



**Building an evidence-based, holistic approach  
for moving integrated employment forward**  
APSE 2018

Rehabilitation Research and Training  
Center on Advancing Employment

A project of

**ThinkWork!**



**APSE**  
Association of People Supporting Employment First  
EMPLOYMENT FIRST - EMPLOYMENT NOW

**rtc on  
community  
living**  
INSTITUTE of COMMUNITY INTEGRATION  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

**NASDDDS**

**The Arc.**  
For people with intellectual  
and developmental disabilities

**ICI** **U**  
**UMASS**  
**BOSTON**

**SELF  
ADVOCATES  
BECOMING  
EMPOWERED**

**DirectCourse**  
ONLINE CURRICULA FOR LIFE IN COMMUNITY

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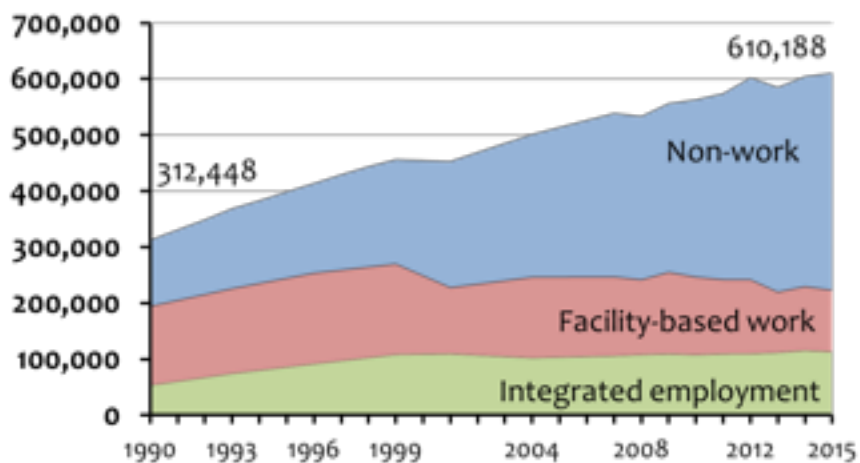
***“Employment is a way for people with disabilities to give to the community and see what they have to offer.***

***We’re givers, not just takers.”***

-Max Barrows, Green Mountain Self-Advocates

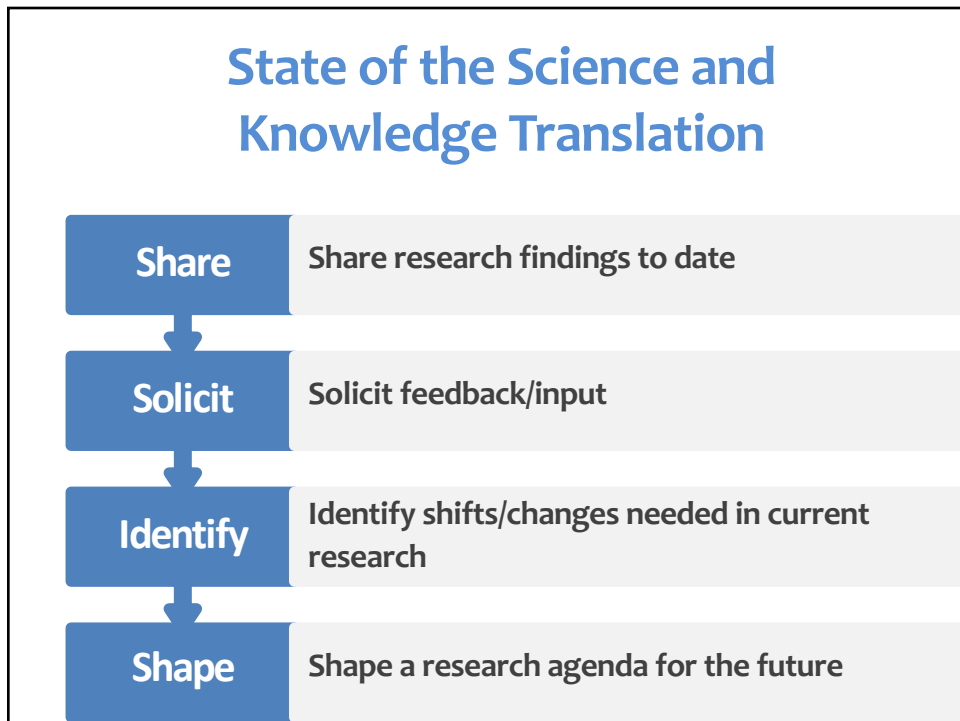


### Number in Employment and Day Services



Source: ICI National Survey of State IDD  
Agency Day and Employment Services





## Strand 1: Individual and family engagement

### Goal:

Employment as a lifelong conversation. Information and support available on a “just in time” basis

- Scoping literature review
- Focus groups: Individual and family experiences
- Family engagement intervention

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## Findings: Scoping literature review themes

- ❖ Family modeling shapes employment experiences.
- ❖ Engaging families supports a focus on employment.
- ❖ Family/individual demographics are related to employment.

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## Findings: Scoping literature review strategies

### Training

- Explore, Prepare, Act
- FEAT

### Planning tools

- The Arc's Build Your Plan
- LifeCourse tools

### Online resources

- Let's Get to Work (WI)

### Peer-to-peer outreach

### Social media

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## Findings: Online focus groups and forums

- ❖ Confusing guidance and low systems expectations
- ❖ Navigation is hard: lack of alignment & discontinuity
- ❖ System lacks capacity
- ❖ More success when relying on self and family

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## Intervention (evolving)

- ❖ Family members (young adults ages 12-24).
  - Guided use of LifeCourse Planning Tool
  - Private Facebook group and peer support
  - Online Community of Practice



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## State of the Science themes

- Choice & Risk: Dream, try, fail, succeed
- Early engagement & anticipatory guidance
- Authentic partners: Meet families “where they are”
- Address discontinuities among services and between agencies
- Roles and expectations. How can formal supports best intersect with personal supports?

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## Strand 2: Employment support practices

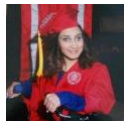
### Goals

Describe the relationship of practice to outcome

A scalable model for implementation support

- Interviews: Highly effective employment consultants, job seekers, families, supervisors
- Intervention

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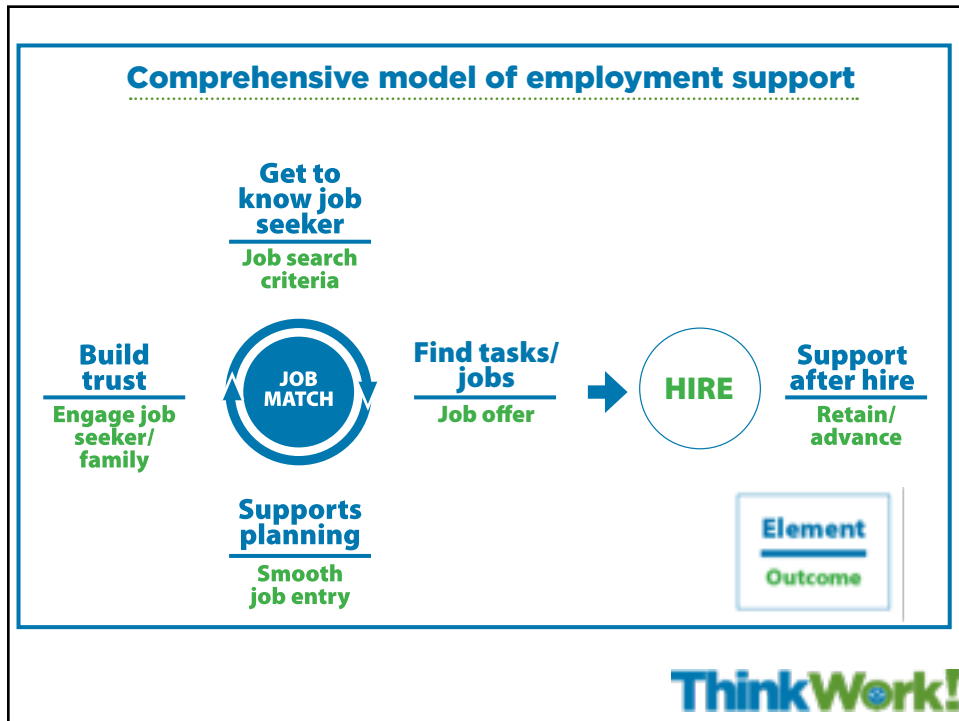


### The Truth Comes from Us: Supporting Workers with Developmental Disabilities By: Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)

Employment professionals play a powerful role in the pursuit of true inclusion. SABE outlines key steps on how allies can move people with developmental disabilities out of poverty and into meaningful roles in their communities.

[http://www.sabeusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/ThinkWork\\_sabe\\_D2-002.pdf](http://www.sabeusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/ThinkWork_sabe_D2-002.pdf)

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## Intervention: Engaging employment consultants

- ❖ 167 participants, 85 CRPs, 30 states
- ❖ Baseline and quarterly surveys
- ❖ Daily activity survey by smartphone
- ❖ Monthly community of practice & goal
- ❖ Monthly performance feedback

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## The daily survey for smartphones

- **What** primary support activity was implemented?
- **Who** was the interaction with?
- **Where** did this interaction take place?

Once each work day at a random time

Outlook LTE 3:01 PM  
survey@zmo.com

### ThinkWork

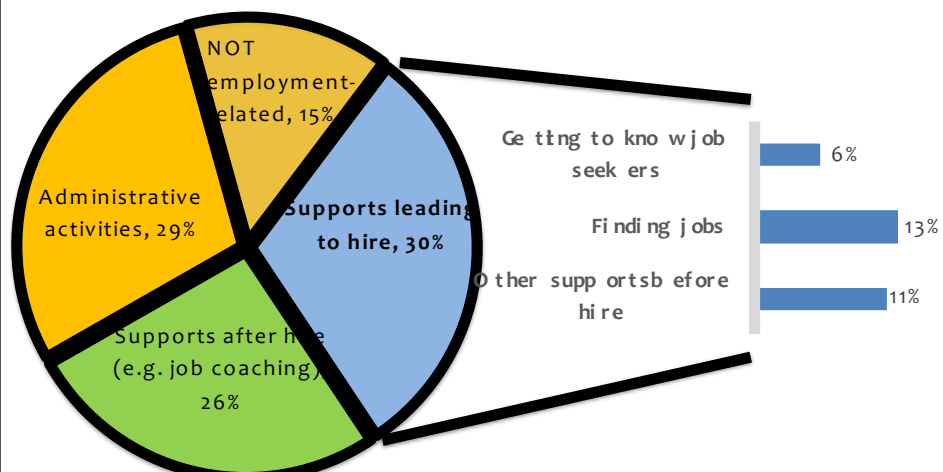
Where were you during your primary activity between 10:30 am and 11:00 am, today?

- In my office or home office
- At the residence of a person I support
- At an employer's site
- In other community settings
- In a vehicle
- At a facility-based program

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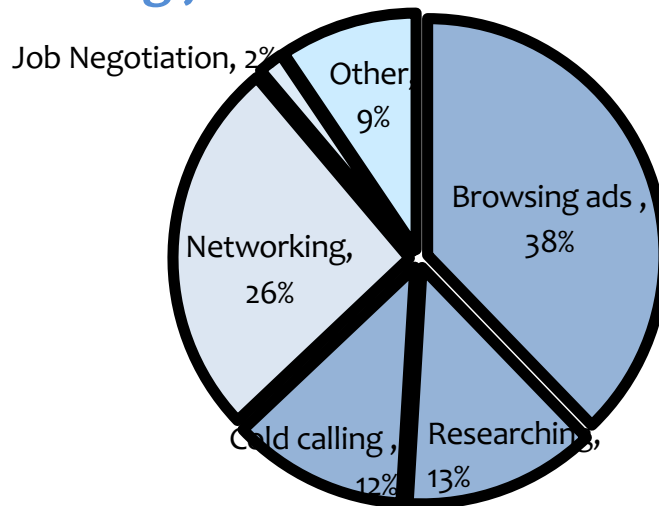
## WHAT: primary support activity



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## WHAT: Blue zone Finding jobs



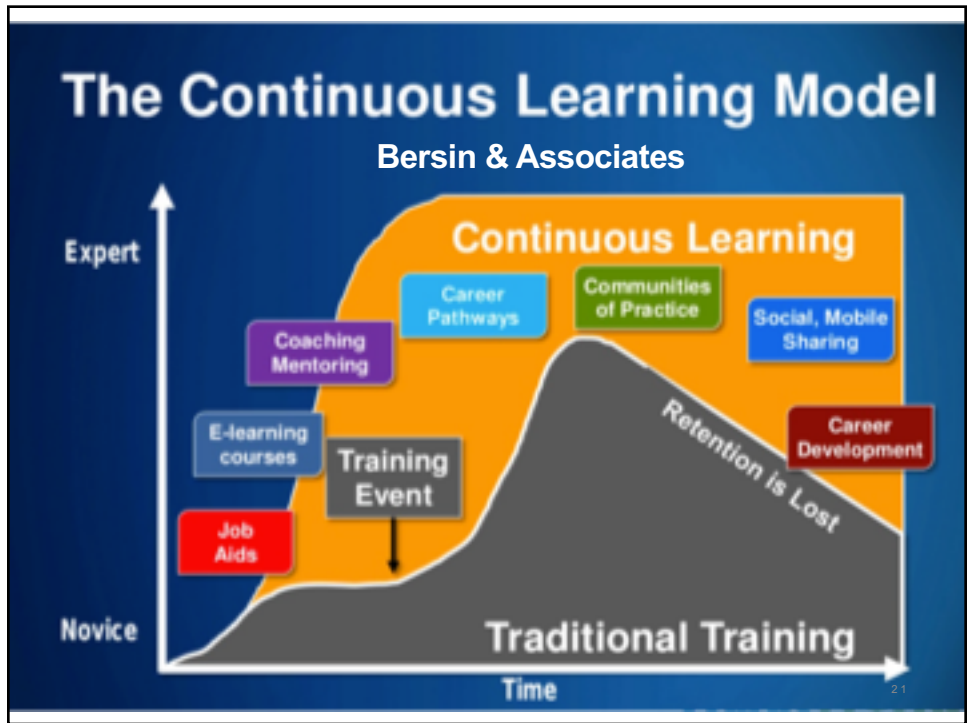
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## State of the Science themes

### Employment support practices

- ❖ Key practice benchmarks
- ❖ Effective supervisory & team structures
- ❖ Efficiency: Reduce admin burden
- ❖ Smart use of tech
- ❖ Training and credentialing: Models/roles

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## Microlearning

Ask employers:  
*What tasks in your business are sometimes left unfinished?*

[Watch this 3 min video about Maggie's negotiated new job description](#)

[Oliver.lyons@umb.edu](mailto:Oliver.lyons@umb.edu)  
617-287-4376  
<http://www.thinkwork.org/s22ec>

You may now close your browser

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Advancing employment and opportunity for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

0% ▶

## Feedback

[2:49]

That's the hours and minutes that you and your peers as a group spend on administrative tasks, each day.

*Share your ideas for streamlining administrative tasks [HERE!](#)*

0% ▶

## Strand 3: Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs)

### Goal

To develop a model to support provider transformation that can be brought to scale

- Delphi Panel: Framework
- Case studies: How the framework looks on the ground
- Intervention Study: Organizational Transformation



## What is a Delphi Panel?

- ❖ Getting a group of experts to agree on a topic
- ❖ 36 experts in organizational transformation
- ❖ Represented provider staff and management, self-advocates, families, researchers, trainers
- ❖ Had knowledge of, or had participated in, a transformation process
- ❖ “What is most important for providers during transformation?”
- ❖ several rounds (respond to early findings, identify what is missing, and rank)

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## Findings: Delphi panel Ten organizational factors

1. Clear and consistent goals
2. Agency culture that values inclusion\*
3. Active, person-centered job placement process (one person at a time)
4. Strong internal & external communications
5. Reallocated and restructured resources

\*New element

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## Findings: Organizational Factors (continued)

6. Ongoing investment in staff learning\*
7. Focus on customer engagement/feedback\*
8. Effective performance measurement, quality assurance, & program oversight\*
9. Holistic approach to supports
10. Multiple & diverse community partnerships

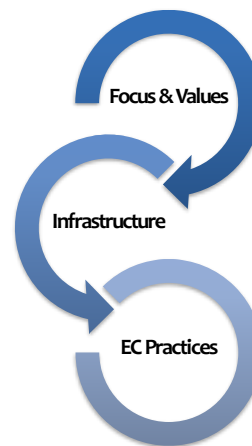
\*New element

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## Increasing provider capacity

“Organizational transformation cannot occur without a strong workforce of employment consultants, and employment consultants perform their most effective work within a high-functioning organizational culture that has a shared mission and vision among all of its stakeholders.”



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## Findings: Case studies

- ❖ Arc of Westchester (NYC metro)
- ❖ At Work! (Seattle metro)
- ❖ Work, Inc. (Boston metro and Cape Cod)
- ❖ Penn-Mar Human Services (rural Pennsylvania)

Closed at least one workshop in last ten years, must primarily serve individuals with IDD, diversity of characteristics and experience

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## Findings: Case Studies

- ❖ Case study findings confirmed the ten elements
- ❖ Learned WHY each element is valuable during the transformation
- ❖ Provided on-the-ground examples, strategies, and depth to the 10 organizational factors.
- ❖ Provided specific practices that illustrate each finding for replication
- ❖ Offered different state contexts
- ❖ Content for Agency Change Toolkit

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## Intervention (ongoing)

- ❖ 10 Arc chapters over two years, selected through RFP process
- ❖ Intervention components
  - Agency Change Toolkit
    - Organizational self-assessment
  - Customized action planning
  - Monthly expert technical assistance
  - Monthly Community of Practice/webinar
  - Leadership summit in Washington, DC



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## Intervention Emerging Findings

### Common themes across the first five providers:

- ❖ They all lacked clear and consistent goals for their transformation
- ❖ Limited knowledge of best practices in job development
- ❖ Strong need for building capacity of all levels of staff
- ❖ Strong relationship with day supports. Can't think about one without the other.

(consider against Delphi )

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## State of the Science themes

### Provider Organizational Change

- ❖ Expectations/culture of the organization- everyone can work
- ❖ “Employment is everyone’s business”
- ❖ Focus on long-term career development
- ❖ Infusing data into decisions
- ❖ Not just closing workshops, but tools to evolve service delivery (connection to strand 2)
- ❖ Importance of employer customers

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## Strand 4: Aligning policy and practice across state agencies

### Goal

Define policies and practices of high-performing state employment systems at a multi-agency level

- Composite indicator
- National Core Indicators analysis
- Case studies: Higher performing states
- SABE: Employment first
- Topical policy analysis

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**APSE EMPLOYMENT FIRST STATEMENT**  
Adapted by Green Mountains Self Advocates and Self Advocates Becoming Empowered

All people with disabilities should have opportunities to work. Public dollars should be used to pay for supports for people to work in the community.  
People with disabilities, their families, and their allies believe that:

- Too many people with disabilities do not have a job. This is unacceptable.
- All people should have opportunities for real jobs with real wages. It will get us out of poverty. We will be more independent. We will feel more included.
- All people, with and without disabilities, can work in jobs together earning minimum wage or higher.
- Like everyone else, people with disabilities should have access to supports that they need to work successfully.
- All people, no matter what disability they have, have the right to work a job they choose that matches their skills and interests.
- Public policies must support people with disabilities having real jobs. Money for services should be spent on people having jobs in the community.
- Just calling your state an Employment First state is not enough. "Employment First" is when everyone who wants a job, has a job.



“just calling your state an ‘Employment First’ state is not enough; it’s when everyone who wants a job, actually has a job.”

(SABE, 2017).

<https://www.thinkwork.org/apse-employment-first-statement>



What self-advocates around the country said about Employment First



“Employment First means that, above all else, people with disabilities, people of all abilities, need to have a purpose in life.”

John Fenley,  
People First of  
New Hampshire



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“Employment First, I define it like this... anyone who wants to work should have the chance to do so.”

Andrew Whalen,  
Advocate in Action  
Rhode Island



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“Being in a sheltered workshop is being sheltered from the world.”


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“It is not acceptable to close sheltered workshops by moving people into day programs. The goal is real jobs with real pay.”

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## Findings: Composite indicator rankings

	Rank	Overall CI Score	IDD Score	VR Score	Education Score
<b>MD</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>47.38</b>	<b>21.60</b>	<b>15.22</b>	<b>10.56</b>
NH	2	47.26	22.76	9.63	14.86
VT	3	46.88	22.76	13.75	10.37
OR	4	44.77	21.60	12.81	10.35
WA	5	44.26	22.84	10.87	10.56
IA	6	42.48	15.42	13.78	13.28
OK	7	41.98	21.67	12.79	7.52
SD	8	40.51	14.33	14.72	11.46
CO	9	39.78	14.47	13.92	11.39
DE	10	39.60	19.20	14.32	6.08



## Findings: Case study research in MD

- ❖ Success over the long term depends on a cadre of stakeholders.
- ❖ Leadership is most effective when distributed across multiple levels of responsibility.
- ❖ Competitive integrated employment for individuals with IDD has been a long-standing goal of the Maryland state government.

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## Findings: Case study research in MD

- ❖ Consistent allocation of funds for long-term services for youth exiting schools is critical. Cement expectation for collaboration between school and adult service systems.
- ❖ Capacity building efforts have focused on building a statewide understanding of goals and service outcomes, methods to enhance and monitor service quality and ensure best practice.

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## Findings: State-level policy analyses

- Leadership through setting values, setting direction, and creating the infrastructure for change.
- Embedding ongoing employment conversations in the support coordination/case management process.
- Inter-agency collaboration with a focus on person-centered planning. Setting the expectation about a more unified planning process among all partners.

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## State of the Science themes

- ❖ Data and its relationship to state systems and policy
  - Need a “deeper dive” into existing data
  - The value of longitudinal data
  - Triangulation at all levels
  - Shared definitions of employment?
  - Tracking employment outcomes not tied to formal services.

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## Findings from the field- continued

- ❖ Leadership
  - Development of regional communities of practice
  - Organic growth of leaders
  - Identifying and supporting champions
- ❖ Communication/collaboration
  - Shared agendas across agencies- shifting from competition to collaboration
  - Engaging all stakeholders so “they are the messengers”

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## Areas for research

Scalability  
Implementation support

### Employment supports

- ❖ Linking individual and system resources
- ❖ Activities/impacts

### Organizations

- ❖ Finance & infrastructure
- ❖ Team structures
- ❖ Data and decision making
- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Connection to day supports

### Individual & family

- ❖ Supporting risk
- ❖ Early and often (many small touches)
- ❖ Family context: Holistic view

### Systems change

- ❖ Case management
- ❖ Assess systems experiments (funding, policy, ...)
- ❖ QA/QI approaches

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## Holistic Perspective

Community  
& Labor  
Market

Workplace

Individuals &  
Families

Employment  
Supports

Individual  
Employment  
Outcomes

Community  
Rehabilitation  
Provider  
Practices

State Policy  
& Strategy

Federal Policy

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**John Butterworth  
Jaimie Timmons  
Jason Billehus**

**Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Advancing Employment  
for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

A project of

**ThinkWork!**  
at the Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass Boston

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