on enrollment status, work-based learning, and employment while enrolled, reason for exit or employment outcomes. Acknowledging the extenuating circumstances being experienced by TPSID program staff during the pandemic, the NCC also provided extended grace periods for data entry and offered additional opportunities for technical assistance. Our analyses of program and student data in this report will, when possible, describe the impact of COVID-19 on implementation of the TPSID programs. Additionally, given this was the final year of the 2015–2020 TPSID grant funding, the NCC provided a voluntary opportunity for TPSID staff to share information on their plans for no-cost extension requests, program continuation after the end of the grant, COVID-19 impact, and other sustainability-related questions. This information was gathered via a survey conducted using Qualtrics and consisted of multiple choice and open-ended questions. The NCC received 27 valid responses that are analyzed and shared in this report.

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**The investment by Congress and the commitment of the Office of Postsecondary Education in the continuation of the TPSID model demonstration program has demonstrated what is possible when high expectations are paired with expanded opportunities and sufficient resources.**

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## TPSID PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The fifth year of the Cohort 2 (2015–2020) Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSID) commenced on October 1, 2019. The 25 TPSID grantees planned or implemented services through 58 programs at 56 colleges and university campuses in 19 states. Thirty-seven of these programs (64%) had served students before receiving the TPSID grant. Fifteen programs (26%) were recipients of the 2010–2015 TPSID funding. There were 956 students attending the 58 programs. Four new sites were added in 2019: Duquesne University, Gwynedd Mercy University, University of Hawaii at Manoa, and Kauai Community College. Five sites that were included in the Year 4 report were not included in the Year 5 report: two of these were programs closed during the year so data were not complete (Edison State Community College and Mercyhurst University), and three programs were part of the Florida TPSID consortium and were required by the terms of their participation in the consortium to report program and student data for only one year (Atlantic Technical College, McFatter Technical College, and Tallahassee Community College); see Table 1 Summary of TPSIDs 2019–2020.

## Types of IHEs

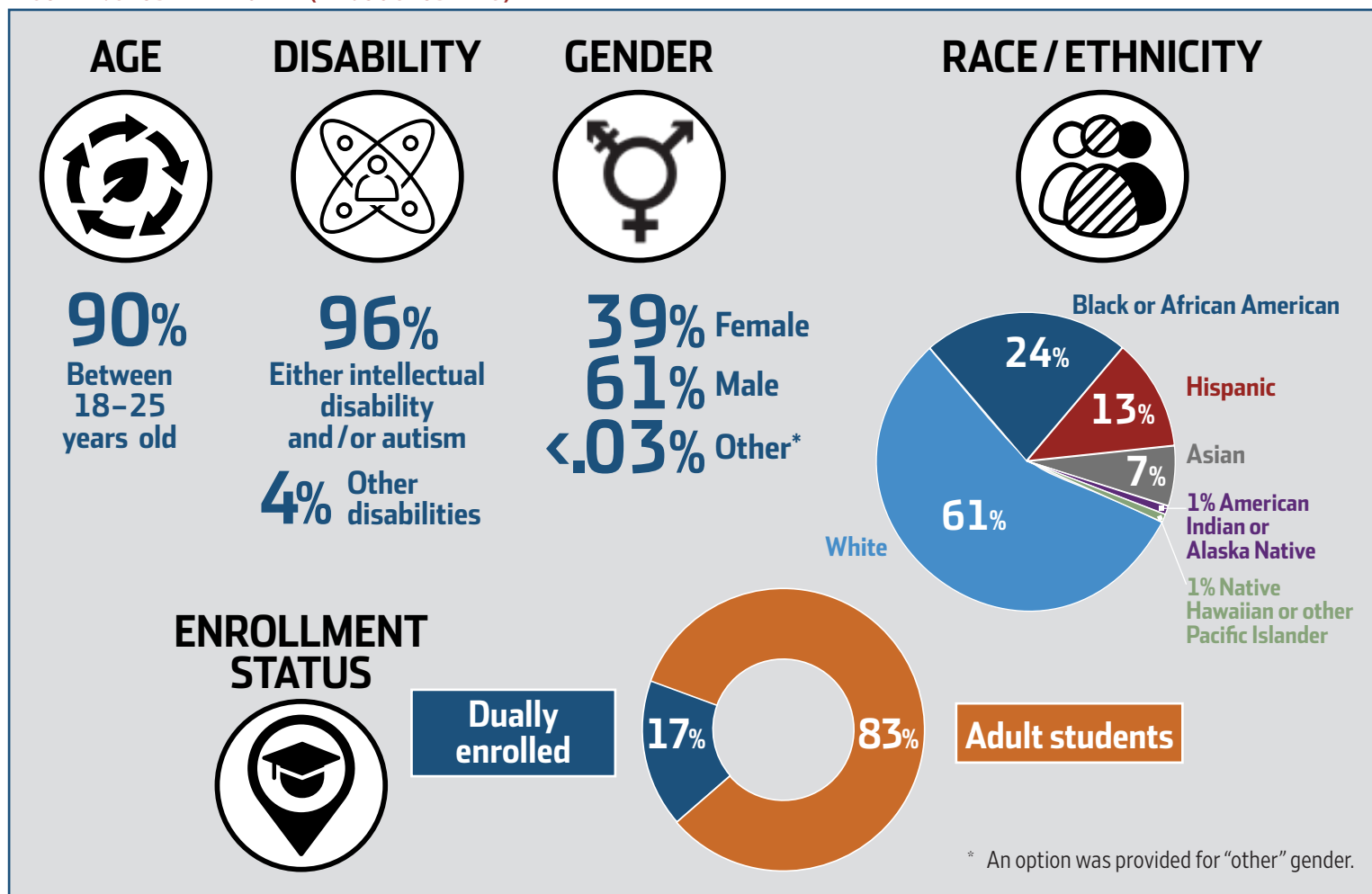
In 2019–2020, 18 of the 25 TPSID grants were implemented at a single IHE, and seven operated as consortia with various satellite IHEs. There were 38 programs across the seven consortia. Two universities (Florida International University and Syracuse University) each operated more than one distinct TPSID program on their campus. Of the 58 programs, 15 were located at 2-year IHEs and 43 were located at 4-year IHEs. Thirty-four TPSID programs (59%) were approved as Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) programs, meaning they could offer eligible students access to certain forms of federal student aid.

**34** TPSID programs (59%) were approved as Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) programs.

## Student Enrollment in TPSIDs

Student enrollment at TPSID programs ranged from 1–66 students. The 58 TPSID programs (N = 956 total students) had an average of 16 students per site. Programs served adult students who were no longer attending high school, as well

FIGURE 2: STUDENT PROFILE (N=956 STUDENTS)



as transition-age youth who were receiving college-based transition services as part of their final years in high school. Almost half of programs ( $n = 28$ , 48%) served students who were enrolled in high school. Four programs served only high school students, and 24 programs served both high school students and adult students. The remaining 30 programs served only adult students (52%). The percentage of students who received college-based transition services was 17% ( $n = 161$ ; see Figure 2).

The majority of students were white (61%). Twenty-four percent were black or African American, 13% were Hispanic or Latino, 7% were Asian, 1% were American Indian or Alaska Native, and 1% were Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. The majority of students enrolled were male (61%).

Most students (90%) were between the ages of 18 and 25, with ages ranging from 17 to 45. Almost all students (96%) had an intellectual disability and/or autism. Sixty-three percent had an intellectual disability but not autism, 28% had both intellectual disability and autism, 5% had autism but not an intellectual disability, and 4% had other disabilities (see Figure 2).

## Retention

To calculate first-year retention rates for students who attended TPSIDs, we first identified the students who enrolled at a TPSID in 2018–2019 and, of those, the students who were still enrolled at the school in the following academic year (2019–2020). We then removed those students who entered and completed a TPSID in a single academic year as well as students who were enrolled in programs that did not report data in 2019–2020. The first-year retention rate for the 2019–2020 academic year was 84%. In comparison, for first-time, full-time, degree-seeking undergraduate students who enrolled in 4-year degree-granting institutions in fall 2017, the overall retention rate was 81% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020).

## STUDENT PLANNING, ADVISING, AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

In 2019–2020, person-centered planning was used by 57 out of 58 TPSID programs (98%). Academic advising was provided in various combinations by the IHE's typical advising staff and by TPSID program staff. In nine of the programs (16%), students received advising only from existing academic advising offices. Thirty of the programs (52%) did not offer access to typical advising services and instead provided separate advising specially designed for students who attend

the TPSID. Nineteen programs (33%) offered access to both the typical advising services and specialized advising by TPSID program staff.

Peer mentors provided support to students in 88% of programs. Types of support provided by peer mentors included social (86% of programs used peer mentors), academic (76%), employment (55%), independent living (50%), and transportation (36%).

Employment services and work-related direct support were provided by all 58 TPSID programs. The most frequently reported source of support was TPSID program staff (91% of programs). Employment supports were also provided by career services staff at the IHE (66%), supervisors at the worksite (64%), peer mentors (59%), state vocational rehabilitation (VR) staff (50%), coworkers at the worksite (43%), a separate or contracted employment service provider (22%), state intellectual and developmental disability agency staff (14%), LEA staff for enrolled high school students (12%), and others (3%).

### TPSID Impact: Changing a Graduate Student's Journey



I first became involved with the Transition Options in Postsecondary Settings (TOPS) program as a freshman completing my undergraduate degree at OSU. I volunteered with the program as a social coach and in-class mentor and became passionate about working with students with intellectual and developmental disabilities and helping them achieve success in their daily lives.... Now, in my final year, I have collaborated with the TOPS program once again for my doctoral capstone project. For my project, I am developing an inclusive and accessible curriculum on sex education and plan to pilot it in the spring... Additionally, I am leading a parent webinar about the topic and developing modules to be used to promote knowledge carryover as students advance through the TOPS program. Being involved with TOPS has been one of the highlights of my time in undergrad and graduate school. I truly love working with this community and hope to incorporate all that I've learned about sex education and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities when I am a practicing clinician.

—Natalie Robek, 3rd-year occupational therapy student at The Ohio State University

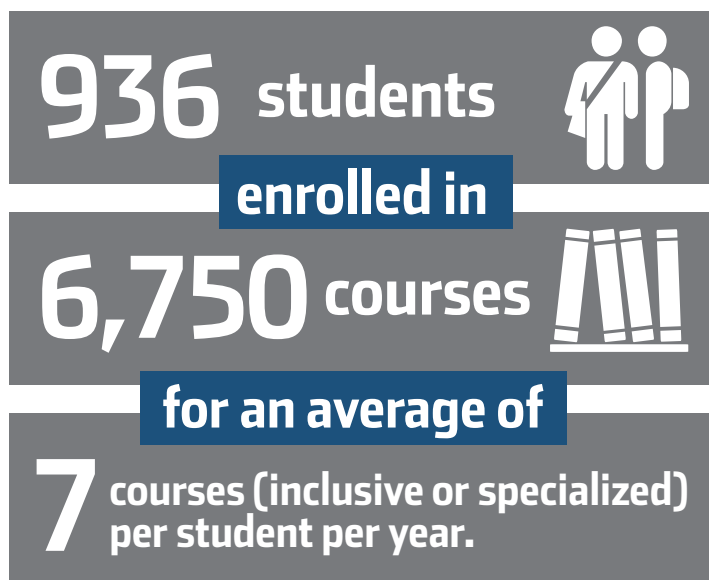


## ACADEMICS

### Course Enrollments

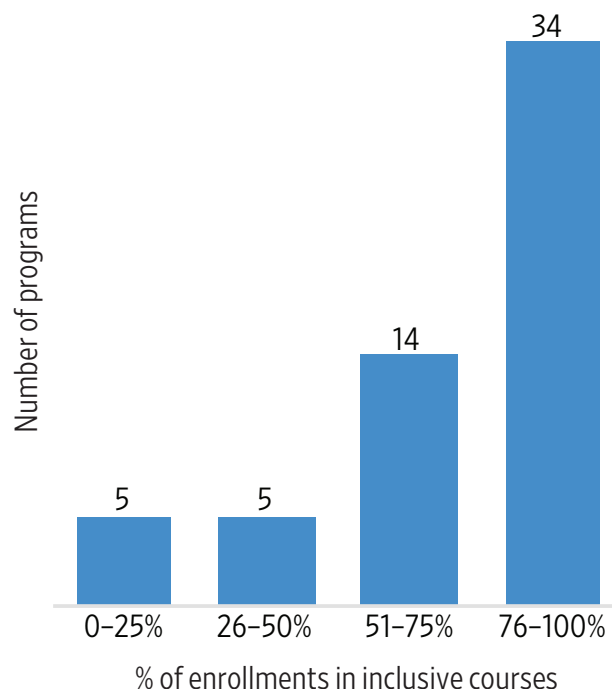
Course enrollments are reported in two categories: academically inclusive and specialized. Academically inclusive courses are defined as typical college courses attended by students with intellectual disability and other college students without intellectual disability. Specialized courses are courses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

Course enrollments were reported for 936 of the 956 students who attended TPSID programs<sup>1</sup>. These 936 students enrolled in a total of 6,750 college or university courses (both inclusive and specialized), with an average of six courses taken by students during the year at 2-year IHEs and seven courses for students at 4-year IHEs.



Across all programs, 62% of enrollments were in academically inclusive courses. On average, students took four inclusive and three specialized courses this year. Data on frequency of enrollment in inclusive courses across programs is presented in Figure 3 and ranged from 0%–25% of enrollments in inclusive courses ( $n = 5$  programs) to 76%–100% of enrollments being in inclusive courses ( $n = 34$  programs). Most students (94%) took at least one inclusive course during the year, and 88% of students took more than one inclusive course. More than a third of students (37%) took no specialized courses and 59% of programs had no student enrollments in specialized courses. The percentage of enrollments in inclusive courses was higher at 4-year IHEs than at 2-year IHEs (62% of enrollments in inclusive courses at 4-year IHEs vs. 58% of enrollments in inclusive courses at 2-year IHEs).

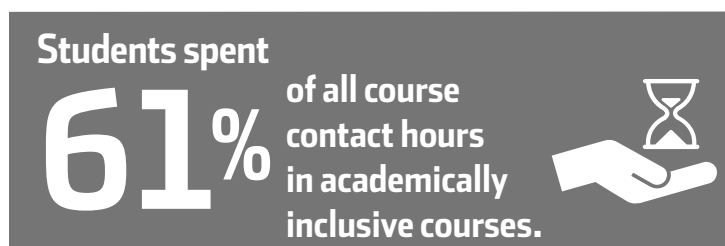
**FIGURE 3: PERCENTAGE OF ENROLLMENTS IN INCLUSIVE COURSES ACROSS PROGRAMS**



### Contact hours

A contact hour is a measure of the amount of time students spend in classes (see Figure 4). 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 61% of all contact hours in inclusive courses. Forty-four of the TPSIDs (76%) had at least 50% of the contact hours in typical college courses attended by students with intellectual disability and other college students. Twenty-four percent of the TPSIDs had less than 50% of the contact hours in inclusive courses. The percentage of contact hours in inclusive courses was higher at 2-year IHEs than at 4-year IHEs (61% of contact hours in inclusive courses at 4-year IHEs vs. 59% of contact hours in inclusive courses at 2-year IHEs).



## FIGURE 4. DESCRIPTION OF CONTACT HOURS.\*

Higher education units in the United States are often measured and reported in terms of credit hours. In this report, we choose to focus on instructional contact hours, (i.e., the amount of scheduled class/seminar time, or scheduled supervision or study in settings like internships and independent study). We collect and report on contact hours rather than credit hours because they more accurately account for the diverse learning modalities provided by TPSID programs. Typically, one credit hour of lecture or seminar typically represents one instructional contact hour of scheduled class time and an expected two hours of out-of-class student preparation time.

At an IHE that uses a semester calendar, a typical 3-credit-hour course represents 45 instructional contact hours and an expected 90 hours of student preparation over the course of a semester.

To reduce burden on TPSID staff, NCC staff gathered inclusive course credit hour and term length information for each course using course catalogs from the host IHEs. The credit hours were then multiplied by the length of the term in weeks, which was typically 15 weeks for a semester and 10–11 weeks for a quarter, to arrive at the total number of instructional contact hours for the course (e.g., 4-credit course taken for a 15-week semester = 60 contact hours). Specialized course contact hours were provided directly by TPSID staff as specialized courses were not consistently listed in the course catalog and may have had irregular schedules (i.e., not weekly).

\*Source: [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/credits.doc](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/credits.doc)

## We All Learn From Each Other

**This is the first year Ms. Wilson has had a student from the Transition and Access Program (TAP) enrolled in her course. In describing her experiences with this student, Ms. Wilson shares, “She is very organized and goes after her goals. I want her to feel completely engaged. It’s a great experience for me, too.**

**Sometimes as faculty members we need to realize we aren’t the only ones imparting knowledge and experience to the student. It’s about what they gain from each other. It’s about what we gain from them and then how we learn and grow, as well.”**

*—Laurie Wilson, Associate Director at the University of Cincinnati Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning (DAAP), on the importance of being student-centered in her teaching.*

## Types of course enrollments

Twenty-eight percent of course enrollments were for standard IHE credit, 28% of enrollments were for audit, 5% were courses in which students unofficially attended/sat in, 3% were not-for-credit or non-credit, and 35% of enrollments were in courses offering credits which could only be used toward a TPSID credential. TPSID credential attainment was a reported motivator for 66% of course enrollments. Other motivating factors for course enrollments were that the course was related to a personal interest (59%), was related to the student’s career goals (51%), or was required for a degree or certificate (51%). See Figure 5 for examples of inclusive courses taken by students.

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

- An Introduction to the University
- College Composition
- Criminal Law
- Encounters in Human Diversity
- Fundamentals of Food Preparation
- Fundamentals of Public Speaking
- General Psychology
- Graphic Design I
- Intermediate Algebra
- Introduction to Acting
- Introduction to Sculpture Studio
- Introduction to Sociology
- Math 101
- Micro-computing Systems
- Office Skills I
- Personal Leadership
- Principles of Marketing
- Race and Social Justice
- Strategies for Success in College
- U.S. History Since 1877

## COVID-19 Impact on Course Enrollments

To determine any potential impact on course enrollments due to program changes related to COVID-19, we examined the number of enrollments by academic term. Given that academic terms at some IHEs are semesters whereas others are quarters, we considered the fall 2019 semester as well as any quarters that finished by March of 2020 as “before COVID-19” and the spring 2020 semester and any quarters beginning in or after March of 2020 as “at or after COVID-19.”

Fifty-four percent of all course enrollments were in the academic terms prior to COVID-19 compared with 46% in the academic terms impacted by COVID-19. In comparison, in the 2018–2019 academic year, 52% of course enrollments for which academic term was reported were in the fall term vs. 48% in the spring or summer terms, suggesting a pattern of a slightly higher number of course enrollments in the fall is not unique to the 2019–2020 academic year. Data on academic terms were missing from most course enrollments prior to 2018–2019, preventing us from further examining this pattern.

TPSIDs were asked to report if there was any particular impact on each course enrollment due to COVID-19. For 31% of courses in the spring academic term, the course was reported to have moved from in-person instruction to online instruction. Two percent of courses were reported to have been canceled and 3% were reported to have had modifications made to assignments. Forty-six TPSID programs (79%) reported there was an impact of 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 6% received all of their supports and accommodations from this office. The

remaining 94% also received support or accommodations from TPSID program staff, faculty, peer mentors, and others. A small number of students (n = 8 at Georgia Southern University) were reported to have been denied services from the DSO on their campus in 2019–2020. The reason provided for denial of services was the DSO on this campus will not provide services to anyone in the TPSID program.

## Access to Course Content is KEY for all Learners

**“I practice Universal Design [for Learning] for all of my students. I consider that access needs are something that all students have; it’s just the way they access their learning. I promote self-advocacy and find out what they really want from the class. I talk with each TAP student and discuss how they want to be engaged in the course and specifically design a plan for each student each semester.”**

*—Sammi Grant, Instructor at the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music (CCM), on the importance of accessibility and accommodations as a key component in designing classes and considering access for all students.*

## Credentials

Students were able to earn a credential at all 58 programs. At 56 TPSID programs (97%), one or more credentials that were developed by the TPSID were available to students in 2019–2020 (n = 102 TPSID-created credentials available at

## Virtual Learning Opportunities were a Lifeline During COVID-19

**“I recently attended a webinar where several doctors presented information and answered questions regarding many aspects of COVID and the Down syndrome (DS) population. After hearing information on infection rates in individuals with DS, the pending vaccine, etc., the discussion turned to the social/emotional well-being of individuals with DS who thrive being around people and physically being part of a community. The importance of online opportunities was discussed and almost everything suggested (maintaining a sense of community and peer relationships, activities, learning experiences, social opportunities, etc.) has been offered online by InclusiveU since March when Nathan returned home from campus. I can’t thank you all enough for realizing the needs of your students and for making the past months enriching and productive. The days have been filled with time not only to learn, but to play games, dance, and socialize with friends. We are blessed to be a part of the Syracuse University InclusiveU community.”**

*—Alicia Bach (parent of InclusiveU sophomore Nathan Bach)*



Nathan at home remotely taking his ARI 261 Painting Studio I class.

56 programs). The two remaining programs had not created a TPSID-specific credential, but students enrolled in those programs were eligible to earn a credential or credentials available to all students at the IHE.

Most programs (n = 42) created a single TPSID-specific credential. Seven programs offered two TPSID-specific credentials, and the remaining seven programs offered three or more TPSID-specific credentials. Thirty-three programs (57%) offered a TPSID-specific credential that was approved by the IHE. Eight programs offered a credential that aligned with an existing labor market credential. See Figure 6 for examples of TPSID-developed credentials.

### FIGURE 6: EXAMPLES OF CREDENTIALS DEVELOPED BY TPSIDS

- Certificate of Academic and Career Studies
- Electronic Records Management Specialist
- Fast Track to Employment
- Information Technology Assistant Certificate
- National Retail Foundation Credential
- Workforce Development Certificate

The expected length of time needed to earn a TPSID-specific credential ranged from half a semester to five academic years. The most common lengths of time it took to earn a credential were two academic years/four semesters (n = 31 credentials), one academic year/two semesters (n = 23), and four academic years (n = 16). Six programs had students who earned multiple TPSID-created credentials during the year.

## RESIDENTIAL

### Residential Options

In 2019–2020, 17 (30%) TPSID programs were located at commuter IHEs that did not provide housing for any student. Of the 41 TPSID programs located at residential schools, 27 (66%) offered housing to students in the TPSID program, and 14 did not. Insufficient housing availability was cited as the reason for restricting access at four of these IHEs. Additional reasons given for not offering housing to students in the TPSID program included students were not matriculated (two programs), and housing access was being planned but not yet available (two programs).

## Lindsey and Dana Share What It's Like Living on Campus

Lindsey Paputa, freshman in the Transition and Access Program (TAP) at University of Cincinnati shares that living on campus can be hard but it gets easier with experience and friendships. “It was hard moving to campus because we are in a pandemic. But I wash my hands, and wear my mask everywhere I go, and I have gotten used to it.” Some of her favorite places include the dining halls on campus where the food is really good! Outside of classes Lindsey enjoys photography and video games. Some advice she would give to a high school student thinking about attending college and living on campus is, “Don’t push yourself too hard and never give up. It gets easier. The dorm is pretty fun, and it’s fun living with someone new.”

Dana Laster shares that living on campus is going well and she has been successful with staying organized and keeping a schedule. “At first, it was kind of hard and sad to move away from home, but I got over it. I have been setting my alarm to get up every morning since middle school so that has really helped me.” Outside of classes, Dana likes to walk on campus and watch movies. Dana shares some advice to future college students: “College is fun. It’s hard at first, but you get used to it. Living in the dorm is fun because you get to meet new people.”



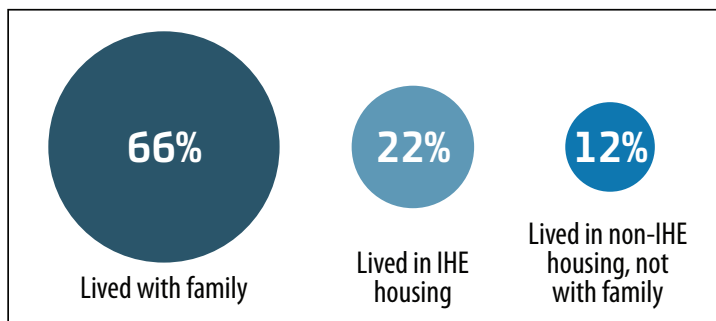
## Residential Supports

The most common residential supports provided were from a residential assistant or advisor (provided by 20 of the 27 programs that offered housing<sup>2</sup>) and intermittent or on-call support staff (13 of 27 programs). An uncompensated roommate/suitemate was provided at six programs. A roommate/suitemate who received compensation was provided at two programs. Continuous support staff was provided at one program, and other forms of support such as life coaches or peer mentors were provided at six programs.

## Student Housing

Two-thirds of students enrolled in TPSID programs (66%) lived with their family. Two hundred fifteen students (22%) lived in IHE housing, and 111 students (12%) lived in non-IHE housing, not with family (see Figure 7).

**FIGURE 7: STUDENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE**



Most of the students accessing IHE housing ( $n = 215$ ) lived in residence halls (78%) or in on-campus apartments (21%). Two students lived in off-campus apartments. Ninety-nine percent of these students lived in housing available to all IHE students (inclusive, as opposed to specialized, housing).

Among students not living with family or in IHE housing ( $n = 111$ ), 53 students lived in supervised apartments or in supported living, 47 students lived independently, eight students lived in group homes, and three students had other living arrangements, such as an apartment.

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The TPSIDs provide a wide array of employment services to students enrolled in their programs. Data were collected by the NCC and categorized into the following types of activity:

- **Career awareness and exploration:** Career awareness and exploration 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 work-based learning is to prepare for a particular job or improve general employment skill, and can be related or unrelated to coursework.
- **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.

Almost all students ( $n = 850$ ; 89%) participated in at least one of the above employment or career development activities (employment, work-based learning, career awareness and exploration, or job-seeking). The majority of students ( $n = 650$ ; 68%) were engaged either through paid employment, paid or unpaid work-based learning 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

Career awareness and exploration activities build student awareness of different careers, as well as awareness of specific types of jobs within certain careers. Activities involve introducing students to workplaces for the purpose of gaining information about an industry or job, and building general skills required for participating in job search activities. TPSIDs report 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.

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

Activity	Definition	Data Collected
<b>Company tour</b>	A group excursion for the purpose of first-hand observation to specific work sites. 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>	A career fair is 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 opportunity. Involves working with another employee who might have a different job in hand, might have something to teach, or can help the person shadowing them to 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 tool that might be used.	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 these relate to the world of work. It is used as a tool to identify what kinds of careers you 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 the LinkedIn website 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 above.	

### CAE participation during the year

Table 3 reflects participation in each CAE activity during the 2019–2020 academic year. The majority of students (n = 812, 85%) participated in at least one CAE activity. The most common CAE activity was creating or revising a resume (79% of students). At least half of the students completed an interest inventory, participated in a mock interview, gathered references, conducted labor market research, or attended a career fair during the academic year.

Examples of other CAE activities students participated in this year included practicing requests for accommodations, practicing an elevator speech, discussing disclosure of their disability, and writing thank you notes after interviews.

Information was also collected 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. Information on the frequency of other CAE activities can be seen in Table 4.

**TABLE 3. PARTICIPATION IN CAE ACTIVITIES IN 2019-2020**

	Number of students who participated in activity (N=956*)	Percentage of students who participated in activity
<b>Create or revise resume</b>	752	79%
<b>Interest inventory</b>	615	64%
<b>Mock interview</b>	564	59%
<b>Gathered references</b>	504	53%
<b>Labor market research</b>	483	51%
<b>Career fair</b>	391	41%
<b>Informational interview</b>	367	38%
<b>Company tour</b>	333	35%
<b>Job shadow</b>	279	29%
<b>Create LinkedIn profile</b>	192	20%
<b>Other activity</b>	197	21%

TABLE 4. DESCRIPTIVE DATA ON CAE ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

	Number of participating students	Median number of times activities completed	Mean number of times activities completed
Company tour	333	2	3
Career fair	391	1	2
Job shadow	279	2	3
Informational interview	367	1	2

## Work-Based Learning

The primary purpose of work-based learning (WBL) experiences is for students to develop and practice workplace-specific skills as well as general employment soft skills. These experiences can be paid or unpaid and may be related to college coursework. Types of work-based learning include internships, student enterprise, work training, unpaid work experience, and service learning. Internships were defined as temporary positions to develop specific job-related skills. Internships emphasize on-the-job training and could be paid or unpaid. Paid internships provided students with a supervised work or service experience where the individual has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she is learning throughout the experience. In some instances, but not all, the student receives academic credit. Student enterprises were defined as school-based enterprises that produced goods or services for sale or to be used by people other than the participating students. Work training was defined as 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 were defined as exploratory and time-limited placements that offered students first-hand exposure to the workplace and the opportunity to explore different careers. Service learning was defined as activities that integrate meaningful community service with classroom instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

### *Paid work-based learning*

Paid WBL experiences included internships, student enterprises, and work training experiences. One hundred sixty-three students (17%) had at least one paid WBL experience. These students had a total of 327 paid WBL experiences. Ninety-seven students had multiple paid WBL experiences during the year.

The majority of paid WBL experiences were paid internships (n = 316 internships; 97% of all reported paid WBL experiences). Other types of paid WBL, which included individual and group work training sites and service learning, accounted for less than 3% of all paid WBL experiences (n = 11 paid WBL experiences).

## Hands-on Employment Training WORKS for Students

Over the summer, Joey Beltran (pictured) and Yohannes Berhan participated in the Starbucks Micro-Credential in Customer Service certificate program. The



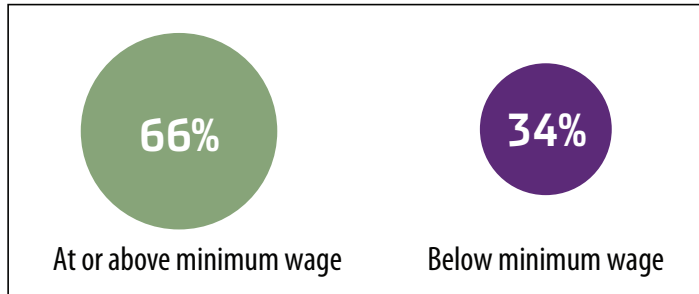
program is funded by the Starbucks Foundation and available to high school students enrolled in the Achieve program and to high school students in the college's pre-employment transition program, Future Launch. This certificate program was designed to increase access to postsecondary education, training, and work experience for individuals with disabilities. Program activities quickly moved to a virtual platform and were designed to prepare students for employment and launch them on a path of opportunity—armed with skills, confidence, and a certificate.

All students who began the program completed it and earned a college credit and certificate in "Global Excellence in Customer Service." Demonstrating commitment and perseverance, every student attended and participated in every class even after the pandemic hit. Not one student missed a single assignment. Starbucks executives participated in course activities. The program culminated in a Starbucks Experience Day at the Starbucks Roastery Reserve in Seattle. Students were given tours of the facility, completed coffee tastings, met with and learned about a variety of positions within the Starbucks organization, learned to make coffee, and were treated to snacks and T-shirts. Multiple Starbucks executives were in attendance.

## Wages and hours

The majority of paid WBL experiences for which wage information was reported (66%, n = 208) paid at or above the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, whereas 108 paid WBL experiences (34%) paid below minimum wage (see Figure 8). Nearly all of the WBL experiences that paid below minimum wage were paid internships (n = 107; the remaining job was at an individual work training site). Wage information was missing for 11 paid WBL records.

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



Note: Federal minimum wage = \$7.25/hour. n = 316 paid WBL experiences. Wages were not reported for 11 WBL experiences.

Students worked between five and 20 hours per week at 90% of paid WBL experiences for which hours were reported. Hours were not reported for one paid WBL experience. The entity that paid students differed by WBL experience. In paid internships, students were paid by the TPSID program (n = 124, 41% of internships), the employer (n = 56, 18%), the host IHE (n = 5, 2%), or another entity (n = 118, 39%). At one program, students held 51 internships that were paid by California regional center funds (16%). Information on the entity paying students was missing for 13 paid internships.

## Unpaid work-based learning

More than 40% of students (n = 401 students, 42%) participated in 652 unpaid WBL experiences in 2019–20. The 652 unpaid WBL experiences included 407 unpaid internships (62% of all reported unpaid WBL experiences), 141 unpaid work experiences (22%), and 45 service-learning experiences (7%). All other types of unpaid WBL accounted for about 9% of all unpaid WBL experiences. Unpaid internships were more common than paid internships (407 unpaid vs. 316 paid internships). Forty-six percent of students (n = 186) participated in multiple unpaid WBL experiences in 2019–2020. One hundred eight students had two or more unpaid internships during the year. Figure 9 provides examples of unpaid internship sites.

**FIGURE 9: EXAMPLES OF UNPAID INTERNSHIP SITES IN 2019-20**

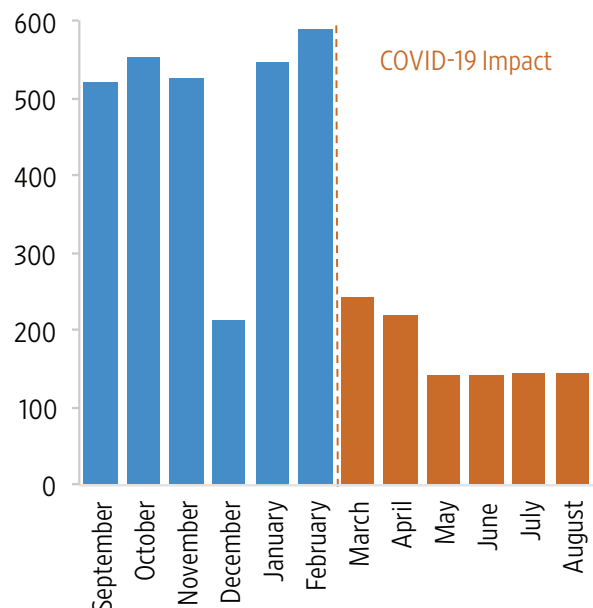
- Staten Island Children's Museum
- Dental Hygiene Clinic
- Student Radio Station
- Nashville Soccer Club
- Senator's Office
- Tennessee Department of Education
- Ronald McDonald House

## COVID-19 impact on work-based learning

TPSIDs were asked to report on the impact of COVID-19 on WBL positions. Of the 563 paid and unpaid WBL positions for which this information was provided, only 22% (n = 122) were reported to have had no impact. Paid and unpaid WBL positions were almost equally impacted: 12% of unpaid WBL positions were reported not to have been impacted vs. 14% of paid WBL positions not impacted.

The following COVID-19 related impacts were reported: WBL is on hold and will resume when employer reopens (n = 160, 28%), student was laid off (n = 121, 21%), student lost WBL because they had to move out of the area (n = 80, 14%), student continued working remotely (n = 20, 4%), or other (n = 60, 11%). The most frequently reported other impact was that the WBL was lost because the location closed due to COVID-19 with no option for remote work. Additionally, 428 students (n = 45%) were reported to have had no WBL opportunities this academic year specifically because of COVID-19. Figure 10 shows there was a visible reduction in the number of positions held by students in February 2020 (n = 591) to March 2020 (n = 242).

**FIGURE 10. NUMBER OF WORK-BASED LEARNING (WBL) POSITIONS BY MONTH**

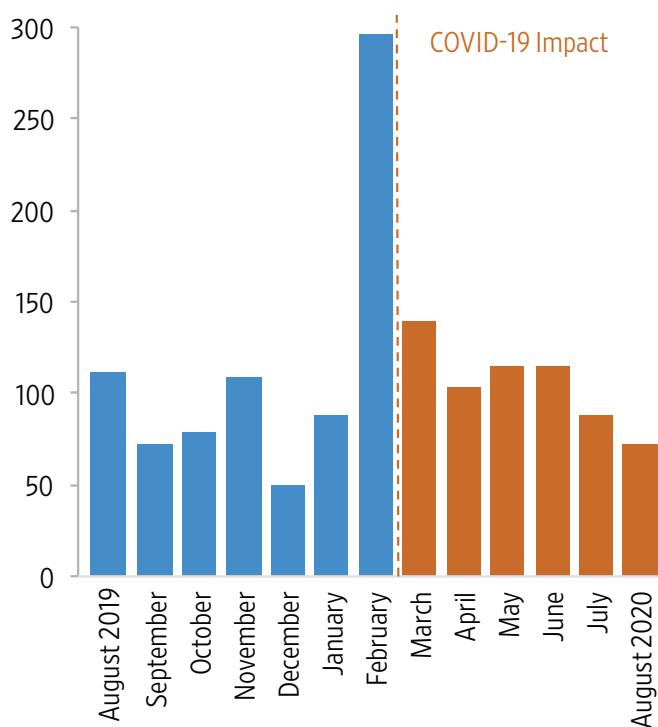




## Job-Seeking

The job-seeking activity data collected reflected students' submission of employment and internship applications, participation in interviews, and receipt of offers of paid positions. More than a third of the students enrolled in 2019–2020 participated in job seeking activities ( $n = 385$ , 40%). Three hundred sixty-one students (38%) applied for paid positions in 2019–2020, 280 students (29%) interviewed for paid positions, and 215 students (22%) reported receiving one or more offers for paid positions. Students attending TPSID programs were reported to have applied to 1,400 positions, interviewed for 786 positions, and received 280 offers. February was the most popular month for job applications ( $n = 298$ , 21% of all job applications). See Figure 11 for the number of job applications by month.

**FIGURE 11. STUDENT JOB APPLICATIONS BY MONTH**



February was also the month when students had the most interviews ( $n = 222$  interviews, 28% of all interviews).

## Paid Employment

Paid employment included individual paid jobs, as well as other types of employment, such as federal work study and self-employment. An individual paid job was defined as work in the competitive labor market paid for by an employer at or above minimum wage. Federal work study positions were those 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 was defined as 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. Students 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 2019–2020, 305 students (32%) were engaged in any type of paid employment while enrolled. Students held a total of 417 paid employment positions. Eighty-five students (28% of students with a paid job) had more than one paid employment (any type), with some students having three, four, or even five paid employment positions. Fifty-six percent of the students who were employed had never held a paid job prior to entering the TPSID<sup>3</sup>.

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



Two hundred seventy-five students (29%) held individual paid jobs and were earning at least minimum wage (see examples in Figure 12). The remaining students were employed by federal work study positions ( $n = 6$  students), self-employment ( $n = 2$ ), other job types ( $n = 22$ ), or a combination of these ( $n = 10$ ). See Figure 12 for examples of individual paid jobs held by students.

**FIGURE 12: EXAMPLES OF INDIVIDUAL PAID JOBS HELD BY STUDENTS ATTENDING TPSIDS**

- Tea Blender and Packager
- Associate at Home Depot
- Ramp Agent at Kamaka Air
- New Parent Outreach Support at Northwest Disability Support
- Audio Tech at Sound Beat Podcast
- Food Services Staff at NBC Universal Studios
- Data Entry Staff at Heartland Homecare Pharmacy
- Game Day Staff at Lincoln Financial Field

## Wages and hours

Wage information was reported for 313 jobs. All but three reported jobs paid at or above the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour. Wage information was missing for 104 employment records.

## Turning Interests into Job Opportunities

Wesley has a great interest in video games, and his long-term goal is to become a software engineer. As a part of the Achieve certificate program, students can participate in an internship and work with



an Employment Consultant to secure and maintain employment. The pandemic has posed some additional challenges in developing internships and jobs. Nevertheless, Wesley and his Employment Consultant, Brandy, persevered and found an opportunity in video game testing at HCL Technologies. At the internship interview, Wesley was offered a job on the spot. When asked about his new job, Wesley said, "I'm mostly into video games. I'm a PC gamer. I'm good with computers. I'm really excited to do the video game tester job, since I have passion working with video games. It will be the greatest job I ever have. Working as a video game tester, I will help test if they have the game mechanics right or looking at the AI of the characters, and there's got to be optimization. I want to make the money. I would be saving up for building a gaming PC for my sister."

—Wesley Ngem, Achieve graduate, Highline College

Students worked between five and 20 hours per week at 69% of jobs for which hours were reported ( $n = 331$ ). Students worked fewer than five hours at 15% of jobs and more than 20 hours at 16% of jobs. The employer paid the student directly at 95% of individual paid jobs<sup>4</sup>.

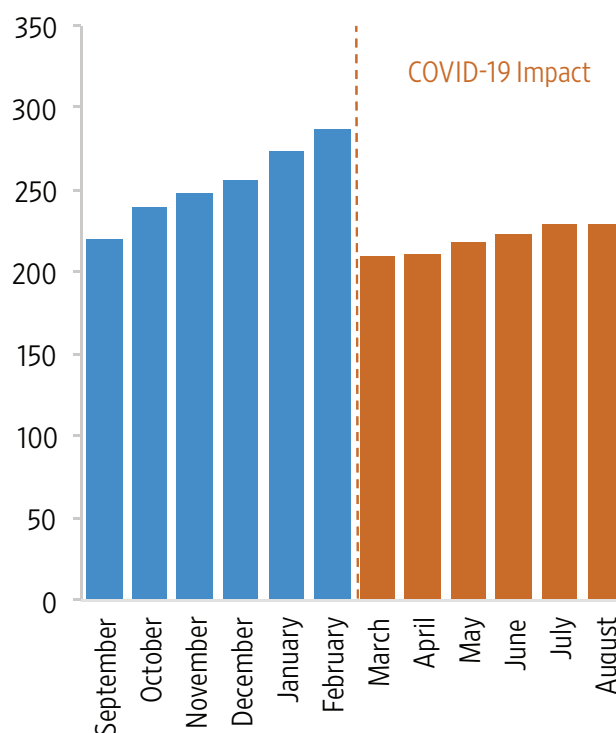
### COVID-19 impact on employment

TPSIDs were asked to report on the impact of COVID-19 on student employment. Of the 245 jobs for which this information was provided, 31% ( $n = 76$ ) were reported to have had no impact. The following COVID-19 related impacts were reported: job is on hold and will resume when employer reopens ( $n = 53$ , 22%), student lost job because they had to move out of the area ( $n = 43$ , 18%), student was laid off

( $n = 23$ , 9%), student continued working remotely ( $n = 10$ , 4%), or other ( $n = 40$ , 16%). The most frequently reported other impact was that hours were reduced.

Figure 13 shows the number of employment positions held by students each month and demonstrates a visible reduction in the number of jobs held by students from February 2020 ( $n = 287$ ) to March 2020 ( $n = 209$ ).

**FIGURE 13. NUMBER OF EMPLOYMENT POSITIONS BY MONTH**



### Summary of Paid Positions

To assist in comparisons with previous annual reports, below we offer a composite of paid employment and paid work-based learning data for the 2019–2020 academic year.

In Year 5, 44% of students ( $n = 419$ ) had at least one paid position while enrolled. Students attending TPSID programs held a total of 744 paid positions. Two hundred four students (49% 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 ( $n = 367$ , 49% of all paid positions) followed by paid internships ( $n = 317$ , 43%). All other types of paid positions including federal work study, work training sites, and self-employment accounted for about 8% of all paid jobs ( $n = 61$ ).

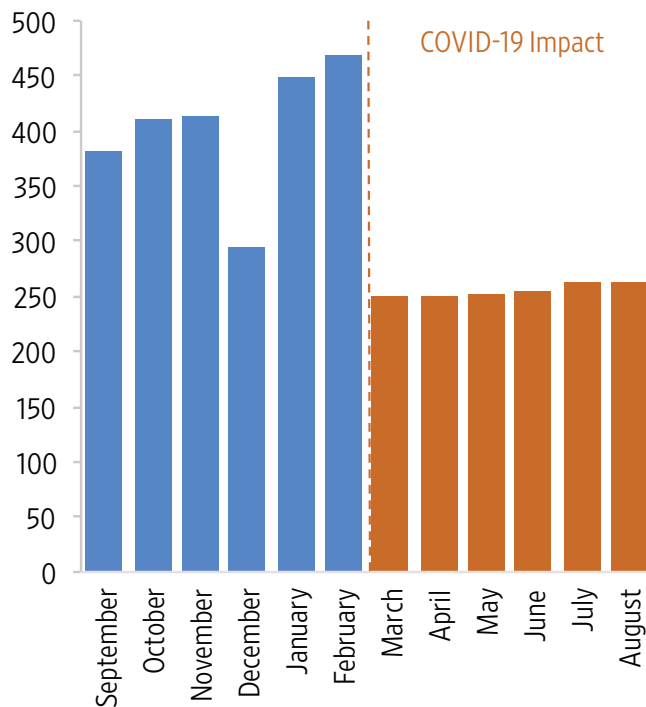
**44%** of students had a paid job or paid work-based learning experience.



### COVID-19 impact on paid positions

Figure 14 shows the number of paid positions held by students each month and demonstrates a visible reduction in the number of paid positions held by students from February 2020 (n = 468) to March 2020 (n = 250).

**FIGURE 14. NUMBER OF PAID POSITIONS BY MONTH**



Note: Paid positions include paid employment and paid work-based learning.

### VR services

**31%** of students received services from a VR program.



Three hundred eighty-two students (40%) were enrolled in their state VR program in 2019–2020, and 300 (32%) received services provided or purchased by VR during the year. Eighteen students were denied services by VR<sup>5</sup>. The most common

services provided by VR to students enrolled in a VR program were self-advocacy instruction (30% of students who received VR services), work-based learning (29%), job readiness training (29%), job coaching (26%), and benefits counseling (23%). Students also received supported employment services (7%) and social skills instruction (4%) from VR.

## INTEGRATION WITH HOST INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Students attending all TPSID programs were able to join registered student organizations, and 91% of programs had students who joined these organizations. In 100% of programs, students attending the TPSID were able to attend social events on campus that are only available to students at the institution of higher education (IHE), and 98% of programs reported that the students attended social events on campus.

Almost all (95%) of the TPSIDs followed the IHE academic calendar, and 100% held students to the IHE code of conduct and issued official student identification cards from the IHE. Official transcripts from the IHE were issued in 66% of programs, and program transcripts not officially from the IHE were issued in 17% of programs. Fourteen percent issued both an official transcript from the IHE and a transcript from the TPSID program. Two programs (3%) reported that students did not receive any transcript.

The most common types of resources accessed by students were the library (98% of programs), the bookstore (97%), student center or dining hall (95%), computer lab/student IT services (93%), sports and recreation facilities or arts/cultural center (93%), health center/counseling services (88%), registrar/bursar/financial aid (83%), career services (78%), and the DSO (72%). Resources accessed at fewer campuses were tutoring services (66%), residential life (47%), and off-campus housing services (26%). All programs stated students accessed at least one of these campus resources.

Forty-one (71%) TPSID programs reported students attended the regular orientation for new students at the IHE, and family members of students attended the regular parent orientation at 47% of TPSIDs. The majority of programs provided a special orientation for students (86%) and for family members (81%).

## Inclusion at the Highest Academic Level

“A representative from the Utah State University Students’ Association (USUSA) contacted me recently to say USUSA is rewriting its bylaws and wanted to ensure that the updated language reflects the status of students in Aggies Elevated as bona fide members of the students’ association. Since the Aggies Elevated program began in 2014, our students have always paid all regular student fees and had access to all campus services and events, but had not been eligible to hold USUSA offices or leadership positions. The change in language is an indication of how fully our program has been embraced by our university and integrated into campus culture. Aggies Elevated serves 11 students this year (an unfortunate decrease due to the pandemic); USU’s student population is approximately 28,000. THIS is campus inclusion!”



—Sue Reeves, Program Director,  
Aggies Elevated at Utah State University

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

TPSIDs were asked to report each instance of a partnership with an external organization. For example, if a TPSID partnered with more than one local education agencies (LEAs), they entered a record for each LEA. TPSID programs partnered with 373 external organizations in 2019–2020, an average of six partners per program. Sixty-six percent of programs partnered with LEAs, 64% partnered with state VR agencies, and 55% partnered with state or county intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) agencies.

Programs had the highest number of partnerships with LEAs (n = 126 partnerships), VR agencies (n = 41), state or county IDD agencies (n = 34), advocacy groups (n = 33), community rehabilitation providers (CRPs, n = 30), employers (n = 27), developmental disabilities (DD) councils (n = 20), and University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs, n = 19). Other TPSID partners (n = 37) included business advisory councils, private foundations, and placements for student practica.

The three most common partner roles included serving on an advisory board or as a consultant (41% of all partnerships), providing services directly to students (38%), and providing career development opportunities for students (25%).

TPSIDs reported that 11% of partners played additional roles including referring students to the program and helping with student recruitment, connecting students to employers in the community, providing access to and funding for services, or providing funds for student mentors or other staff.

Sixty-two percent of the TPSIDs that partnered with VR (n = 23 of 37 programs) reported they collaborated with VR to provide pre-employment transition services as defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA, 2014). VR agencies provided direct services to students at 27 of the 37 TPSIDs that partnered with VR.

## TPSID Impact on Schools, Colleges, and Universities

The staff of the TPSID programs conduct significant outreach and offer information as well as technical assistance to other LEAs as well as colleges and universities. A majority of TPSIDs indicated the existence of their program led to increased interest or action in their region or state for developing inclusive higher education.

Twenty-three of the 27 TPSIDs that responded to the survey had provided information or training to other colleges and universities. The most frequently cited activities were offering tours or visits (n = 20, 74%), sharing program information at conferences (n = 20, 74%), and providing virtual technical assistance via phone/email (n = 19, 70%). TPSIDs also reported assisting with planning or evaluation for other programs (n = 6, 59%), providing in-person training or technical assistance (n = 16, 59%), hosting regional events/conference/symposia (n = 13, 48%), and hosting webinars (n = 10, 37%).

TPSIDs estimated they had provided information and training to 396 colleges and universities over the past five years. Most had assisted colleges and universities outside of their state, including some states in which there were no TPSID programs.

Twenty-five TPSIDs had provided information or training to LEAs. The most frequent activities with LEAs were offering tours or visits to their college or university (n = 24, 89%), sharing program information at conferences (n = 21, 78%), and assisting with student or family planning (n = 21, 78%). Other types of information and training provided to LEAs

included providing in-person training or technical assistance (n = 18, 67%), providing virtual technical assistance (via phone/email) (n = 14, 52%), hosting regional events/conference/symposia (n = 11, 41%), and hosting webinars (n = 9, 33%).

TPSIDs estimated they had provided information and training to 741 LEAs over the past five years. Only three had provided information and training to LEAs outside of their own state. TPSIDs also reported providing training to other entities including VR, DD agencies, other state agencies, and parents.

## FINANCES

### Sustainability

In 2019–2020, 93% of TPSIDs received financial support from external sources, such as state VR agencies and state IDD agencies. In 26 of the 37 programs that partnered with VR (70%), VR provided funds for student tuition, and in 15 of the 37 programs (41%), VR provided funds for other student expenses. Annual costs of the TPSID programs varied widely, ranging from \$0–\$73,000 per year. Mean annual total cost of attendance was:

- \$13,977 for programs that charge the same rate for all students attending the TPSID (n = 25)
- \$8,933 to attend a program as an in-state student at a program that had an in-state rate (n = 25)
- \$27,106 to attend a program as an out-of-state student at a program that had an out-of-state rate (n = 4)
- \$15,567 to attend a program that charged another type of rate (n = 3)

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).

Thirty-six TPSID programs (62%) had external partners who provided funds for student tuition. Additionally, 34 programs (59%) 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 LEAs (n = 78), advocacy groups (n = 19), VR (n = 15), and state IDD agencies (n = 11). Twenty-four programs (41%) 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 U.S. Department of Education. To meet these match requirements, 85% of programs used in-kind contributions such as faculty/staff time (79%), physical space (57%), or materials (35%).

### Post-grant funding plans

Of the 27 TPSIDs that responded to the voluntary survey, 24 planned to continue operating their program after the end of the TPSID grant (two TPSIDs were not sure, and one did not plan to continue operating the program). Changes were anticipated in the following areas: staffing levels (n = 16, 59%), cost of attendance (n = 12, 44%), course of study or credential (n = 10, 37%), academic access (n = 8, 30%), student services (n = 7, 26%), or other (n = 9, 33%). Sixteen programs (59%) planned to request a no-cost extension, six (22%) were unsure, and five (19%) did not plan to request an extension. Twenty programs (74%) anticipated applying for further TPSID funding.

At the time of the survey (June, 2020), seven programs (26%) anticipated their IHE would continue remote learning in fall 2020. Six programs (22%) said remote learning would end, 13 programs (48%) were not sure, and one program (4%) did not respond to this question.

### Student Financing

Information on tuition expenses and non-tuition expenses (e.g. fees, room and board, books) was collected for each student. For tuition expenses, private pay was the most commonly cited source of funding (for 41% of students), followed by scholarships (22%), state IDD agency funds (19%), state VR agency funds (17%), Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Medicaid waiver (12%), federal/state grants (12%), and local education agency funds (8%). Tuition was waived for 21 students. Private pay was the most commonly used source of funds to pay non-tuition expenses (54% of students). HCBS waiver funds from state IDD agencies were used by 19% of students to pay for non-tuition expenses.

Seventy-one percent (n = 681) of students were attending programs approved as CTP programs and able to offer eligible students access to federal student aid. One hundred eighty-eight students (20%) 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 342 students exited their IHE program during the reporting period. Of the students who exited, 79% (n = 270) completed a program and earned a credential. Among the 72 students who did not complete a program, the most common reasons given for exit were: no longer wanting to attend the program (n = 27), being dismissed from the program (n = 8), and transferring to another postsecondary program (n = 1). Students who did not complete programs exited for various other reasons (n = 30) such as financial issues, aging out, or mental health concerns. Five students were reported to have exited their program due to COVID-19, citing health concerns or not wanting to take online coursework.

### College is a Life-changing Event for Some Students

My name is Curtis Ostrowski. I graduated from the Integrated Studies Program at Millersville University in 2019. I currently work as a one-on-one paraprofessional. Going to college changed my life because it showed me what Americorp is and how good it looks on a resume. In the end, it helped me get this job that I am so passionate about, which is helping students in a school setting, and I am eternally grateful. I am also getting an apartment with my awesome roommate that I met in Wisconsin, and I am working on taking some online classes. The college experience helped me to be more insightful and to get things done. I am really glad I went to Millersville.



—Curtis Ostrowski, Millersville University graduate

### Credentials Earned

Data on credentials earned were reported for 266 of the 270 students who completed a program. The most frequent type of credential earned was a credential developed by the TPSID. Two hundred eighteen students earned 246 TPSID-created credentials. One hundred ninety-seven students earned a single TPSID-created credential, 14 students earned two TPSID-created credentials, and seven students earned three TPSID-created credentials. Of the TPSID credentials earned, 133

(54% of TPSID-created credentials earned) were approved by the IHE governance structure.

Credentials earned were awarded by the TPSID program (n = 118), the IHE (n = 96), the IHE continuing education division (n = 23), or another entity (n = 9). Thirty-two credentials awarded were reported to be industry-recognized (e.g., by the National Restaurant Association, American Heart Association, the American Hotel and Restaurant Association, the National Retail Foundation, or a state-specific education agency).

Forty-eight students at eight programs earned an existing credential not developed by the TPSID. Examples of existing credentials were Certificate of Nutrition, Certificate of Child and Family Studies, and University College Certificate. Twenty students completed the coursework required to earn a credential but were not awarded the credential. Eight of these cited disruption in their studies due to COVID-19 as the reason for not being awarded the credential (e.g., needing more hours or unable to take the test). All 20 of these students did earn another credential from their TPSID program upon exit.

### Activities at Exit

Most students who exited (n = 243; 71%) 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.

Seventy-three students (21%) were working in a paid job at exit or within the first 90 days after exiting, either in combination with unpaid career development experience CDE: (CDE; n = 48, 14%) or a paid job only (n = 25; 7%). One hundred sixty-eight students (49%) were participating only in unpaid career development experience. Two students (<1%) continued on to further postsecondary education. Ninety-nine students (29%) were not engaged in any of these activities at exit (or within 90 days in the case of employment; see Figure 15).

**FIGURE 15: NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENGAGED IN EACH ACTIVITY AT OR WITHIN 90 DAYS OF EXIT**



Note: No paid job, career development, or postsecondary education activities were reported for 99 students.

## TRENDS

By comparing the Year 5 TPSID data with previous years, we can identify areas of growth and changes experienced by the Cohort 2 TPSIDs. Changes may be attributed to factors such as the increased number of students served as programs increased in size or gained experience in serving students. Additional shifts may reflect targeted areas of growth, such as emphasizing credential attainment, employment, or inclusive course access. In Year 5, there was an additional influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on TPSID programs.

Comparisons in program and student data across all five years of TPSID Cohort 2 are shown in Figure 16.

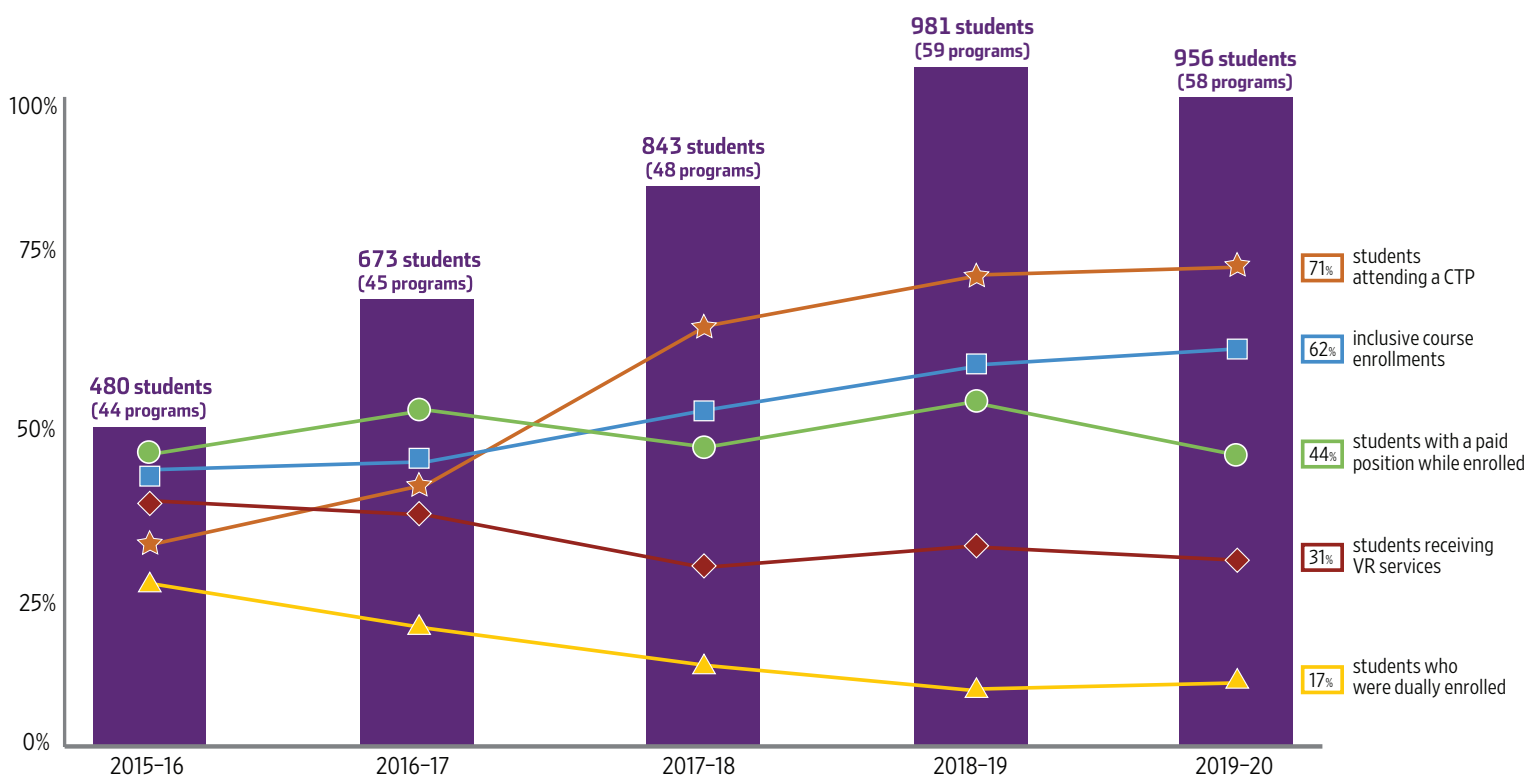
Between Years 1 and 5, the number of TPSID programs increased 34% from 44 to 58, and the number of students served increased almost 200% from 480 to 956. Over the last 5 years, there has been a decrease in the percentage of high school students enrolled (overall decrease from 31% of students in Year 1 to 17% in Year 5), although there was a slight increase in this percentage from Year 4 to Year 5. However, the number of high school students has remained relatively stable over the 5 years, suggesting the increase in percentage of adult students can be attributed to a proportionally greater increase in the number of adult students served in the overall sample.

The percentage of students attending approved CTP programs increased again in Year 5, with the number of approved CTP programs increasing substantially from 12 in Year 1 to 34 in Year 5<sup>6</sup>. The increase in the number of CTP programs meant a high percentage of students were attending programs where they could apply for federal financial aid (71% of students in Year 5). A greater number of students at CTP programs received Pell grants in Year 5 than in previous years (188 students in Year 5, 157 students in Year 4, 150 students in Year 3, 70 students in Year 2, and 12 students in Year 1).

The percentage of enrollments in inclusive courses continued to grow this year, from a starting point of 44% in Year 1 to 62% in Year 5. The average number of courses taken by students remained constant at seven courses per student per year, with students enrolling in, on average, four inclusive and three specialized courses. Year 5 represents the highest proportion of inclusive classes attained thus far since TPSID funding began in 2010.

The percentage of students receiving services from VR had decreased from 40% in Year 1 to 31% in Year 5. TPSIDs have indicated they are not always able to obtain this information from students, so the percentage may be higher.

**FIGURE 16: KEY TPSID PROGRAM AND STUDENT INDICATORS**

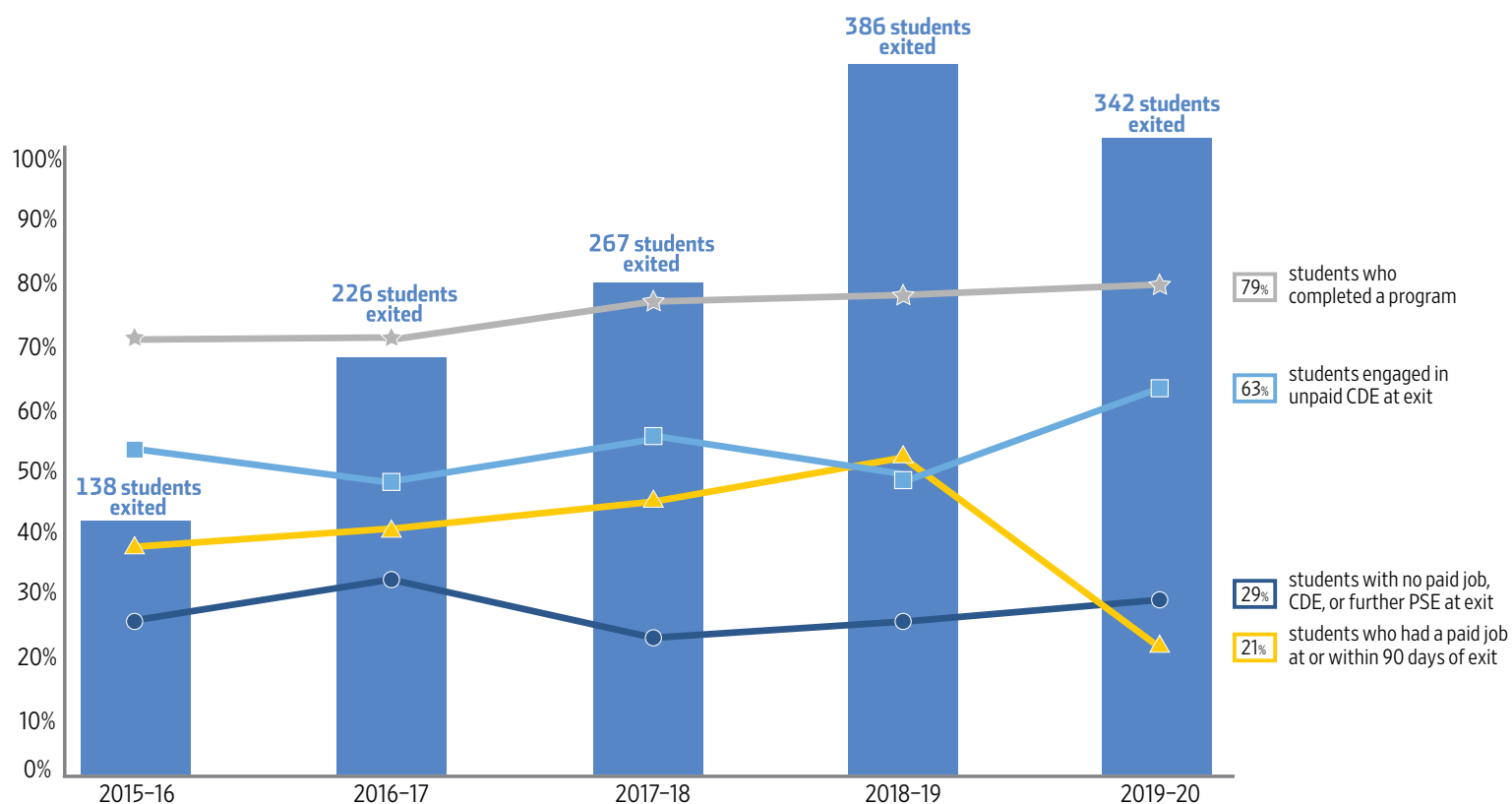


Although an increase was seen in the percentage of students with a paid position, from 46% in Year 1 to 53% in Year 4, this percentage dropped to 44% in Year 5. Similarly, the percentage of students who were reported to have participated in either paid employment or one of the career-related activities dipped slightly from 93% of students in Year 4 to 89% of students in Year 5. This does still indicate, however, the vast majority of students attending TPSID programs are engaged in some kind of activity related to employment.

Comparisons of student activities at exit are shown in Figure 17. The number of students who exited TPSID programs has increased steadily from 138 in Year 1 to 342 in Year 5. A higher percentage of students exited because they completed a program than for other reasons in Year 5 than in previous years (79%). The percentage of students who had a paid job at exit or within 90 days dropped substantially from 52% in Year 4 to 21% in Year 5, indicating students who attended TPSIDs struggled this year in finding paid employment in the time period immediately following their program likely due to the pandemic.

**The percentage of students attending approved CTP programs increased again in Year 5, which means a high percentage of students were attending programs where they could apply for federal financial aid.**

**FIGURE 17: KEY STUDENT EXIT INDICATORS AT TPSIDS**





# Reflections of a College Parent

## Q & A with Dee Sapp, Lawrence Sapp's mother

### Can you tell us what college means for Lawrence and your family?

What college means for us is the opportunity for Lawrence to create a life for himself based upon not only his wants and needs, but based upon his capabilities. College gives him the opportunity to narrow down his options based upon his personal experiences and personal goals and objectives, as opposed to someone deciding for him what opportunities he should pursue. College also allows him to further develop his social and interpersonal skills through trial and error. Receiving a college education will also decrease the chances of his being a part of the overwhelming statistics of people who are either unemployed, underemployed, or simply unsatisfied with their socioeconomic status.



Lawrence is a 1st year student at University of Cincinnati and is training to be in the 2021 Paralympics. He is also featured on the cover of this report.

### Was college always a goal?

Yes. We actually never considered him NOT going. He is the middle child of three children, and college after high school has always been the logical next step for our children unless there was a clear plan for employment or entrepreneurship.

### What made attending TAP at University of Cincinnati appealing?

What made the University of Cincinnati (UC) appealing was the level of inclusive practices throughout the campus. Lawrence thrives from engaging with peers and being included in all facets of community life, and UC has been able to afford him this opportunity.

### Is there a particular class that he loves and is bringing out good things in him?


He's in a PT conditioning class that he really seems to like. The class meets at 6:00 am outside, and he's expressed how nice and friendly the people in that class are. He's not really mentioned any other classes, but he got a 4.0 last semester, so he did well even if they weren't his favorite.

### Is college helping Lawrence in any noticeable ways?

Most definitely. I noticed positive changes in Lawrence within the first month of his being at UC. He's always had the will to do things independently, but he's definitely doing things more independently due to his time at UC. He's washing his own clothes, scheduling meetings/appointments, has better time management, is advocating for himself, and is a much better listener and communicator.

## POST-EXIT OUTCOME DATA

**59%** of respondents to a 1-year outcome survey had a paid job one year after completing a TPSID program.



### One Year Outcomes

One year after program completion, TPSIDs reported outcomes for 464 students who completed their Cohort 2 TPSID program in 2015–2016 through 2018–2019. This reflects a 59% response rate for all students who completed a program in these years. Fifty-nine percent (n = 275) of respondents to the one-year outcome survey had a paid job one year after exit. By comparison, 19% of adults with developmental disabilities in the general population had a paid job in the community in 2018–2019, the most recent year for which data are available (National Core Indicators, 2019).

Thirty-four percent of respondents (n = 159) were not working one year after exit. These 159 former students reported they were doing other things, such as looking for work (n = 85), attending postsecondary education (n = 53), or doing unpaid career development activities (n = 89). Twenty-two of the 272 respondents (8%) did not report their employment status.

Twenty-six percent of respondents reported they were pursuing further education in the year after completing their TPSID program. Slightly more than half (53%) were not living with family while the remaining 47% lived with family. Ninety-two percent of respondents reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with their social life (this excludes 63 students who did not answer this question).

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**Ninety-two percent of respondents reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with their social life**

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### Two Year Outcomes

Data on outcomes two years after program completion were reported for 228 students who completed their Cohort 2 TPSID program in 2015–2016, 2016–2017, or 2017–2018 (47% response rate). Sixty-six percent (n = 150) of respondents to the 2-year outcome survey had a paid job two years after exit. Forty-six percent (n = 106) of respondents to the 2-year outcome survey lived with family.

**66%** of respondents to a 2-year outcome survey had a paid job two years after completing a TPSID program.



### Three Year Outcomes

Data on outcomes three years after program completion were reported for 100 students who completed their Cohort 2 TPSID program in 2015–2016 or 2016–2017 (39% response rate). Sixty-seven percent (n = 67) of respondents to the 3-year outcome survey had a paid job three years after exit. Thirty-five percent (n = 35) of respondents to the 3-year outcome survey lived with family.



Highline College students who participated in a micro-credentialed program offered by the Starbucks Foundation enjoyed Starbucks Experience Day at the Starbucks Roastery Reserve in Seattle once they finished the program.

## 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.

The long-term outcome data are collected by the TPSIDs via a survey, and it is possible that data collected reflect a response bias, with students with more positive outcomes being more willing to respond to the survey questions. Outcome data are collected by the TPSIDs, and the NCC does not control the procedures used to gather these data.

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

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**An encouraging development was the marked growth in academically inclusive courses, with 62% of student enrollments being in inclusive classes. Access to inclusive courses is important for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, inclusive course access is one of the hallmark outcomes of the TPSID program.**

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## CONCLUSION

The fifth year of the Cohort 2 TPSID model demonstration program offered access to higher education to 956 students with intellectual and developmental disabilities at 58 programs located at 56 college and university campuses in the United States. Most of these programs (n = 43) were implemented at 4-year colleges and universities, with just over a quarter of programs being implemented at 2-year institutions (n = 15). The most frequent length of programs was two years, including those programs offered at 4-year institutions.

### Collaboration with K-12 LEAs

A small increase was seen this year in the percentage of high school students enrolled in TPSID programs (17%); however, this proportion remains lower than in earlier years of the Cohort 2 program. While high school student enrollment remains lower, this does not necessarily reflect a lack of collaboration between the colleges and universities hosting TPSID programs and K-12 local education agencies. Two thirds of TPSID programs reported having partnerships with LEAs representing over 126 direct partnerships. In addition, TPSIDs also reported providing information and training to LEAs in the form of tours, planning assistance, and phone or email technical assistance. Technical assistance and training were provided by TPSIDs to 741 LEAs in the United States. This represents a significant level of outreach and engagement in the K-12 community.

### Increased Inclusive Course Access

An encouraging development was the marked growth in academically inclusive courses, with 62% of student enrollments being in inclusive classes. Access to inclusive courses is important for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, inclusive course access is one of the hallmark outcomes of the TPSID program. The charge to the TPSIDs was to create or expand high quality, inclusive model comprehensive transition and postsecondary programs for students with intellectual disabilities, meaning students would be able to access existing college courses as well as participate in campus organizations and activities, and, when available, housing. Access to typical college courses exposes students to a great array of course content and offers the chance to connect with college peers without or with other disabilities, and provides students with the potential, in some cases, to earn college credits.

Inclusive course enrollment may also impact student access to credentials awarded by the institution of higher education. Papay, Grigal, Hart, Kwan, and Smith (2018) found students who primarily enrolled in inclusive courses in their final year

of attending a TPSID program were more likely to earn a certificate available to all students at the IHE than students who primarily enrolled in specialized courses. Why does this matter? Earning a credential that was awarded by the IHE almost doubled the odds of students having a paid job at exit (Grigal, Papay, Smith, Hart, & Verbeck, 2019).

### Increased Access to Financial Aid

The number of TPSID programs approved as CTPs remained relatively stable. There were 34 TPSID programs approved as CTPs in 2019–2020, an overall decrease of one from the previous year, but there were three new CTP programs at TPSIDs. Thus, 71% of students enrolled in TPSIDs were attending colleges or universities where they could apply for federal financial aid. Receipt of Pell grants also rose, with 188 students receiving this form of federal student aid.

Increased access to financial aid is also evident in higher education programs not receiving funds via a TPSID initiative. Nationally, in the 2019–2020 academic year, there were 114 approved CTP programs. Of these, federal student aid was received by 628 students with intellectual disability (ID) at 88 colleges and universities. A total of \$2,592,507 was received by students in Pell grants, \$112,100 in Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants, and \$52,378 in Federal Work-Study (personal communication, Lindsay Wertenberger, January 25, 2021). Using these figures, the student aid recipients attending TPSID programs represent approximately 30% of the students with intellectual disability receiving federal student aid nationally.

### Stable Access to College Systems & Services

Few changes were seen this year in terms of TPSID use of existing college systems, including academic advising and disability services. The receipt of academic support from the disability support office remained steady with 72% of programs offering access and 67% of students receiving support from this office. A slight decline was evident in programs offering access to both typical and specialized advising services, from 38% in 2018–2019 to 33% in 2019–2020. Those programs offering advising solely via the typical advising services at the IHE remained below 20%.

Use of existing college advising services is a predictor of access to inclusive course enrollment for students with intellectual disability (Papay et al., 2018). Therefore, TPSID program staff should continue to assess the extent to which they are or should be replacing existing advising with TPSID staff supports. The plateau in access to DSO services,

coupled with the decline in use of existing advising services, is concerning. Engaging faculty and staff in these offices with the planning and support needs of students with intellectual disability helps to cultivate ownership for student success (Papay et al., 2018) and can help institutionalize response mechanisms beyond paid program staff.

Four additional programs offered housing to students attending the TPSIDs in Year 5, bringing the number of programs providing residential options to 27. It is worth noting that none of the current TPSIDs have established or offered specialized housing, demonstrating a commitment by grantees to establish inclusive residential experiences for enrolled students. However, creating access to housing continues to be a challenge for many TPSIDs due to issues such as space limitations and student status restrictions.

### Pandemic Impact on Employment

The NCC's more granular approach to data collection on career awareness and exploration (CAE) activities launched last year offers insights into the level of student engagement in various kinds of employment preparation activities. Similar to last year, the CAE activities most frequently engaged in were the creation of resumes, completion of interest inventories, and mock interviews. It did not appear that the changes incurred by the TPSID response to the pandemic impacted student participation in CAE activities in a meaningful way.

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**As businesses dealt with temporary and permanent closures, students had fewer opportunities to seek and gain paid work after completing their program.**

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The impact of COVID-19 emerges more clearly when looking at employment preparation activities in work-based settings. For example, the percentage of students who had unpaid work-based learning experiences declined from 47% in 2018–2019 to 42% in 2019–2020. Only 12% of unpaid work-based learning positions were reported not to have been impacted by COVID-19. Paid work-based learning experiences also saw a drop from 22% of students having a paid work-based learning experience in

2018–19 to 17% of students in 2019–2020, and only 14% of paid work-based learning were reported not to have been impacted by COVID 19. TPSIDs reported that almost half of the students enrolled had no work-based learning experiences (paid or unpaid) due to COVID.

TPSID programs sought creative solutions when students were no longer able to retain existing work-based learning positions. Some programs shifted focus to other employment preparation activities such as updating resumes, practicing interview skills, or completing job applications (Papay & Myers, 2020). Others explored the use of virtual job exploration programs such as Virtual Job Shadow and Able Eyes to support continued progress. Program staff also focused on helping students become more adept at using online communication platforms such as Zoom and Google Meets, given the increased use of these platforms in various business settings doing work remotely.

The NCC conducted on-going virtual support group sessions to provide opportunities for program staff to share challenges and solutions related to meeting students' needs during the pandemic. Topics of discussion included supporting students' social and emotional needs, how to continue access to core academic content remotely, how to provide employment support online, and communicating with families. Additionally, the NCC created a private Facebook group for ongoing information-sharing and peer-to-peer connections for IHE program staff.

The most striking impact of COVID-19 was evident in the student level of paid employment both while enrolled and at exit. Like so many others when the pandemic hit, the students with intellectual disability enrolled in TPSID programs faced furloughs, layoffs, and unemployment. Since March, people with disabilities have faced disproportionate impacts in the labor market (Saleh & Karhan, 2021), losing nearly one million jobs (Livermore & Schimmel Hyde, 2020). Younger workers with disabilities may face greater difficulties in times of economic stress due to their limited experience and skills (Fogg, Harrington, & McMahon, 2012). There was a visible reduction in the number of jobs held by students at TPSIDs from February 2020 ( $n = 287$  jobs) to March 2020 ( $n = 209$  jobs). Given the highest number of job applications occurred in the month of February (see Figure 11), right before the lockdowns occurred nationwide, it is likely that gains in rates of paid employment we might have expected to see later in the spring were also potentially subverted due to the pandemic. In 2019–2020, 305 students (32%) were engaged in paid employment while enrolled, a decrease of five percentage

points from the previous year. Students held a total of 417 paid employment positions, a decrease from the 454 paid employment positions in 2018–2019. Between February and March 2020, there was a 27% drop in the rate of paid employment for students enrolled in the TPSID programs. Finally, 70 fewer students in 2019–2020 held individual paid jobs than in the previous year.

Given that students who are employed while enrolled are more likely to be employed at exit, (Grigal et al., 2018), it is perhaps not surprising that the rate of employment for students exiting the TPSIDs in spring of 2020 also reflected a downward trend. Only 21% of exiting students ( $n = 73$ ) were working in a paid job at exit or within the first 90 days after exiting. This is a 31-percentage-point decrease from the 52% of students employed at exit in the previous year. As businesses dealt with temporary and permanent closures, students had fewer opportunities to seek and gain paid work after completing their program. Conversely, the percentage of students who were only participating in unpaid career development experiences at exit grew from 25% in 2018–2019 to 49% in the current year.

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### **The most striking impact of COVID-19 was evident in the student level of paid employment both while enrolled and at exit.**

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Graduating students' plans for further postsecondary education also saw a reduction, with only two students in Year 5 indicating they were continuing onto further postsecondary education (12 students sought that experience in the previous year). This could be related to the lack of clarity about whether colleges and universities would be able to provide face-to-face instruction in fall of 2020. Like other students considering higher education, the prospect of distance or remote learning may have dissuaded students with intellectual disability from considering future postsecondary education options in their immediate future.

### **Positive Long-term Outcomes**

Given the impact of COVID-19 on overall employment opportunities across the nation, the long-term outcome data from Cohort 2 completers was still relatively positive. There was a reduction of six percentage points in the paid employment rate one year after exit (from 65% in the previous year to 59% this year). This reduction was

somewhat less than we might have expected. This same level of reduction was evident in the 2-year outcome data with 66% of respondents reporting having a paid job, compared to the previous year's 72%. This is the first year the NCC has been able to report data on outcomes from students three years after program completion. While the response rate was somewhat lower than for students who were one or two years out of their program (39%), 67% percent of respondents reported having a paid job three years after exit. These outcomes far exceed the employment outcomes of other adults with intellectual disability (19% of adults with developmental disabilities in the general population had a paid job in the community; National Core Indicators, 2019). The employment outcomes from the TPSID program reinforce findings from other recent studies (Miller, Sax, & Tucker, 2019; Rast, Roux, & Shattuck, 2019; Sannicandro et al., 2018) that postsecondary education is a viable and effective path to paid employment for people with intellectual disability.

Outcome data also reflected larger numbers of students engaged in postsecondary education ( $n = 53$ ) one year after exit, and the vast majority of respondents reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with their social life.

One additional change from the previous year was a significant increase in the percentage of students not living with their family. This year slightly more than half (53%) of respondents indicated they were not living with family, up 20 percentage points from the previous year. The 2-year outcome data showed that 54% of respondents were not living with family, up 14 percentage points from the previous year. This could demonstrate some longer-term impacts on post-enrollment independent living.

The achievements of the Cohort 2 TPSID program are significant, having created and expanded access to inclusive college courses and employment for students with intellectual disability throughout the nation. Across five years, the colleges and universities participating in the Cohort 2 TPSID model demonstration program created 71 higher education programs and enrolled 2,122 students with ID. Students in these programs enrolled in 27,679 courses and held 1,177 individual paid jobs, demonstrating the capabilities of students with intellectual disability to achieve these laudable outcomes. TPSID programs have helped to improve the infrastructure of their host IHEs, ensuring they are more responsive to the learning and support needs of students with ID. They have also exposed countless faculty and staff, college students, and employers to the skills and potential of students with ID. These interactions may lead

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**By creating viable paths to and through higher education and coupling these experiences with a continued focus on employment, the TPSID programs support increased independence as well as personal and professional growth for students with intellectual disability.**

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to opportunities for engagement and connection far beyond what has occurred in the TPSID programs. Additionally, in the face of the recent pandemic, the staff from these TPSID programs helped to ensure students continued their learning and, when possible, continued to retain their jobs or seek new ones. The investment by Congress and the commitment of the Office of Postsecondary Education in the continuation of the TPSID model demonstration program has demonstrated what is possible when high expectations are paired with expanded opportunities and sufficient resources. By creating viable paths to and through higher education and coupling these experiences with a continued focus on employment, the TPSID programs support increased independence as well as personal and professional growth for students with intellectual disability.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Of the 20 students without any course enrollments, six had a paid job, six had an unpaid WBL, and two participated in career awareness exploration activities. No course enrollments, jobs, or other career-related activities were reported for six students.
- <sup>2</sup> Two programs that offered housing did not respond to the question about supports provided.
- <sup>3</sup> Data were missing for seven students ( $n = 298$ ).
- <sup>4</sup> The entity that paid students was missing for 40 job records.
- <sup>5</sup> Reasons for denial of service included: VR previously paid for another postsecondary program or would only pay for two years of the program, the student was deemed ineligible, VR does not support the student's career choice, the student's case was closed or transferred between offices, or VR will not pay for the student to attend the TPSID program.
- <sup>6</sup> There were three new CTP programs in Year 5: Gwynedd Mercy University, University of South Alabama, and Widener University. However, with the removal of Edison State Community College, Mercyhurst University, McFatter Technical College, and Tallahassee Community College (all CTP programs) from the list of TPSID programs, there was a net reduction in the number of approved CTP programs at TPSIDs by one in Year 5.

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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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