Report Chronicles State Of People With Disabilities In New Hampshire

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Among the key findings in the annual report:

- At 11.4 percent, the percentage of people with disabilities in New Hampshire is greater than that of Massachusetts (11.2 percent) but less than neighboring states of Vermont (13.6 percent) and Maine (16.1 percent). Nationally, 12 percent of the population reports having a disability.

- The population with disabilities is diverse across disability type (hearing, cognitive, self-care, vision, ambulatory, and independent living).

- Although employment rate of people with disabilities in New Hampshire (39.9 percent) is favorable to the national average (35.3 percent), there is a 40-point gap in the employment rate of people with and without disabilities in the Granite State.

- New Hampshire lags behind its New England neighbors and the national average in terms of the quantity of special education students who spend at least 80 percent of their time in regular classrooms.

“Statistics and other forms of research-based data are powerful forms of information used in policymaking, program evaluation, and advocacy,” says IOD Director Charles Drum. “Statistics about people with disabilities and the government programs that serve them are often hard to find. This report aims to make this data available to a broad audience."

The report, which will be published annually, draws on the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2009 American Community Survey as well as reports from government agencies such as the Social Security Administration. It examines four topic areas: demographics, education, economic well-being, and participation in government programs.

In addition to “Facts & Figures,” the IOD has produced a shorter companion publication called “To the Point.” With data-driven facts, it provides an introduction to the experience of people living with disabilities in New Hampshire. Both publications are available to download in a variety of formats at http://iod.unh.edu/Research/nhstats.aspx.

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 IOD is affiliated with UNH’s College of Health and Human Services.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state’s flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

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