

2022 Virtual TA Institute

Breakout Room Notes

Session Number: 1

Breakout Room Title: Regions 9 & 10

Attendees:

Josephine Cruz, Alexis Deavenport-Saman, Rhonda Eppelsheimer, Julie Fodor, Karen Heath, Christopher Murray, Randall Owen, Wendy Parent-Johnson, Aubyn Stahmer, Kiriko Takahashi, Tafaimamao Tupuola, Jack Brandt (listener only)

Notetaker: Harpur Schwartz

Notes:

Intros (Questions #1 and #2)

Rhonda Eppelsheimer

- Training providers in collaboration with people with disabilities and doing research in this area with a focus on DEI
- Working on reports around emergency preparedness/effects of pandemic and creating recommendations for the state

Alexis Deavenport-Saman

- Focusing on DEI- developing trainings in other languages and partnering to create trainings and recordings on different emerging issues
- Working to expand research into different communities and capture the lived experience

Christopher Murray

- Biggest item focusing on next year is adolescent mental health in high schools and building capacity of high schools to support all students, specifically students with disabilities
- An area of emerging work is peer relationships and support

Karen Heath

- Salient goal is university equity and inclusion
- Area of emerging work is addressing health disparities. There are also thousands of jobs coming to Alaska, but there is no capacity to absorb that many jobs in the current work force. This is an opportunity to make sure people with disabilities are put forward as appropriate employees.

Randall Owen

- Focusing on increasing research capacity- always have been focused on services but need the research to back it up
- Emerging work is on family navigation and family support- received a new grant to do this work

Wendy Parent-Johnson

- Looking at diversity and inclusion across all work- working on all projects and core functions to expand diversity representation and involvement as well as looking at access and leading strategic efforts across the state to expand translations (e.g., plain language)
- New area working in is the pregnancy and disability space and expanding early intervention and earlier decision making around pregnancy. Also working with Indigenous youth and



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A project of AUCD, in partnership with ACL, to strengthen the network of UCEDDs

collaborating with tribal communities and partners.

Julie Fodor

- Focusing on school wide support, specifically around autism support (e.g., Act Early Idaho work)
- Biggest emerging area is health education- launching new health initiative for adults with disabilities focusing on healthy lifestyles

Tafaimamao Tupuola

- Focusing on the various threats that people with disabilities face e.g., economic security, work force, and employment or education activities. Also addressing health security issues e.g., Zika.
- Future work includes looking at what falls in the human security framework

Aubyn Stahmer

- Strong focus on DEI and doing this work using an implementation science approach
- Working to integrate people with disabilities into the research- have a project doing focus groups including researchers to develop trainings to help people understand how to participate and for researchers to know more

Kiriko Takahashi

- Continuing efforts include developing a pipeline for the workforce and making sure people with disabilities have an opportunity for employment. Also, there is a need for housing for people with disabilities.
- Focusing on creating high quality personnel and increasing trainings to ensure people stay on the island (while not limiting their options)

Josephine Cruz

- Have two main focuses, education and public health:
 - Education- the focus has been on building personnel capacity in working with students with disabilities
 - Public health- working on health issues, COVID-19, and insuring individuals with disabilities have access to vaccinations and information in plain language

Questions #3

- (Rhonda Eppelsheimer) Having time like this is helpful- time to connect and hear about different partners working with communities
- (Aubyn Stahmer) Might be helpful to partner with organizations that other UCEDDs are already working with and that also have regional offices where other centers are and can collaborate. Might give other centers an “in” by sharing partnerships that can lead to building a network across UCEDDs.
- (Wendy Parent-Johnson) The informal convos and brainstorming, hearing from others and bouncing ideas off of one another is helpful. Presents an opportunity to say oh you are doing this, we are doing this, how can we collaborate!

Future TA Needs:

- (Tafaimamao Tupuola) Who in the region is a DEI expert and can take the lead to help us address this within our own state and territory and as a consortium?
- Previously had regional meetings, did AUCD organize these? Something AUCD could help do?
- (Kiriko Takahashi) Useful to have a messaging board or something where we can post what we are doing, a regional board
- (Julie Fodor) How are others working on public health initiatives and how might we collaborate to engage in health education opportunities? Looking specifically at initiatives to promote healthy active lifestyles.



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