



**Center, Institute, or Bureau (CIB) Annual Performance Statement
2021-2022**

Name of CIB: University of Memphis Institute on Disability (UMID)

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

Physical Location: 4050 S. Park Loop Bldg. 29, Memphis, TN 38152
(901) 678-4303

Director Dr. Chrisann Schiro-Geist
Professor, Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology and
Research

Leadership Team

Mr. Patrick Krolik, MBA – Project FIRST Grant Manager
Dr. Jeffrey B. Smith, BCBA - Behavior Unit Director
Bonnie Sanford - Instructional and Curriculum Coordinator
Jerrica Linsey – Coordinator of Externships & Internships
Tonya McNeal, Coordinator of Administrative Operations
Beth Harms, CRC – Coordinator of Transition UMID – TigreLIFE
Margret Lainey Goodwill – Project FIRST Assistant Project Manager.

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, emphasizing 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 for 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 the 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

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|--------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|---------------------|----------|---|
| Transition Revenue | \$440,000 | expenditures | \$417,000 | ST Fiscal Yr.06/30 | \$23,000 | + |
| Vocational Revenue | \$110,000 | expenditures | \$90,000 | Fed Fiscal Yr. 9/30 | \$20,000 | + |
| Research Revenue | \$399,673 | expenditures | \$399,673 | Fed Fiscal Yr. 9/30 | \$0 | - |

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|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Total UMID Revenue | \$949,673 | expenditures | \$839,673 | ST.Fiscal Yr. 6/30 | \$43,000 | + |
|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|----------|

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 comprises the *Research Unit*, the *Vocational Unit*, and the *Career Development and Transition Programs Unit*.

Research Unit engages with an interdisciplinary faculty team from the various University of Memphis departments, including counseling, psychology education research, behavioral analysis, and social work. In addition, we are actively engaged with local, regional, national, and international affiliates in the pursuit of understanding disabilities and vocational rehabilitation. Our goal is to advance quantitative and qualitative research on disabilities and vocational rehabilitation. These areas of study are guided by the following principles: Person-Centered Systems Perspective, Inclusion, Social Justice and Equity, and Systemic and Sustainable Impact. The interdisciplinary research team includes faculty, vocational experts and consultants, and doctoral-level students who are budding researchers and seek experience 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 retain employment through the Institute's vocational services as a State of Tennessee (TN) Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) through letters of agreement (LOA). UMID has maintained its CRP status since 2014 under these LOAs, which UMID secures in contractual agreements with the State of Tennessee to provide services. UMID renders services in Fayette, Madison, and Shelby counties in West Tennessee through maintaining a TN VR-certified staff of employees that offer various services: vocational assessments, job development, job coaching, and workforce readiness training.

Pre-ETS provides five critical areas of workforce readiness outlined in the Work Force Innovation Act (WIOA) of 2014, including 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 its service contract from \$30,000 to an anticipated 2022-2023 of \$78,000. UMID will investigate providing additional services in the greater Mid-South region. UMID will continue to emphasize providing services to clients with intellectual developmental disabilities, as it is our area of expertise in the region.

Career Development and Inclusive Higher Education (IHE) Transition Programs Unit

Tigers Learning Independence Fostering Education and Employment program (TigerLIFE) is a

Postsecondary Education Program requiring sixty (60) hours of instruction culminating in a completion award in Career and Community Studies. The TigerLIFE program was founded in January 2013 and is a two-year career development and transition program for 18-29-year-old students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and provides an inclusive college campus experience. The program offers individualized Programs of Study in academic, social, vocational, and independent areas.

At the heart of TigerLIFE is a person-centered planning model that uses the Systems Approach to Placement. Participation in the Tiger LIFE program allows students to continue their education beyond high school to increase employment opportunities. TigerLIFE is a federally recognized Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP) through the Department of Education. The University of Memphis Institute administers the TigerLIFE program on Disability (UMID), which aims to assist people with physical and developmental disabilities to find meaningful and lasting employment. TigerLIFE students will receive the five pre-ETS transition services in a collegiate atmosphere. The students gain valuable social inclusion, leading to a successful transition to employment and community independence. The TigerLIFE program systematically assesses 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 to live a more meaningful life.

The College Campus Transition Program (CCTP) is the second transition program UMID is proud to support is a partnership program with the Memphis Shelby County Schools (MSCS) Department of Exceptional Children. CCTP is a comprehensive certified program for motivated young adults with documented intellectual and developmental disabilities, ages 18 – 22. CCTP is a transition program that allows students enrolled at local MSCS schools to enroll in the CCTP program housed within UMID, as the students are considered dual enrolled as continuing education students with the university. The CCTP program was inaugurated in the fall of 2011 and will be in its tenth year come fall of 2022.

Since the conception of both transition programs, The TigerLIFE program has had over 300 complete the program, while 100 students successfully complete the CCTP program. UMID based its success on data collected from the two programs. CCTP graduates maintain an average **81%** successful employment rate 90 days to one year after completion. While TigerLIFE has maintained an average **75%** successful employment rate 120 days to one year after completion.

The UMID Director reports to the Chair of the CEPR Department. A leadership team supports him (Senior Associated Director, Associate Director of Operations, Associate Director of Transition Programs, Instructional and Curriculum Coordinator, and 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.

Goals/Purpose

Purpose

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, primarily focused on the needs of the greater Mid-South region.

Goal

Goal 1: Support students with disabilities to gain competitive integrated employment and independent living.

Objective 1: Increase externship and internship opportunities

- UMID continued its partnership with community partners and the University of Memphis. UMID maintains all initiatives that support TigerLIFE student externship positions.
- Internship opportunities were also maintained through the following partnerships: Southern Reins Equine Therapy, UM Physical Plant, and UM Food Services.
- New campus-based and community internships were created at the following sites: Mid-South Food Bank, Holiday Inn, Tiger Garden, and UofM football.

Objective 2: 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. TigerLIFE partnered with sports and leisure. The students will be able to participate in leisure activities and intramural sports.

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

Objective 1: Build on the established Pre-Employment Transition Service (Pre-ETS) program for area high school students with IDD

- 100 high school students participated in the 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
- Four (4) Memphis Shelby County Schools (MSCS) and Four (4) 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 camps offered on the University of Memphis campus
- Tennessee VR Pre-ETS funding: \$78,000
- UMID will continue to provide post-secondary options, vocational services, and job

placement to Pre-ETS students.

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

- UMID continues to provide internships and job placement opportunities to Vocational Rehabilitation clients through the Institute's programs and services.
- UMID continues to provide individuals with job placement services.
- UMID provides career services for individuals and families, helping them navigate their options and determine the best course for their future.

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

- UMID is working on current grants, such as Project FIRST, and continuing to apply for grants that will assist in UMID's goals of research and practice.
- UMID continues to partner with Alabama A&M to facilitate Bulldog LIFE.

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. UMID staff presented and attended several conferences throughout the academic years 2021-2022.

- American Board of Vocational Experts (ABVE) Spring 2022
- Arkansas Rehabilitation Association (ARA) Fall 2022
- National Rehabilitation Counselors Association (NRCA) Fall 2022
- National Counseling Rehabilitation Educators (NCRE) spring 2022
- Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Commission (VRCC) summer 2022
- Violence in Clinical Psychology Fall 2022

Objective 2: Promote the visibility of UMID through publications and presentations

UMID continues to conduct research, present at events and conferences, and promote research for individuals with disabilities.

- Project FIRST Training Module: 'BRIDGE' Pre-Employment Transition Services training module. November 1st release for evaluation.
- Project FIRST Article 1- Title: Vocational Rehabilitation Closure Rates Among Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities from an Outcome-based Perspective. *In-press. American Board of Vocational Experts. January 2023.*
- Project FIRST Article 2 – Title: Impact of rehabilitation counselor's degree type on the closure rate of clients. *In-press. Journal of Forensic Vocational Analysis. January 2023.*
- Project FIRST Article 3 - A moderate caseload among vocational rehabilitation counselors achieving the best closure rates for clients with disabilities. *In-Press. Rehabilitation Research, Policy, and Education Journal. Spring 2023.*
- Project Article 4 – Title: A moderate caseload among vocational rehabilitation counselors achieving the best closure rates for clients with Intellectual disabilities.

- Project Article 5 – Title: Client living Wage Study Employment Outcomes.
- Project Article 6 – Title: Client patterns and commonalities of Employment Outcomes.

Goal 4: Conduct research to determine empirically supported best practices for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors Training

- 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 five years, 2019-2024. UMID will continue to focus on all future research that strengthens the goal of gainful employment for persons with disabilities, emphasizing persons with ID.

Membership/Affiliate Criteria

- UMID employs a diverse staff of approximately ten researchers, instructors, practitioners, behavior specialists, graduate assistants, and interns. UMID has supported on-campus faculty affiliates through collaborations with grant submissions and 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.
- Memphis Shelby County Schools (MSCS) - UMID works in full partnership with the MSCS Department of Exceptional Children to provide transition awareness in the district and fully collaborate with the regional transition fair. In 2022, UMID hosted two transition fairs.
- UMID staff are on the Advisory Board of Memphis Center of Independent Living (MCIL).
- Special Education Community Unified Partners (SECUP) - UMID has been the partnership’s leader since its conception. UMID participated with the council in sponsoring the annual West TN SPED Conference in past years and convened the partnership’s first region-wide 2021 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 2021 and 2022 that featured the 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 tremendous forethought to the many changes that followed the October symposium, in 2020, with the growth of social unrest and Covid-19. The Affiliation Agreement was not terminated in the fall of 2022.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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 2023.
- 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

Work Force Investment Group / Memphis

Disability Coordinator Phyllis Brunson

Department of Vocational Rehabilitation/Pre-ETS

Jamie R. Perry

Triniti Holden

TigerLIFE parent and student

Sandeford J Schaeffer

Patti Lehigh

University of Memphis

Dr. Steven West

Dr. Will Hunter

Dr. Tara Buchanan

Dr. Xiaofei Zhang

Dr. Xinhua Yu

Dr. Brenna Breshears

Dr. Ashley Batastini

Shelby County schools

Patricia Beane

Tonyal Mathes

Deborah Harris

UMID - Staff

Dr. Schiro-Geist

Dr. Jeffrey Brian Smith

Patrick Krolik

Gwen Porter

Beth Harms

Laney Goodwill

The community at large / Consultants:

JoAnn Fusco - Thrive

Billie Walker – Sephora

Sandi Klink - MCIL

Loretta Vaughn – Marshall Department Store.

Lisa Montgomery – Service Master by Stromby.

Anthony McClyde – United Way

Notable Achievements and Challenges

Achievements at a glance for 2021-2022

1. UMID leadership will continue to serve as consultants to the National Coordinating Center for TPSID on the accreditation committee (Dr. Chrisann Schiro-Geist).
2. UMID staff will continue to serve on the Shelby County Employment Disability Council
3. UMID will continue to host the Shelby County Regional Transition Fair to provide these

4. UMID will continue to serve and present at the Shelby County Parents and family Transitions Summit.
5. UMID will continue to serve on and facilitate the Special Education Community Unified Partners.
6. UMID will continue to serve on the TN IHE Alliance Committee.

Challenges

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

Plans for the Upcoming Fiscal Year 2023

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. UMID will hire a new Senior Associate Director
2. UMID will submit a series of papers for publication from 2022 to 2023. 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 2022-2023, as well as presenting at conferences specific to IHE programs.
3. UMID will increase its social media presence by posting relevant news, publications, and Institute and student achievements throughout 2022-2023.
4. UMID will seek a more extensive partnership with the University of Memphis and multiple State Institutions.
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 the level of services to the TN VR Pre-ETS programs in 2022-2023
7. Expand the Career Development and Transition programs to the Jackson campus
8. Expand UMID's research and contracts footprint to new agencies and corporations
9. Maintain UMID's visibility among IHE programs.

10. Maintain UMID's role in accreditation efforts.

11. Grow UMID's CRP to meet the needs of the greater Mid-South region.