



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
CENTER ON DISABILITY &
COMMUNITY INCLUSION

FY23 Annual Report

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

We are finishing another exciting year at the Center. We welcomed new people, started new projects, and said goodbye to dear colleagues.

The purpose of this “Year in Review” is to share how we did this year.

This year was the final year of our 5-year plan. CDCI must write a new plan every 5 years that says what we do. That plan started July 1, 2018, and ends June 30, 2023. This year we created a new 5-year plan that starts July 1, 2023 and ends June 30, 2028.

We needed to do to many things to create the new plan. Most important was learning about the needs of Vermonters with disabilities. We had a lot of help. We used the feedback our Community Advisory Council has been giving us for years. Over 300 Vermonters completed a survey to share their experiences. Many people shared their feedback in small and large groups.

Thank you to everyone who helped guide our work this year! I am excited to hear what you think and get started on our new plan!

All my best,

Jesse

ACADEMICS

ANNUAL PRIORITIES	RESULT
1. Partner with people from diverse backgrounds to teach.	ACHIEVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nicole Villemaire continues as teaching assistant. Sefakor Komabu-Pomeyie teaching Global Disabilities course. Sharing our curriculum with University of Cape Coast in Ghana.
2. Improve accessibility of online teaching at UVM.	IN PROGRESS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked with UVM to advocate for accessible online teaching. Working with SILC to update <i>Include!</i> Special Education master's program moving online. Use what was learned to help improve SILC curriculum.
3. Support career development through courses and internships.	IN PROGRESS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus of newly designed micro-certificate. Exploring online certificates and credentials.

HIGHLIGHTS

- CDCI hired an autistic UVM student who took the Culture of Disability as our summer intern, working on transcribing videos and collaborating on a Think College news story.
- We submitted an NIH research grant to create a new curriculum: *Dating and Sexual Education to Address Social Challenges of Autistic Young Adults*
- Winnie is Faculty Advisor for a new student group in the medical school.

KEY NUMBERS

- 13 Think College students enrolled, 5 graduated.
- 79 UVM students took disability studies courses this year.
- 3 Disability Studies courses offered.

RESEARCH

ANNUAL PRIORITIES	RESULT
1. Share our research and evaluation in many ways.	ACHIEVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated research summaries. • Presented at national conference.
2. Strengthen research partnerships at UVM, in Vermont, and nationally.	ACHIEVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with new partners at UVM, Vermont, and nationally. • Working on grant applications on trauma & transition to adulthood.
3. Review how diversity, equity, and inclusion is part of CDCI research.	IN PROGRESS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Done this more for trainings. • This is focus for new 5-year plan.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- CDCI made two presentations at the AUCD national conference this year: [The Vermonter Poll](#) and [Show Me the Disability Data](#).
- We partnered with The Nature Conservancy Vermont on a study of attitudes toward accessibility in natural spaces: [Attitudes on Accessibility in Vermont's Outdoor Natural Spaces](#)
- We focused in-house research on an internal examination of ableism, and how we can address it with professional development: [Changing Institutional Attitudes About Accessibility](#)
- We used feedback from the CAC to overhaul our research summary templates and worked with Vermont Early Mobility in creating a new set.

KEY NUMBERS

- 3 publications.
- 6 presentations.
- 5 plain language research summaries.

SERVICES

ANNUAL PRIORITIES	RESULT
1. Improve our skills in accessibility.	ACHIEVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many participated and say increased their skills.
2. Better understand diversity of who we serve and how our work helps people.	IN PROGRESS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand more who we serve. • Need to learn more about how our work helps. • Collecting data from Community Needs Assessment, Event registrations, Training surveys, Project TA surveys
3. Support growth of public health and service projects.	ACHIEVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second year of the new 24-hour postural care and CDCI CARES. • Growth of Continence Project. • Resources & advocacy on COVID-19 and masking.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Continence Project added a nurse and family resource consultant to become an interdisciplinary team!
- New Children’s Integrated Services Personnel Development Coordinator.
- CAC offered feedback to help revise survey questions about disability!
- Helping state agencies and partners submit new grant to improve services on transition to adult hood.

KEY NUMBERS

- 31 service projects.
- 41 CDCI staff members attended at least one accessibility training.
- 90% say they now use more accessible design in their work.

COMMUNICATIONS

ANNUAL PRIORITIES	RESULT
1. Create an Accessible Events guide	ACHIEVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CDCI Accessible Events Guide 2.0 now available.
2. Expand the CDCI Accessibility Resources website	ACHIEVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doubled the amount of available content
3. Run community panels with self-advocates and family members	ACHIEVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supported three events: film viewing & discussion with the Habibs; ABB community panel; autism & employment community panel
4. Offer accessibility trainings for CDCI staff.	ACHIEVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8 accessibility workshops offered to staff.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Collaborated with Inclusive Arts Vermont, All Brains Belong VT, UVM DEI, and independent self-advocates on designing the CDCI Accessible Events Guide.
- Published a four-video series for families of autistic children with the UVM Autism Assessment Clinic.

KEY NUMBERS

- 61% increase in # of newsletter subscribers
- 105% increase in # of YouTube subscribers
- 120% increase in # of views on YouTube

INFRASTRUCTURE

ANNUAL PRIORITIES	RESULT
Collect and share community feedback on needs in Vermont.	ACHIEVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed community needs assessment. • Shared with CDCI & CAC. • Sharing publicly in Fall.
Create a new Center work plan based on community needs.	ACHIEVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New work plan drafted and submitted.
Support priorities with professional development.	ACHIEVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3

HIGHLIGHTS

- New staff: Patti Hodgdon-Dickman, Kelly Savitri, Michele Streeter, & Julia Wayne.
- Mary Ellen Seaver-Reid retired from I-Team after more than 40 years!
- Valerie Wood left CDCI to work for Building Bright Futures.
- Justin Salisbury graduated and now working on doctorate at University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Feedback from Vermonters with disabilities led to big change for new plan: We will conduct community needs assessment every year!
- University and state agencies using our accessibility resources and asking for more.
- New 5-year plan includes objectives and activities to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in our work.

KEY NUMBERS

- 3 full staff retreats.
- 100+ employees.
- \$606,330 requested for July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.