



To: UCEDD Directors c/o Andy Imperato, Executive Director

From: Bill Gaventa and Erik Carter, on behalf of the [Collaborative on Faith and Disability](#)

Re: Resources for 5 Year Plans on Outreach and Collaboration with Faith Communities

At the meeting of the Collaborative on Faith and Disability last Monday morning at the AUCD conference, several UCEDD representatives noted that their centers are in the process of developing their 5 year plans. Even though the planning processes are well underway, they suggested that we contact the UCEDD network to offer assistance in case any of you are seeking to address spiritual supports (for individuals and families, working with faith communities and networks on a variety of issues, providing training for seminarians and clergy, etc.). That's the purpose of this memo.

The Collaborative currently has 17 plus UCEDD members, and will soon be opening its membership to other organizations, networks and individuals. (See the attached flier) Members of the Collaborative are involved a variety different kinds of projects involving faith communities, including, but not limited to:

- Employment. The recently completed congregational manual, [Putting Faith to Work](#), for helping people with disabilities find jobs has been published.
- Including spirituality interns in LEND programs. Contact Eric Moody (Eric.Moody@ucdenver.edu) in Denver.
- Working collaboratively with seminaries on training for seminarians and clergy, as well as helping to infuse issues related to disabilities into seminary curricula. Jenny Hatfield Callan (hatfieldcallenj@umkc.edu) in Kansas City and Mark Crenshaw (mcrenshaw@gsu.edu) in Atlanta.
- In response to consumer members of the CAC, sponsoring a small grant process for faith communities and networks to enhance inclusive supports. Rhonda Eppelsheimer (eppelshe@ohsu.edu) in Oregon.
- Research projects exploring individual and family perceptions on spiritual needs and interests. Erik Carter (Erik.carter@vanderbilt.edu) in Nashville.
- Providing training re: addressing spiritual needs and supports to both UCEDD and LEND trainees as well as the community at large. Erik Carter, Eric Moody, and/or Mark Crenshaw. See emails above.

Initiatives in spiritual interests and supports can be directly related to community inclusion, natural supports, outreach to ethnically diverse communities, inclusive education, holistic health and aging, end of life issues, self-determination, and family supports, to name a few.

Members of the Collaborative on Faith and Disability stand ready to assist in sharing objectives from the plans of their own UCEDD and/or to help in shaping objectives for your own. Please feel free to contact any of the people mentioned above, Bill Gaventa (bill.gaventa@gmail.com) and/or Erik Carter (erik.carter@vanderbilt.edu). We will either help directly or guide you to someone else in the Collaborative more specific to your interests and goals.

Thank you for your time and attention. Best wishes for the holidays and for the successful completion of your 5 year plans.