

VANDERBILT  UNIVERSITY  
MEDICAL CENTER



I/DD ECHO

**Inclusive Higher Education**

Elise McMillan

# I/DD ECHO Disclosures

- Target audience: Family practitioners, internists, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, clinical social workers
- Objective: To improve the knowledge of primary care providers who care for individuals with IDD.
- Speaker Disclosure: **Speaker** has no relationship with any commercial firm having products related to topics discussed at this program. Actual disclosure forms are available upon request.

# Inclusive Higher Education

There are now more than 300 inclusive higher education programs at colleges and universities across the country. About 40 percent of those programs are residential. These are generally certificate programs, and do not lead to a college degree.

# Inclusive Higher Education

Programs are committed to providing students with intellectual disabilities an inclusive, transformational postsecondary education in academics, social and career development, and independent living.



# Inclusive Higher Education

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# Tennessee Programs for Students with IDD

- Access ETSU, Johnson City
- IDEAL, Lipscomb University, Nashville, residential
- Eagle Access, Dyersburg State Community College, Dyersburg
- Next Steps at Vanderbilt, Nashville
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# Tennessee Programs for Students Needing Additional Support

- For students who are degree seeking, but need additional support, there are additional programs:
  - Mosaic Program, University of Tennessee Chattanooga
  - BEST Program, Lipscomb University
  - Full Spectrum Learning, Austin Peay University, Clarksville

# Paying for Inclusive Higher Education

- Tennessee STEPUP Scholarship, mirrors the Tennessee HOPE Scholarship, for students who graduated from a Tennessee high school
- Vocational Rehabilitation provides financial support for VR clients who are interested in college and employment
- Federal Financial Aid funds are available for students enrolled in eligible Comprehensive Transition Programs (CTP) and who have demonstrated financial need
- Other funding sources



# Resources

- Think College, [thinkcollege.net](http://thinkcollege.net), national Technical Assistance Center
- Tennessee Inclusive Higher Education Alliance, [tnihealliance.org](http://tnihealliance.org)
- College Autism Network, [collegeautismnetwork.org](http://collegeautismnetwork.org)
- AHEAD, Association on Higher Education and Disability, [ahead.org](http://ahead.org)
- Many of the Tennessee programs are currently holding open houses and other outreach activities.

# Employment

- Inclusive higher education programs include an employment component. Most offer internship opportunities both on and off campus.
- More than 80 percent of the graduates of Tennessee's programs are employed.

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# Thank you!

For more information  
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# I/DD ECHO

## Employment Resources

Janet Shouse

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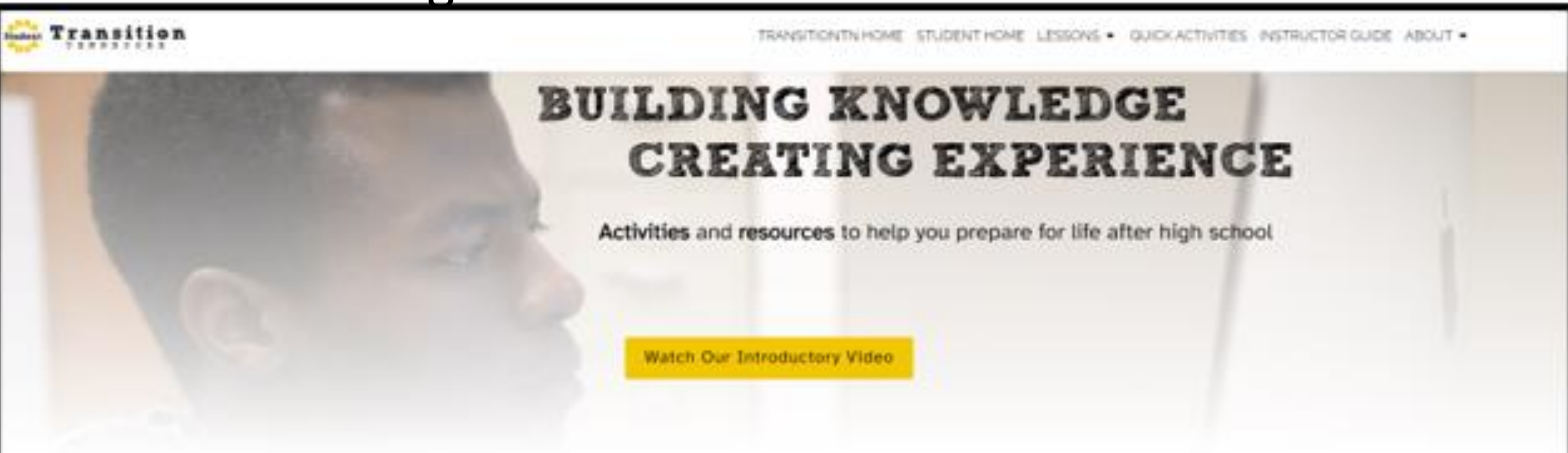
# Today I will discuss

- Transition TN
- Disability:IN
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Project SEARCH
- Employment and  
Community First CHOICES
- Other resources



# Transition Tennessee

- Tennessee's online home for training and resources on preparing students (or adults) with disabilities for life after high school.

The image shows a screenshot of the Transition Tennessee website. At the top left is the logo for "Transition Tennessee" with a sun icon. To the right of the logo is a navigation menu with links: "TRANSITIONTN.HOME", "STUDENT.HOME", "LESSONS", "QUICKACTIVITIES", "INSTRUCTOR GUIDE", and "ABOUT". The main content area features a large, bold headline: "BUILDING KNOWLEDGE" and "CREATING EXPERIENCE". Below the headline is a sub-headline: "Activities and resources to help you prepare for life after high school". At the bottom center, there is a yellow button with the text "Watch Our Introductory Video". The background of the website features a blurred image of a person's profile.

# Transition Tennessee

- Transition TN offers tip sheets and resources for families or social workers to find the right supports and activities as the individual transitions into and through adulthood.

Finances  
and  
Benefits

Family &  
Caregiver  
Supports

Social  
Networking &  
Community  
Supports

Postsecondary  
Education

Independent  
Living

Healthcare

Employment

[transitiontn.org/](https://transitiontn.org/)



# Disability:IN and the Disability Equality Index

- Disability:IN is the leading nonprofit resource for business disability inclusion worldwide. Its network of more than 500 corporations expands opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Its Disability Equality Index produces a yearly report of the best places to work for people with disabilities.
- This is a national resource.
- Check out the list at [disabilityin.org/](https://disabilityin.org/)

# Tennessee "State as a Model Employer"

- In 2021, the legislature approved a bill to make Tennessee a "State as a Model Employer."
- Department of Human Resources has an initiative to hire people with disabilities for state jobs.
- Jobs listed at <https://www.tn.gov/careers.html>

# Frist Center for Autism and Innovation

- Located at the VU School of Engineering, the center brings together engineers, business scholars, disability researchers and experts in neuroscience and education to maximize and promote neurodivergent talent.
- Lots of great employment resources!
- Our own Dave Caudel is associate director and often speaks with families and individuals on the spectrum.
- <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/autismandinnovation/>

# Vocational Rehabilitation?

- VR provides a variety of individualized services to persons with disabilities in preparation for their employment in the competitive labor market.
- VR advocates for employment outcomes for clients that are consistent with their individual strengths, resources, abilities, capabilities and informed choice.
- Every state has a Vocational Rehabilitation program, although it may have another name.

# VR Has Special Emphasis Services

- Tennessee Rehabilitation Center at Smyrna offers a variety of vocational programs on campus with residential housing available.
- 17 Community Tennessee Rehabilitation Centers offer comprehensive vocational evaluation services, employee development services, job readiness training and placement.
- Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired

# How to Contact VR in Tennessee

Phone: 1-833-772-8347

[www.tn.gov/humanservices/ds/vocational-rehabilitation.html](http://www.tn.gov/humanservices/ds/vocational-rehabilitation.html)



# Project SEARCH

- Cincinnati Children's Hospital began to train job seekers with disabilities to meet a need for qualified, reliable support staff in its Emergency Department.
- Program has been replicated in more than 300 sites worldwide.
- Tennessee's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation serves as a partner.
- Transition-to-Work Program is a business-led, 10-month unpaid employment preparation program that takes place at the workplace.



# Project SEARCH

- Total workplace immersion combines classroom instruction, career exploration, and hands-on training through worksite rotations.
- Students complete a resume.
- Graduates get a Project SEARCH certificate of completion.
- Some programs are linked with school districts, some focus on those who are out of school.
- Stats from 2017-2018 showed 77.3% who completed the program were employed.
- <https://www.projectsearch.us/>





# Project SEARCH

## Tennessee sites:

- Nike Distribution Center-Shelby County Schools, Memphis
- Peabody Hotel-Shelby County Schools, Memphis
- Le Bonheur Children's Hospital-Shelby County Schools, Memphis
- Methodist North Hospital-Shelby County Schools, Memphis
- West Tennessee Healthcare, Jackson/Madison Schools, Jackson
- Tennova Hospital-Clarksville/Montgomery County Schools, Clarksville

# Project SEARCH



## Tennessee sites:

- Monroe Carell Jr. Vanderbilt Children's Hospital-Progress Inc., Nashville
- Amerigroup-Progress Inc., Nashville
- Embassy Suites-Metro Nashville Public Schools, Nashville
- Embassy Suites-Rutherford County Schools, Murfreesboro
- Welch College-Sumner County Schools, Gallatin
- Blue Cross of TN-Hamilton County Schools, Chattanooga



# Project SEARCH

## Tennessee sites:

- East Tennessee Children's Hospital-Sertoma, Knoxville
  - University of Tennessee Medical Center-Breakthrough Corp., Knoxville
  - Fort Sanders Hospital-Knox County Schools, Knoxville
  - Parkwest Medical Center-Knox County Schools, Knoxville
  - Wilderness of the Smokies-Sevier County Schools, Pigeon Forge
- 
- Easiest way to find contact info:  
<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/ds/vocational-rehabilitation/transition-services/project-search.html>

# Employment and Community First CHOICES



- Gov. Bill Haslam designated Tennessee an Employment First state in 2013.
- Employment First means employment in integrated, competitive jobs is the first and preferred options for individuals with disabilities receiving state services.
- TennCare works with the three MCOs to provide services under the ECF CHOICES program, which include many employment services.

# Employment and Community First CHOICES

- Young people with intellectual or developmental disabilities who are exiting high school are a priority category.
- The three MCOs—BlueCare, Amerigroup and United Healthcare—contract with community provider agencies for employment services for their members.
- These provider agencies work with employers in hiring job seekers in ECF CHOICES.
- Agencies can provide ongoing job support for these individuals.

# DIDD 1915c Waivers

- After the creation of Employment and Community First CHOICES and the state's designation as an Employment First State, DIDD revamped employment services for those in the 1915c waivers.
- Emphasis is now on asking all individuals in supports every year if they want to work.
- Medicaid waiver provider agencies provide long-term employment supports, if needed.

# Individual Placement and Support

- Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and VR offer, in partnership with community provider agencies, IPS Supported Employment model for persons with significant mental health concerns.
- Employment is seen as a vital part of the recovery process, not something that waits until recovery is accomplished.
- 52 counties have IPS providers.
- <https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/mental-health-services/ips-supported-employment.html>

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# Thank you!

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Check out: [www.Tennesseeworks.org/blog/](http://www.Tennesseeworks.org/blog/)

for a 7-year archive of employment-related programs  
and disability supports