



**Center, Institute, or Bureau (CIBs) Annual Performance Statement  
2019-2020**

**Name of CIB:** University of Memphis Institute on Disability

**Website URL:** <https://www.memphis.edu/umid/>

**Physical Location:** 4050 S. Park Loop Bldg. 29, Memphis, TN 38152  
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**Director** Chrisann Schiro-Geist, Ph.D.  
Director of the Institute on Disability at the University of Memphis.  
Professor, Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology and  
Research.

**Leadership Team** Maurice Williams MA, MS, CNP. - Senior Associate Director  
Career Development and Transition Program Director.  
Patrick Krolik, MBA. - Associate Director of Operations.  
Cindy Cassell, MA, MS. - Associate Director of Transition Programs.  
Jeffrey B. Smith Ph.D. - BCBA Behavior Unit Director.  
Annett Teepe Ph.D. - Instructional and Curriculum Coordinator.

## University of Memphis Institute on Disability (UMID)

### MISSION STATEMENT

UMID serves the needs of the greater Memphis area through services, education, and research to and about persons with disabilities, with an emphasis on persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

### VISION STATEMENT

We are committed to creating a learning community that provides perspectives and insights from scholars, thought leaders, community partners, students, families, and other supporters who challenge, lead, and advocate with persons with disabilities.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#### **Person-Centered Systems Perspective**

We utilize a person-centered systems perspective to maximize educational, health, social, family, employment, and financial outcomes for diverse community members and those who support them in an ever-changing global environment.

#### **Inclusion, Social Justice, and Equity**

We create and leverage innovative and interdisciplinary programs, services, and research with community, public, and private partners by: 1) promoting access to higher education and career development; 2) advocating for community inclusion; and 3) enhancing the overall quality of life for individuals with disabilities and their families.

#### **Sustainable and Systemic Impact**

Our practical, real life results change individuals, families, and communities and inform sustainable and systemic change.

### BUDGET INFORMATION

Transition Revenue	\$741,688	expenditures	\$681,654	ST Fiscal Yr.06/30	\$60,034	+
Vocational Revenue	\$135,750	expenditures	\$86,525	Fed Fiscal Yr. 9/30	\$49,225	+
Research Revenue	\$838,949	expenditures	\$573,919	Fed Fiscal Yr. 9/30	\$265,030	+
Total UMID Revenue	\$1,716,387	expenditures	\$1,342,098	ST .Fiscal Yr. 6/30	\$374,289	+

## PERFORMANCE NARRATIVE

### Overview of UMID

The University of Memphis Institute on Disability (UMID), founded in 2006, is organizationally associated with the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology and Research (CEPR) and housed on the Park Avenue campus. UMID is comprised of three units: the *Research Unit*, the *Vocational Unit*, and the *Career Development and Transition Programs Unit*. The **Research Unit** engages with an interdisciplinary team of on-campus as well as local, regional, national and international affiliates. The interdisciplinary team also includes doctoral-level students who are budding researchers and seek experiences writing grants, conducting research studies, and publishing research in peer-reviewed journals. The **Vocational Unit** provides all elements of support to help clients become independent and successfully employed, and to retain employment through the Institute's vocational services as a TN VR Community Rehabilitation Provider, letter of agreement (LOA). UMID has maintained their CRP status since 2014. Under the LOA, UMID renders services in Madison and Shelby counties in West Tennessee through maintaining a TN VR certified staff of employees that provide a variety of services that include: vocational assessments, job development, and job coaching. All five pre-employment transitions service job coaching, job shadowing, work-based learning, workforce readiness, self-advocacy and post-secondary transition counseling. Under the continued contract to provide services for TN VR clients, UMID has grown their service contract from \$30,000 to an anticipated contract this year just shy of \$200,000. UMID has plenty of room to increase its contract to higher amounts with the extension of services in the greater Mid-South region, at the University's regional campuses. UMID will continue to place emphasis in providing services to clients with intellectual developmental disabilities, as it is our area of expertise in the region. The **Career Development and Inclusive Higher Education (IHE) Transition Programs Unit** encompass UMID's most notable programs: the Tigers Learning Independence Fostering Education and Employment program (TigerLIFE), as well as the dual enrollment partnership program with Shelby County Schools Department of Exceptional Children College Campus Transition Program (CCTP). The CCTP program was inaugurated in the fall of 2011, and will be in its eighth year come fall of 2019. CCTP is a transition program that allows students enrolled at local SCS schools to enroll in the program housed on the University campus, with BRIDGE TWO goals of expanding the CCTP Model program to LEAs in the greater Mid-South region. Students will receive the five pre-ETS transition services in a collegiate atmosphere, where the students gain valuable social inclusion that leads to successful transition to employment and community independence. TigerLIFE, founded in January 2013, is a two-year career development and transition program for 18-29-year-old students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). It is a non-degree, 60-credit-hour program that culminates in a certificate in Career and Community Studies. TigerLIFE uses a systematic approach to assess each student's academic, career, technical, independent living, and social skills. Based on this, the best person-centered plan is created to match students' goals for transition into gainful employment and living a more meaningful life. The TigerLIFE program also provides an inclusive college campus experience. TigerLIFE began with eight students and rapidly expanded to its largest enrollment of 106 students. Currently, 61 students are enrolled in either the training component or the job placement component, confirming the need that exists for transition support for individuals with IDD in the Memphis community. Since the conception of both transition programs, UMID has had 86 students to graduate from CCTP and 204 TigerLIFE completers. Based on data from the two programs, CCTP graduates maintain an average 81% successful employment rate one year after completion, while TigerLIFE has maintained an average 72% successful employment rate one year after graduation.

The UMID Director reports to the Chair of the CEPR Department and is supported by a leadership team (Senior Associated Director, Associate Director of Operations, Associate Director of Transition Programs, Instructional and Curriculum Coordinator, Behavioral Unit Director, who

coordinates UMID's staff of master and doctoral level behavioral specialists, undergraduate mentors and buddies, along with volunteers that provide all services that support the three units. Additionally, UMID maintains consultants from the College of Education, an advisory board of on-campus and off-campus affiliates to ensure UMID is meeting its goals and objectives (See Appendix B for UMID Organizational Chart).

### **Goals/Purpose**

The **purpose** of UMID is to provide quality service, teaching and research to and about persons with disabilities, with an emphasis on persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as those with other social justice issues, and their families, from a Person-Centered, Systems perspective, especially focused on the needs of the greater Mid-South region.

UMID works to accomplish the following **goals**:

**Goal 1:** Support students with disabilities in their quest for employment and independent living

**Goal 2:** Build capacity of UMID programs to increase and extend the impact on individuals with IDD and their communities

**Goal 3:** Conduct research to determine empirically supported best practices for postsecondary educational transition services

**Goal 4:** Assist community colleges, rural colleges, and minority-serving institutions in the mid-south region in efforts to establish/sustain inclusive postsecondary education programs for students with IDD

Additionally, UMID added Goal 5 this year to build research capacity to solicit internal and external funding:

**Goal 5:** Develop interdisciplinary research projects utilizing a person-centered systems approach and whole family approach by collaborating with on-campus and off-campus/international affiliates

**Membership/Affiliate Criteria** - UMID employs a diverse staff of approximately 35 researchers, instructors, practitioners, behavior specialists, graduate assistants, and interns. UMID has supported on-campus faculty affiliates through collaborations with grant submissions, as well as co-hosting training conferences. UMID currently maintains affiliations with the following persons or entities:

City of Memphis Mayor's Committee on Employment and Disability - UMID staff are members of the committee and help to promote the committee agenda annually.

Shelby County Schools (SCS) - UMID works in full partnership with SCS Department of Exceptional Children in providing transition awareness in the district and in full partnership for the regional transition fair. In 2019/20 we hosted two transition fairs, adding a new fair to the fall 2019 calendar.

UMID partnered with the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDDs), to sponsor the West TN disability resource fair.

Special Education Community Unified Partners (SECUP) - UMID has served as the leader of the partnership since conception. UMID participated with the council in sponsoring the annual West TN SPED Conference in past years, and convened the partnerships first region wide 2019 PLC Conference - UM SPED Partnership Showcase Classroom/Behavioral Management HLP Conference. UMID and SECUP also worked together to enhance Pre-ETS services in the region with a virtual meeting in August, 2020 that featured Dr. Eric Carter, the Cornelius Vanderbilt Professor of Education and Ms. Andrea Levy, West TN Vocational Rehabilitation Director, to highlight the importance of a shared effort in Pre- Employment Transition Services for the SECUP community .

Committee on Rehabilitation Accreditation (CoRA) - UMID has accepted the leadership to provide administrative support to the development of the CoRA agency under a letter of affiliation. UMID hosted on behalf of CoRA and the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association a fall symposium on the importance of the practices of Social Justice in Rehabilitation. That served as a huge fore thought to the many changes that followed the October symposium, in 2020, with the growth of social unrest and Covid-19.

TPSID National Coordinating Center Accreditation Committee (NCC) - UMID's Director, Dr. Schiro-Geist, serves and will continue to serve on the national committee providing leadership in the area of accreditation for Postsecondary Education Programs.

TPSID National Coordinating Center Accreditation Committee (NCC) - UMID's Senior Associate Director, Mr. Williams, serves and will continue to serve on the national self-study committee providing leadership in the area of program development and assessment.

The National Coordinating Center hosted the first ever Virtual TPSID Directors meeting in July, 2020. UMID presented during the meeting a presentation on the Past, Present and Future of UMIDs BRIDGE project and receive great participation during the presentation.

UMID in the summer of 2020, submitted a proposal for continued funding under the Department of Education TPSID programs a new five year proposal for \$2.2 million, that if funded will span an additional five years until 2025, entitled BRIDGE TWO.

Southeast Postsecondary Education Alliance (SEPSEA) - UMID's Associate Director Serves as the vice chair for professional development for the regional organization's board of directors. Mr. Williams provides leadership of the Historical Black Colleges and University Alliance, an initiative to bring postsecondary education programs to the nation's HBCUs. This year UMID served on the SEPSEA conference planning committee to help SEPSEA launch its first ever Virtual Conference in July, 2020.

TN Inclusive Higher Education Council (TN IHE) - UMID is a charter member of the State of Tennessee's IHE Council, annually hosting the council's quarterly meeting in the Memphis region. UMID is slated to host the fall meeting later in November, 2020.

University of Memphis Black History Month Committee - UMID annually serves on the committee helping to plan and execute the University's Black History Month activities. We are looking forward to our participation on the committee in 2021.

University of Memphis Friends of the Library - UMID's leadership, Dr. Schiro-Geist (chair) and Mr. Williams, are members of the executive committee on the organization geared towards finding new opportunities to promote the University's libraries. Dr. Geist and Mr. Williams attended all executive committee meeting and worked with the Library staff to launch two new initiatives during fiscal year 2019-20.

INSPIRED - The International Network for Special Projects in Inclusive Rehabilitation Education and Disability, both Dr. Schiro-Geist and Mr. Williams are members of this organization.

Limerick Institute of Technology - UMID created a memorandum of understanding with Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) in Thurles, northern Tipperary, Ireland to promote study abroad, exchanges, research and other collaborations.

## **UMID Advisory Board Members**

### **Workforce Investment Network**

Disability Coordinator - Phyllis Brunson

### **Department of Vocational Rehabilitation**

Supervisor - Anthony McClyde

VR Counselor - Jamie R. Perry

### **Shelby County schools**

Exceptional Children Department: Director - Cecilia Moore

Manager - Patricia M. Beane

Transition Instructor - Tonyal Mathes

### **Municipal public schools**

Millington High School - Jill Church

Houston HS - Leigh Ellis

Bartlett HS - Marianne Lanahan

Avon-Lenox - Belinda Gibson

Germantown HS - Robyn Orr

### **Lemoyne-Owens College**

Dr. Ralph Calhoun

### **TigerLIFE parent and student**

Student - Joseph Hill

Parent - Ms. Hill

### **University of Memphis**

UM Dean of Students - Dr. Justin Lawhead

CEPR Chair - Dr. Steven West

COE Assistant Dean - Alfred Hall

COE Dean - Kandi Hill-Clarke

### **UTCHS Boiling Center**

Dr. Bruce Keisling

Dr. Lee Wallace

## **Progress Toward Objectives -**

### **Goal 1: Support students with disabilities in their quest for employment and independent living**

#### *Objective 1: Increase externship and internship opportunities*

- UMID continued its partnership with the Crosstown Concourse community and maintained all initiatives that supported TigerLIFE student externship positions in Church Health's procurement, concierge service, and commercial kitchen. However, spring semester partnerships were placed on hold due to Covid-19.
- Internship opportunities were also maintained through the following partnerships: Marshall's, Ronald McDonald House, Memphis Botanic Garden, Southern Reins Equine Therapy, Highlands of Memphis, UM Physical Plant, UM Food Services, and UM Recreational Center. However, once again due to Covid-19 the internships were moved to a virtual model with the move of all UMID transition programs to a virtual model of internships.
- New campus-based and community internships were created at the following sites: Dreamers Coffee, Mid-South Supportive Living, Mid-South Food Bank, Christian Care Center, UM Art Museum, Holiday Inn, Tiger Garden, UM Basketball Equipment were all placed on hold in the spring semester as all University academics moved to online virtual services.

*Objective 2: Increase opportunities for community engagement (off campus)*

- Students continued to utilize facilities at Church Health at Crosstown Concourse as part of the “healthy living lab” portion of the Health Advocacy course to take cooking and exercise classes during the fall of 2019. However, these services were not continued in the spring semester due to Covid-19.

*Objective 3: Increase opportunities for on-campus inclusion*

- Peer mentors with Best Buddies partnered with TigerLIFE students to engage in activities such as the Homecoming parade, sporting events, and other campus events which were very successful during the 2019 fall semester. All Best Buddies activities were moved to virtual activities during the late spring and summer semester of 2019, and have continued in virtual mode this fall for the TigerLIFE students, as the University has decided to maintain all online presence for the current fall 2020 semester.

**Goal 2: Build capacity of UMID programs to increase and extend the impact on individuals with IDD and their communities**

*Objective 1: Establish a Pre-Employment Transition Service (Pre-ETS) program for area high school students with IDD*

- 220 high school students participated in Pre-ETS program through UMID Pre-ETS services to explore career interests, learn self-advocacy skills, engage in job shadowing, and receive postsecondary education counseling
- Seven (7) Shelby County Schools and six (6) municipality high schools agreed through a memo of understanding (MOU) to participate in Pre-ETS program activities provided by UMID at their respective high schools and at camps offered on the University of Memphis campus
- Tennessee VR Pre-ETS funding: \$200,000
- Due to Covid-19, UMID received approval from TN VR to move its CRP services to a virtual online model and currently is the county’s only CRP that has received this virtual operations approval.

*Objective 2: Work with vocational rehabilitation departments as a community rehabilitation provider (CRP)*

- UMID continues to provide virtual internships and job placement opportunities to Vocational Rehabilitation clients through the Institute’s virtual services.

*Objective 3: Collaborate with internal and external partners to seek mutually beneficial funding opportunities*

- “BRIDGE” (Building Resources for persons with Intellectual Disabilities towards Gainful Employment) U.S. Department of Education grant renewed for FY 2019-20, in the amount of \$322,015.00, which was the final year of funding for the five year grant awarded in 2015. However, UMID is very hopeful that this project will be continued with the funding of BRIDGE TWO.
- UMID continues to partner with Alabama A&M to facilitate Bulldog LIFE, from which UMID support the 2020 summer operations of Bulldog LIFE, through UMID’s virtual Schoology Platform
- UMID serves as a consultant to LeMoyné-Owen College Department of Education.

**Goal 3: Conduct research to determine empirically supported best practices for postsecondary educational transition services**

*Objective 1: Collaborate with Tennessee’s Inclusive Higher Education Alliance (including Lipscomb*

*University, Union University, University of Tennessee, and Vanderbilt University) in research endeavors*

- Through funding acquired in the fall of 2019, with the Institute's funded grant proposal from the Department of Education Office of Rehabilitation Services, FIRST grant Project FIRST (Finding Innovative Rehabilitation Services Training), Chrisann Schiro-Geist, Ph.D., Principal Investigator. Department of Education Grant CFDA NO. 84.263 C, \$1,974,264 over 5 years, 2019-2024. UMID will continue to focus on all perspective research that strengthens the goal of gainful employment for persons with disabilities with an emphasis on persons with ID.

*Objective 3: Promote visibility of UMID through publications and presentations*

- UMID staff presented and attended the fall 2019 CEC International Career Development and Transition International Conference in Seattle WA, where both UMID's Senior Associate Director and our SCS Exceptional Children Transition partners attended to support UMID's CCTP and TigerLIFE programs presentations on providing transition services in an urban community.
- UMID's senior leadership staff attended the annual State of the Arts Conference in Reno, NV, to share with other IHE on the progress of IHE programing in the nation.

## **Special Achievements and/or Challenges**

### ***Achievements at a glance for 2019-2020***

1. Contracts and grants for a total of \$1.7 million dollars during 2019-20.
2. The TPSID 3<sup>rd</sup> round funding proposal for BRIDGE TWO \$2.2 million over a five year period, which will fund UMID's transition programs until 2025.
3. UMID leadership will continue to serve as consultants to the National Coordinating center for TPSID on the accreditation committee (Chair, Dr. Chrisann Schiro-Geist) and Self Study Committee (Mr. Maurice Williams)
4. UMID's Senior Associate Director will continue to serve as the Vice Chair of SEPSEA.
5. UMID staff will continue to serve on the Shelby County Employment Disability Council
6. UMID leadership will continue to serve as a part of the steering committee of the West TN Counseling Association.
7. UMID will continue to host the Shelby County Regional Transition Fair with a goal of providing these
8. UMID will continue to serve and present at the Shelby County Parents and family Transitions Summit.
9. UMID will continue to serve on and facilitate the Special Education Community Unified Partners.
10. UMID will continue to serve on the TN IHE Alliance Committee.

### ***Challenges***

1. Communication between three UMID units needs to be perfected to allow for the maximum use of all staff in the promotion of UMID goals and mission.
2. Program evaluation data collections (consistent data collection)
3. Building permanent staff pool
4. Pre-ETS issue with expanding refundable services under Pre-ETS contract with TN VR.
5. Working with UMID affiliates to ensure productivities (establish MOUs)



## **Plans for Upcoming Fiscal Year**

UMID will continue all endeavors in the previous year (1-5).

UMID will partner with industrial and certification programs to offer certificates to increase the employability of TigerLIFE students. Certificate programs being investigated include Logistics in Warehouse Services (forklift operations), Environmental Safety and Cleaning, Personal Care Assistant, and Safety and Industrial Services.

1. Beginning in summer 2020, UMID's IHE Career Development and Transition Programs will operate under its new UDL Virtual mode to provide all transition programs.
2. UMID will submit a series of papers for publication during 2020-21. UMID will also submit proposals for presentations and workshops at the APA (American Psychological Association), NCRE (National Council on Rehabilitation Education), ATINER (Athens Institute for Education & Research), EDEN (European Distance and E-Learning Network), and ICAP (International Congress of Applied Psychology) conferences in 2020-21, as well as presenting at conferences specific to IHE programs.
3. UMID will increase its social media presence by posting relevant news, publications, Institute's and student's achievements throughout 2020-21.
4. UMID will seek to be a more extensive partnership with the University of Tennessee, Boling Center.
5. The development of a Rehabilitation Education Undergraduate UMID will increase its social media presence by posting relevant news, publications, and Institute and student achievements throughout 2021.
6. Increase level of services to the TN VR Pre-ETS programs in 2020-21.
7. UMID will host a follow-up Symposium on Host a conference for the Committee on Rehabilitation Accreditation.
8. Expand the Career Development and Transition programs to the Jackson campus
9. Develop MOU's with key greater Mid-South region HBCU's to establish Centers on Disability to partner with UMID in future expansions of LIFE model programs.
10. Expand UMID's research and contracts footprint to new agencies and corporations
11. Develop UMID's relationship with the Undergraduate Rehabilitation program and other academic programs across campus
12. Maintain UMID's visibility among IHE programs.
13. Maintain UMID's role in accreditation efforts.
14. Grow UMID's CRP to meet the needs of the greater Mid-South region.

## **Appendix A**

### **UMID Organizational Chart**

An Equal Opportunity / Affirmative Action University

