The Auburn Transition Leadership Institute (ATLI) had the pleasure of providing on-site training every Tuesday to six students from Auburn High School. Students' job duties consisted of office work including various tasks such as making buttons for the 2012 Alabama Transition Conference, assembling packets, counting surveys, and sorting materials. Throughout our community-based instruction, students played an important role in preparing for the conference.

With the help of our team, we were able to make over 800 buttons for this year's conference! The students were accompanied each week by Ms. Betty Schiffer, a former Collaborative Approach to Training Transition Specialist (CATTS) scholar, who is now the transition teacher at Auburn High School.

Through Ms. Schiffer, ATLI is able to follow-up with students and see how community-based instruction will help them succeed in their post-secondary goals. Over the course of the year, students learned that hard work can be both fun and rewarding. At the end of the academic year, students celebrated their hard work with a party at ATLI, with the theme, “Hard Work = Success!”

ATLI is very proud of the work they’ve done and wish them successful futures!
For youth and young adults with disabilities, the key to a successful future is planning, preparing, and gaining real-work experiences. These young adults are often faced with many challenges, adding to the difficulty of obtaining employment after high school. One way to assist these students in gaining the necessary skills and experiences they need in order to excel in the competitive workforce is through Community-based instruction (CBI). CBI is a work-training program that can take place anywhere in the community that is of interest to the students. Community-based instruction sites are usually local businesses or agencies that allow students with disabilities to engage in training and perform various job tasks. Such sites could include local restaurants, grocery stores, or offices. Students can participate in CBI to discover their interest and potential for work.

At the Auburn Transition Leadership Institute (ATLI), students are provided the opportunity to gain these vital work experiences in a natural and encouraging environment. Since spring 2010, ATLI has served as a Community-based instruction site to 7-10 students per year in the Auburn-Opelika area. These students benefit from the opportunity to learn in natural work settings, that extends beyond what they are able to receive in the classroom. CBI also provides opportunities for members from the Collaborative Approach to Training Transition Specialist (CATTS) teacher training program to engage with other professionals in different disciplines such as counseling, rehabilitation, radio/television, and film in creating task analyses, collecting data to show students’ strengths, abilities and production, and filming tasks. This collaboration not only helps increase interdisciplinary awareness, but also generates experience in planning while working alongside other service agencies. After all, transition is a coordinated set of activities that must extend beyond special education, not just within.

Community-based instruction provides work experience for young persons with disabilities outside of the classroom, contributing to the students’ understanding of the world of work. Each student’s experience in Community-based instruction should play a significant role in achieving their best post-school outcome of successful transition into postsecondary environments, while ultimately reaching their desired post-school goals. ATLI and CATTS are pleased to contribute to this important effort.
ATLI IMPACTS...
Compiled by Courtney Dotson

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS IN TRANSITION...
“I now have goals for the future and they include joining the track team at my high school this year, being more involved in my IEP meetings, and planning for college because I HAVE A VOICE!” -April Reid, YAiT Member

“And then I went to YAiT and I learned it was okay to come out of your shell ...and you can share your thoughts and you don’t have to be shy.” -Laura Tapia, YAiT Member

“The best thing about volunteering at ATLI was gaining experience that I will be able to use in the future.” -Whitney Ellis, former Auburn High School Student and Community-based Instruction Trainee

PARENTS OF YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS IN TRANSITION...
“I appreciate all of the hard work that the staff has put into April, and thank you for trusting and believing in her.” -Summer Reid, Parent of YAiT member

“Getting to know that other parents go through that “fear of letting go” has helped. Going to conferences like Auburn Transition Conference is really helpful and enlightening. It’s actually been an eye opener—getting to know who the players are, and what the issues are.” -Paula Tapia, Parent of YAiT member

“This expo has been most informative! I didn’t realize how many opportunities there are for those with disabilities. I am so excited and feel much at ease regarding my daughter’s transition from high school to college! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!” -Parent Expo Attendee

AUBURN UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDENTS...
“ATLI is...Growing as a person, a professional, and a leader, with guidance along the way!”
-Dr. Stephanie Z. Smith, Special Education Teacher, Saraland City Schools

“The most important asset I have gained from my experiences with ATLI is life mentors. The leadership and mentorship at ATLI is more than exceptional.” -Courtney Dotson, Instruction Coordinator, Auburn Transition Leadership Institute

“My work experiences at ATLI have had a positive impact on me in my job as a special education teacher and my professional goals.” -Dr. Shelley H. Bailey, Special Education Teacher, Nichols-Lawson Middle School

TRANSITION PROFESSIONALS...
“The Auburn Transition Leadership Institute has always been a beacon for transition. I am constantly amazed... I think that ATLI is always striving to do things better. The State of Alabama may be last in some areas, but they are definitely not in Transition due to ATLI.”
-Janis Braue, Retired Educator, Adult Day Director, United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Birmingham

“I have had the opportunity to participate in, as well as attend, the Alabama Transition Conference; it has enriched my knowledge and understanding of transition. The conference has helped me to know what is happening in the field here in Alabama and around the country.” -Karibi Dede, former Special Education Teacher, Auburn High School

“This conference gives me the latest information on transition as well as explains the changes that either have happened or will happen with special education and rehabilitation.”
-Reese Grantham, Rehabilitation Counselor, Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

ALABAMA STATE LEADERS...
“When the Auburn Transition Leadership Institute came into being, Alabama became one of the few states with the advantage of tapping into resources that a university institute could provide.”
-Dr. Mabrey Whetstone, former Director of Special Education Services, Alabama Department of Education

“I am so impressed and pleased with how the Institute has handled the funds and kept me informed. This is a program that is making a big difference in the state of Alabama. It is a program that is making it happen and you can see it.”
-Speaker of the Alabama House of Representatives, Mike Hubbard, Alabama State Legislature
NEW BEGINNINGS!
by Christina Adams

ATLI recognizes our own Kasey Kaschak on being selected as a new member of Collaborative Approach to Training Transition Specialist (CATTS) teacher training program, Summer 2012. Kasey recently graduated in May 2012 with a degree in Collaborative Teacher Education. Kasey states that he is looking forward to participating in the specialized training program offered through CATTS and gaining more knowledge about best practices in transition. Upon completion of the CATTS program, Kasey’s goal is to become a high school transition teacher in Lee County.

ATLI also recognizes our own Addie Littrell for moving on to the final stage of her graduate program, as she begins her internship. Through her experience and opportunities within the CATTS program, Addie says she feels prepared to go out into the field and implement what she has learned, and also feels confident that she can help students successfully transition into postsecondary environments. Addie states her appreciation that the CATTS program equipped her with the necessary skills to be an effective transition specialist. In Addie’s role at ATLI she successfully planned and implemented Community-based instruction which she will be able to transfer directly into her career as a teacher. Upon her December graduation, Addie expresses a desire to pursue a job working at a high school in a self-contained classroom or a resource room where she can implement all that she has learned about transition.

Newsletter Notes
Do you have an interesting personal story to share about the transition process? Our newsletter staff would like to hear from you!

Call 334.844.5927
Archived issues of ATLI “Directions” are saved at auburn.edu/atli (click on “Publications”).

Guest Editor
Addie Littrell
ATLI Graduate Assistant

~Building Brighter Futures for Youth and Young Adults~

2013 Alabama Transition Conference
March 4th & 5th, 2013
For updates, visit auburn.edu/atli

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