



University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service (UCEDDs)

**FY 2016 Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations Bill
HHS Administration for Community Living (ACL)
Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD)**

FY 2014	FY 2015	President's FY2016 Request	AUCD's FY 2016 Request
37.0	38.0	39.0	\$39.0

Recommendation: Appropriate at least \$39 million under the ACL/AIDD program for the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs), an almost \$1 million increase over the FY 2015 enacted level. This amount is the same amount as the President's FY 2016 Budget request.

Background: Authorized under Section 156 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-402, Subtitle D), HHS/ACL supports a network of 67 UCEDDs that provide interdisciplinary pre-service preparation of students and fellows, continuing education, community training, research, model services, technical assistance, and information dissemination. UCEDDs exist to provide a unique, expert state and community resource to facilitate the independence and full participation in the community of people of all ages living with developmental and other disabilities.

Developmental disabilities are disabilities that significantly affect three or more activities of daily living, occur prior to the age of 22, and include such disabilities as autism, behavioral disorders, cerebral palsy, brain injury, fragile X, Down syndrome and other genetic syndromes, fetal alcohol syndrome, intellectual disabilities and spina bifida.

The national network of University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities are well situated to facilitate communication across agencies, schools, and other providers as they are accustomed to blending resources and have had extensive experience working with multiple state and local agencies, interdisciplinary academic departments and community partners. Transition experts from UCEDDs across the country have recently developed researched-based recommendations and are eager to collaborate in breaking down the barriers to collaborative and coordinated support for transition in response to the well-documented transition needs of youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Justification: This funding request provides continued support to maintain the existing 67 UCEDDs. Due to the funding formula in the Developmental Disabilities Act that requires appropriated funds to provide cost of living adjustments (COLA) to Centers before funding National Training Initiatives (NTI)

and technical assistance to Centers, this level of funding is necessary to support the core functions of the Centers in addition to being able to fund emerging national issues, such as transition from school to postsecondary education, service, and/or integrated employment, and others identified by the DD network.

Continued funding of the UCEDDs will support this network of independent but interlinked centers, representing an expansive national resource for addressing issues, finding solutions, and advancing research related to the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. At the local level, UCEDDs are vital to the training of future professionals with the specialized expertise in developmental disabilities. Of the UCEDD trainees who graduated 5 to 10 years ago, 82 percent are in leadership positions. It is estimated that over 36 percent of people with developmental disabilities are receiving services from former UCEDD trainees.

Continued funding will be used to leverage the UCEDD's existing relationship with state agencies, disability organizations and youth with disabilities to help implement provisions under the recently passed Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act, such as improving comprehensive transition outcomes from adolescence to adulthood in ways that lead to post-secondary education and meaningful employment.

Continued funding will also be used to address obstacles to improve outcomes for youth in ways that can save money and lead to greater independence. Youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities want to graduate from school, find a job that pays a living wage, and be able to fully participate in our society as contributing citizens. What often stands in the way of this goal are poorly coordinated and poorly supported transitions from school to postsecondary education and/or work, including needed services in the housing, transportation, health and direct supports sectors.

This funding will also help the UCEDD network to address other critical national and emerging needs such as developing evidence-based interventions to support the rising numbers of individuals on the autism spectrum; demonstrating cost effective long term services and supports for adults with disabilities and those aging with disabilities; developing science based information for parents with children newly diagnosed with developmental disabilities; and supporting returning veterans with disabilities.

Recommended Report Language: University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities— The Committee provides \$39 million for the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs), a network of 67 centers that are interdisciplinary education, research and public service units of a university system or public or non-profit entities associated with universities. The funding provided will allow Centers to assist states to initiate collaborative research, education, training, and service efforts to assist youth with disabilities to successfully transition from school to postsecondary education, and/or integrated employment. The funding will also allow the Centers to continue to address critical and emerging national needs, such as addressing the needs of the rising numbers of individuals on the autism spectrum; demonstrating cost effective long term services and supports for adults with disabilities and those aging with disabilities; supporting returning veterans; and providing technical assistance to strengthen and support the national network of Centers and to disseminate research and best practices nationwide.