Institute on Disabilities
ANNUAL REPORT
2016-2017
Message from the Director


It’s been an active and productive year here at the Institute. We’ve expanded one program, added a new one, and welcomed several forward-thinking leaders.

This year, one of our most popular and successful programs, the Academy for Adult Learning, grew into a four-year certificate program and was renamed “Leadership & Career Studies.”

Another mainstay of the Institute is our Mini Course Lecture Series on Disabilities and this year, a new program evolved from the Mini Course featuring Alex Truesdell, founder of Adapted Design Association, Inc. She talked about equipment constructed from cardboard especially for children with physical disabilities. Inspired by her work, the Institute applied for, and received, a High Impact Innovative Quality of Life grant from the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation to establish “Cardboard for Kids: Adaptive Design Greater Philadelphia.”

Taking the lead on this, and other programs, is one of our new leaders, Kim Singleton, who directs our Assistive Technology activities. Also joining us is Kate Fialkowski, the Director of Academic Programs, responsible for all of the Institute’s university-based education programs. Finally, Jamie Ray-Leonetti is now the Associate Director of Policy and will coordinate all policy-related activities, as well as a newly funded Developmental Disabilities Council Project, “Assessing Compliance with the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services’ Home and Community-based Final Rule.”

Thank you for taking the time to read this annual report. We are enthusiastically planning our activities for next year—new programs and new ways to work with and on behalf of people with disabilities.

Celia S. Feinstein
Executive Director
AAL Becomes L&CS

The Institute has expanded its successful Academy for Adult Learning (AAL) program into a four-year certificate program with a new name—Leadership & Career Studies (L&CS). Students with an intellectual disability take academic courses, explore college life and develop career experiences based on their interests and goals. Students select a coach from a group of matriculated Temple students—L&CS students will have a coach for their entire time at Temple University.

disabilities.temple.edu/programs/inclusive/lcs.shtml

Kids Get Cardboard!

The Institute was awarded a High Impact Innovative Quality of Life grant by the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation to establish the “Cardboard for Kids: Adaptive Design Greater Philadelphia” program.

The project served children with paralysis-causing conditions by creating customized adaptations made from three-ply cardboard. Adaptations included everything from standers to chair inserts and wheelchair trays.

Professionals from a variety of disciplines including occupational and physical therapists, and speech-language pathologists, from several partner organizations teamed up to fabricate the adaptations.

The project culminated with a showcase of the cardboard creations at the Tyler School of Art at Temple University.

disabilities.temple.edu/programs/assistive/adgp/

Innovator Profiled

The Institute’s Western Coordinator, Guy Caruso, served as a producer on the film “Valuing Lives: Wolf Wolfensberger and the Principle of Normalization.”

The film profiles Wolf Wolfensberger, an iconoclastic professor who trained thousands of human services professionals in the theory and practice of “normalization.” Celia Feinstein, the Institute’s Executive Director says that when Wolfensberger wrote his groundbreaking book on the subject in 1972, “Wolfensberger’s principle of normalization was instrumental in shaping the leadership and values necessary to close institutions that warehoused people, including Pennhurst State School and Hospital in Pennsylvania.”

In addition to Caruso, the film was produced by Jerry Smith, the film’s Director. Executive Producer is Amy Hewitt.

rtc.umn.edu/valuinglives/
Social Media Campaign Celebrates Parents

The Institute launched a unique social media campaign, Visionaries Are Made, a series of portraits of parents of children with a disability. Each person featured in the portraits became an advocate the moment they became a parent, evolving into persistent, committed risk takers for a cause they believe in...their children.

*Parent portraits (front cover and at right) by Cecilia and Jacob Lee*

disabilities.temple.edu/mac/

Transition in Aging

The Institute partnered on a series of training modules designed for service providers, direct support staff, family members and others to promote a better understanding of the aging process among individuals with developmental disabilities.

The modules were developed by Dr. Pei-Chun Hsieh, a faculty member in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences at Temple University, with support from Institute Executive Director Celia Feinstein and Institute staff members.

Topics include “Successful Aging,” “Aging in Place,” and “Retirement Planning.” The project was funded by the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council.

disabilities.temple.edu/transitions-in-aging/homepage.html

Annual Symposium Welcomes Arts Community

“Representation in the Arts and Media” was the title of our fourth annual Disability and Change Symposium. This event was a unique gathering of artists and scholars from a variety of disciplines to converse on “Cultural Equity” inclusive of people with disabilities, to address not just basic access but full equity to all artists and audiences, particularly those who have traditionally been excluded. Nearly 300 people attended the day-long event which included a gallery with tactile pieces (touching was encouraged!) and a large interactive weaving project installed by Tyler School of Art students.

disabilities.temple.edu/programs/ds/ds-dashboard.shtml
Funding
Total Funds in FY 2016-2017

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Core funding for the Institute on Disabilities comes from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living, Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

Program funding is provided by Pennsylvania (PA) Departments of Human Services, Health, and Labor and Industry; Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (US); Federal Communications Commission; PA Developmental Disabilities Council; PA Public Utility Commission; Montgomery County, Office of Developmental Programs; Tuscarora Intermediate Unit; Dream Partnership, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia; Millersville University, Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation; and Berks County Commissioners.

New Staff
The Institute welcomed three new leaders this year. Pictured below from left to right are Jamie Ray-Leonetti, Associate Director of Policy, responsible for coordinating all policy-related activities for the Institute; Kim Singleton, Director of Assistive Technology Programs, overseeing all programs which make technology available and useful to people served by the Institute and Kate Fialkowski, Director of Academic Programs, heading the Institute’s university-based education programs.

Learn more about Jamie, Kim and Kate and all our staff at disabilities.temple.edu/about
ACES 2016

Augmentative Communication and Empowerment Supports (ACES) returned in 2016, welcoming young adults from across the country who use communication technology. ACES is a two-week program on Temple’s main campus where participants learn empowerment techniques and develop and refine their communication, including computer access, and use for daily living and job skills.

disabilities.temple.edu/programs/aac/aces/

Guide for Young People in Transition

The Institute, along with The Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network and The George Washington University, developed The Transition Discoveries Guide as an aid to people with disabilities, families, and others involved with transition to measure and create pathways to success for young people in transition. Each of the nine sections contain definitions, meaningful stories, resources and more.

The content was driven, written and approved by a diverse advisory board which included young people with disabilities. The project was funded by a grant from the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council.

secondarytransition.org/page/transition_discoveries_guide