

April 28, 2023

To: Marcella Crane – Contracts Manager, Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council

Re: Supporting Inclusive Practices in Colleges (SIP-C) Year 4, Q1 Report

Title: *Supporting Inclusive Practices in Colleges (SIP-C): An Exemplary Model for Supporting Students with Intellectual Disabilities Transition to Postsecondary Education in Arizona*

Recipient: Northern Arizona University, Institute for Human Development (NAU-IHD)

PI: Dr. Kelly D. Roberts, NAU-IHD
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Dear Ms. Crane,

Please see the attached report for the first quarter of year 4 of the SIP-C grant project. This report covers the period from January 1 – March 31, 2023.

If any additional information is needed, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Sakénya McDonald, PhD
Assistant Director of Academic Programs, IHD
Project Director, SIP-C



Kelly Roberts, PhD
Executive Director, IHD
Principal Investigator, SIP-C

Contractor: NAU/IHD

Contract #: ADDPC-FFY19-PSTSCD-01/Year 4

Contract Period: January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023

RFGA Title: Pilot Projects to Support Inclusion Practices in Colleges (SIP-C)

Instructions for Grantees on Submitting Narrative Reports

Grantees provide quarterly narrative reports to inform the progress of their funded projects. Information provided by the grantee shall be summarized.

Below is the schedule of due dates, list of questions, performance measures and demographic data contractors are required to track and submit. If you have any questions or cannot track any specific data, please let the ADDPC's Contracts Manager know as soon as possible.

Due Date	Time Period	Notes
April 30, 2023	January 1 – March 31, 2023	Narrative Report only
July 31, 2023	April 1 – June 30, 2023	Narrative Report and 6-month Performance Measure data
October 31, 2023	July 1 – September 30, 2023	Narrative Report only
January 31, 2024	October 1 – December 31, 2023	Narrative Report and 6-month Performance Measure data. Final data shall be provided for the entire year

Provide a summary that is no more than two pages, to include the following: Progress to date, numbers of participants served, and the role collaborators have in your project.

Supporting Inclusive Practices in Colleges (SIP-C) is a postsecondary transition support program housed at Northern Arizona University's Institute for Human Development (NAU-IHD). Program objectives and activities identify and address the ways in which individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) living in northern Arizona, specifically in rural areas, pursue and access inclusive postsecondary education (PSE). SIP-C's mission is to provide comprehensive, evidence-informed supports to help individuals with ID succeed in postsecondary environments. It is guided by the belief – supported by research – that if individuals with ID self-determine their education and employment goals and have access to supports to realize their goals in authentic, inclusive, and age-appropriate environments, they will achieve significantly improved transition and employment outcomes.

Our Year 4 (YR4) project design expands upon the original program model (2020-2023), specifically *Objective 7: Replicate and sustain the model throughout Arizona*. In YR4 we will continue our partnerships with four institutes of higher education (IHEs), while beginning to pilot YR4 activities and objectives at Mohave Community College in Kingman, AZ and Arizona

Western College in Yuma, AZ. To date, the SIP-C team has formed two advisory groups that will replicate the function of the current Interagency Collaborative Team. The first group, Campus and Community Outreach, Response, and Engagement (CCORE), is composed of campus professionals and delegates from key statewide agencies, specifically the Arizona Rehabilitative Services Administration/Vocational Rehabilitation (RSA/VR) and the Arizona Department of Economic Security Division of Developmental Disabilities (“The Division”). The second group, the Student Self-Advocacy Group (SSAG), will work directly with the CCORE team to provide consistent feedback on how students are acclimating to the program. A comprehensive evaluation plan has been implemented and we anticipate that data mined from surveys and focus groups administered to CCORE and SSAG members will result in the development and dissemination of an inclusive postsecondary transition workbook (IPTW). The IPTW will provide IHEs and local educational agencies (LEAs) with practices and procedures for introducing SIP-C model components into existing transition programs.

The principal investigator (PI) and program director (PD) have determined that, given recruitment data at current partnering IHEs, we will seek to continue providing individualized support under the current program model to 36 onboarded participants and to 20 newly recruited participants under the new CCORE/IPTW model. At the end of this reporting period, there were 46 participants with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) enrolled in the program. Nine of these 46 are newly admitted participants who will be attending Mohave Community College. Recruitment for Arizona Western College is still ongoing.

Provide an update on the activities and/or implementation plan timeline. If activities have not been met by your deadline, or changed, provide an explanation.

Objective 1: Develop an evidence-informed and comprehensive inclusive postsecondary transition workbook.

1.1. Establish pilot Campus and Community Outreach, Response, and Engagement (CCORE) teams and Student Self-Advocacy Groups (SSAGs) at two partnered IHEs. (Month 1)

In January, individuals from Mohave Community College and Arizona Western College agreed to join CCORE. Also represented on the CCORE team are personnel from the Arizona Department of Economic Security Developmental Disabilities Division (“the Division”), the Arizona Rehabilitative Services Administration Vocational Rehabilitation (RSA/VR), Kingman Unified School District (KUSD), and the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC). CCORE team meetings were held in January and February and the first CCORE focus group meeting was scheduled for April. The SSAG was formed and eight current SIP-C students were invited to participate. SSAG met in March and the first SSAG focus group was scheduled for April.

1.2. Continue to provide individualized support to 36 current participants with I/DD by working within the two model components and ten current strategy areas that focus on (1) improving

access to and participation in inclusive academic, social, independent living, and career/vocational activities and (2) implementing ten strategies. **(Ongoing)**

SIP-C staff continued to provide individualized support to 36 current participants with I/DD using model components as indicated in Table A. Recruitment is still underway for individuals attending Northern Arizona University (NAU), Coconino Community College (CCC), and Northland Pioneer College (NPC). Individuals admitted to one of these three IHEs receive supports aligned with existing model components in Table A. Newly admitted participants enrolling at Mohave Community College (MCC) or Arizona Western College (AWC) receive supports under Table B to determine efficacy of the YR1 program objectives and activities. In Table A, model components five (“interagency collaborative team”) and ten (“faculty professional development”) have been modified in Table B to “student self-advocacy group support” and “CCORE team professional development,” respectively. The justification for these changes is that under the YR4 replication and sustainability proposal, we wanted to identify ways for participants and professionals to utilize already existing sources within the campus and community structure. We posit that these changes will reallocate time, labor, and cost efforts to better suit smaller IHEs and LEAs who may be minimally staffed or limited in funding for activities such as hiring consultants. The SSAG can replicate the peer mentor experience by encouraging participants to engage with one another while also engaging in other campus activities, such as student clubs or groups. The CCORE team will essentially serve as a smaller version of the ICT but will offer comprehensive support to students with I/DD. The IPTW would provide guidelines to lead the CCORE team in supporting faculty as well as assist with identifying free or low-cost training resources to offer faculty and staff.

Table A: Model components and supports provided at NAU, CCC, and NPC

<i>Model Component I - Transition Preparation and Linkage</i>	<i>Model Component II - Supports that Result in Authentic Inclusive Postsecondary Education Participation</i>
1. person-centered planning 2. self-advocacy 3. self-determination 4. natural supports 5. interagency collaborative team	6. “Front Door First” 7. “Setting the Bar High” 8. adaptive educational coaching 9. technology support 10. faculty professional development

Table B: Model components and supports provided at MCC and AWC

<i>Model Component I - Transition Preparation and Linkage</i>	<i>Model Component II - Supports that Result in Authentic Inclusive Postsecondary Education Participation</i>
1. person-centered planning 2. self-advocacy 3. self-determination 4. natural supports 5. SSAG support	6. “Front Door First” 7. “Setting the Bar High” 8. adaptive educational coaching 9. technology support 10. CCORE professional development

1.3. Conduct a literature review of effective campus and/or community team strategies and the impact on transition outcomes in students with DD. (Months 1-3)

Under the direction of the program evaluator, this activity was completed during the first quarter (see [Evaluation section 3.5 below](#)).

Objective 2: Assist CCORE teams in implementing training and replication/sustainability strategies with 20 newly recruited individuals with I/DD.

2.3. Assist pilot CCORE teams in providing individualized support to 20 new participants with I/DD by working within the two model components and 10 strategy areas that focus on (1) improving access to and participation in inclusive academic, social, independent living, and career and vocational activities; and (2) implementing eight original strategy areas and two revised strategy areas. (Months 3-12)

During the current reporting period, nine individuals applied and were admitted to the SIP-C program. These individuals will be attending Mohave Community College and will receive individualized support in eight of the original model component areas. These participants will be included in the SSAG (model component #5) and the evaluation plan includes pre- and post-surveys to assess ways in which the transition experiences of newly admitted participants differ from those currently enrolled. Analysis of these differences (or similarities) will be shared with the CCORE team and will aid in the development of the IPTW.

Objective 3: Conduct research on the inclusive postsecondary transition workbook to determine the efficacy of program replication strategies using qualitative processes and outcome measures.

Under the direction of the program evaluator, research/evaluation activities completed during the first quarter are explained in the [Evaluation section below](#).

Objective 4: Program model components and strategies are replicated and sustained at partnering sites and demonstrate program efficacy to donor(s) and funding agencies.

4.1. Utilize collected data and replication/sustainability materials and activities to inform the production of publications, white papers, community reports, and other materials relevant to applying for funding. (Ongoing)

In the first quarter of the reporting period, the PD, research assistant (RA), and evaluator (EV) met multiple times to refine strategies for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating data collected relating to the model program's replication and sustainability. In response to collaborative efforts between SIP-C and Arizona RSA/VR, a professional development webinar was designed and will be offered four times: twice in April 2023 and twice in October 2023. Program staff believe that by increasing RSA/VR awareness of the benefits of inclusive postsecondary education, SIP-C participants who are eligible for VR services will have greater

success in advocating for VR financial support to pursue PSE credentials. As a government agency, RSA/VR has the capacity to assist program sustainability if VR staff are informed and aware of the impacts of inclusive PSE – specifically, how participation in SIP-C can lead to increased self-advocacy, independent living, and gainful employment. Materials from the webinar will be made available in print form to VR personnel and the webinar series has been approved for continuing education credits through the Commission on Rehabilitation Counseling Certification (CRCC).

4.2. Pursue additional funding from the NAU Foundation and various agencies, for example: Helios Foundation, U.S. Department of Education, Arizona Public Service (Community Impact Grants – Education), and/or Arizona Community Foundation. (Ongoing)

During the first quarter of the reporting period, the program director (PD) identified one potential funding opportunity through Arizona Public Service (APS) Community Impact Grants (Education). The PD has initiated the required procedures within the NAU-IHD organizational structure to begin drafting a proposal. The PD was informed by Principal Investigator (PI) Kelly Roberts and IHD Associate Director Holly Hulen that proposals for APS grants require approval from the NAU Foundation before submission. Upon receiving approval from the NAU Foundation, the PD and PI will proceed with drafting and submitting a proposal prior to the October 15th deadline. Additional information regarding this grant may be found here: <https://www.aps.com/en/About/Community/In-the-Community/Community-Impact-Grants>

Evaluation Section: Describe the data that is being collected, how often and how the data is used for programming.

Since January 2023, the SIP-C program has made progress on five objectives (3.1-3.5) regarding

- outreach to campus, community, and participants;
- responding to the needs of participants in the program;
- engagement between campus and community partners; and
- potential replicability and sustainability of SIP-C across campus environments.

Given the size of the SIP-C program, its target population, and its overall goals, the evaluator focused on the following tasks:

- Review of literature on college/university programs serving individuals with disabilities
- Pre-, post-, and retroactive survey questionnaires with participants
- Consecutive interviews with incoming participants
- Focus groups with campus partners, community organizations, and SIP-C participants

Below is a more detailed overview of each of the subsequent objectives detailed in the original grant.

3.1. Conduct interviews with new participants to learn how they are acclimating to the program. (Ongoing)

To evaluate how incoming students are acclimating to college, they are given two options: they can participate in pre/post surveys (see 3.2) or they can participate in consecutive/successive interviews. Participants may choose whichever option best suits their time, capability, and preferences. Interviews will occur during the person-centered planning process and include feedback related to current academic habits and anticipated concerns about transitioning into PSE environments. Repeat interviews will occur every two to three months to better understand students' participation in on-campus activities, anticipated educational challenges, and academic habits (time management, study skills etc.).

Currently, the program evaluator has developed interview questions and anticipates working with educational coaches to identify how these questions could be incorporated into the person-centered planning process to ensure an effective use of time and reduce redundancy.

3.2. Conduct open-ended surveys with both new students and current students to understand the potential for programmatic replicability, growth, and sustainability. (Ongoing)

As stated above, students are given the choice of participating in either interviews (activity 3.1) or pre/post surveys. Pre/post surveys from various campus sites offer an opportunity to review the individual growth and academic success of students. Surveys were chosen for two reasons. First, programs that can demonstrate impact to student success are likely to be considered an asset by both community programs and campus administration, thus improving the likelihood of sustainability. Second, by surveying students at various campus sites, evaluators can offer insights into how replicable the program is from institution to institution.

Thus far, pre/post surveys have been developed but have not yet been built into a Qualtrics platform. Pre/post surveys mirror the questions from the interviews detailed in 3.1, with the addition of a demographic section.

Participants who have been admitted into the program prior to April 2023 (n=36) will be asked to complete a retrospective survey. A retrospective survey was chosen to allow continuing SIP-C participants an opportunity to reflect/report on their individual growth and successes.

During this reporting period, the retrospective survey was developed via Qualtrics and is broken into three sections:

- Demographic information
- Development of confidence and development of independent academic skills (setting goals, future planning, and socialization with peers)
- Use of SIP-C provided resources, welcoming atmosphere on campus, and potential programmatic improvements

The next step is to review the pre-, post-, and retrospective surveys with the PD and RA to determine how appropriate the questions are for individuals with I/DD and to ensure all aspects of participation are addressed. Once the surveys are finalized, they will be distributed to targeted participant groups.

3.3. Aggregate ongoing notes from CCORE's interactions with DD students. (Ongoing)

Notes from educational coaches were reviewed by the evaluator as these represented ongoing, real-time interactions with program participants. Such notes can help identify opportunities for growth, needed resources, and ways educational coaches respond to students. This review of educational coaches' interactions will occur in January, April, August, and November.

In January, notes from educational coaches' interactions with 10 anonymous students were aggregated and reviewed by both the evaluator and PD. From these notes, 151 in total, the following information was gathered.

1. Educational coaches were directing students to certain campus resources at different times of the semester. For example, at the start of a semester participants were being directed to technology services when they were having difficulties with campus learning management systems, whereas later in the semester individuals were redirected to academic success services for tutoring.
2. Expectations around frequency and preferred channels of communication were identified, which could help to improve future communications between campus partners and SIP-C students.
3. Emotional support was noted by some coaches but was entirely absent from other coaches' notes. Given the mental health needs of many students with I/DD, this seemed to be a particularly important aspect of support to consider.

An analysis of notes also revealed educational coaches sometimes had questions related to how campus and community members support individuals with I/DD when they express challenges. These questions were added to the CCORE focus group questionnaire.

3.4. Conduct focus groups/interviews and review meeting notes of SSAG and CCORE groups to discover communication gaps, goal alignment, and areas of improvement for the program. (Months 2-6)

To determine the varying goals, priorities, challenges, needs, and best practices of CCORE and SSAG, the evaluator has reviewed ongoing notes and meeting recordings and will be conducting campus, community, and student focus groups. Focus groups were scheduled for April and a follow-up focus group with SSAG in Fall '23 is being considered to determine the effectiveness of the implemented workbook.

3.5. Complete a literature review to compare evidence-based results from other student support programs against the results of this program. (Months 1-5)

To produce a robust IPTW which aligns with best practices, evaluation conducted a three-step review of literature for the past 13 years on transition programs for students with disabilities.

Five different databases with NAU's Cline Library as well as the ThinkCollege database were searched for reports/studies concerning post-secondary education, disability, and mentoring. Once an initial search had been performed, the 500+ studies were aggregated and sorted for relevance and importance. Currently, the remaining 195 studies are being read by two different individuals, the evaluator and RA; thus far, many of the core best practices of SIP-C mirror those of other similar programs (such as "decrease stigma/increase awareness," "independence-focused workshops," "inclusive academic classrooms," and "develop and collaborate with existing programs/resources"). Additionally, programs that have incorporated aspects to support student mental health and the need to clarify expectations between coaches and students are providing unique opportunities for SIP-C to adapt.

Describe any unintended barriers encountered and how they were addressed. N/A

By the end of the contract period, share one success or personal stories from the target group participating in the program. This can include feedback from families and collaborators. N/A

Are there any contract amendments to request, including any staffing changes? No

Are financial expenses and match reporting on track? Yes