



## Working in the Community: The Status and Outcomes of People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Integrated Employment –Update 2

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### Overview

Improving employment outcomes has been identified as a priority by self-advocates, states agencies, the National Governor’s Association, and federal policy makers. The recognition of the pivotal role that work can play in the lives of people with IDD is driving many state developmental disabilities agencies to adopt “Employment First” policies that prioritize employment in integrated settings as the preferred day service alternative.<sup>1</sup> The need for this policy shift is clear. While few policymakers, providers, families or advocates fail to recognize the benefits of employment for people with IDD, the outcomes have been difficult to achieve. Rates of integrated employment among people with IDD receiving services are low and have remained essentially unchanged for the past ten years.<sup>2</sup> Fortunately, state and federal policymakers recognize the need to improve employment outcomes: 30 states now participate in the State Employment Leadership Network, a collaborative community of practice assisting state developmental disabilities agencies in changing systems to improve employment outcomes.

National Core Indicators<sup>TM</sup> (NCI<sup>TM</sup>) data provide an important window on the employment and employment outcomes of people with IDD receiving services. This Special Issue Data Brief updates the Brief from October 2012 and describes the employment status of individuals supported by state IDD agencies and compares participating states in terms of proportions of service recipients in different types of community employment.

<sup>1</sup> Moseley C. (June 2009). *Community Services Reporter*. National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities. Alexandria, VA.

<sup>2</sup> Butterworth, J. et al. (2015). *State Data: The national report on employment services and outcomes 2014*. Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Boston, Institute on Community Inclusion. [www.StateData.info](http://www.StateData.info)

## Description & Demographics of the Sample

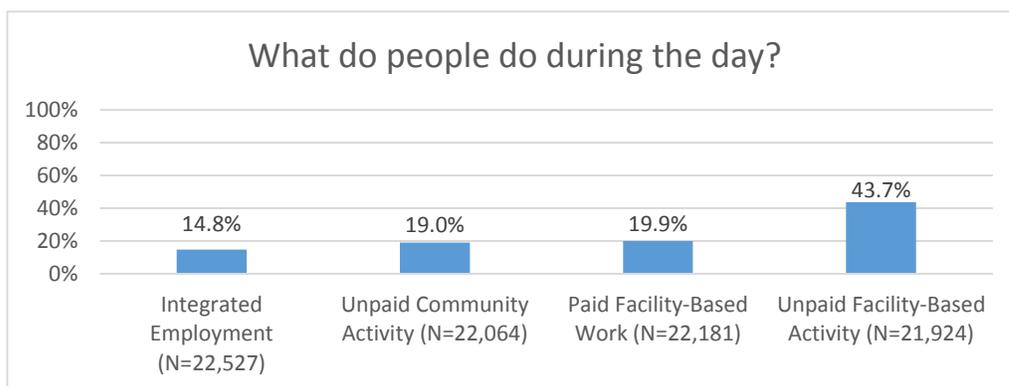
The information in this report is drawn from the 2014-15 National Core Indicators (NCI) Adult Consumer Survey of 25,820 adults from 31 states, Washington, D.C. and one sub-state entity<sup>3</sup>. For the purposes of these analyses people under the age of 22 who were enrolled in public schools (or for whom this information could not be determined) were excluded; subsequently, 23,321 adults remained in the data.

Over one-third (37.2%) of adults included in the data lived in a parent's or relative's home and nearly one-third (31.1%) lived in group homes or agency-operated apartment-type programs. Approximately one-tenth (9.5%) lived in ICF or specialized institutional settings, and a slightly greater proportion (14.7%) lived in independent homes or apartments. The rest (7.5%) lived in other types of residential settings.

## Results

### 1) What do people do during the day?

The graph below shows that, slightly less than half of those surveyed participated in an unpaid facility-based activity during the day (43.7%) (Denominator does not include "don't know" responses and missing data.) About one-fifth (19.9%) were in a paid facility-based job while a little under one-fifth (19.0%) took part in an unpaid community-based activity during the day. **Only 14.8% were engaged in paid employment in the community.**

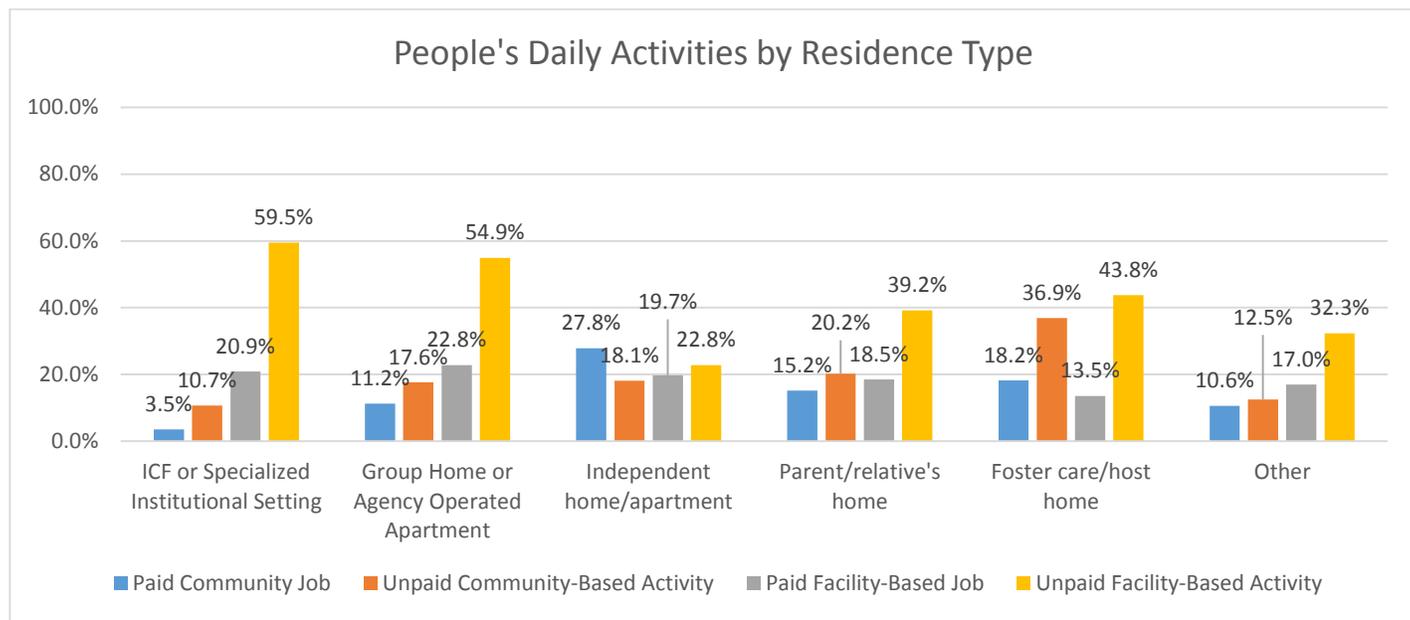


People often participated in more than one activity during the day. Overall, 40.4% of people who were reported to have a paid community job were also reported to take part in at least one other kind of day activity or employment: 25.9% were also in an unpaid community activity, 11.8% also had a paid facility-based job, and 18.4% were in an unpaid facility-based activity. Of those who had a paid facility-based job, 38.2% were reported to also be engaged in an unpaid facility-based activity, 13.2% also participated in an unpaid community-based activity and 8.7% had a paid community-based job. Of those in an unpaid community-based activity, 41.3% were also in an unpaid facility-based activity.

<sup>3</sup> The 2014-15 NCI Adult Consumer Survey Report included: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Washington, DC. Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, The Mid East Ohio Regional Councils (MEORC), Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Vermont.

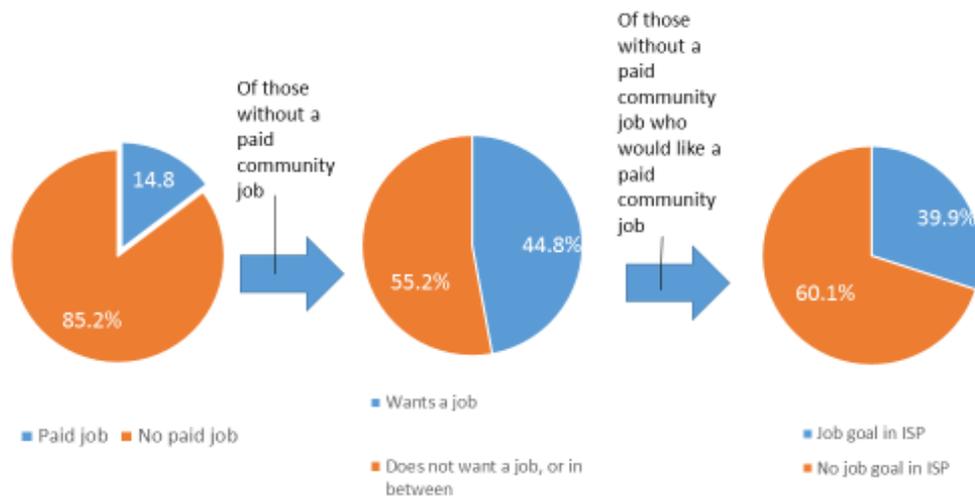
**2) Are there differences in what people do during the day based on where they live?**

The rates of participation in the four types of day activities/employment (paid community job, unpaid community activity, paid facility-based job, unpaid facility-based activity) varied by the type of residence people lived in. People living in independent homes or apartments had the highest numbers of community-based paid jobs (27.8%), whereas people living in ICF or specialized institutional settings had the lowest rates of community employment (3.5%). Of those living with parents or relatives, 15.2% were reported as having a community paid job, as were 11.2% of people living in group homes or agency-operated apartment programs.



**3) How many people do not have community jobs but report they would like one? Of those, how many have this goal in their ISP?**

Almost one-half (44.8%) of people interviewed who did not have a paid job in the community indicated they would like to have one. Only 16.8% of those without a community job had employment identified as a goal in their individual service plans (ISP). However, 39.9% of people who did not have a job and stated that they would like a paid community job had this goal documented in their service plans.



*Because so few people living in ICF or other specialized institutional settings had community-based paid jobs, only people living in the community are included in the rest of this data brief. For the purposes of the remaining analyses, living in the community includes the following types of residence: those in group homes and agency-operated apartments, in independent homes or apartments, in parents' or relatives' homes and in foster care/host home. Total number of people remaining in the data is 20,464.*

**4) Out of those with community-based paid jobs, how many are in competitive, individually supported, and group-supported employment? Do these proportions differ by where people live? By state?**

A community-based job can be of one of three types: an individual job without supports (competitive), an individual job with supports (individually supported) and group-supported. All three types represent “integrated” employment. Individually supported employment and competitive employment make up “individual” jobs. The table below shows that 15.6% of respondents (excluding those living in institutional settings) worked in integrated employment (*Note: people who had missing information for whether they had integrated employment are included in the denominator.*) Of those in integrated employment, 8.9% had individual jobs: 4.0% were in competitive employment, 4.4% were in individually supported employment. In addition, 3.8% were in group-supported employment. For 3.3% the type of employment was not specified; in these cases, the questions asking whether work is done primarily by a group of people with disabilities and about the receipt of publicly funded support for employment activities were left blank or marked “don’t know.”

	N	Percentage of 20,464	Percentage of total number in integrated employment (N=3,185)
In integrated employment	3,185	15.6%	100.0%
In individual jobs	1,830	8.9%	57.5%
Competitive employment	821	4.0%	25.8%
Individually supported	909	4.4%	28.5%
In group-supported	770	3.8%	24.2%
Type of employment support not specified	685	3.3%	21.5%

The proportions of people with different types of employment support in community jobs varied somewhat depending on the locations where people lived. As shown in the following table, those living in an independent home or apartment were more likely to have individual community jobs (either competitive or individually supported) than those living with parents or relatives or in a community-based residence (group homes or agency-operated apartment programs). (*Note: only people who had enough information to determine the type of employment support are included in the denominator.*)

	% in group-supported	% in individually supported	% in competitive employment	% in individual jobs (individually-supported + competitive)
Group home/ agency operated apt	47.2%	31.9%	20.9%	52.8%
Independent home/apt	20.7%	36.9%	42.4%	79.3%

Parents/relatives home	28.0%	37.2%	34.8%	72.0%
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The proportion of people employed in integrated community jobs as well as the proportions with different types of employment support also varied by state of residence. The following table shows the percentage in integrated employment as well as the percentages in various types of community employment for each participating NCI state.

The proportion of people engaged in integrated community employment varied widely by state, from only 4.5% in Hawaii to 41.7% in Connecticut (*Note: people who had missing information for whether they had integrated employment are included in the denominator.*) States' percentages of people with different types of employment also varied. For example, the proportion in group-supported jobs varied from almost 0% in a number of states (e.g., Arkansas, Hawaii) to a high of 20.3% in Connecticut. On the other hand, the proportion of people in individual jobs ranged from 31.1% in Vermont to 0.8% in Hawaii.

	N	% in integrated employment	% in individual jobs (individually supported+ competitive)	% in competitive jobs	% in individually supported jobs	% in group supported jobs
CT	355	41.7%	11.3%	4.2%	7.0%	20.3%
VT	318	40.3%	35.8%	4.7%	31.1%	0.9%
NH	386	34.7%	27.7%	9.8%	17.9%	4.4%
CO	399	30.8%	15.3%	3.5%	11.8%	13.5%
SD	288	29.9%	21.5%	13.5%	8.0%	3.1%
MN	330	29.7%	12.4%	7.3%	5.2%	9.1%
OK	381	22.8%	6.8%	1.3%	5.5%	14.2%
SC	350	22.0%	6.9%	3.1%	3.7%	8.0%
IN	614	21.7%	19.7%	10.3%	9.4%	0.7%
ME	362	21.5%	14.4%	3.0%	11.3%	3.0%
UT	352	19.0%	13.6%	2.8%	10.8%	3.4%
LA	252	18.7%	6.7%	5.6%	1.2%	3.2%
TN	414	18.4%	7.5%	4.8%	2.7%	4.1%
DE	232	16.8%	5.6%	1.7%	3.9%	5.2%
PA	540	15.7%	8.9%	3.9%	5.0%	1.7%
OH	403	14.9%	8.4%	3.0%	5.5%	5.0%
CA	6430	13.5%	5.7%	3.3%	2.5%	4.5%
NY	472	13.3%	8.5%	3.8%	4.7%	0.8%
MI	324	12.7%	4.0%	2.2%	1.9%	4.6%
KS	325	12.6%	8.0%	6.5%	1.5%	1.2%
MEORC	364	12.6%	9.3%	4.1%	5.2%	1.4%
NC	544	12.5%	9.0%	2.9%	6.1%	1.5%
GA	461	12.1%	9.1%	2.6%	6.5%	1.5%
AR	266	11.7%	6.8%	4.5%	2.3%	0.0%
IL	332	11.1%	4.5%	3.6%	0.9%	2.7%
VA	761	11.0%	3.0%	1.3%	1.7%	4.9%
TX	1282	10.8%	7.0%	5.3%	1.7%	1.0%
MO	302	9.9%	4.3%	3.3%	1.0%	3.3%
FL	1187	9.8%	8.3%	5.6%	2.8%	0.6%
KY	372	9.4%	8.3%	4.3%	4.0%	0.3%
DC	279	7.9%	2.2%	0.0%	2.2%	0.4%
NJ	412	5.6%	2.7%	0.7%	1.9%	0.2%
HI	375	4.5%	3.5%	2.7%	0.8%	0.0%

## 5) What are the most common jobs?

For people working in paid community-based employment, the three most common types of jobs were: building and grounds cleaning or maintenance (31.1%), food preparation and service (18.7%) and retail such as sales clerk or stock person (17.8%). Less common were office jobs such as general office and administrative support (4.4%), assembly and manufacturing jobs (8.1%), and materials handling and mail distribution (2.6%).

The types of jobs within which individuals worked varied depending on whether they were in competitive employment, individually supported employment, or group supported employment. Retail jobs and food prep and food service jobs were more common for those in individually supported positions and those in competitive employment, whereas building and grounds cleaning or maintenance were the most common jobs for those with group-supported employment (44.7%).

	Food prep and service	Building and ground cleaning/ maintenance	Retail
<b>In competitive</b>	28.1%	20.5%	22.0%
<b>In individually supported</b>	23.6%	27.5%	22.9%
<b>In group-supported</b>	7.7%	44.7%	11.3%

The majority of people with general office and administrative support jobs were in individually supported positions (46.3%). On the other hand, the majority of people performing assembly, manufacturing or packaging jobs or materials handling tasks had group-supported employment (58.2% and 49.2%, respectively).

## 6) How much do people work in community jobs? How much do they make?

*Note: All figures reported below represent the most recent two-week period at the time of data collection.*

On average, people employed in paid community jobs worked 30.16 hours in a two-week period and earned \$225.59 or \$7.71 per hour (N=2,454). However, as shown in the following table, the number of hours worked and the amounts earned differed by the type of employment support that people received.

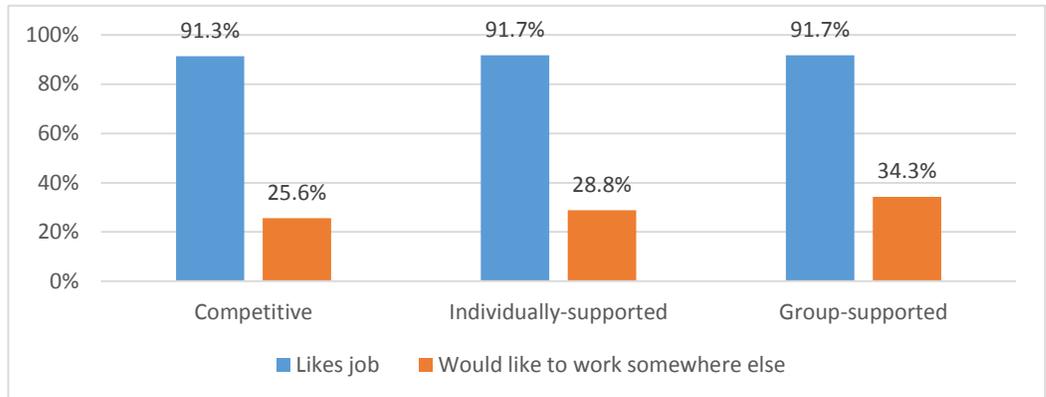
On average, people employed in competitive community jobs worked 30.6 hours over a two-week period, earning a total of \$266.80 for an hourly wage of \$8.66. Those in individually supported community jobs worked an average of 26.3 hours over a two-week period and earned \$226.75 for an hourly wage of \$8.76. People employed in group-supported community jobs worked an average of 32.05 hours over a two-week period and earned only \$186.62 for an hourly wage of \$6.02.

	Hours (in two weeks)	Wages (in two weeks)	Hourly wage
<b>In Competitive</b>	30.58	\$266.80	\$8.66
<b>In Individually supported</b>	26.34	\$226.75	\$8.76
<b>In Group-supported</b>	32.05	\$186.62	\$6.02

**7) How many people report that they like where they work, or that they want to work elsewhere? Are there differences by the type of employment support?**

Of those people who had a job in the community, 91.8% stated that they like their jobs. However, 29.6% said they would like to work somewhere else.

While the percentage of people who reported that they liked their job did not vary by the type of employment support they received, the proportion of those wanting a different job did. Fully 34.3% of individuals with group-supported employment wanted to work somewhere else, as compared to 25.6% of those with competitive employment and 28.8% of those with individually supported jobs. The higher percentage of people in group-supported employment stating that they want to work elsewhere may reflect an area for states to further explore when considering expansion of individually supported or competitive employment opportunities.



**8) How many people receive benefits at their community job?**

Of those in paid community jobs, 26.8% were reported as receiving benefits. As compared by employment type, 31.1% and 27.8% of those in competitive and individually supported employment, respectively, received benefits such as paid vacation and sick time, compared to 22.9% of people in group-supported employment.

**9) How long have people been working at their community jobs?**

The mean length of time people worked in their community job was 72 months. Those in individually supported employment had worked at their job for an average of 63 months, while those in competitive employment had worked at their job for an average of 105 months. Individuals in group-supported employment had worked at their job for an average of 61 months.

## Policy Implications

Improving the level of participation of people with IDD in integrated employment and the quality of employment outcomes in terms of choice of job, individual or group supports, rate of pay and type of work is a growing priority for states. The data we present in this brief illustrate the variation across states and the challenges that confront policymakers in their efforts to increase the numbers of people with IDD working in integrated community settings. These data frame several priorities for current and future service design and delivery:

***Development of Employment First initiatives.*** The state-to-state variation in employment participation among people with IDD receiving publicly funded services suggests that state policy, strategy, and investments have a significant effect on the numbers of people who are working in integrated community settings. While current national discussions emphasize the benefits of state Employment First policies, case studies of higher-performing states suggest that policymakers who do provide consistent messages that prioritizes employment and the goal of achieving paid work in integrated settings see more positive outcomes. These same case studies show that those states who focused on integrating the message across all system components, including leadership, policy, financing, training and technical assistance, outcome and quality measurement, and interagency collaboration were more likely to see higher levels of employment.<sup>4</sup> Other states could use the same approaches in their efforts to increase employment.

***Planning for wrap-around supports.*** People working in individual jobs average less than 14 hours per week. This finding clearly underscores the need for research into the reasons for low hours. In addition, this finding indicates the need for states to develop policies and practices that encourage full-time employment and increased economic self-sufficiency in order to expand individual work hours. It also suggests that state agency administrators, planners and operational staff must collaborate with community rehabilitation providers, home and residential support agencies, and others in the development and implementation of holistic approaches to person-centered life planning that includes non-work hours. Typically, work takes place at all hours of the day throughout the work week, and workers organize their lives and activities around their jobs, families, and home responsibilities. People with IDD are frequently prevented from working at night and on weekends because of the lack of flexibility in the structure of their service delivery supports, living situation, and limited transportation options. Funding, regulatory and systems strategies need to support varied work schedules. As seen in this data brief, currently over two-fifths of individuals in paid community jobs also participated in another day activity, most often an unpaid day activity. With effective quality improvement strategies, states can identify, and then address, the root cause of the dual participation.

***Prioritizing individual jobs over group supported employment.*** The data suggest that individual employment yields higher levels of income and a wider array of job choices than group-supported employment despite the fact that people in group-supported employment work more hours on average. Additionally, individuals in group-supported employment were more likely to report that they want to work elsewhere. The benefits and advantages of individual employment should be reflected in policy and operational practices that prioritize individual employment outcomes.

***Supporting career goals.*** The data suggest that almost half of individuals who are not working in the community want a job, but that only 39.9% of those who want a job have community employment as a goal in their service plan. A key component of Employment First initiatives, and of state-specific

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<sup>4</sup> Hall, A. C., Butterworth, J., Winsor, J., Gilmore, D. S., & Metzel, D. (2007). Pushing the employment agenda: Case study research of high performing states in integrated employment. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 45*(3), 182-198.

efforts to improve employment outcomes, is a focus on ensuring that employment is identified as a priority during each individual's person-centered service planning and on the provision of training to case managers or service coordinators to enable them to become skilled in facilitating conversations about employment and in addressing individual and family concerns about community employment. **Further exploration of the reasons for such low levels of employment goals could provide state agencies with direction on how to effectively address this challenge.**

## Recommended Citation:

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## Questions? Comments? Contact Us

For additional information on the National Core Indicators (NCI) initiative, public reports, and past data briefs, please visit: [www.nationalcoreindicators.org](http://www.nationalcoreindicators.org).

We welcome your feedback and questions. If you want to discuss this report or have questions about the NCI project, please contact: Dorothy Hiersteiner, NCI Project Coordinator, at [dhiersteiner@hsri.org](mailto:dhiersteiner@hsri.org)



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ADMINISTRATION ON  
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## Access to Integrated Employment

A project of

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at the Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass Boston

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