

AUCD
Community Training for UCEDDs (Adobe)
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Hello, and welcome to the third installment of our coffee and TA series. We'd like to thank all of you for joining us today. Before we begin, I'd like to address a few logistical details. Before each individual program presentation, we'll provide a brief introduction of all of our speakers. Following the culmination of our presentations, there'll be a time for questions. Because of the number of participants, your telephone lines will be muted throughout the call.

However... we will unmute your phones one at a time during the Q&A time at the end. You'll need to press star and pound sign on your phone to request to be unmuted to ask your questions. If you are using the microphone on your computer, you can raise your hand by clicking the little icon at the very top of the screen that looks like a person raising their hand. You can also submit questions at any point during the presentations, via the chat box on your webinar console.

You may send a chat to the whole audience or to the presenters only. We will compile your questions throughout the webinar and will address them at the end. Please note, we may not be able to address every question and make combine some questions. This webinar is being reported and will be available on AUCD's webinar library. We invite you to provide feedback on the webinar and suggestions for future topics.

As mentioned, we are hosting a multipart series on the UCEDD core functions. Followed by AIDD's definition of community training, based on their logic model revised in session 12. We'll have presenters from two different UCEDDs expanding on their program activities. We will then conclude with a period for questions and answers.

Last year, we held our first two installments on interdisciplinary preservice preparation, specifically for UCEDDs training grant and continuing education. The archive of those webinars are available on AUCD's webinar library.

This particular installment will focus on the next core function, community training, here's a list as a heads up of our upcoming webinars planned in this series.

Session 153 of the developmental disabilities assistance and Bill of Rights act of 2000 referred to as DD Act covers the purpose and scope of activities to be undertaken by the national network of UCEDDS, outlining a series of core functions. This includes the specific text, community training, provides training or technical assistance for individuals with developmental disability, their families, professional, paraprofessionals, policymakers and students in the community. That was split into two core functions.

Further... AIDD issued a final rule in 2015, providing guidance on implementing the DD Act. In this guidance AIDD specifically mentions the need for each UCEDD to have a written plan for the core function. This'll be a topic of a future installment of this series.

This is also echoed in the UCEDD funding opportunity in which each applicant must provide a five-year plan for carrying out functions as outlined in the DD Act.

And... finally, based on AIDD's logic model in which they provide definitions for every core function, the definitions provided for community training is as follows. These trainings, provided by UCEDD faculty/staff to enhance knowledge of a variety of community members, including individuals with developmental and other disabilities, their families, professionals, policymakers, students, and others in the community.

First... we have Canyon Hardesty. Director of Communication at University of Wyoming, Wyoming Institute for Disabilities. She hold an MS in Health Care ethics and health education. Canyon is also an abject faculty at University of Utah. Canyon has worked at the Wyoming Institute for Disability since 2013 and has been involved in the translation of Echo from health to education and is dedicated to realtime community training, known to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families. Please join me in welcoming Canyon Hardesty.

>> Canyon: Welcome, everybody, can you hear me okay? Thumbs-up? No?

>> Yes.

>> Canyon: There we go... perfect. I know that they said they were going to keep questions to the end, but given I live in the land of community training, as hopefully most of you join, although this is a presentation, I'd love to answer questions or specifically address, you know... other questions or comments that you may have as question go through.

So... I tried to make this pretty brief, but as well... hopefully to give you an opportunity of what we do.

So... just to kind of orient you to Wyoming and the Institute for Disabilities and where we've situated ourselves like other UCEDDS. People can participate in every day community life as they choose. And so... you see in this picture, a beautiful fall day, it's one of the few... fall is pretty here... that, with our University of Wyoming sign. We have a pretty beautiful campus and pretty wonderful opportunity to be part of WIND.

These are obviously the five core areas we really focus on and I just like the graphic, so I wanted to show you our little colorful flower and really, the mission of the Wyoming Institute for Disabilities is to assist individuals with developmental disabilities and other disabilities and their families by promoting and supporting full inclusion, community membership, independence, productivity and social participation.

Both of these, our mission and vision, really orients us to not just what we should be doing as an UCEDD, but really, what that overall, you know... culture, that we want to cultivate throughout the communities in Wyoming.

So... Wyoming is a very, very square state. And... you can see this is just a picture of the state of Wyoming. I did include all of these kind of looking like veins going through our state. You can see that there's I-25 and I-80. Most of our populations are located on those two interstates and the rest of Wyoming is not very populated at all.

We are -- we have a population of about 577,000 people. About 97,000 square miles and we're the tenth largest state. We have more antelope than we do people.

To give you an idea, when we talk about community training, we've really had to rely on a lot of virtual opportunities, connections with community members, regional leaders, who can operate as an extension of what we do here at the Wyoming UCEDD and WIND is located in the -- I'd say, bottom right, but actually in the southeast corner of the state.

When we talk about what we're focusing on, we're talking about kind of these five-year opportunities, these are some of the core areas that I'm really going to focus on, that come out of our needs assessment and our areas of emphasis in our five year plan. So... we used to do -- and actually still do quite a bit of work in education... as a way to complement that, in our next five-year plan, we're really focusing our work in health, wellness and community participation, as well as continuing to support that base of work in education that we do as well. Early intervention, which I know a lot of you out there are really dedicated to early

intervention, supports identification, that's been a priority area for us and then... just going to touch briefly on some of our new work in employment.

So... not seeing any questions in the chat, but... please feel free to ask as we go forward.

So... I'm going to talk about our overall community training activities, related to that first, kind of area of emphasis... I think that we do have a pretty good mixture of things that are addressing, you know, community levels, individual levels, as well as system levels.

So... the third bullet on this slide -- note, TeleHealth project that we have, and this really sits under this broader idea of, of getting to our communities, engaging our communities, you know... through, through innovative ways, but also ways that, that really we're able to plug into infrastructures, and really supporting and improving the outcomes of individuals with disabilities, right? The target that we choose.

So... this particular community training project is a cool collaboration with our Wyoming Department of Health, our Office of Rural Health. It fits into community training, but also into a lot of community training, but also into services, is, you know, we're really helping to build that infrastructure for the provision of TeleHealth in Wyoming, right? So... telepractice that would allow a family in Casper, the central part of our state to connect with a specialist, you know... maybe an endocrinologist, living in Denver, which would be about six hours for them to actually be able to get to that location, to actually be the provided care in the home community, and... most-recently, because of changes in legislation, actually in their homes.

So... we have about 300 providers, I think it's like 319 as of about three weeks ago, who were really engaged in this project, to really learn about TeleHealth, what are those best practices, and... even learn the technical assistance around the technology, but... with this opportunity, being UCEDD, we've been able to focus on those provision of care for the populations that we serve that maybe, wouldn't necessarily have been able to be served, had this network been located in another entity.

So... all of you on the line probably have wonderful collaborations, this has been a cool way for us to think and get providers recruited and to think about disability first.

So... the other kind of core projects that we work on, the first bullet here, really talks about our sexual and reproductive health program, which... includes a couple of other things, within that, but... really, is this idea of, of what supporting sexual and reproductive health looks like for the population. We had the unique opportunity, the first bullet underneath there, talks about supporting healthy

relationships, right? Supporting consent -- supporting some other soft skills and really talking about our bodies and what that might look like -- as well as really, developing some advocacy skills for the participants in the class. It's a ten-week class, where individuals meet twice a week. One of those times is actually on a college campus or in a community area. Community college campus, let me clarify that. Or another community library, where individuals go and learn about these core areas and the second one is actually the application, the community, right? We might be learning about, not having some good examples, but just looking at relationships and what that looks like and then having individuals, maybe go out into a community setting where they're at a restaurant and having conversations and practicing those.

It's a wonderful collaboration with the Alaska UCEDD. I don't know if anybody's on from Alaska, but thank you, this has been a really good partnership over the last three years and something that's really enhanced the conversation beyond the individuals who are participate in this class, to the recognition that we were training individuals in this content. They were going back into their environment, advocating for themselves.

This has grown into us really getting into how we can help to train and support direct service providers. In these kind of -- even core skills that are being delivered in the training. So... that's another exciting project.

A couple other bullets on here talk about our family to family health information center. We do a lot of training and support with families and... we do some early childhood vision screening -- which has really led us into this idea that early periodic screening and developmental screening, but we work with child development centers, other community-based organizations, to do some direct training on best practices, for screening of kiddos less than 5, right? And how to encourage participation in a community-wide effort to improve access to vision screening, as well as in that follow-up and referral.

An additional project we work on is our Veterans adaptive sports project. This is more of a community engagement project, but a chance to work with community organizations, do training outreach and get them to feel more comfortable, sports opportunities that exist within their organization, or... to you know... collaborate with a biathlon program that hasn't necessarily been inclusive. That's a pretty exciting thing as well.

And then, one of the last things, I think, is really exciting is this opportunity to train and support early care providers, their families, who are working with children who have been impacted by the opioid epidemic. That's another collaboration with several other UCEDDs in Ohio and more on that to come. That's another really exciting thing and a need that's been responsive to what our communities have identified that they need support in.

This next area and I'm going to talk about assistive technology as well, so... Wyoming Institute for Disabilities is our assistive technology act program. We have that unique opportunity to really embed that as a practice into lots of things we do. I'll talk more about the work we do in education and the adaptation of the ECHO model to meet all those needs, but... on this slide, I'll talk about some other engagement activities.

One of the ones that -- it's been kind of a blossoming activity, this engagement with libraries, with librarians, with you know, their programming that's going on and really giving individuals access. We have about 78 libraries across our state that are associated with our state library system. Some of them are very, very small and very remote communities, you know... even a halftime or a third time, even one of their staff members, but we've been able to create this partnership where we've been training and supporting librarians to loan out equipment, so individuals in the communities can access a local resource with librarians and other staff who know how to use assistive technologies. They're getting that information in their home communities, with some of the best practice tools they need.

We also do some training, community engagement with both students and educators on accessible, educational and instructional materials and then, do some outreach engagement around foundations of assistive technology, what that looks like, what people should be thinking about, how they should be utilizing that and are actually integrating to professionals, who, who participate in these provision of services, then transitioning to our work in, in education, so... I think we have a lot to learn. Pun intended. A lot to learn about those projects, what that might look like and how -- even with the changing environment of libraries being community hubs, how we, as an UCEDD can engage with them in a different way than we did before.

I don't know -- librarians are the most resourceful humans on the planet, right? You can go in there with three sentences about "I think this is what this book is or what this cover looks like" and I think an underutilized resource we're excited to partner with.

A lot of the work we do, as I said before, we're a very large square state is via virtual education and really this idea of interprofessional learning, so... I don't know if people can raise their hands -- I love to know how many people are familiar with the ECHO model? Some people may or may not raise their hands. I won't call on you. Okay... perfect. Looks like some of you are. Which is wonderful -- even during the question period, I'd love for you to share your experience.

The model, it actually stands for the extension of community Health Care outcomes. Which sometimes is a little funny because we're not necessarily

focused on Health Care outcomes and some of our ECHO communities, but there's definitely that intersectionality between health and the populations we serve and the environment that they're in -- but... the echo model really offers interdisciplinary professional learning and development and really ties that with the coaching opportunities, right? With this interdisciplinary group of highly-skilled educators, professionals, families, individuals with lived experience, really is this way to build capacity, in the application of effective practices, in home communities.

So... a lot of our work around education is tied to individuals in the classroom, our school districts, and then, really looking at report -- um... evaluating and really impacting the students, right? We're all here for our students in our communities.

So... this is done virtually, kind of like we're doing here. Via face-to-face, kind of face-to-face, via video conferencing technology and is really a specific way in which we've evaluated as well, how to use didactic training, the professional learning development, also tied to case-based presentations, you know... kind of intermingling professional learning communities and community of practice models into a virtual approach. It's been very successful here in Wyoming, very successful across the nation and the world and I think a benefit of being part of this ECHO community is that we all get to learn from one another and... ECHO is identifiable, right? I think Jill and Becky said they're familiar with ECHO. We're looking at how we can identify a best practice.

I had to get rid of all my pictures -- we run about 13 ECHOs. So... really what that means -- we have 13 different communities tied at areas of need that have been identified in our state. Right? I'm guessing most of the individuals on the line have experience supporting individuals with autism or maybe around behavior support, looking at that idea of educational transition -- we have communities in assistive technology. As I mentioned before, it's a pretty good part of a lot of the community-based outreach and training we do. That's where our experience in ECHO grew out of that collaboration with, not collaboration -- because they're here -- but out of that work and with that interdisciplinary team of professionals working in our assistive technology world. Occupational therapists, assistive technology specialists, that's where this started, but it's also been one of the communities that we've been running since we starting working in ECHO since 2013.

We run ECHO communities, ECHO networks in so many areas. Early childhood -- that's been a unique opportunity... to partner. We've been working with our Department of Health to have a larger discussion about how to work in early childhood, to get the idea what's going on in community, not just early intervention, but the support that's, then, needed, in those environment for individuals and families to be successful. Because of our success here and

because of our work in TeleHealth, we've had opportunities to support other initiatives. We talked about opioid work, as well as in our state, we're doing adult work in behavioral health and integrated mental health, some work with school nurses and the teams around them that are supporting students and I could probably talk for quite a long time about our activities around ECHO, but it's been something that our communities have been excited about. They've been engaged with and they're implementing those practices.

So... I think in the last two years, three years, we've impacted 14,000 people through ECHO. So... depending on what state you come from, it may not sound like a lot, but it's a substantial increase in the number of individuals we're able to engage with and their professional learning opportunities, which is critical to all the stuff we do. We don't want to look at an educator, an individual, we want to look at this entire perspective.

So... just to -- before I jump into employment -- Valerie, you mentioned regarding the dating program, is that targeting specific disabilities or a cross-disability program? Right now, the curriculum we have is for individuals with developmental disabilities. We've been semi flexible with that. We live in a state and communities where that may be, may not only be the need, right? And if the content meets the needs, that's where we want to live and there are some adaptations that have been made for looking at social communication and emotional issues.

And... so, I'd love to have further conversations with you about what that looks like or maybe even learn from the work you do.

And Rhonda, you mentioned, is there an ECHO framework you'd be willing to share? Absolutely. One of the key pieces of these, we'd love to be engaged with you, if you're thinking about ECHO, I'll definitely share the framework we use, but... we have the unique opportunity, because this is a trademark model and has Intellectual Property associated with it, to help work together with individuals, to be trained on the model and provided with technical assistance, but absolutely, I'll give you that additional framework that we use.

We also have orientations to ECHO and our work in education, every other Thursday, from 10:30 to 11:30 mountain time. We don't have one today or you would have missed it, but we do have one next week, Rhonda, I could shoot you that information as well. Would love to have you on the call.

The last piece I'm going to talk about that really, once again -- was an area of emphasis for us, we could have done everything, right? Transportation... natural supports which we're working on as well -- but we had the unique opportunity to not just expand... but... really, enhance this work around employment, it's specifically targeting it, pre-ET [phonetic]. How many know pre-EP. Preemployment transition services. How do we support individuals who

are at risk for decreased postsecondary outcomes, right? Employment or Postsecondary Education or other opportunities, so... this is just recently been a collaboration with our Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, although we had long standing relationships with them and focusing on some kind of core areas. You can see, on the right-hand side, we do have a graphic, circular graphic where we've just indicated that these five core areas were focusing on employment are tied to self-advocacy, job exploration, work-based learning, Postsecondary Education and workplace readiness.

Going back, again, to the challenges, barriers, opportunities, however you want to frame it in a very rural state, as we do a lot of virtual activities, but we have other people on the other end that are helping us to connect to one another, but also to support their communities.

So... doing some virtual job exploration, individuals are probably familiar with the WINTAC [phonetic] and I don't remember what it is. They recently came out with a platform called explore work and it's targeted at this pre-EP population. We're excited as we get to pilot that. That just came out in October and highlighting this campus experience. The University of Wyoming is down in the southeast corner, but really looking at ways in which we can support our community colleges. We have eight other community colleges throughout our state and... using this kind of meld of using virtual connectivity and... training, and then, culminating that in a one-day campus experience. People get that mixed message that, that will best appeal to their interest knowledge and... you know, maybe existing skills as well as then, really getting individuals to envision themselves in a larger community. And in larger experiences. Recently, you know... kind of embarked or reembarked on a different way to looking at small business development centers and... you know, engaging employers in a different way, with this, this overall kind of new legislation and supports around preemployment transition services.

I can talk a lot more about what all of this look like, but I wanted to give a -- you know, quick overview of the things that we're doing, the things that we're thinking about and all of these projects, like... every other UCEDD are collaborations which I think makes us more impactful.

You know... it's, it's not necessarily less resources, they're doing more with less, we really view it as the opportunity to be creative as we're all working towards the same, the same mission. That's really how we target all of our training activities. Listening to community needs and being very flexible as we, you know... intermingle funding.

So... this is my contact information and that's all I have unless there are questions or comments.

>> Great, thank you so much, Canyon. Next we have Laura Buckner. Laura has over 30 years' experience in the disability field. A licensed professional counselor and former special educator, Laura has invested 20 + years providing training on local, state and national levels. Employed by the Texas Center for Disabilities at the University of Texas in Austin, Laura is a founding partner of the Institute for Person-centered Practices there. Please join me in welcoming Laura Buckner.

>> Hi, y'all, can you hear me? Great, I'm thrilled to be with you here this afternoon, I'm not a native Texan, but you might think I am the way I talk. I've been here awhile and I'm married to a native Texan. What can I say?

I'm thrilled for this opportunity, I appreciate the opportunity. I like to say my most important letters are the last three in my title. I'm the parent of a 29-year-old young man with development disabilities. I can't help but bring that to my role as a community trainer. As I was talking with Luis in preparation for today's webinar, we talked a lot about the fact that Community Ed can be hard sometimes -- do I need to back the microphone off or maybe turn the volume down -- let me try that. Thank you for letting me know that... so as Luis and I were talking in preparing for this webinar, I said, I think it's just as important to talk about some of the barriers or the challenges to this. I know in Texas, we certainly have our own set of challenges. I can't imagine that we're the only UCEDD that faces some of those challenges.

I thought I'd start with that. Talking about what -- just to give you a little perspective -- I'm trying to find the arrow now. I'm at the University of Texas at Austin. I don't live in Austin -- I'm sorry to say. I live about five hours northeast of there and work from home and I'm on the road quite a bit. But... I love this picture on this slide. It's right over our offices, isn't that cool?

But... for a little perspective -- we're a big state, in case you didn't know. We take pride in that. Here's what our state looks like on the northeast side of the country. There it is on the western coast. And just -- I think this really gives us some good perspective that, that red line that goes across our state, shows you the trip from Beaumont, which is over on the coast side, the East Coast side of Texas, all the way to El Paso, in the west corner, northwest corner, it takes longer -- it would take you longer to go from Beaumont to El Paso than it would to take you from New York to Chicago.

That red arrow represents about 830 miles, or about a 12-hour drive. We like to say in Texas, you can drive a really long way and never leave the state.

So... it gives you a perspective in terms of our UCEDD trying to provide community education, community training opportunities across our state. Just to get to a lot of our state requires a flight.

Which, as you probably know, is not cheap.

The other -- one of the other challenges we deal with in Texas and I imagine this is not just true of Texas. I think it's becoming a bigger and bigger issue nationally, is just that we're not -- you know, we're not just solely an English-speaking state. It's safe to say this, this graphic here, represents some of our bigger counties in Texas, Harris is Houston, Tarrant is Fort Worth, Bexar in San Antonio. In some of our bigger cities, we have a representation of about 1/3 of those cities being Spanish-speaking. Other languages that are commonly found in Texas include Vietnamese, Chinese, Arabic, and Erdu. How do we provide community education in all of those places if we can't speak the language? We certainly don't speak all of those languages at our UCEDD.

So... the bottom line, that I think we -- I know we're facing in Texas and I can't imagine we're the only ones facing it. The bottom line is that travel's expensive, our time is expensive, training materials, even brief handouts are expensive, finding a venue that can host us, either cheaply or free is expensive. And for us... especially translation and simultaneous interpretation is expensive.

Funding for the community training opportunities is hard to come by sometimes.

So... I do have some boasts about who we are, in spite of our challenges. I'd like to touch on those quickly. Some much the ones we decided we wanted to target, institute for person-centered practices, healthy relationships project, similar to the one that Canyon shared with you guys. Our sibling network, project that we call the Baylor Genetics Project, other speaking opportunities that we've come across.

The institute for person-centered practices is one of our biggest sources of Community Ed. It began years ago, with, and some of you may be familiar with, my good friend and mentor, Shelly Dumas. She was with our UCEDD for many years and really brought person-centered practices through the learning community for person-centered practices to our state.

Shelly retired last fall, but she's still doing the work, I tell you, she's still out there doing it -- she just retired from our UCEDD.

But... Shelly was -- I like to say, Shelly tilled these fields for years in our state, all on her lonesome. I came on board at the UCEDD in 2006. Shelly brought me on and mentored me to be a trainer within the learning community for person-centered practices and... we really tilled those fields around our state, doing whatever we could do -- wherever somebody would have us -- we'd provide community education around person-centered thinking, person-centered planning, person-centered practices. And those opportunities were sometimes hard to come by, but the cool thing about that story -- there's several cool things

about this story that I'd like to share with you -- one is that in 2010, I neglected to say, we're such a big state, we're one of the few that has two UCEDDS. We have an UCEDD at University of Texas at Austin, but also at Texas A&M university. I'm happy to say we collaborate beautifully and one of the ways we collaborate is through our institute. So... in 2010, our two UCEDDS came together and formed the Institute for Person-Centered Practices.

We mentored a couple people at the Texas A&M UCEDD and... began doing that training more and more every opportunity that we could get. A lot of community education opportunities with family groups, with local non-profits, with state-wide non-profit organizations, like parent to parent.

And... we began getting more and more -- we began getting more and more tension at the state level. The CMS final rule -- the final settings rule that came out, certainly gave us a boost in that direction, states needed to become more interested and trained in person-centered practices.

The end of that very cool story is that since 2010, we, we started in 2010, with two mentor trainers, Shelly Dumas and myself and then we added a third, Jeff Garrison Tate and since that time, we managed to train 25 trainers in the state of Texas, we're up to six mentor trainers in the state of Texas and we have more right behind us, coming. And those trainers are all over the state... so... where we -- originally, the two and three of us were trying to go into remote parts of the state where we had no funding to get there.

Now we have trainers in those locations able to provide those trainings. We're really excited about that and that is continuing to grow. Our state has really become invested in person-centered practices and... so... for example, some of our home and community-based waiver services today, their state forums reflect the teaching we've been doing. That's a very cool outcome of our very, very small beginning, where we're seeing -- we're truly seeing our community training, our community education, impacting systems change. That's an exciting outcome that we've seen.

Most of our work at this point... through the institute for person-centered practices, most of our work is through contracts with either state agencies, such as the state Health and Human Services agency, adult protective services, Texas Education Agency, but we're also still continuing to do a lot of projects through state and community conferences, peer advocacy training opportunities and many of those, we -- they don't have the funding to pay for us to come and we find a way to get there.

So... some cool things happening with the, the Institute for Person-Centered Practices. And I neglected to say also, just like Canyon, I'm happy to take questions as I'm going along, don't feel like you have to wait until the end if you have any questions you want to pose, please throw them at me.

But... the Institute for Person-Centered Practices is probably the greatest source right now of our community Ed projects and... growing and we're excited with that.

Not only are we doing contracts within our state, but we're doing contracts outside of our state. So... we, I have actually trained some people in Anchorage, Alaska. Went there in the dead of winter -- we've been training trainers in many other states as well.

So... that's a -- I will be honest and say that's an outcome that I don't know I ever imagined we'd see happen when we formed our collaborative in 2010 with three trainers.

We also have a healthy relationships project going, like Canyon mentioned. And that is also growing by leaps and bounds. It's focused on people with developmental disabilities. The trainer involved in heading this project up has a really, a wealth of information and experience and is more than happy to expand that to other audiences. I suspect, probably has done some of that, even more than I'm aware.

The cool thing about this project is it's not just about sexuality. It's about teaching people about these social skills. So many folks with developmental disabilities haven't been taught, some of those basic relationship skills -- how to shake hands -- how to introduce yourself. How to have -- you know, conversation with people. Well before you get to talking about any kind of sexuality or serious relationship. They also get into what I think is really important -- the whole idea of concept and we're seeing this project gain a lot of ground and get a lot of interest out of transition specialists who are working with transition age young people. Schools don't quite know how to deal with this topic and... this is an opportunity to help them bring that in. I don't know if any of you saw the NPR series that ran last fall, but there was an NPR -- just Google NPR sexuality and people with disability and you'll find it. There was a whole series that NPR ran. It was really powerful, that looked at the rampant abuse that happens for people with disabilities around sexuality, because... they're uninformed and uneducated and haven't been taught healthy ways to manage relationships.

So... I'd encourage you to look at that NPR -- between the NPR series that ran nationally, and the Me Too Movement, has certainly helped. We're seeing a real explosion of growth in the interest, in the need for this kind of Community Ed training. That's an exciting thing we've got going.

Another project that we're excited about is the Texas Sibling Network. You know... you probably are aware, there's a National Sibling Network, but there hasn't been much happening in Texas around the occasional sib shop, which is for younger children. This is really looking at establishing a Texas chapter of our

National Sibling Network and we currently have, alive and well, two chapters in Texas, one in Austin at UT and one in Houston has just opened. It's growing.

I love the fact that the gal that is running our Texas Sibling Network at UT is a sibling herself. I think that's such an important and powerful tool in our tool chest because we know that the sibling relationship is one of the longest relationships many of us will ever have -- especially... in terms of our people with disabilities. It may be the longest running relationship they have and yet... so many siblings are uninformed, are uninvolved in planning. There's a lot of training opportunities and support opportunities for parents and as the parent of a child with a disability, I can say that. But there's not been much out there for siblings and we know that as parents, we know that we won't you'll be here and we're often looking to our siblings -- I talk to parents all the time who say -- my, my daughter's brother or sister will take care of that. I'll say "have you had that conversation?" No, they haven't. We're counting on siblings to know a whole lot and step up, but we haven't been willing to have the conversation with them.

So... the gal that's running the sibling network, she says "we speak our own language, we speak our own type of shorthand" and when you get a group of siblings together, they immediately know that shorthand and are able to converse with each other. It provides a powerful means of support for each other. That is hard to come by in lots of other opportunities, right? So... they're creating some really available support networks where they speak the same language. It's providing support to them, but also providing resources, some leadership and advocacy skill-building. If you're going to speak on behalf of your loved one... you need to have advocacy skills and many of the siblings have had none of that training, we're providing some of that as well.

And I think that's just going to continue to take off... and we hope to see it in more and more communities than what we have right now. It is a DD Council grant. So... right now, it's being funded by DD Council grant... this is another project I'm personally involved in and very excited about. I won't spend a lot of time, I know we need to leave time for questions, but... Baylor Medical, in Houston, has one of the largest -- if not the largest group of geneticists than anywhere else in the country. And so... you can imagine, if you've worked with families whose children have a genetic disability or suspect they might... being able to find a geneticist in some of these remote parts of Texas is very difficult.

And so... we partnered with the State Health Agency, the Texas State Health Department which funded the project and we have a collaborative between the Baylor College of Medicine, Baylor Genetics and University of Texas, our UCEDD, to do training around genetics. We have, where we go into, at least four under-served communities in Texas every year and we have quite a few under-served and some of those remote parts of the panhandle or down in the valley, people are desperate for this information and they can't get to it.

We go into these underserved communities, we take a geneticist with us, but... I also go, the geneticist speaks for an hour, I speak for an hour, the geneticist speaks, specifically about, you can see in this flyer, this one, he's going to speak specifically about why, if you have a label of autism -- why you might want to look into a developed, a genetic work-up. There's a lot of genetic causes of autism that people are often unaware of.

So... he'll speak for an hour -- I'll speak for an hour as a parent of a child with a genetic disability about how to have a life, in spite of a scary diagnosis, how do you go on and have a life? And we also bring in people from around the community to speak about the resources that are available to those families. A lot of the geneticists we take out into those communities are bilingual, which has been an amazing thing to watch families be able to speak to a geneticist in their own language. Maybe sometimes for the first time.

So... I just want to close by talking about the barriers and how do you get around those barriers? I don't think it's fair to talk about "oh, we've got these fabulous things going..." but we don't talk about how to get around our barriers and we have obvious barriers.

We encourage people to partner whenever possible. I love that Canyon talked about the partnership with Alaska. How can we partner with other UCEDDs to share our resources, our space, our training and abilities? How can we partner with state agencies or local advocacy, grassroots organizations? Sometimes we'll go into some of these underserved part of Texas with the genetics project and... we have people from the community who are all over how do we get you back? How do we get you back? And they'll go find funding to bring us back.

So... one of the -- one of the other things we're doing with the genetics project is webinars... we're providing a series of webinars where the geneticist speaks for a while, I speak for a while and I'm happy to say that our webinars, we served 268 people live last year, but we had over 1200 view the archive. [No sound].

>> Laura, it seems that we've lost your sound. Can folks hear me?

>> Yes.

>> Okay... so... we actually have a few minutes left for Q&A. So... we'll hand it over to you.

>> Yeah... sure.

>> Thank you.

>> So... yeah -- I guess now we do have some time for questions and answers. If you have a question, press star then pound on your telephone

keypad and the conference call system will unmute you in the order in which you have a question. You'll hear a prompt when your phone is unmuted and you can ask your question aloud. You can also type your question in the chat box. I'll read the question aloud for our presenters. Canyon, can you hear me? Hello, can our presenters hear us? Hello?

So... I do see one question here. As soon as we get our audio connected for our presenters... can either of you talk about evaluation strategies? I'd be interested in hearing how you measure impact. So either for the community training or for a specific project.

>> Great... can you guys hear me now?

>> Yes... that's the best part about community training, right? I tried like eight different microphones and strategies... and you know, keep calm under pressure -- right? I mean... I think, you've got really good questions, right... Rhonda -- I could talk specifically about each of our projects -- Laura, feel free to jump in as well. I think, you know... we really tried to fine-tune those -- I'll tell Dawn that we always use the nearest community training question in everything we do... but... yeah... I mean, it's, it's really hard. You know... we do have a corset of questions, of course, about satisfaction, but... we have spent a lot of time really drilling down to, you know... why are individuals asking for this and really trying to measure those outcomes?

We have some very-specific questions and do follow-up about how are you implementing? You know... we were talking about ECHO earlier, yes, we asked what they've learned and we're going a little away from knowledge and skills and really... thinking from that literature about self-efficacy, tied to implementation, and... then, really focused on, you know... kind of direct outreach to those distance sites to ask and tease those out. I'm more than willing to share everything we've done -- I know we're at time and Rhonda and others, I'd love to have further conversation, so... I'll stop talking.

>> Thank you so much and thank you all for attending this webinar. This webinar has been recorded. If you'd like more information about the UCEDD Resource Center, please feel free to contact us. Please take a few moments to complete our survey. Thank you very much.

[Presentation concluded at 3:00 p.m. ET].

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