



**Center, Institute, or Bureau (CIB) Annual Performance Statement  
2023-2024**

**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** Chrisann Schiro-Geist, Ph. D.  
Professor, Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology and  
Research

**Leadership Team**

Patrick Krolik – Project: FIRST Grant Manager

Bonnie Sanford - Instructional and Curriculum Coordinator

Jerrica Linsey - Externships & Internships – On ground Coordinator

Tonya McNeal UMID – Project: FIRST Administrative Operations Coordinator

Nakeshia Bennett - Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) Coordinator

Carman Coulter – Job Placement 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, 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.
  - Promoting access to higher education and career development.
  - Advocating for community inclusion.
  - Enhancing the overall quality of life for individuals with disabilities and their families.

### BUDGET INFORMATION

Transition Revenue	\$478,500	expenditures	\$352,055	ST Fiscal Yr.06/30	\$126,445	+
Vocational Revenue	\$82,000	expenditures	\$72,000	Fed Fiscal Yr. 9/30	\$10,000	+
Research Revenue- FIRST	\$394,351	expenditures	\$394,351	Fed Fiscal Yr. 9/30	\$0	-
Research Revenue-Tn Bel.	\$135,000	expenditures	\$55,000	ST Fiscal Yr.06/30	\$63,000	

<b>Total UMID Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,089,851</b>	<b>expenditures</b>	<b>\$873,406</b>	<b>ST.Fiscal Yr. 6/30</b>	<b>\$199,445</b>	<b>+</b>
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#### Sustainable and Systemic Impact

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

## **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, the three pillars of the Institute on Disability at the University of Memphis. The UMID Director currently reports to the Chair of the CEPR.

### **Research Unit**

UMID engages with an interdisciplinary faculty team from the various University of Memphis departments, including counseling, psychology education research, public health, behavioral analysis, and social work. In addition, we are actively engaged with local, regional, national, and international affiliates in the pursuit of understanding disability constructs 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. Current grant projects include Project FIRST and Tennessee Believes, detailed later in the report.

### **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. In Fall 2023, UMID and the State of Tennessee entered into an interagency

agreement for two years running congruently. The interagency agreement includes Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) designed to educate secondary school students. It offers five critical areas of workforce readiness services 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, Vocational Assessments for all VR clients, and job coaching, and workforce readiness for client of VR. Under the continued contract to provide services for TN VR clients, UMID has grown its interagency service contract budgeted at \$58,000 to an anticipated 2023-2024 of \$78,000. UMID renders services in Fayette, Madison, and Shelby counties in West Tennessee by maintaining a TN VR-certified staff of employees. UMID will investigate providing additional services in the greater Mid-South region and continue to emphasize providing services to clients with intellectual and 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 four semesters 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). It provides an inclusive college campus experience and 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 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 students' 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 through a MOU, its 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. The CCTP programming is similar to the Pre-ETS training for its students with the goal of employment at the end of the semester. CCTP was inaugurated in the fall of 2011 and will be in its twelfth year come the fall of 2024.

Since the conception of the TigerLIFE and College Campus Transition Programs, the TigerLIFE program has had over 332 students have complete the program, while 127 students successfully completed 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 70% successful employment rate 120 days to one year after completion.

## Goals/Purpose

### Purpose

UMID is to provide quality service, training, 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 1. Conduct research to determine empirically supported best practices for postsecondary educational transition services.**

*Objective 1: Collaborate with Tennessee's Inclusive Higher Education Alliance (IHE), including Next Steps at Vanderbilt, FUTURE at UT Knoxville, Lipscomb IDEAL, EDGE at Union University, Access East Tennessee State University, Eagle Access Dyersburg State, TigerEDGE at Tennessee State University and Chattanooga State Community College .*

*Objective 2: Collaborate with the Southeastern Postsecondary Education Alliance (SEPSEA). The alliance includes networking with other Inclusive Higher Education (IHE) programs in the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, North and South Carolina in research endeavors.*

*Objective 3: Collaborate with the National Coordinating Center (NCC) for Inclusive Higher Education programs in research endeavors.*

### **Goal 2. UMID continues to conduct research, present at events and conferences, and promote research for individuals with disabilities. Promote the visibility of UMID through publications and presentations.**

*Objective 1: Develop and promote the educational and professional capacity of staff and Graduate Assistants.*

*Objective 2: UMID will continue to focus on all future research that strengthens the goal of the Institute on Disability.*

### **Goal 3. Conduct research to determine empirically supported best practices for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors Training.**

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, 2019-2025. Currently, PROJECT FIRST has been granted an additional year extension ending September 30, 2025.

**Special Recognition:**

UMID recognizes Dr. Xinhua Yu, MD, PhD, MS, for his outstanding contributions to Project FIRST. As an epidemiologist with extensive training in medicine and statistics, Dr. Yu has brought a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the Project First team, significantly advancing UMID's research efforts. Dr. Yu's role in analyzing credentials among rehabilitation counselors and client closure outcomes has been pivotal. His in-depth understanding of epidemiological methods, combined with his expertise in managing and analyzing large datasets, has allowed the Project FIRST research team to draw meaningful conclusions that will have a lasting impact on the field of vocational rehabilitation.

Furthermore, Dr. Yu's research on subminimum wage, living wage, and disability has been instrumental in highlighting the disparities faced by individuals with disabilities. His work in this area has provided crucial insights into the socioeconomic challenges that affect UMID target populations, and his findings will undoubtedly inform future policies and interventions aimed at improving the lives of those UMID serves. Dr. Yu's ability to navigate complex data and translate it into actionable knowledge has been invaluable to Project FIRST. His dedication, precision, and analytical rigor have enhanced the quality of our research and set a high standard for excellence in our collaborative efforts.

UMID also commends Dr. William Hunter for his invaluable contributions to Project FIRST, particularly in the area of pre-employment transition. As a Professor of Special

Education at the University of Memphis, Dr. Hunter has brought a wealth of experience and expertise to Project FIRST, significantly enhancing UMID efforts to support young individuals with disabilities in transitioning from school to work. Dr. Hunter's background as an administrator, special education teacher, and children's mental health intervention specialist, combined with his extensive research in classroom management strategies, evidence-based instructional practices, and culturally responsive teaching, has been instrumental in shaping the strategies and practices employed in Project FIRST. His insights have informed the development of UMID pre-employment transition services in conjunction with his advice and ensured that our approaches are inclusive, practical, and grounded in the latest research.

*Objective 1:* Establish UMID as a premier provider of online training provider for vocational rehabilitation professionals. Develop in-service training modules to better equip vocational rehabilitation counselors with education to better serve their clients with placements and sustainability.

Project: FIRST Training Modules.

- Training Module: ‘BRIDGE’ Pre-Employment Transition Services training module.
- Training Module Module: Crisis & Trauma Counseling and Interventions.
- Training Module Module: Medical & Psychosocial Aspects of Chronic Illness and Disability.
- Training Module Module: Career Development and Job Placement.
- Training Module Module: Principle and Practices of Vocational Rehabilitation.

*Objective 2:* Investigate and publish the research area discovered in the statistical analysis of the data of vocational rehabilitation counselors and their clients.

Project: FIRST Articles

Project: FIRST Article 1- Title: Vocational Rehabilitation Closure Rates Among Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities from an Outcome-based Perspective. *American Board of Vocational Experts.*

Harmon, M., Yu, X., Schiro-Geist, C., Zhang, X., Kansakar, Y., Krolik, P., Williams, M., Goodwill, L., & Cozort, S. (in press). Having a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling leads to higher closure rates among persons with intellectual and



developmental disabilities from the outcome-based perspective. *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling*. DOI: 10.1891/JARC-2021-0020

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*.

Yu, X., Schiro-Geist, C. Harmon, M.J., Zhang, X., Kansakar, Y., Krolik, P., Williams, M., Goodwill, M.L., Cozort, S. (2022). The Outcome-Based Perspective: Benefits of Field-Specific Rehabilitation Counselor Education. *The Journal of Forensic Vocational Analysis*, Vol. 21 (2)/ Vol. 22(1).

Project: FIRST Article 3 - Title : A moderate caseload among vocational rehabilitation counselors achieving the best closure rates for clients with disabilities. Alternative Title: Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors with a moderate caseload achieved the highest employment closure rates for clients with disabilities. *Rehabilitation Research, Policy, and Education Journal*. anuscript re-submitted 7/15/2024.

Project: FIRST Article 4 – Title: The Impact of Caseload on Case Closure Rates for Clients with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Xinhua Yu, Chrisann Schiro-Geist, Xiaofei Zhang, Patrick Krolik, Jun Cai, Beth A. Harms, Jayasimha Reddy Tippireddy. (2023). Disparities in closure rates by counselor’s caseload levels for clients with intellectual and developmental disabilities. *Journal of Forensic Vocational Analysis*.

Project: FIRST Article 5 – Title: Disparities in the Quality of Employment Placement and Live Wage Employment by Counselor’s Training and Caseload among Their Clients with Disabilities

Xinhua Yu, Chrisann Schiro-Geist, Xiaofei Zhang, Patrick Krolik, Jun Cai, Margret Goodwill, Jayasimha Reddy Tippireddy. (2023). Disparities in the Quality of Employment Placement and Live Wage Employment by Counselor’s Training and Caseload among Their Clients with Disabilities. *Journal of Forensic Vocational Analysis*. In-press.

Project: FIRST Article 6 – Title: Disparities in the subminimum wage employment among vocational rehabilitation clients: roles of vocational rehabilitation counselors

Xinhua Yu, Chrisann Schiro-Geist, Xiaofei Zhang, Patrick Krolik, Jun Cai. (2023). Disparities in the subminimum wage employment among vocational rehabilitation clients: roles of vocational

rehabilitation counselors. The Journal of Rehabilitation. In-press. JOR 2023-373.

Project: FIRST Article 7 – Title: Differences in the Quality of Employment Placement for Vocational Rehabilitation Clients with Disabilities between Counselors with a Certification in Rehabilitation Counseling versus Counselors without the Certification. RCB or JARC ~ 2023 (manuscript under revision).

*Objective 3:* Present at conferences and promote research findings of Project: FIRST for individuals with disabilities and vocational rehabilitation counselors.

Project: FIRST Presentations

**Presentation 2024**

Yu, X., Krolik, P., Nandiki, S (2024, October 31-November 3). *Exploring the intersectionality of disabilities: Multifaceted challenges and multidimensional solutions* [Poster presentation]. American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine (ACRM).

Schiro-Geist, C., Yu, X., Krolik, P (2024, August 27). *CRC differences in the quality of employment placement for vocational rehabilitation clients with disabilities between counselors with a certification in rehabilitation counseling versus counselors without the certification* [Conference proposal]. NRA Virtual Presentation.

Schiro-Geist, C., Yu, X., Krolik, P (2024, June 1). *CRC differences in the quality of employment placement for vocational rehabilitation clients with disabilities between counselors with a certification in rehabilitation counseling versus counselors without the certification* [Conference proposal]. West TN Counseling Summer 2024 Conference.

Schiro-Geist, C., Yu, X., Krolik, P (2024). *Differences in the quality of employment for VR clients with disabilities by counselor's CRC status* [Poster presentation]. IARP Fall Forum.

Schiro-Geist, C., Yu, X., Krolik, P (Spring, 2024). *Differences in the Quality of Employment for VR Clients with Disabilities by Counselor's CRC Status*. Paper presented at the American Board of Vocational Experts (ABVE) Spring Conference, Memphis, TN

Schiro-Geist, C. (Winter, 2024.) *Addiction/IDD/Employment*. Paper presented at the Hawaii International Conference on Education, Honolulu, Hawaii

Schiro-Geist, C., Yu, X., Krolik, P (Spring, 2024). *Differences in the Quality of Employment for VR Clients with Disabilities by Counselor's CRC Status*. Paper presented at Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSVAR). Virtual

### **Presentations 2023**

- Schiro-Geist, C. (Fall 2023). National Rehabilitation Counselors Association (NRCA)
- Schiro-Geist, C. (2023). Perspectives on Inclusion, University of Memphis. The State-of-the-Art Conference (SOTA) Conference, Colorado Springs, CO.
- Yu, X., Schiro-Geist, C., Krolik, P., Cai, J. (Fall, 2023) Challenges in Living Wage Employment for Individuals with Disabilities. Poster presented American Public Health Association (APHA.)
- Yu, X., Krolik, P (Fall,2023). Differences in the Quality of Employment for VR Clients with Disabilities by Counselor's CRC Status. Paper presented American Public Health Association (APHA.) Virtual
- Yu, X., Krolik, P (Fall, 2023). Differences in the Quality of Employment for VR Clients with Disabilities by Counselor's CRC Status. Paper presented at American Psychological Association(APA). Virtual
- Yu,X., Schiro-Geist, C., Zhang.X., Zhang, X. Cai, J.( Fall, 2023). Subminimum Wage Employment among Individuals with Disabilities: A Public Health Blind Spot. Paper presented at American Psychological Association. Atlanta, GA.
- Schiro-Geist, C., Yu, X., Krolik, P (Spring, 2023). *Project FIRST- Finding Innovate Rehabilitation In Service Training*. Paper presented at Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSVAR). Virtual
- Schiro-Geist, C., Yu, X., Krolik, P (Fall, 2023). *Project FIRST- Finding Innovate Rehabilitation In Service Training*. Paper presented at National Rehabilitation Counselors Association (NRCA). Virtual
- Schiro-Geist, C., Yu, X., Krolik, P (Spring, 2023). Project First : Finding Innovative Rehabilitative Service Training. Poster presented at American Board of Vocational Experts (ABVE). Virtual

#### **Goal 4: 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 in 2022-2023.
- 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 by the University of Memphis campus.

- Tennessee VR Pre-ETS funding: \$78,000. 2023-2024
- 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 Vocational Assessments to clients of Tennessee Vocational Rehabilitation.
- UMID provides career services for individuals and families, helping them navigate their options and determine the best course of action through a Systems Approach to Life Transition (SALT)

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

UMID received a grant from the State of Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD). The funding amount for three years is \$375,000

- Feasibility study of offering credentials and training for individuals exiting secondary education and the TigerLIFE program, which has been identified as meeting all eight points of the Absolute Priority set by the State of Tennessee Department of Human Services Training programs.
- Feasibility study for expansion into Independent Living, allowing UMID to continue its mission of promoting inclusion and diversity on college campuses.
- Feasibility study for implementing an Inclusive Post-Secondary Education program at Southwest Community College, Memphis, Tennessee. Then the IHE TigerLIFE program expanded to the University of Memphis Lambuth campus in Jackson, Tennessee.
- UMID is working on current grants, such as the thr Rehabilitation Serpvces Admistation, the William T Grant Foundation, and continuing to apply for community grants that will assist in UMID's goals of research and practice.

**Goal 5: 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 will focus on supporting and maintaining all initiatives that aid in

career development and transition into the world of work through TigerLIFE student intern and externship positions.

- Internship opportunities were also maintained through the following partnerships: University Departments and other C.I.B., University of Memphis Chartwell Food Service, Physical Plant, Holiday Inn, UM, and Tiger Garden. and other University Departments.
- Externship opportunities Community internships were also maintained through the following partnerships Southern Reins Equine Therapy, Mid-South Food Bank, Super-Lo grocery, and Hicks Construction and Events Center. Investigate new opportunities with targeted companies and employers, including Amazon, Nike Warehouse, Memphis, Gas, Light, and Water, and All-World Project Management.

*Objective 2: Increase opportunities for inclusion*

- UMID—Hosted a Spring 2024 Transition Fair in collaboration with Memphis Shelby County Schools, State of Tennessee Vocational Rehabilitation agencies, Shelby community agencies, and University of Memphis Departments. The Fair provided information about disability services and post-secondary education. Over 150 total participants attended the Fair.
- Peer mentors with Best Buddies, YoungLife, and University Volunteerism 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.

**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 2023-2024.
- UMID staff are on the Advisory Board of Disability Connect Memphis (DMS), and THRIVE of Memphis.
- UMID and SECUP also worked together to enhance Pre-ETS services in the region with virtual meetings to highlight the importance of a shared effort in Pre- Employment Transition Services for the SECUP community.

- Committee on Rehabilitation Accreditation (CoRA) - UMID hosted on behalf of CoRA and the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association a Spring 2024 conference to grow a stronger alliance between CoRA and the National Rehabilitation Counsel Association. In developing more accredited undergraduate Rehabilitation programs nationally.
- 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.
- 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 2024.
- 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**

The UMID advisory board comprises faculty and staff of the University of Memphis, including the College of Education and Engineering and the School of Public Health, the City of Memphis and Shelby community disability agencies, the State of Tennessee Department of Human Services Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Disability and Aging, and the Memphis Shelby County School district. The goal of the advisory board of on-campus and off-campus affiliates is to ensure UMID is meeting its goals and objectives.

#### Department of Vocational Rehabilitation/Pre-ETS

Heather Sacks Region 9 Supervisor VRC  
 Nneka Austin Region 9 VRC  
 Triniti Holden Pre-ETS Counselor.  
 Amanda "Mandy" Board- State of Tennessee BEC

#### DDA

Denetris Dee Grandberry

#### Memphis Shelby County Schools

Tonyal Mathes  
 Sheniqua Woodard  
 Jlahna Chatman

Robyn Orr

TigerLIFE parent and student

Sandeford J Schaeffer

Patti Lehigh

University of Memphis

Steven West

Will Hunter

Tara Buchanan

Xinhua Yu

Madeleine Brodt

Kevin Berisso

External Consultants

Corey Moore

Marissa Harris

Christine Warrington

The community at large / Consultants:

JoAnn Fusco - Thrive

Billie Walker – Sephora

Sandi Klink - DCM

Jeannie Croker- TN Disability

## **Notable Achievements and Challenges**

### ***Achievements***

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 serve and present at the Shelby County Parents and Family Transitions Summit.
4. UMID will continue to serve on and facilitate the Special Education Community Unified Partners.
5. 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's goals and mission.
- Program evaluation data collection (consistent data collection)
- Building a permanent staff pool
- Working with UMID affiliates to ensure productivity (establish MOUs)

### **Plans for the Upcoming Fiscal Year 2025**

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, Food Service Food Handler, Animal Caretaker, and Safety and Industrial Services.

1. UMID will hire a new Associate Director
2. UMID will hire a coordinator of ground operations
3. UMID will hire of TN Believes Manager
4. UMID will submit a series of papers for publication from 2024-2025.
5. 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 2024-2025, as well as presenting at conferences specific to IHE programs.
6. UMID will increase its social media presence by posting relevant news, publications, and Institute and student achievements throughout 2024-2025.
7. UMID will seek a more extensive partnership with the University of Memphis and multiple State Institutions.
8. Increase the level of services to the TN VR Pre-ETS programs in 2024-2025
9. Expand UMID's research and contracts footprint to new agencies.
10. Maintain UMID's visibility among IHE programs.
11. Maintain UMID's role in accreditation efforts.
12. Grow UMID's CRP to meet the needs of the greater Mid-South region.
13. Expand UMID's role in offering quality virtual remote training opportunities to rehabilitation professionals.
14. Establish independent living model using the University of Memphis dormitory life.

### **Employees by Ethnicity and Gender**

The University of Memphis Institute on Disability (UMID) has made every effort to diversify its leadership and staff. UMID employs staff from a variety of backgrounds, such as special education, behavioral analysis, and psychology, in addition to graduate students who

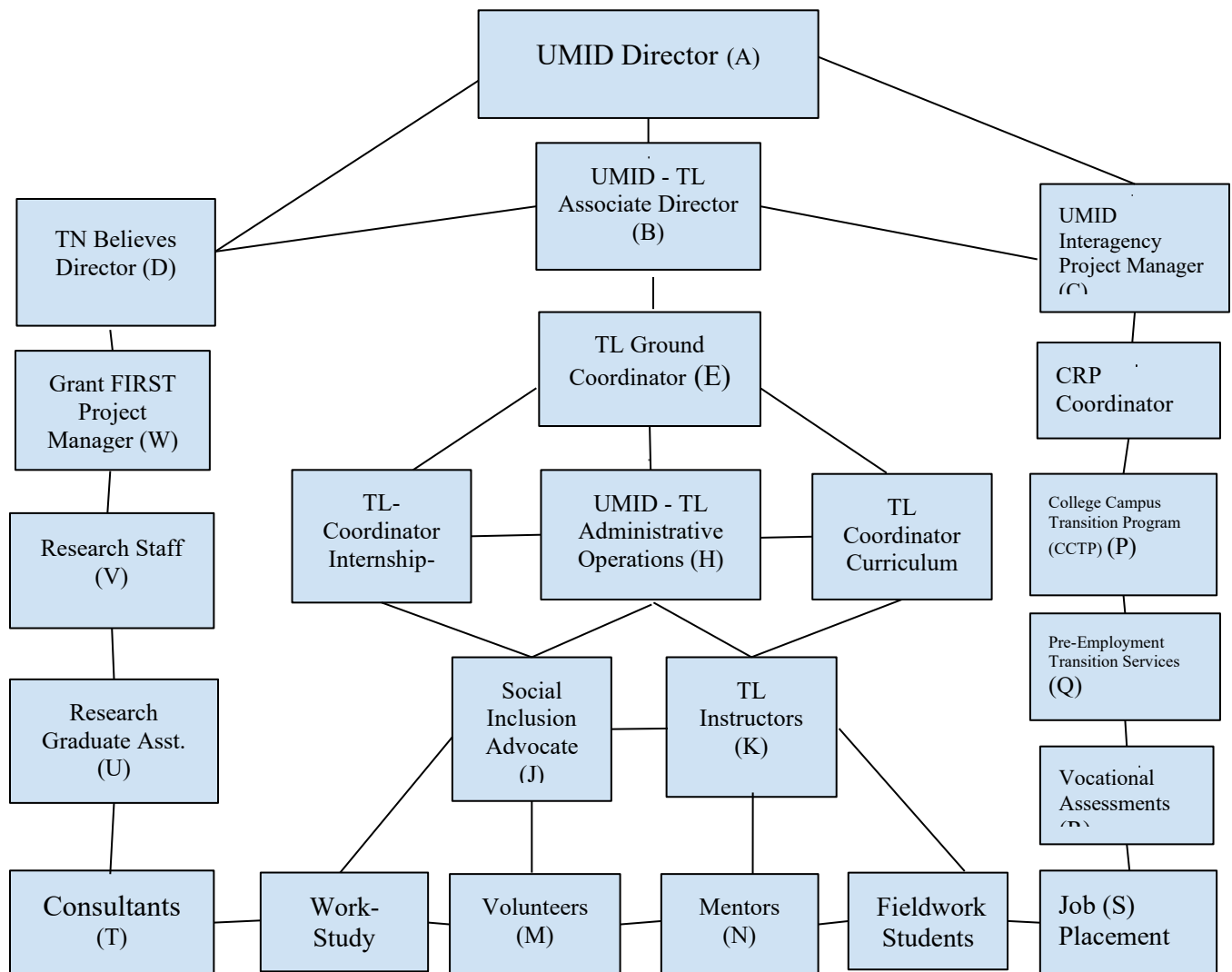


work collaboratively with staff. UMID employs a diverse group of individuals who are typically underrepresented, continuing the institute’s commitment to equity and inclusion. The demographic makeup of UMID’s staff, researchers, and consultants is outlined in the table below. The high number of graduate degrees exhibits extensive qualifications and relevant training this program has for continued research.

Table 1. Demographic Makeup of UMID Staff, Researchers, and Consultants

<b>Demographic Makeup of ALL Project Staff, Consultants, and Researchers</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
	21	100%
Male	5	24%
Female	16	76%
<b> </b>		
African American/Black	14	67%
Latin	1	5%
Asian	3	14%
Caucasian/White	3	14%
<b> </b>		
Does not possess a disability	20	95%
Possesses a disability	1	5%
<b> </b>		
In some colleges, no degree	9	43%
Bachelor’s degree	5	24%
Master’s degree	5	24%
Doctorate degree	2	9%
<b> </b>		
Employed as a graduate assistant	1	5%
Not employed as a graduate assistant	20	95%
<b> </b>		
Born outside of the U.S.	3	14%
Born in the U.S.	18	86%
<b> </b>		

The University of Memphis Institute on Disability: Organizational Chart 8-1-2024.



(A) Chrisann Schiro-Geist. Professor / Director. (FTE)

(B) To Be Determined. UMID – TL Associate Director. (FTE)

(C) To Be Determined. UMID Interagency Project Manager. (PTE)

(D) To Be Determined. Tennessee Believes Project Manager. (FTE)

(E) To Be Determined. TigerLIFE Ground Coordinator. (FTE)

(F) Nakeshia Bennett. UMID Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP).

(PTE)

(G) Jerrica Lindsey. TL- Coordinator Internship-Externship. (PTE)

(H) Tonya Thomas. UMID - TL Administrative Operations. (PTE)

(I) Bonnie Patterson-Sanford. TL Coordinator Curriculum Programing.  
(PTE)

(J) Seth Jackson. TL - Social Inclusion Advocate. (PTE)

(J) Patrick Vanderpool. Lead TL - Social Inclusion Advocate. (PTE)

(J) Tiffany Whitehead. TL - Social Inclusion Advocate. (PTE)

(K) Denise Lofties. TL Instructors. (PTE)

(L). To Be Determined. Work-Study/ Interns Students.

(M) To Be Determined. Volunteers.

(N) Best Buddies – Disability Advocacy Group. Mentors.

(O) Stephen Boateng. Fieldwork Students. (UM Student)

(O) Dorcas Dancy. Fieldwork Students. (UM Student)

(O) Ashley Holmes. Fieldwork Students. (UM Student)

(O) Damyah Kimbrew. Fieldwork Students. (UM Student)

(P) Lead Instructor (MSCS) Sheniqua Woodard. College Campus Transition Program (CCTP). Memphis Shelby County Schools (MSCS) Partnership. (Non-UM employee).

(Q) Safiyyah Sharieff. Pre-Employment Transition Specialist. (PTE)

(R) Sarah Hitchcock. Vocational Assessments. (UM GA)

(S) Carman Coulter. Job Placement Specialist. (PTE)

(T) Advisory Board Members. Various UM STAFF, Vocational, And Community Agencies.

(U) To Be Determined. UM Research Graduate Asst.

(V) Jun Cai. Research Staff – Project FIRST. (PTE)

(V) Jayasimha Reddy Tippireddy. Research Staff – TN Believes. (PTE)

(V) Sushmitha Nandiki. Research Staff – TN Believes. (PTE)

(W) Patrick Krolik. Grant Manager. Project FIRST. (FTE)