Changing Training Practices of Adult Support Providers: Training, Mentoring, and Technical Assistance Matter

Alberto Migliore, Ph.D.
University of Massachusetts Boston, Institute for Community Inclusion

Derek Nord, Ph.D.
University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration

**AUCD Conference, Arlington, VA
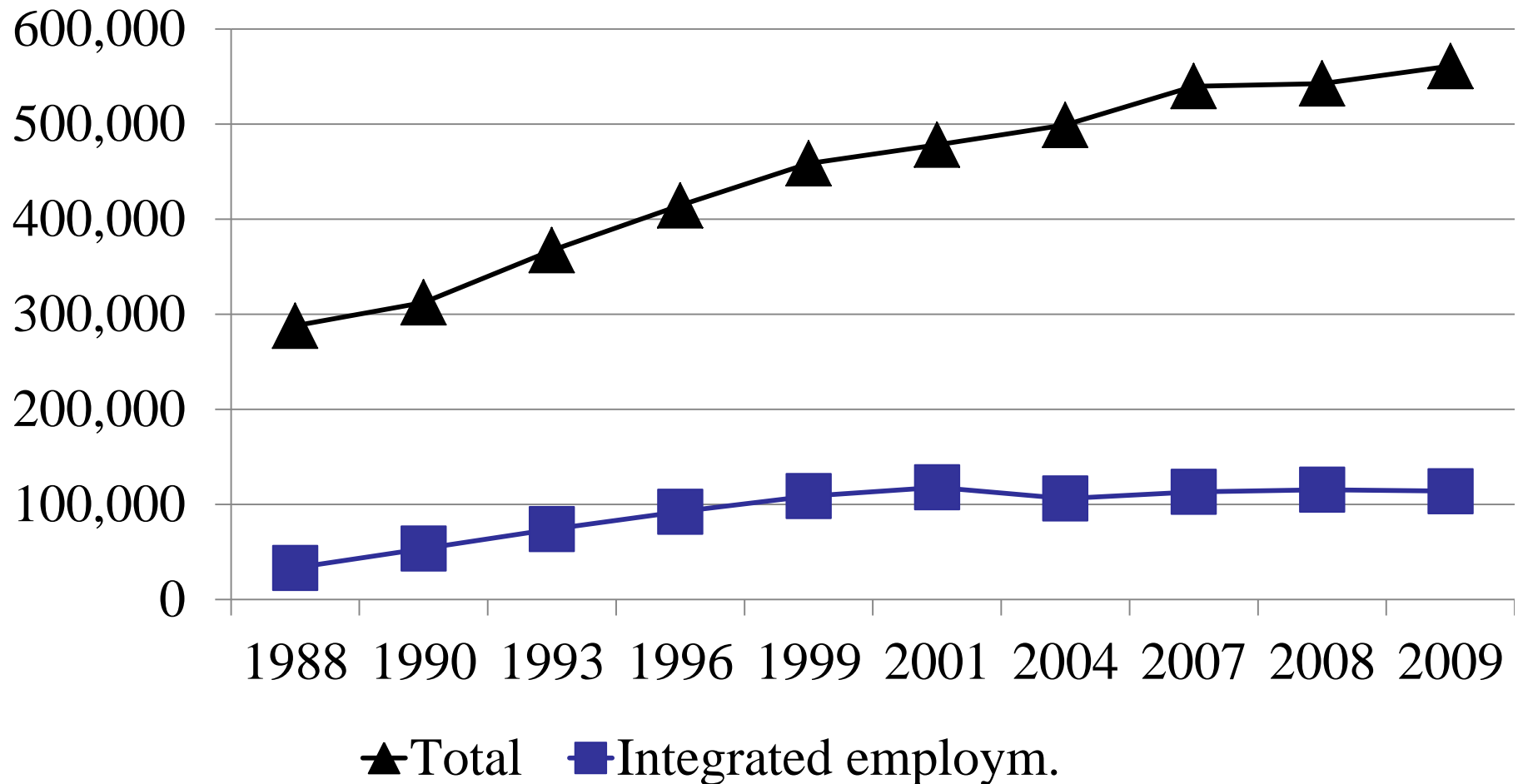November 8, 2011**

INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover℠

Employment of people with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD) is a **high priority** across the nation.
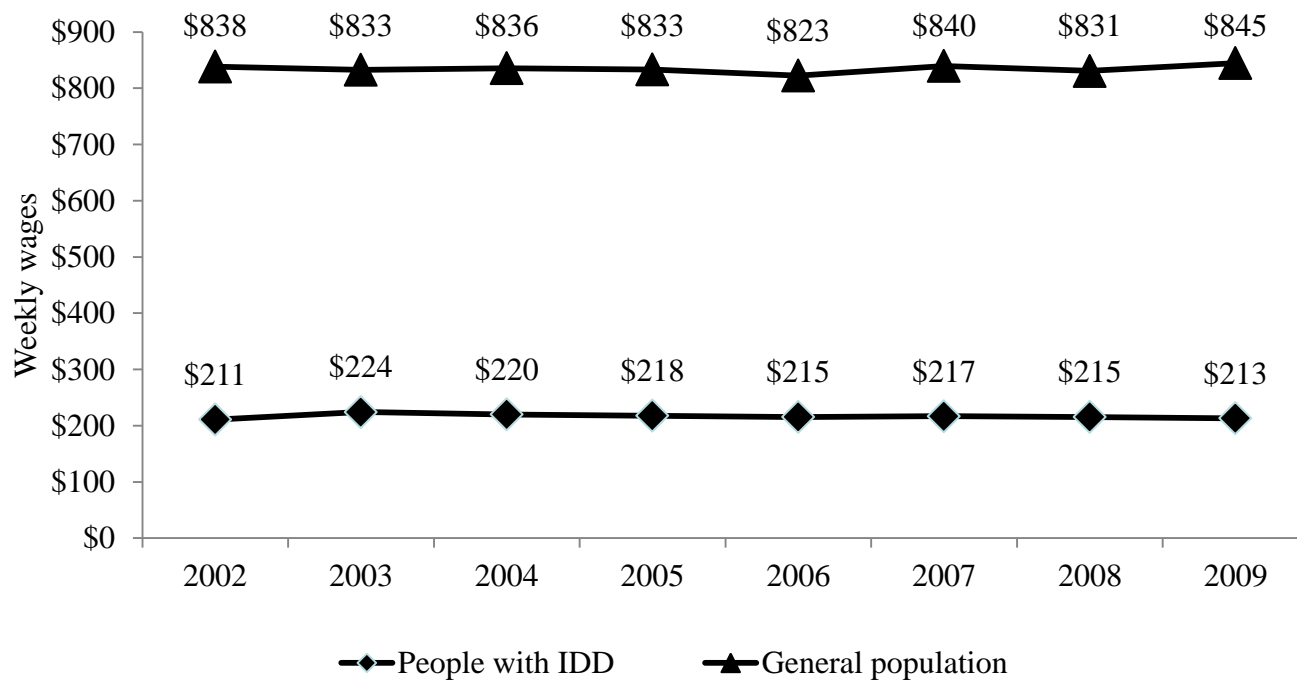
However, only a minority of people with IDD work in individual paid employment, and those that do earn low wages.

How many receive integrated employment supports?

What are the weekly wages?

Line chart titled "What are the weekly wages?" showing Weekly wages on the y-axis ($0 to $900) and years 2002–2009 on the x-axis.

General population: 2002 = $838, 2003 = $833, 2004 = $836, 2005 = $833, 2006 = $823, 2007 = $840, 2008 = $831, 2009 = $845

People with IDD: 2002 = $211, 2003 = $224, 2004 = $220, 2005 = $218, 2006 = $215, 2007 = $217, 2008 = $215, 2009 = $213

Legend: People with IDD — General population

INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover℠

Our hypothesis

Better employment outcomes for people with IDD can be obtained by providing employment consultants with training and mentoring on individualized support strategies.

Better outcomes include:

- More job seekers getting individual paid work
- Jobs that entail more weekly work hours
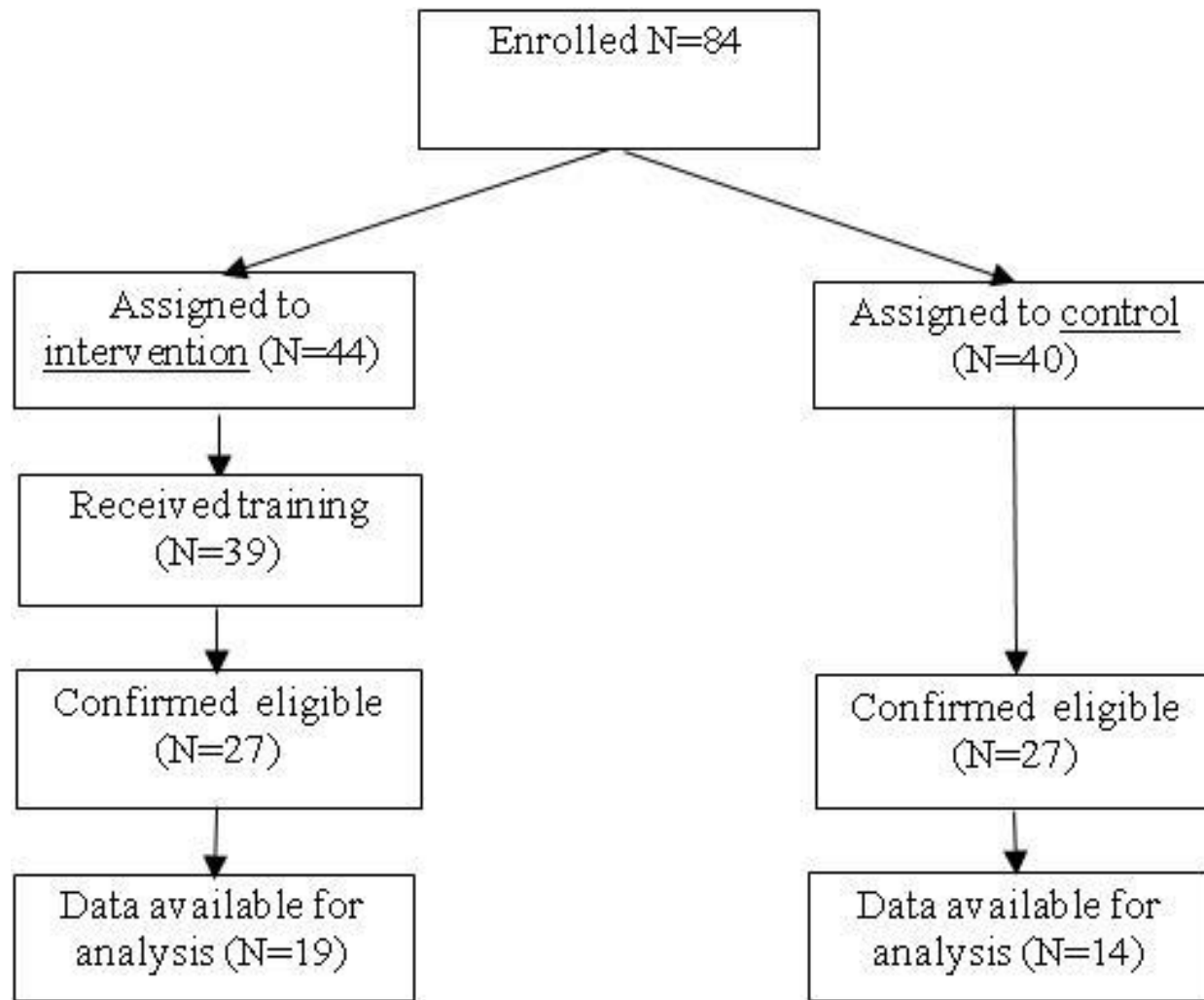- Jobs that pay higher wages

What was the research design of the study?

Experimental with random assignment involving 25 employment providers in Minnesota and Connecticut

Timeline:

- Baseline data collection: May 2009
- Training to the intervention group: June 2009
- Post-baseline data collection: Summer 2010

How many consultants participated in the study?

What competencies were taught?

Understanding job seekers' preferences and skills within a person-centered career-planning approach (e.g., spending time with job seekers, talking with people who know job seekers well, observing job seekers in work and non-work environments)

Knowing how to find jobs (e.g., researching the local labor market, involving job seekers' personal networks)

Knowing how to connect with employers (e.g., exploring employers' needs, developing meaningful proposals, and negotiating customized job descriptions)

Understanding implications after the hire (e.g., identifying and facilitating natural workplace supports, addressing work incentives, and fostering relationships with employers)

How was training and mentoring delivered?

1. Three-day in-person seminar

   Lecture, discussion, interactive group exercises, and community-based exercises

2. Field work

3. Training manual

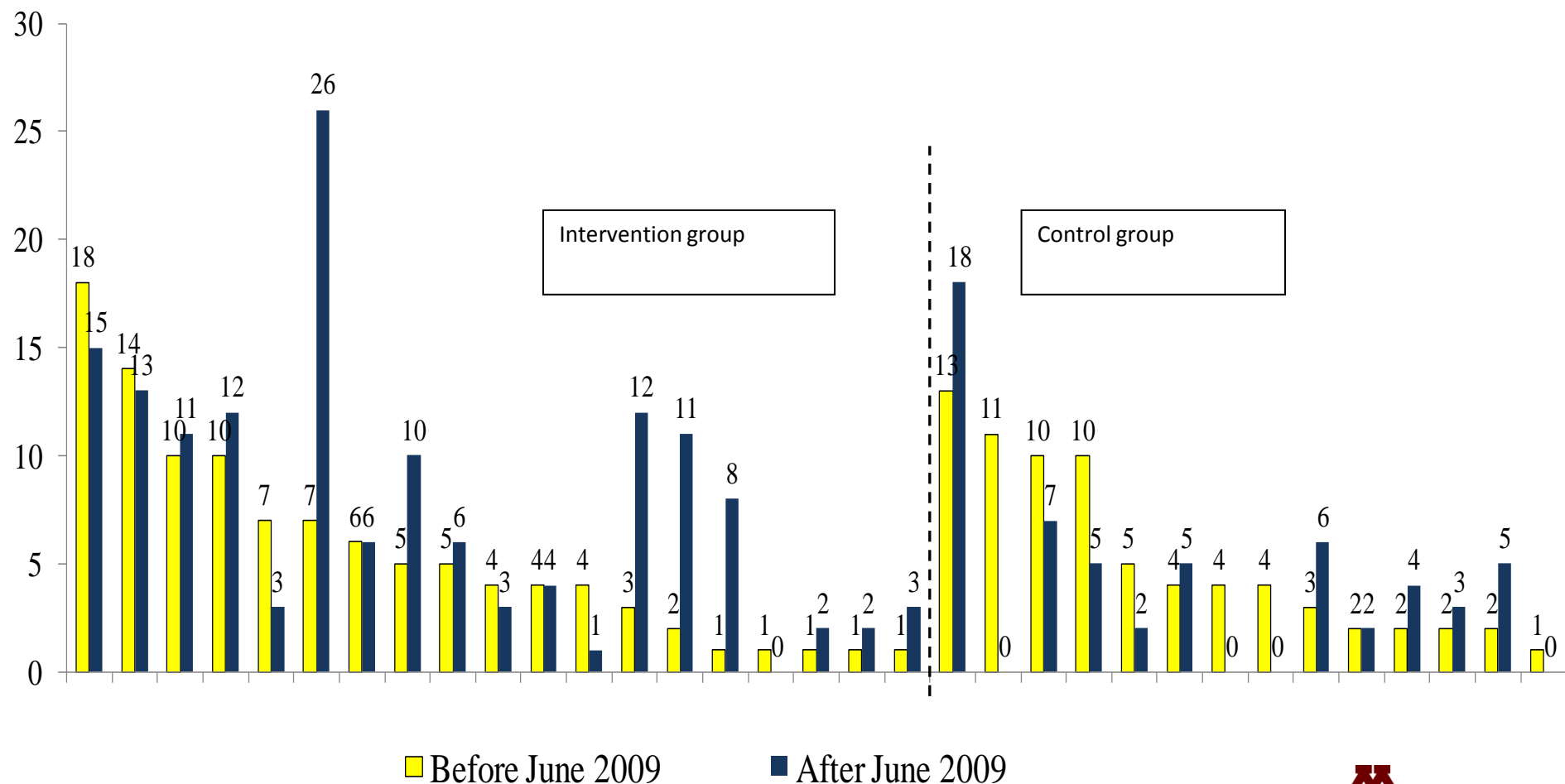4. Two individual mentoring sessions

5. Long-distance assistance (telephone or email)

What did we find?

Training and mentoring lead to better employment outcomes:

- 3.4 more placements in paid employment over one-year period (ES=0.33; P=0.03)

- $.99 more earnings per hour (ES=.29; p=.06)

- 6.7 more weekly work hours (ES=.32; p=.03)

Did every employment consultant in the intervention group improve?

Intervention group

Control group

■ Before June 2009   ■ After June 2009

INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover℠

What other factors may influence outcomes?

- Employment providers' priorities

- Organizational supports to employment consultants

- Consultants' personal experiences

- Funding mechanisms

- Job seekers' support needs.

Any limitations and strengths of this study?

Limitations
1. Voluntary enrollment
2. Small sample size
3. Self-reported outcomes
4. Some differences in implementation
5. Hawthorn effect

Strengths
1. Experimental design with random assignment
2. Characteristics across intervention and control group were minimal
3. High response rate (61%)

Conclusions: What can be done to increase employment of adults with IDD?

- Ensure that employment consultants receive training and mentoring on individualized employment supports

- Ensure that funding agencies, employment programs, and supervisors structure their activities around the same principles of individualized support taught to employment consultants

Resources

- Butterworth, J., Hall, A. C., Smith, F. A., Migliore, A., Winsor, J., Timmons, J., & Domin, D. (2011). *StateData: The national report on employment services and outcomes.* Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Boston, Institute for Community Inclusion

- DiLeo, D. (nd). APSE Supported Employment Competencies. Retrieved from http://www.apse.org/docs/APSE%20Supported%20Employment%20Competencies.pdf

- Griffin, C., Hammis, D., & Geary, T. (Eds.). (2007). *The job developer's handbook*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

- Hoff, D., Gandolfo, C., Gold, M., & Jordan, M. (2000). *Demystifying job development: Field-based approaches to job development for people with disabilities.* Training Resource Network, Inc.

- Kirkpatrick, D. L., & Kirkpatrick, J. D. (2006). *Evaluating training programs: The four levels* (3rd edition). San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koheler Publishers, Inc.

- Larson, S. A., & Hewitt, A. S. (Eds.). (2005). *Staff recruitment, retention and training strategies for community human services organizations*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing, Co.

- Luecking, R. G., Fabian, E. S., & Tilson, G. P. (2004). *Working relationships: Creating careers for job seekers with disabilities through employer partnerships.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

- Migliore, A., Butterworth, J., North, D., Cox, M., & Gelb, A. (In press). Customized employment in Connecticut and Minnesota. Do employment specialists implement the strategies recommended in the literature? *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*.

INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover℠

Any questions?

John Butterworth (principal investigator)
john.butterworth@umb.edu
(617) 287-4357

Alberto Migliore
alberto.migliore@umb.edu
Tel. (617) 287-4306

Derek Nord
nord0364@umn.edu
Tel (612) 624-0386

Acknowledgments

ICI INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover℠