

Media Relations

UNH Institute On Disability Receives \$4.25M From Dept. Of Education

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DURHAM, N.H. – The Institute on Disability (IOD) at the University of New Hampshire has been awarded a five-year, \$4.25 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) to study and measure the impact of national policies and programs on the employment of people with disabilities.

People with disabilities experience persistently low employment rates, low participation in employment services programs, delays in receiving services, and limited funding for services. Participation in safety net programs for this population is high, and there is little coordination between employment services and safety net programs. To address these issues, policymakers, program administrators, advocates, and people with disabilities need compelling evidence-based information on the effectiveness of past employment initiatives and the impacts of potential options for policy changes, as well as effective ways of measuring and monitoring employment outcomes as policies change.

This grant will establish a Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) on employment policy and measurement at UNH to meet these needs and facilitate the translation of research findings into policymaking and program administration. Annual research-to-policy roundtables, an online training series, and a national conference will provide a variety of accessible opportunities to discuss the RRTC's findings. In addition, the Center will publish a research-to-policy brief series as well as provide varying levels of technical assistance.

"Through this project, the RRTC will generate new knowledge and techniques to move the field of disability policy studies forward and facilitate utilization of this knowledge among key stakeholders," said Andrew Houtenville, IOD research director and principal investigator of the project. "In doing so, we expect to positively influence the integration of government programs and ultimately increase employment and social participation of people with disabilities."






"I congratulate the University of New Hampshire on receiving this important grant," said U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen. "This funding will not only help the Institute on Disability at UNH analyze the relationship between government programs and the employment of people with disabilities, but also turn those research findings into policies that improve the lives of New Hampshire citizens."

Grant partners include the UNH Whittemore School of Business and Economics, Mathematica Policy Research, and the American Association of People with Disabilities, as well as Cornell, Rutgers, and Syracuse universities.

The Institute on Disability at the University of New Hampshire was established in 1987 to provide a coherent university-based focus for the improvement of knowledge, policies, and practices related to the lives of persons with disabilities and their families. Its mission is to strengthen communities to ensure full access, equal opportunities, and participation for all persons.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a New England liberal arts college and a major research university with a strong focus on undergraduate-oriented research. A land, sea and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.

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