CPD LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS: SHAPING AND INFORMING PROFESSIONALS

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UTAH

NORTH DAKOTA

USU STUDENTS

MONTANA

IDAHO

KANSAS

WYOMING

UTAH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

The UPDN has provided nearly 200 professional development events for educators in 18 months. This system is driven by priorities set by the Utah State Office of Education and an advisory board. Current priorities include numeracy, English-language arts, and post-secondary outcomes. School district and charter schools each have a designated level of support in the system, with some districts and schools requiring more intensive PD supports. The work of the UPDN is to support participants in acquiring critical knowledge, skills and dispositions believed to leverage improved results for children and youth with disabilities. PD events are delivered face-to-face and online, as well as in recorded formats. Substantial planning occurs with school leaders, and also includes evaluating the impact of the professional development. Development of transfer supports, or the needed supports to assist teachers in transferring their newly acquired knowledge and skills to their classrooms and schools is also in place. This makes implementation of these practices happen, rather than assuming they will following professional development. To support transfer, the UPDN has hired instructional coach/implementation specialists in key geographic locations in Utah, and video-based coaching is one of several tools used to facilitate transfer of skills to the classroom.

UTAH REGIONAL LEADERSHIP EDUCATION IN NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

URLEND encompasses five western states, and aims to shape future leaders in health care and policy for the United States. Currently, 43 trainees from four states are enrolled, with disciplines including speech-language pathology, audiology, nursing, special education, social work, pediatric dentistry and genetic counseling. Some are practicing professionals, and some are still in graduate programs.

URLEND uses state-of-the-art technology to connect groups of trainees from Utah, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and North Dakota. Professionals are trained to move beyond discipline boundaries to provide optimal services to children and adolescents with special health care needs. An important component of the program is the Family Mentorship Program, which enhances trainees skills in implementing an interdisciplinary, family-centered, and culturally competent approach to support families who have a child with special health care needs.

According to one trainee, "I am becoming more involved in the state and national level of my profession--something a second-year doctoral student doesn't even think of doing. I have adopted a project in URLEND that I hope to continue developing throughout my career."

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMERGING AND PRACTICING PROFESSIONALS

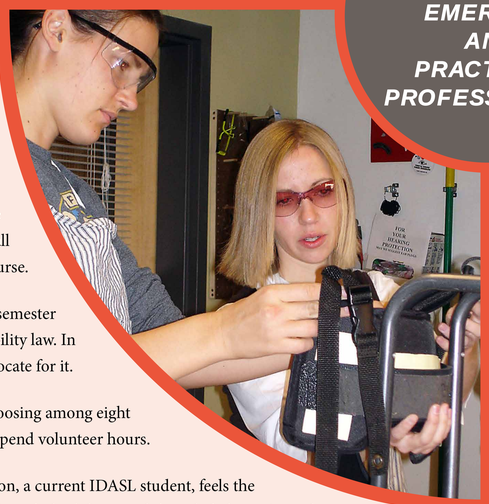
IDASL

The Interdisciplinary Disability and Service Learning Program, or IDASL, is a two-semester course inviting students from all majors and levels at USU to learn about the issues people with disabilities face every day. In the weekly class, students watch presentations, listen to guest speakers, and participate in discussions. Students write three papers in the class – a preflection essay at the beginning of fall semester, and two "defining moments" papers later in the course.

Another important component of the class is advocacy. Fall semester provides background and an overview of the history of disability law. In spring, the students follow a bill in the state of Utah and advocate for it.

Additionally, the students participate in service-learning, choosing among eight disability-related community and campus organizations to spend volunteer hours.

Students from all majors benefit from the class. Celesti Neilson, a current IDASL student, feels the class is important because it increases awareness about people with disabilities and their daily lives. According to Neilson, "I think my favorite part is to learn about the people's disabilities from other perspectives besides mine."



KANSAS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Each summer, the Kansas Department of Education Technical Assistance System Network (TASN), a program of The Center for Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) at the CPD holds a leadership conference aimed at educators and administrators in the state. Between 300-350 participants attend annually.

The conference offers information relevant to regular and special education leadership. It provides updated information on district requirements in preparation for the upcoming school year. Ninety-three percent of educators completing an evaluation reported an increase in knowledge in the subject area. Comments include the following:

"The staff and the presenters were all so welcoming. As a new attendee, I appreciated their friendliness and willingness to answer questions."

"MIS session, ESI session, and Law session were quite informative...I come away excited about working with my new ESS teachers after his presentation."

" I really appreciate the opportunities this conference provides to network and learn about all the resources TASN offers."