



RUTGERS HEALTH

The Boggs Center
on Disability and Human Development

Robert Wood Johnson Medical School



FACING THE FUTURE 2025

UNCHARTED WATERS:
NAVIGATION STRATEGIES FOR
COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT
October 10, 2025 ■ Hyatt Regency New Brunswick



A conference for professionals highlighting best practices in supporting people with disabilities in career planning, supported and customized employment, and transition from school to work

Conference at a Glance

8:00 A.M. TO 8:30 A.M.	Registration, Continental Breakfast, and Exhibits			
8:30 A.M. TO 8:45 A.M.	Welcome Brooks Sanders, President, NJ APSE and Margaret Gilbride, JD, CT, The Boggs Center			
8:45 A.M. TO 9:00 A.M.	Navigating Success through Uncharted Waters: It Takes Preparation, Skill, and the Right Tools Margaret Gilbride, JD, CT, Director of Transition and Employment, The Boggs Center			
9:00 A.M. TO 9:15 A.M.	Break (15 minutes)			
9:15 A.M. TO 10:30 A.M.	Workshop 1	Workshop 2	Workshop 3	Workshop 4
	Quality Indicators for Programs Serving Students with Disabilities 18-21 Years Old	Navigating New Currents: Uncovering the Tangible Benefits of Research-Provider Partnerships in Supported Employment	"Hoofin' It" - The "Old-Fashioned" Ways That Still Work, but Everyone Forgot	More Than Soft Skills: Reframing Interpersonal Skills for Neurodivergent Job Seekers
10:30 A.M. TO 10:45 A.M.	Break (15 minutes)			
10:45 A.M. TO 12:00 P.M.	Workshop 5	Workshop 6	Workshop 7	Workshop 8
	A How-to Guide for Navigating Employment After High School	Empowering Employment: How Assistive Technology Breaks Barriers to Competitive Integrated Jobs	Built to Last: The Enduring Values of Supported Employment	Develop A Career Pathway: Using a Digital Toolkit to Support Individuals with Disabilities to Succeed in Career & Technical Education
12:15 P.M. TO 1:00 P.M.	Awards Luncheon			
1:15 P.M. TO 2:30 P.M.	Workshop 9	Workshop 10	Workshop 11	Workshop 12
	Community-Based Instruction (CBI) and Work-Based Learning (WBL) in Action: Creating Inclusive Employment Opportunities for Students with Disabilities	Navigating Work and SSA Benefits	Beyond GPT: Leveraging AI to Transform Disability Employment Services	Pathways to Possibilities: DVRS, Pre-ETS, and Inclusive Higher Education at TCNJ
2:30 P.M. TO 2:45 P.M.	Break (15 minutes)			
2:45 P.M. TO 3:45 P.M.	Keynote Presentation The Person You're Helping Duncan Winburn 3 rd Year Law Student, Joseph F. Rice School of Law, University of South Carolina Disability Rights Advocate			
3:45 P.M.	Conference Adjourns			

Keynote Presentation



The Person You're Helping

Duncan Winburn

*3rd Year Law Student,
Joseph F. Rice School of Law, University of South Carolina
Disability Rights Advocate*

The first job we get in life is to be a student. We become students to learn how to become employed. Therefore, our definition of employment needs to begin early – at the first IEP at age three or the first point when a person acquires a disability.

Education, volunteerism, and employment are interwoven for all humans. The earlier we begin planning for employment, the more likely we are to obtain it and keep it. This is just as true for people with disabilities, and there is no reason why people with disabilities cannot be happily employed. To make this a reality, everyone involved must approach employment with a plan from the beginning – at the individual, community, and government levels. The most important thing is to keep the individual in mind. Always ask what they want, and make it happen – whether they are three, thirteen, or thirty.

Just as important as the teachers are the adult providers. Education makes the transition to employment smoother, but a well-executed plan is necessary throughout the employment process. As adults, the experiences we want out of life change, and the plan should change with it.

I have had a disability all of my life, and so have some of my friends. We have seen great plans, absent plans, and good plans that could have been executed better. Join me as I use examples from my own life experience to illustrate how to effectively plan and execute a person with disabilities' employment journey.

About Duncan Winburn

Duncan graduated from Westwood High School at the top of his class and clocked a record high number of volunteer hours. And he began a legacy - an annual event called Star Day. During this day, the Arts and Special Education students come together to create! Because of Star Day, the Riley Institute named Duncan an Emerging Public Leader. This led him to attend Furman University and graduate with a degree in sociology. He left a legacy at Furman as well, working with the disabilities office, theatre department, and even Furman's police force to make the campus's roads, buildings, and buses more accessible. He was chosen by Furman's TEDx conference to speak, and chose to support SC Bill 533. He spoke twice at the SC State House advocating for the bill, which was passed in May 2022, and made illegal the use of the Fair Labor Standards Act to pay subminimum wages to people with disabilities.

After graduation, Duncan worked with Able SC to develop protocols for disability rights organizations to use in the event of another pandemic, and helped lead the Equip peer group to teach community skills. He has also worked with SC Appleseed Legal Justice Center to conduct research to support advocacy work, and with the SC Richland County Public Defenders Office. Duncan is in his final year at the University of South Carolina Joseph F. Rice School of Law. He recently won the right to argue a case in front of the SC Supreme Court, where he prevailed. He's also earned the Jeffcoat Public Interest Fellowship grant and the Nicholas J. Luft Scholarship Award. His dream is to continue lobbying for poverty reform and civil rights, and advocate for those whose voices are not heard.

Morning Workshops 1-2: 9:15 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.

1 Quality Indicators for Programs Serving Students with Disabilities 18-21 Years Old

Bill Freeman, MEd, State Coordinator of Secondary Transition, and JoAnn Johnson, MA, Transition Specialist, New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education

The New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education, has released the “Quality Indicators for Programs Serving Students with Disabilities 18-21 Years Old.” This new framework provides guidance for ensuring high-quality programs that support students as they prepare for success in adult life. This session will provide an overview of the quality indicators, highlight best practices for implementation, and discuss how they align with the IDEA (2004). This session will equip you with essential knowledge to enhance programming and improve outcomes for students preparing for a successful adult life. Attendees will leave with a clear understanding of how to apply these indicators to improve services and support for students aged 18-21.

2 Navigating New Currents: Uncovering the Tangible Benefits of Research-Provider Partnerships in Supported Employment

Kimberley Deng, EdD, Research Project Coordinator, Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers University; Valentina Arango-Correa, EdD, Training and Consultation Specialist; and Robert Kimmel, EdD, BCBA, CESP, Training and Consultation Specialist, The Boggs Center on Disability and Human Development, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

This presentation will explore the essential interdependence between research institutions and supported employment providers. It will illuminate how provider agencies are crucial for conducting relevant and impactful research, while also detailing the significant advantages these agencies gain through active participation. Discover how involvement in research can unlock opportunities for grant funding, influence the development of best practices, contribute to positive policy evolution, and enhance workforce development. Learn how these collaborations can also elevate public relations, increase name recognition, and foster stronger community partnerships, ultimately strengthening the entire supported employment landscape.

Morning Workshops 3-4: 9:15 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.

3 “Hoofin’ It” - The “Old-Fashioned” Ways That Still Work, but Everyone Forgot

Dominique Hyder, MA, Director of Business Development, Avenues to Independent Living, Inc.

“Hoofin’ It” is the phrase I coined many years ago in a soft skills lesson I created for my high school BD students about how to job search. I have since updated the lesson for career counseling purposes and most recently have evolved it to use as a job development training technique for Employment Specialists and Trainers. I will share strategies that I have developed over a 20-year career providing employment services and career education. In this time, I found that the best job development/seeking strategies involve human-to-human contact. Participants will be provided with strategies to use as well as my lessons to share these seemingly antiquated skills with some modern twists with their consumers and students.

4 More Than Soft Skills: Reframing Interpersonal Skills for Neurodivergent Job Seekers

Danielle Jeudy, PhD, BCBA-D, LBA, Clinical Supervisor, and Jennifer Ajbuszyc-Sanchez, MS, Assistant Director of Day Services, Our House, Inc.

Competitive integrated employment (CIE) often relies on an individual’s ability to meet unwritten interpersonal expectations. Traditional “soft skills” training can reinforce deficit-based models that pressure neurodivergent individuals to mask or conform. This workshop invites participants to rethink interpersonal skill development through a neuro-affirming lens. Drawing from applied behavior analysis, trauma-informed care, and day program practices, the session explores strategies that promote authentic communication, co-regulation, and self-advocacy. Attendees will examine implicit social biases and gain practical tools to build strengths-based, inclusive employment readiness supports. Ideal for behavior analysts, job developers, and program staff, this session centers dignity, autonomy, and workplace equity.

10:30 A.M. ~ Break (15 minutes)

Morning Workshops 5-6: 10:45 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

5 A How-to Guide for Navigating Employment After High School

Adam Kubler, BA, New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities, and Amy Watts, BS, Program and Community Liaison, Progressive Center for Independent Living

Educators are the gateway to students' future employment success. Join us for an informational presentation with a game show style discussion as we travel down the path of how to guide students and their families through the transition from school to employment. We will review options for life after high school and the available resources to make it all happen.

6 Empowering Employment: How Assistive Technology Breaks Barriers to Competitive Integrated Jobs

Vanessa Lombardo, MEd, ATP, Project Director, AT Center at The College of New Jersey

This presentation explores the role of assistive technology (AT) in creating inclusive workplaces for individuals with disabilities. Participants will learn to identify various AT tools, such as screen readers, ergonomic devices, and voice recognition software, and understand how they enable individuals to thrive in competitive integrated employment (CIE). Through case studies and interactive activities, the session highlights the practical application of AT in overcoming barriers to productivity, fostering inclusivity, and evaluating the effectiveness of AT in workplace settings.

Morning Workshops 7-8: 10:45 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

7 Built to Last: The Enduring Values of Supported Employment

Bethany Chase, DSW, Training and Consultation Specialist, and Jessica Short, BA, Senior Training and Consultation Specialist, The Boggs Center on Disability and Human Development, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

While the language of Supported Employment has evolved over the years, the foundation of our work has remained steady. We've always centered merit-based hiring and the right to meaningful, competitive employment for all. We've adapted to new systems, funding models, and political climates—not by compromising our mission, but by finding new ways to work towards it. In today's shifting environment, that adaptability is more important than ever. This session offers a clear, grounded framework for promoting supported employment in ways that rise above the noise. Participants will explore practical messaging strategies, reflect on the enduring relevance of our core values, and leave with renewed confidence in supported employment as a sustainable, nonpartisan solution that strengthens the workforce for everyone.

8 Develop A Career Pathway: Using a Digital Toolkit to Support Individuals with Disabilities to Succeed in Career & Technical Education

Ni Gao, PhD, Professor and Director, Integrated Employment Institute, Rutgers School of Health Professions

Career and Technical Education (CTE) presents a viable and effective pathway for individuals with disabilities to obtain employment and improve quality of life. CTE programs, which are typically shorter and more affordable than traditional academic degrees. CTE focuses on developing hands-on, job-specific skills in high-demand fields. CTE graduates often find jobs with competitive wages, upward mobility, and opportunities for long-term career development. Despite the benefits of CTE, many individuals with disabilities remain unaware of these opportunities or lack the necessary support to succeed in CTE. Expanding access to these opportunities through resources like this CTE digital toolkit will address the barriers. This workshop will demonstrate how professionals can use the toolkit to support individuals in exploring and succeeding in CTE.

12:15 P.M. ~ Awards Luncheon

Afternoon Workshops 9-10: 1:15 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.

9 Community-Based Instruction (CBI) and Work-Based Learning (WBL) in Action: Creating Inclusive Employment Opportunities for Students with Disabilities

Heather Moller, MA, Work-Based Learning Coordinator, Atlantic County Special Services School District, and Jocelyn Muse-Taylor, MEd, Training and Consultation Specialist, The Boggs Center on Disability and Human Development, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Participants will learn how to effectively use Community-Based Instruction (CBI) and Work-Based Learning (WBL) techniques to develop and sustain meaningful community partnerships. This workshop will explore best practices for creating and expanding work-based learning sites for individuals with disabilities. We will emphasize the importance of a thoughtful approach to building community partnerships and highlight the significance of a collaborative team, which includes students, teachers, job coaches, parents, case managers, administrators, and community stakeholders.

10 Navigating Work and SSA Benefits

Amira Hassan, MSW, LSW, NJWINS Project Manager, and Andrea Jimenez, BA, Community Work Incentives Coordinator, The Family Resource Network

Are you supporting individuals who receive SSDI or SSI and are currently employed or exploring employment opportunities? This session will help employment professionals deepen their understanding of how work impacts disability benefits and health coverage, and how to support informed decision-making around employment goals. By the end of the session, professionals will be equipped with practical strategies to connect individuals with Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) services and empower them to pursue their employment goals with greater confidence and clarity.

Afternoon Workshops 11-12: 1:15 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.

11 Beyond GPT: Leveraging AI to Transform Disability Employment Services

Heather Janci, BA, Executive Consultant, Provider Strategy, SETWorks

Artificial intelligence (AI) presents unprecedented opportunities to enhance competitive integrated employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. In this interactive workshop, participants will explore how AI solutions effectively address key challenges such as staff retention, personalized support planning, and administrative efficiency. Real-world examples will demonstrate AI's impact, including intelligent systems to support job coaches and all staff as well as automation for simplifying compliance and training processes. Participants will leave equipped with ethical frameworks and practical tools to immediately integrate AI-driven strategies within their organizations. Join us to harness the transformative power of AI to strengthen your services and amplify employment success.

12 Pathways to Possibilities: DVRS, Pre-ETS, and Inclusive Higher Education at TCNJ

Toni Scott, MSW, CRL, Program Planning and Development Specialist, New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and Amy Schuler, Assistant Director, Career and Community Studies Program at The College of New Jersey

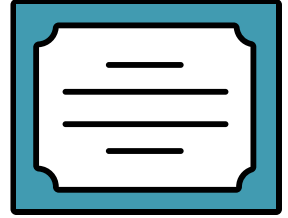
This workshop highlights the need for equitable access to education and employment opportunities for students with disabilities. The presentation explores how Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) support these students, emphasizing collaboration with The College of New Jersey (TCNJ). Attendees will learn about the Inclusive Higher Education Comprehensive Transition Program and Pre-College Summer Program, designed to align educational pathways with vocational goals and competitive integrated employment. By showcasing proven strategies and fostering dialogue, this session aims to empower students in achieving their full potential, addressing 2 challenges, and building a supportive community network for successful transitions.

2:30 P.M. ~ Break (15 minutes)

2:45 P.M. ~ Keynote Presentation

Continuing Education

As part of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, The Boggs Center offers this program for social work continuing education credit per NJAC 13:44G6.4.c(5). The Boggs Center is a registered NJ Department of Education Professional Development Provider. The program has also been submitted to the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) and APSE (Certified Employment Support Professional - CESP) for continuing education program approval.



Certificates of Attendance will be emailed to attendees following the event. The Facing the Future Conference is offered for 5 hours of continuing education recognition. To be eligible for a Certificate of Attendance, you must attend one workshop in each time slot, the keynote presentation, and turn in your name badge at the end of the conference. **Certificates will only be sent to participants who attend the full day and return their badges.**

Conference Registration

- **Register using The Boggs Center Online Registration System at:**
<https://boggscenterregistration.rwjms.rutgers.edu/index.php/event/conference>

REGISTRATION FEES	Non-Member Rates		APSE Member Rates	
	Early Bird until 8/8	Registration starting 8/9	Early Bird until 8/8	Registration starting 8/9
	\$200.00	\$225.00	\$165.00	\$195.00

Register by August 8 and save! Final registration deadline: September 5

APSE membership number is required to receive the Membership Rate. Membership will be verified. To join APSE, go to: <http://apse.org/membership/>

- **After you register, you will receive an email with your invoice with the amount due and payment instructions.** Registration fees must be paid by credit/debit card (preferred) or by check. Your registration will be approved when payment is received.
- **Payment is due no later than September 19.** If payment is not received by **September 19**, your registration will **not be approved**, your space will be forfeited, and you will **not be able to attend** the conference.
- **There are no cancellations or refunds. Substitutions are permitted.**
- If you require disability-related accommodations or have dietary restrictions, please complete the Accommodations section of your Boggs Center Online Registration System profile.
- Continental breakfast, awards luncheon buffet, dessert buffet, and Continuing Education fees are included with your registration.
- For conference updates, please check the conference web page at:
<https://boggscenter.rwjms.rutgers.edu/conferences-and-events/facing-the-future-2025>
- For conference registration questions, please contact lisa.thomas@rutgers.edu

Exhibitor Registration



Exhibit at the Facing the Future conference to showcase your agency, products, and services to our audience of disability employment professionals and educators!

Exhibitor registration deadline: Friday, August 8

Register early! Exhibitor space is limited and fills up quickly!

Exhibitor Fees:

- \$450 fee includes a 6 foot table and chair, admission to conference presentations, meals (continental breakfast, lunch buffet, and dessert) for one exhibitor representative.
- A second exhibitor representative may be added for \$150, which includes a second chair at the table, admission to conference presentations, meals (continental breakfast, lunch buffet, and dessert).
- Maximum of 2 representatives per exhibit table (1st and 2nd exhibitor)

Exhibitor Registration and Payment:

- **Register using the Exhibitor Registration Form at:**
<https://form.jotform.com/boggscenter/facing-the-future-2025-exhibitor>
- After you register, you will receive an email with your invoice with the amount due and payment instructions.
- Registration fees must be paid by credit/debit card (preferred) or by check. Your registration will be approved when payment is received.
- Register by August 8. Payment is due by August 22.
- **Exhibitor payment must be received no later than August 22, 2025 or your space will be forfeited.**
- Exhibitor space is limited and there are no cancellations or refunds.

Questions?

Please contact deborah.mahovetz@rutgers.edu if you have any questions about exhibiting at the conference

Directions to Hyatt Regency New Brunswick

Two Albany Street, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 08901 Tel: 732-873-1234

GPS Address: 200 Neilson Street New Brunswick NJ 08901



From the New Jersey Turnpike

Take the New Jersey Turnpike to Exit 9. Proceed on Route 18 North 3 miles to Route 27 South. Travel 2 blocks to Nielson Street. Turn left. Hotel is on left.



The Hyatt Regency is walking distance from the New Brunswick train station (NJ Transit and Amtrak).



From Route 1, South or North

Take Route 18 North 3 miles to Route 27 South. Travel 2 blocks to Nielson Street. Turn left. Hotel is on left.



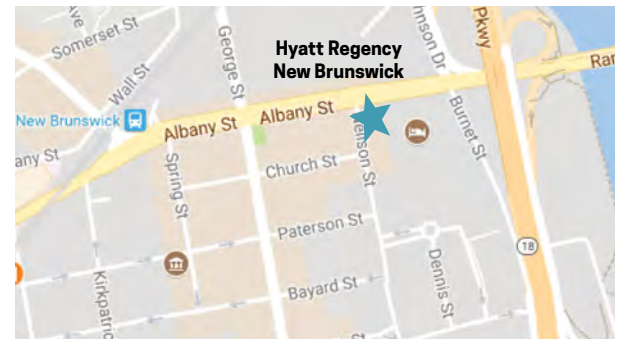
Walking directions from New Brunswick train station to Hyatt Regency

Head northeast on Albany Street toward Spring Street. Turn right on Neilson Street and the hotel will be on your left.

Parking Information

Event parking is offered on a first-come, first-served basis at the Hyatt Regency New Brunswick parking deck for the discounted daily rate of **\$10**. Parking is also available at the Church Street Deck and other nearby locations for approximately \$2 per hour. See the Parking Map (at right) and the New Brunswick Parking Authority Parking Locator at: <http://www.njnbpa.org/parking-locator/>.

The Hyatt Regency is located in downtown New Brunswick. Please leave extra travel time. Car pooling and public transportation are encouraged.



Overnight Accommodations

The conference rate is \$184 for overnight accommodations the night of October 9 at the Hyatt Regency New Brunswick. Reserve rooms online at: <https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/group-booking/EWRRN/G-FTFC>.

Rooms must be reserved by September 11 to receive the discounted rate. After the deadline, the standard hotel rates will apply.