



UNIVERSITY of NEW HAMPSHIRE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 12, 2003

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INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY LAUNCHES NEW PH.D. IN EDUCATION FOCUSING ON AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS (ASD)

DURHAM – The Institute on Disability/UCED, at the University of New Hampshire, received a four-year grant from U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, for Project LEAD – Preparing Leadership Personnel in the Area of Educating and Supporting Children and Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

The purpose of the program is to prepare leaders in teaching, research, public policy, and advocacy through three different program tracks:

1. Program of study leading to the Doctor of Philosophy is operated by the Department of Education at the University of New Hampshire. LEAD program participants must seek admission to the doctoral program through the Department of Education. The LEAD program will support up to four full-time students with graduate assistantships and tuition waivers. Part-time students may also enroll. The Ph.D. program is comprised of 3 years of coursework and practica experiences in educational service delivery, research, public policy, and advocacy; and a year of dissertation work.
2. Specialization in ASD for Ph.D. students in related fields – e.g., Psychology, Sociology – four students will be enrolled.
3. Graduate Certificate in ASD for individuals in a variety of roles – educators, speech- language pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists, school nurses, social workers, families, consultants, advocates, policymakers – 20 students will be enrolled.

Theoretical Foundations of LEAD program include:

- Social equity for persons with disabilities
- Understanding of the larger socio-cultural context in which children and families experience ASD
- Family and consumer participation and self-determination
- Natural settings and general education class placement
- Interdisciplinary service delivery
- Positive behavioral approaches and communication
- Facilitation of social relationships and community participation
- Individualized, early, and intensive assessment, instruction, and support
- Acknowledgment of the medical and pharmacological issues in ASD

Coursework will begin in the summer of 2004. **Applications are due by February 15, 2004.**

- For information about application procedures, contact Lisa Canfield at (603) 862-2310
- For information about program content, contact Cheryl Jorgensen at (603) 862-4678, TTY at (603) 862-4320 or e-mail cherylj@cisunix.unh.edu

The Institute on Disability's mission is to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities into their schools and communities and to advance knowledge about disability and best practices. The Institute works with students and faculty, conducts statewide training, participates in grant-funded model demonstration projects, conducts research and engages in collaborative partnerships with other statewide organizations that are committed to improving the lives of persons with disabilities and their families.

The Institute on Disability, together with the Division of Genetics and Child Development Children's Hospital at Dartmouth, and the Department of Pediatrics at Dartmouth Medical School; the Institute for Health, Law, and Ethics at Pierce Law Center; and the Center on Community Economic Development and Disability at Southern New Hampshire University comprise New Hampshire's University Center for Excellence on Disability (UCED).

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The Institute on Disability at the University of New Hampshire, is a University Center for Excellence on Disability, established in 1987 with a mission to promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities into their communities.