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**UNH's Institute on Disability Offers Mentoring and Community  
Employment Training for Individuals with Disabilities**

HAMPTON – A mentoring and employment training seminar for individuals with disabilities will be held in March to provide on-the-job training methods, creative problem-solving, service quality improvement, and an ongoing network for peer support.

Adults with developmental disabilities have historically been relegated to second-class status in the workforce. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that about 33.1% of adults with disabilities are unemployed. But the rate of unemployment for individuals with severe disabilities -- those who require multiple supports over an extended period of time -- is a staggering 74%. And many of those who are employed work not in the regular labor force but in segregated sheltered workshops.

Fortunately this picture has begun to change. In New Hampshire, employment for individuals with developmental disabilities has been steadily improving, says Dr. David Hagner of the University of New Hampshire's Institute on Disability. "Young adults are saying that they are interested in real jobs with real futures." New admissions to sheltered work have virtually ceased. The Bureau of Vocational rehabilitation refers only about three individuals, on average, for sheltered employment statewide per year. The federal Rehabilitation Services Administration revised its policies so that starting this year sheltered workshop placements are no longer considered legitimate vocational rehabilitation outcomes.

nding the right job and making sure the business receives any help it might need to successfully employ an individual requires trained staff with skill and experience,” Dr. Hagner explains.

The Institute on Disability offers an annual series of training seminars to service providers throughout New England who provide these employment services. Particularly effective is the Mentor Training seminar, whereby experienced staff members are trained to serve as mentors for other staff and take on a leadership role within their organization.

This year’s Mentor Training seminar, led by Dr. Hagner, will be held at the Ashworth-by-the-Sea Hotel at Hampton Beach from March 27 through March 29. For information, contact the Institute at 862-0556 or visit its Web site at [iod.unh.edu](http://iod.unh.edu).

Dr. Hagner, Rehabilitation Projects Director with the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability, is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor with more than 20 years’ experience in teaching, research, evaluation and direct service. In addition to coordinating the community employment seminar series and mentorship project, he currently conducts research about employment supports for individuals with autism and homeownership for individuals with significant disabilities.

Dr. Hagner has published 5 books and over 35 chapters, monographs and journal articles related to employment and rehabilitation. He frequently lectures at regional and national conferences and has also been involved in training and consultation in Australia, New Zealand and Scotland. He also serves as Consulting Editor for the journal Mental Retardation.

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*The Institute on Disability at the University of New Hampshire was established in 1987 with a mission to promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities into their communities.*