

[UNH
Institute on
Disability](#)

UNH's Institute on Disability Awarded Grant to Increase Inclusion for Students with Significant Disabilities in General Education

By [Julie Moser](#)
Institute on Disability
603-862-3603

August 12, 2002

DURHAM, N.H. -- A four-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education was recently awarded to the Institute on Disability at the University of New Hampshire to increase inclusion in the general education curriculum for students with significant disabilities.

Jan Nisbet, the institute's director, said, "This grant capitalizes on a decade of work in the area of inclusive education."

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997 requires that students with disabilities have access to general education curricula, and that "to the maximum extent appropriate" they pursue learning goals that are "consistent with those of students without disabilities." For students who have traditionally been given labels of mental retardation, autism, traumatic brain injury and multiple disabilities, reaching this goal can be a significant challenge.

The project, dubbed "Beyond Access: A Model that Promotes Learning of General Education Curriculum Content for Students with the Most Significant Disabilities," is a \$700,000 model demonstration grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs over four years.

For "Beyond Access," Cheryl Jorgensen and Rae Sonnenmeier of the Institute on Disability will design, demonstrate, evaluate and disseminate a comprehensive

education model that takes a team approach to allow parents, teachers and others to do what it takes for the student to be successful in a general classroom.

The model differs from current practice by supporting full-time participation of students with the most significant disabilities in the general education classroom.

The Beyond Access model will be tested in three New Hampshire schools with 15 students who experience significant disabilities.

The Institute on Disability's mission is to promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities into their communities. The institute offers workshops and training sessions, participates in grant-funded model demonstration projects, conducts research, and engages in collaborative partnerships with other statewide organizations that are committed to improving the lives of persons with disabilities and their families.

For more information, visit the Institute on Disability's Web site at <http://www.iod.unh.edu>.

[Back to UNH News Bureau](#)