

**Abstract: Developing College Campuses as Transition Settings for Students with Severe and Multiple Disabilities Aged 18-21**

There is a current and critical need to develop sustainable community-based programs for students with severe and multiple disabilities (SMD) aged 18-21. According to the *Second National Longitudinal Study of Transition* (Wagner, Newman, Cameto, & Levine, 2005), the presence of students with SMD in home-school settings increased 29% in the past decade, coming mainly from separate special education schools which saw a 31% drop in enrollment (Wagner, et al.). Typically, local education agencies (LEAs) have responded to this influx by creating self-contained classrooms (Gaumer, Morningstar, & Clark, 2004; Wagner, et al., 2005) with few opportunities for students with SMD to “be prepared to lead productive, independent, adult lives, to the maximum extent possible” as intended in the IDEIA of 2004 [20 U.S.C. § 1400 (c) (5) (E) (ii)].

This project is designed to address this need by using the college campus as a transition setting for students with SMD using a model described by Neubert, Moon, and Grigal, 2004. It will also use a service learning model to address the need for SMD transition professionals with skills in the areas of person-centered planning, community partnering, and interagency collaboration. Students with SMD will be enrolled in a college-level continuing education class on life planning provided by Kent State’s Career Services Center. A university instructor will direct this class, and collaborating SMD professionals and Kent State students will receive service learning credits for providing person-centered planning and individualized campus activities for the participating students with SMD. These planning and campus activities will be coordinated with students’ individual IEPs and IPEs. Students with SMD will also be enrolled in at least one college-level class each semester to assure that they have access to all of Kent State’s services including career planning, health and wellness, student employment, extracurricular activities, and life-long learning opportunities. To achieve these outcomes, project staff will pursue five objectives:

1. To develop college classes for 30 students with SMD that engage practicing and prospective transition professionals in their life and career planning.
2. To develop and implement daily campus activities for 30 students with SMD based on their life plans.
3. To engage students with SMD, their teachers, university faculty, and other transition stakeholders in evaluating, refining, and supporting this model.
4. To develop materials for replication of this model.
5. To disseminate and replicate this project at other universities.

The proposed principal investigator for this project manages Kent State University’s special education masters program for transition specialists, and the proposed project director is a licensed and experienced SMD teacher with a background in developing college disability programs. The proposed project will be run by the Center for Innovation in Transition and Employment (CITE) in collaboration with Kent State’s Learning and Technology Center, Special Education Department, and Service Learning Program. The CITE currently has a network of collaborating LEAs and adult service agencies called the Kent State Transition Collaborative (KSTC) which will serve in a referral and advisory capacity for the proposed project. The CITE has been working to develop this program for several years and submitted an earlier version of this proposal in the last fiscal year (H133G070162).