Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2016
October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016

FEATURES

♦ Engaging over 10,000
♦ Young Adult in Transition Recognized
♦ New ATLI Staff Members
♦ Celebrating Transition in Alabama
♦ ATLI Partnerships
Auburn Transition Leadership Institute
Administrative Staff and Associate Graduate Assistant Staff 2015-2016

Top row (L-R):
Theresa Chan, Jonathan Carpenter, Kat Cler, Leah Kartovicky

Bottom row (L-R):
Ronald Eaves, Eva Wesche, Patsy Dawson, Karen Rabren,
Courtney Dotson, Deborah Henthorne, Jian Fang

Not pictured: George Hall and Diana Simpson

THIS IS AUBURN.
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The Auburn Transition Leadership Institute (ATLI) provides valuable services and support to Alabama’s transition stakeholders. During fiscal year 2016, the number of persons engaged in ATLI’s instruction, research, and outreach activities totaled 10,475.

Table 1: Analysis of Transition Stakeholders Engaged in Institute Activities 2015-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Area</th>
<th>Fiscal Year 2016 Activity</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>Graduate Associates</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undergraduate Student Workers</td>
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<td>Research</td>
<td>Early Learning Progress Profile</td>
<td>2,622</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Alabama Parent Survey</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Alabama Post-school Outcomes Survey</td>
<td>595</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Transition Practices Survey for Rehabilitation</td>
<td>102</td>
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<td>Outreach</td>
<td>Alabama Transition Conference</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Community-based Instruction</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abilities Unlimited Camp</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Interagency Transition Team</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training iN Transition “TNT” Series</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transition Leadership Academy</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,475</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

We believe in transition.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Changes occur throughout one’s lifetime, and for most of us, we learn how to manage the small shifts that occur during our life’s journey. However, more significant changes—perhaps those better known as transitions—can be challenging. Major life transitions can be stressful and often have a profound effect on our lives. For individuals with disabilities, transitions can be more impactful than for those without disabilities. In fact, for these individuals, transitions can be so challenging that services and supports may be needed. Beginning early in their lives, the transition from preschool to school for young children with disabilities is supported by services designed to meet their unique needs (i.e., Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004). As they grow older, and near their exit from high school, services are also federally mandated to help support these youth as they begin assuming their young adult roles and responsibilities (i.e., Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014).

The transitions of children, youth, and young adults with disabilities are the focus of the Auburn Transition Leadership Institute (herein referred to as ATLI or the Institute). ATLI devotes and engages all its resources towards improving transition practices, programs, and policies that benefit children and young people with disabilities. The Institute is engaged in numerous outreach, research, and instruction projects and activities to achieve the Institute’s mission of improving transitions for persons with disabilities. This mission is advanced through a range of objective-driven endeavors, including the:

- provision of direct services to high school transition students with disabilities, and technical and advisory services to schools and districts;
- collection, analysis, and reporting of transition stakeholders’ survey responses to district, state, and national program administrators and policy-makers; and the
- integration of university student instruction with pre-service community and professional experiences.

During fiscal year 2016 (October 1, 2015 - September 30, 2016), the Institute engaged in a number of activities and projects designed to improve and/or impact the quality of life of individuals with disabilities. These activities were supported, in part, by a total of $489,340.72 from six contracts secured through the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) and one from the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS). These contracted projects included: (1) Training in Transition, an online transition training; (2) Early Learning Progress Profile, an online data collection and reporting system of developmental growth profiles of young children with disabilities; (3) Post-school Outcomes Survey, an analysis and reporting of the post-school outcomes of youth with disabilities one year after their exit from high school; (4) Parent Survey, disseminating, collecting, and analyzing parent participants’ reported involvement in and satisfaction with the services their child(ren) with disabilities received; (5) Interagency Transition Initiative, organizing and coordinating the State Interagency Transition Team and the Transition Leadership Academy; and the Alabama Transition Conference partial sponsorship from (6) ALSDE and (7) ADRS.

In addition to these sponsored or partially sponsored activities, ATLI provided community-based training for local high school students, and prepared and disseminated a bi-annual newsletter on transition related topics. ATLI also provided transition instruction to high school students with disabilities at the Abilities Unlimited Camp sponsored by the School of Kinesiology during the summer of 2016. As a result of the talents and commitment of the Institute’s staff, 10,475 transition stakeholders have been collectively engaged or impacted by our projects and activities during the past fiscal year. We appreciate all those who have helped us make this year’s accomplishments possible and we dedicate our work to those we serve—being always focused on building brighter futures for all children, youth, and young adults with disabilities.
TONIQUIA “TEE” CHAPMAN

Student • Jackson High School
Interviewed with her mother, Barbara Chapman

With an eye for fashion and a love for dance, Toniquia Chapman leaves a lasting impression on everyone she meets. Toniquia is currently a sophomore at Jackson High School in Clarke County. This year, she is spending an hour a day working in the school cafeteria developing her vocational skills and is looking forward to the next school year when she will participate in vocational training in the community. Additionally, Toniquia has played basketball and softball, and is currently a member of the high school marching band’s dance line, and church choir. Being on the dance line has given her the opportunity to interact with more students and make more friends. Toniquia got her start at the Jordan School of Dance. She has been a student at the Grove Hill studio for five years. Toniquia is always found engaging in communication with peers and community members, an activity she enjoys. Her outgoing personality is best described by her mother, Barbara Chapman, who explained, “Toniquia is willing to talk to anyone she meets and brighten up their day.”

In 2014, Toniquia participated in the Alabama Transition Conference’s fashion show by modeling apparel from a fashion line especially developed for young women with Downs Syndrome. This event made an impact on Toniquia because it directly relates to her future career goal of becoming a fashion designer and owning her own salon. Through her fashion show experience, Toniquia was also able to meet Ms. Ashley DeRamus, a role model for Toniquia. Ms. DeRamus was the fashion designer featured at the conference show, who also happens to have Downs Syndrome. In recognition of their role at the Alabama Transition Conference, Toniquia, and the other models, were given the opportunity to attend the Governor’s Proclamation Signing Ceremony, an experience that allowed the young women to bond and form lasting friendships. Toniquia states, “My favorite parts of attending the conference and proclamation signing was having the opportunity to model, attending YAiT [Youth and Young Adults in Transition] classes, and making new friends.” In the future, Toniquia hopes to reach her goal of working in the fashion industry. Barbara states that she fully supports her daughter, and “is willing to assist Toniquia in reaching her dreams.”

Throughout all of the activities that Toniquia is involved in, she receives full support from all of her family and friends in achieving her goals. Specifically, Barbara acknowledges the support Toniquia receives at school from her teacher, Mrs. Gwen White. Barbara went on to explain that when Toniquia was trying out for the dance line, Mrs. White supported her throughout the entire process and continues to encourage Toniquia in all areas of her life. Barbara attributes her daughter’s tremendous growth in school to the support she receives from Mrs. White and her other teachers. For example, according to Barbara, “Mrs. White keeps me informed of what happens in the classroom and encourages Toniquia to strive for all of her goals.” Between home and school, Toniquia has a strong support system that is helping to prepare her for success in the future. When Barbara envisions Toniquia’s life after high school, she is filled with optimism and hope. She states, “Toniquia is a very respectful and well-rounded young adult. She is always willing to learn new things and be the best she can, skills that will help her be successful in the future. I want to continue to push Toniquia to reach her goals so that she can have the happiest and most fulfilling life possible.”

—Story by ATLI graduate assistant, Leah Kartovicky
ANNA PAGE MINOR
TRANSITION PRACTITIONER
ANNA PAGE MINOR
Special Educator ● Auburn City Schools

Since high school, Anna Page has developed a passion to help students in special education and the field of transition. She was involved in various organizations throughout high school which provided her opportunities to work with students who were provided special education services. However, Anna Page initially never dreamed of pursuing a career as a special educator until she realized how much she missed being in a classroom. After some time majoring in nursing at Auburn University, she changed her major to special education and found her place in the profession. Anna Page graduated with a Bachelor of Science in collaborative teacher—special education and started her career the following semester. She then decided to pursue both her master’s degree and earn a transition specialist graduate certificate. She achieved both by being a scholar on a United States Department of Education teacher preparation grant (i.e., Collaborative Approach to Training Transition Specialists). She states that her master’s program was a “wonderful learning experience” and provided her training in an area that she could continue to learn and grow in.

Currently, Anna Page serves as a high school special educator in a self-contained classroom. She currently works with seven students with significant disabilities. She is particularly interested in helping students find jobs and/or postsecondary education opportunities. Anna Page aims to help ensure that students who graduate from high school are provided opportunities that they may be unaware of and gain appropriate resources to obtain such prospects. In order to do so, Anna Page points out that it is essential to recognize and build upon each of the student’s strengths and demonstrate to them that they are capable of obtaining a job, as well as learning important life skills that will assist them in their everyday life. Through her work, Anna Page continues to be motivated by seeing her students succeed and enjoy what they do. It also encourages her when she realizes that she played a role in their accomplishments and sees students at their jobs, living out their lives.

As a young professional in the area of transition, Anna Page has observed how more resources are continually being made available for students with various types of disabilities. For example, she has brought her students to the Auburn Transition Leadership Institute once a week to gain community-based vocational instruction, in which students learn different job skills ranging from typing in Microsoft Excel, to sorting and shredding papers. For the future within the transition field, Anna Page envisions that there will be an increase in resources for students with severe disabilities, specifically for their lives after high school. She is aware of how challenging and stressful it is for both teachers and parents to find students jobs and living arrangements after high school, and Anna Page hopes to be able to offer more information and resources in the future.

—Story by ATLI graduate assistant, Theresa Chan
“I believe that no matter what stage of life we are in, we are all in some form of transition, as it is never about making it to the destination, it is about the journey—we are always in the process of arriving.”

JOSHUA TURCHAN
FORMER GRADUATE ASSOCIATE
Josh Turchan is a dedicated, compassionate individual who has studied counseling psychology at Auburn University for four years and trained at the University of Missouri for one year, completing his doctoral internship. Soon, Josh will graduate with his doctorate in counseling psychology. Perhaps more exciting for Josh is that he recently became a father to his sweet daughter, Zoey, in July of 2016. Throughout all of these transitions, Josh has remained steadfast in working towards his goals and encouraging others along the way to strive and reach their own.

During his time at Auburn University, Josh was a graduate assistant at the Auburn Transition Leadership Institute (ATLI) for two years. His desire to continue acquiring knowledge across multiple domains to ultimately serve those in need is what led him to join ATLI’s team. As a therapist, Josh has years of experience working at the individual level, so ATLI offered an invigorating environment to garner change at the state and local level through research, assisting with policy changes, and engaging in professional development. Josh held various leadership responsibilities, including twice being the volunteer coordinator at the Alabama Transition Conference and facilitator for local teams at the Transition Leadership Academy, while also leading research activities (e.g., transition handbook, transition needs assessment). Additionally, Josh played a central role in conducting community-based instruction, teaching students with disabilities job-related skills, and assisting with constructing training modules. While Josh gained knowledge from multiple tasks in a variety of positions, he also learned about himself.

Through his self-reflections, Josh acknowledged the amount of growth he obtained throughout his experience at ATLI, not limited to, gaining administrative and research skills related to assessment development, conference coordination, policy development, and more, and utilizing these skills at the state and local level. As Josh developed his skills throughout his time at ATLI, he has been able to take this knowledge and apply it at his doctoral internship, where outreach is a significant component of his training. Developing outreach and assessment skills, utilizing effective interdisciplinary communication, and embracing leadership roles have assisted Josh in clinical and research work related in the field of counseling psychology. Josh has been able to integrate skills from transition and counseling psychology to increase his multicultural awareness and reach out to others at an individual and systemic level, in order to assist people with a variety of needs.

Taking away from his experiences at ATLI and integrating them into his experience in the field of counseling psychology, Josh reminds us that we are humans, altogether working our way through our personal lives. Many people in the transition field work tirelessly as dedicated, selfless individuals to promote the quality of life for those in need and are rarely acknowledged themselves, something he also noticed in his career as well. Reflecting, as Josh did, on growth, collaboration, integration, and care is what he promotes in his concluding statement, “I believe that no matter what stage of life we are in, we are all in some form of transition, as it is never about making it to the destination, it is about the journey – we are always in the process of arriving.”

—Story by ATLI graduate assistant, Kat Cler
Alicia Hodge is an education administrator at the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) and has worked collaboratively with the Auburn Transition Leadership Institute over the past 10 years. She has been involved with the State Interagency Transition Team (SITT); helped develop training modules for the professional development of teachers, job coaches, administrators, and vocational rehabilitation counselors; helped to identify topics and speakers for the Alabama Transition Conference; and supported many other ATLI initiatives.

Alicia discusses collaboration and shares her appreciation for ATLI, “Without ATLI, I don’t know where our state would be in regard to transition. [Collaboration] is like a puzzle, and ATLI has been the centerpiece of pulling the pieces together.” Additionally, SITT originally brought many agencies together to develop a state plan and work on goals that improve transition services throughout Alabama. Alicia described that each of the agencies brought an important piece of the puzzle to those meetings, and without that collaboration, many goals would not have been accomplished. She also identified the Transition Leadership Academy as a critical program, providing school teams and their local partners with ongoing technical assistance and support to ensure that their plans are progressing, and enhancing transition services for students. “Collaboration is key,” she remarked, “We have to make sure that we are all working together rather than in our silos to make sure we are all moving in the same direction.”

Collaboration extends throughout the state. Within her department, Special Education Services, Alicia is currently collaborating with ALSDE’s Career and Technical Education department to find ways to meet the Alabama’s Plan 2020 goal of Every Child College and Career Ready. Here, every agency is able to bring together their unique services to assist students in achieving their post-school goals. The synergy between all agencies, enhancing transition services, allows important questions to arise, resources to be shared, and ultimately, results for students. Additionally, Alicia emphasized the importance of assessments for all involved in the transition process stating, “Without ongoing transition assessments and the planning based on assessment results, you cannot identify [students] strengths, interests, and needs. I think it is key that assessment is ongoing and that all areas are met, including training, employment, and independent living.”

Alicia concludes by crediting ATLI with the “unique outreach” opportunities they provide to those involved in the transition process throughout the state. In her experience with other states nationwide and their transition programs, she noted that she did not see other states collaborating with universities to the extent that the Special Education Services Department in Alabama works with ATLI. “In fact”, she said proudly, “Alabama was the first state to develop Transition Standards. Had ATLI not collaborated with the Alabama State Department of Education on the project,” she emphasized, “it would most likely not exist.”

—Story by ATLI graduate assistant, Diana Simpson
ATLI WELCOMES NEW STAFF MEMBERS

BRADLEY TARVER
INTERN
Montgomery, Alabama
Media Studies
Since May 2016

EVA WESCHE
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SPECIALIST
Stuttgart, Germany
Since August 2016

CHAD EVANS
RESEARCH COORDINATOR
Madison, Alabama
Since July 2016
INTRODUCTION

**Building Brighter Futures** for children, students, and youth with disabilities and their families—this is our mission. The Auburn Transition Leadership Institute (ATLI) works closely with administrators and professionals in education, rehabilitation, and mental health, and other related agencies to provide intensive coordinated services as well as leadership in the areas of instruction, outreach, and research. ATLI facilitates transition services by providing continuous improvement resources to systems, practitioners, and local programs.

In fiscal year 2016 (October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016), the Institute entered its sixteenth year of operations. This year marked a number of internal transitions within our unit. For example, George Hall, ATLI research coordinator, retired after 15-years of service. We also had several new full-time employees join the staff (i.e., Chad Evans and Eva Wesche, see new staff page 10). Also, Dr. Courtney Dotson became the assistant director of the Institute. We welcome these new staff members and are excited about continuing the ATLI’s mission and expanding its services.

Our foundational principles of leadership, accountability, sustainability, and capacity-building guide us each year, and our inspiration always originates from people—foremost, the families, children, youth, and young adults with disabilities. We are encouraged by the children and youth we serve. Their tenacity to work toward their goals; their resilience to face adversities; and their optimism to follow their dreams drives us to do our best for them. We also recognize the family members who provide support and encouragement, the leaders who advocate for youth and continually seek effective practices, the direct service providers who make things happen, and our colleagues who bring their best to each day’s work in service to the future.

We thank you all for making possible this year’s achievements, and we dedicate our work to you.
THIS IS INSTRUCTION.

THIS IS RESEARCH.

THIS IS OUTREACH.
Instruction

Guided Leadership Experiences for Professionals-in-Training

STUDENT STAFF MEMBERS GAIN PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Essential to the Institute’s operations are our student staff members (i.e., graduate assistants and student workers). Guided by senior staff, students develop professional skills in the area of instruction, research, and outreach. During fiscal year 2016, ATLI’s student staff members were engaged in a number of activities, providing them with experiences that extend beyond what is traditionally available in university classrooms. For example, ATLI student staff members were provided enriching experiences in:

**INSTRUCTION** by developing and implementing research-based community-based instruction to local high school students with disabilities; planning and delivering university teaching;

**RESEARCH** by engaging in research design development; preparing human subjects review protocols; collecting, preparing, and analyzing data; preparing and submitting research-based manuscripts and/or professional presentations;

**OUTREACH** by planning and coordinating ATLI’s outreach events—the Transition Leadership Academy, and the Alabama Transition Conference; providing technical assistance and feedback to local transition teams; assisting with writing project reports; and

**LEADERSHIP** by working closely with local, state, and national leaders as transition practices and policies are formulated.

2016 Alabama Transition Conference Volunteers
Instruction (continued)

Guided Leadership Experiences for Professionals-in-Training

Instruction Goal 1

**Work Experiences in Instruction, Research, and Service Delivery**

During fiscal year 2016, the Auburn Transition Leadership Institute’s graduate assistants and student workers were engaged in multiple experiences that provided the students with the opportunity to enhance their knowledge at the local, state, and national level.

Year after year via projects led by ATLI’s administrative staff, Auburn University students learn how to effectively connect theory to practice by reviewing current research literature in special education, rehabilitation, and counseling prior to service delivery.

Instruction Goal 2

**Integration of Research into Publications and Presentations**

Under the direction of Dr. Karen Rabren, ATLI continues to support university students as they produce work of value to the university, the state, and their own professional vitae.

This year, six students presented at a state conference, and two students delivered presentations at the Division on Career Development and Transition 19th International Conference in Oregon with ATLI’s director.

Instruction Goal 3

**Application of Research-based Transition Methods in Providing Services to Individuals and Programs**

As a result of ATLI’s associate staff members engagement in Instruction Goals 1 and 2, they displayed their leadership abilities during events, projects and/or activities in the areas of instruction, research, outreach.

These opportunities were afforded through ATLI’s projects and activities associated with the Alabama Transition Conference, the Transition Leadership Academy, community-based instruction, and the Abilities Unlimited Camp, to name a few.
Instruction (continued)

Guided Leadership Experiences for Professionals-in-Training

Achievements for Instruction Goal 1

Goal 1a: 4 students will gain research experience
Actual: 7 students gained research experience
Goal 1b: 3 students will gain instruction experience
Actual: 7 students gained instruction experience
Goal 1c: 5 students will assist with product development/service delivery
Actual: 6 students assisted with product development/service delivery

Achievements for Instruction Goal 2

Goal 2a: 3 students will conduct research leading to publication
Actual: 0 students conducted research leading to publications
Goal 2b: 4 students will deliver presentations at state conferences or meetings
Actual: 6 students delivered 7 presentations
Goal 2c: 1 student will present at a national or international meeting or conference
Actual: 2 students presented at an international conference

Achievements for Instruction Goal 3

Goal 3a: 4 ATLI direct service experiences will be provided
Actual: 4 direct service experiences were provided
Goal 3b: 4 consumer empowerment experiences will be provided
Actual: 5 experiences in consumer empowerment were provided
Goal 3c: 5 service experiences in transition program development will be provided
Actual: 6 experiences in program development were provided
THIS IS RESEARCH.
Research
Explorations and Findings in Service to Decision-makers & Policymakers

TRANSITION RESEARCH USED TO IMPROVE PROGRAMS
During the fiscal year of 2016, the Institute collected and analyzed response data from transition stakeholders for the purpose of improving local education agency programs, which is consistent with its mission to provide continuous improvement resources. Stakeholder feedback analyzed during this year included response data for reporting Federal Indicators 7, 8, and 14. Information collected on these, and other indicators, must be reported to the United States Department of Education (USDOE) by all states regarding their provision of special education services. ATLI plays an important role in the state of Alabama’s meeting of these federal criteria. A brief definition of the three federal indicators for which ATLI provided services, along with the activities associated with these projects are listed below.

Indicator 7 (Preschool Outcomes) • Annual measurement is required of young children with disabilities’ development in three areas: (1) positive social-emotional skills; (2) acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (e.g., language/communication and early literacy); (3) use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs (i.e., Indicator 7). The Early Learning Progress Profile (ELPP) website collects data to help determine preschool children with disabilities’ outcomes in Alabama as measured by Indicator 7. ATLI modifies and maintains the website, and responds to technical assistance requests from local and state users. The data captured are used to report on the year-end student progress to the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) and USDOE.

Indicator 8 (Parent Involvement) • Indicator 8 serves as a means to measure and ultimately improve services for children with disabilities. More specifically, the percentage of Alabama parents with a child receiving special educational services, and schools’ involvement in engaging those parents with services is determined by collecting data through a parent survey. The Alabama Parent Survey collects much-needed information from parents of students with disabilities. ATLI coordinates the printing and assembly of over 20,000 Alabama Parent Survey packets for mailing. It also maintains and modifies an online parent survey for data collection. As paper surveys are returned by mail, they are scanned and combined with results collected via the Alabama Parent Survey website. These data are analyzed for reporting to ALSDE, and ultimately USDOE. Finally, survey summary reports for each participating school system are prepared and posted on ATLI’s website for easy access.

Indicator 14 (Post-school Outcomes) • The Alabama Post-school Outcomes Survey collects data from former students and is used by ALSDE for reporting to the USDOE, Indicator 14. This post-school outcomes indicator measures the percentage of youth who had an Individualized Education Program or IEP, who are no longer in secondary school and have made their transition into one of the following three categories: (1) enrolled in higher education; (2) competitively employed; (3) enrolled in some postsecondary education or training within one year of leaving high school. ATLI is responsible for analyzing state and local data as well as compiling survey response reports for each participating school system and making them available online.
Research (continued)

Explorations and Findings in Service to Decision-makers & Policymakers

EARLY LEARNING PROGRESS PROFILE

The Early Learning Progress Profile (ELPP) is designed to analyze the progress made in pre-school aged students. ATLI completed its fifth year of collecting preschool student data for Alabama’s Indicator 7 data in fiscal year 2016. More specifically, data were collected for the Federal Indicator 7 measure, which is reported to the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs. These data are used to determine the percent of preschool children ages 3 through 5 with IEPs who demonstrate improved (1) positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships); (2) acquisition and use of knowledge and skills; and (3) use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

In order to determine the progress of Alabama’s preschoolers with a disability, ATLI’s ELPP website collects and stores data submitted by local case managers. Special education teachers from across the state, who have knowledge of the preschoolers with disabilities, are required to document 70 standards of developmental growth during two separate intervals of an individual student’s preschool tenure. The first interval being when a child first receives services, and the second being when they are about to exit their program. The difference between these two sets of data is used to determine the percentage of students who (a) substantially increased their rate of growth, and (b) were functioning within age expectations by the time they exited the program for each of the three outcome areas. This year, 2,622 complete preschool student records were submitted to the ELPP website.

In addition to the collected data, ATLI also provides technical assistance (TA) to all statewide special education administrators and teachers in regards to the use of the ELPP website and database. During fiscal year 2016, there were 162 requests of TA from both county and city school systems. The types of the request were broken down by percentage: 27% student record not displayed; 13% user password issues; 10% data entry errors; 7% un-excluding records and; 43% were grouped into various other issues.

There were also several enhancements that were added to ELPP website. These included implementation of a new Special Education Tracking System (SETS) data field, updating the flow chart help document for inputting data into the ELPP website, conversion of the website’s display text to a more easily readable font, and visiting Chambers County’s case managers for a user’s perspective of website navigation.

“…I would be more than happy to give a good report, both for the sound advise as well as how expediently all my questions were answered.”

– Kathy Sullivan, ELPP User, Midfield City Schools
Research (continued)
Explorations and Findings in Service to Decision-makers & Policymakers

Early Learning Progress Profile (ELPP)

Welcome to the Early Learning Progress Profile (ELPP) online data collection system. The ELPP Website is a tool for collecting data to measure the extent to which preschool children show improvement from their entry into, and exit from, their preschool special education programs and services. This data collection is required to meet Indicator 7 of federal reporting requirements regarding the education of preschool children with disabilities (30 U.S.C. 1418(a)(3)(A)). Additional information can be viewed by clicking the “More Info” button below.

Entering a date into the SETS Student folder field, Preschool Services Begin Date, is required, beginning July 1, 2015.

Click on a button below to select an ELPP Website function:

- Submit a Student’s Entry Data
- Submit a Student’s Exit Data
- Exclude a Student Record from Exit Data
- View Completed Student Records
- Edit Case Manager Passwords
Research (continued)

Explorations and Findings in Service to Decision-makers & Policymakers

ALABAMA PARENT SURVEY

During fiscal year 2016, the Alabama Parent Survey data was collected to measure parents of children with disabilities’ perceptions of the coordination and facilitation of special education services provided by their children’s schools. With questions seeking parents’ opinions of special educational services provided by schools, the Alabama Parent Survey data are analyzed and reported as a means of improving services for children with disabilities. Over a cycle of four years, each school district is polled in an effort to capture a comprehensive representation of the state. These findings are included in Alabama annual performance report to the USDOE, Office of Special Education (OSEP).

During the 13th year of collecting and analyzing the Alabama Parent Survey data, ATLI received 3,052 survey responses from 36 participating school systems. These 3,052 responses represented a 15% return rate of the 20,897 surveys mailed out in February. This was equal to the previous year’s total, but significantly lower than all other previous years’ survey return rates, with return rates ranging from 23-28%. This may have been due to the use of much smaller mailing envelopes in an effort to reduce postage costs. Despite the lower return rate of the responses from the first 11 survey questions, describing school efforts to involve parents of students with disabilities, 76% of respondents selected either agree or strongly agree, which was equal to the previous year’s 76% response rate.
Research (continued)
Explorations and Findings in Service to Decision-makers & Policymakers

ALABAMA POST-SCHOOL OUTCOMES

One way to determine the current status and satisfaction of students is to measure their success in achieving post-school transitions after secondary school. This transition into adulthood is crucial to the type of lifestyle led and overall happiness of former students. The USDOE recognizes the importance of measuring students’ post-school success and requires, through Indicator 14, that all states gather data and report the post-school status of these young people.

Prior to being an indicator requirement, ATLI has been involved in the collection and/or analysis of Alabama’s former students with disabilities post-school outcomes for 21-years. During this reporting period, ATLI organized and analyzed data, then provided Alabama Post-school Outcomes Survey results to ALSDE for Indicator 14 reporting. These results are used to measure the percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs while in school. This data are a representation of the outcomes of these students (i.e., enrolled in higher education, competitively employed, or in a postsecondary education or training program) one year after completion of high school.

The data showed that of the 595 former students with disabilities, who completed the Alabama Post-school Outcomes Survey, 25% \((n = 151)\) of them were enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school. An additional 40% \((n = 240)\) were competitively employed, and 9% \((n = 51)\) were either enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program or engaged in non-competitive employment within one year of exiting high school. As for the former students who reported no engagement, they represented 26% \((n = 153)\).

The collection of post-school outcomes data were reported for both the entire statewide sample as well as the 36 participating school systems. In addition, former students’ responses to Alabama Post-school Outcomes Survey items were reported for by each school system and posted online at ATLI’s website for subsequent download and use.

![Post School Outcomes Survey](image)

**Former Students Engaged in Post-school Employment or Education**

- Engaged: 74%
- Not Engaged: 26%
Research (continued)
Explorations and Findings in Service to Decision-makers & Policymakers

Research Goal 1

INVOLVE LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL TRANSITION STAKEHOLDERS WITH
DESIGNING, DEVELOPING, AND/OR CONDUCTING RESEARCH

During fiscal year 2016, local and state transition stakeholders participating in ATLI research by contributing response data to the Alabama Post-school Outcomes Survey, the Alabama Parent Survey, and the Early Learning Progress Profile (ELPP) website.

Research Goal 2

SHARE TRANSITION RESEARCH RESULTS WITH LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL AGENCIES

For fiscal year 2016, data from the Alabama Post-school Outcomes Survey, the Alabama Parent Survey, and the Early Learning Progress Profile website were provided to ALSDE for reporting to Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

During the 2016 Transition Leadership Academy I and II, district-level Alabama Post-school Outcomes and Alabama Parent Survey reports were shared with local education agencies in drafting their transition plans for the upcoming school year.

Research Goal 3

DISSEMINATE FINDINGS AT STATE, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL FORUMS

During fiscal year 2016, ATLI staff members presented at the 2016 Alabama Transition Conference; the 2016 Transition Leadership Academy I and II; an Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services’ training session; and at the Division on Career Development and Transition 19th International Conference in Portland, Oregon.
Research (continued)
Explorations and Findings in Service to Decision-makers & Policymakers

Achievements for Research Goal 1

Goal 1a: 100% Alabama Post-school Outcomes Survey return rate
Actual: 67% return rate
Goal 1b: 25% Alabama Parent Survey return rate
Actual: 15% return rate
Goal 1c: 100% of ELPP technical assistance requests addressed
Actual: 99% of ELPP technical assistance requests addressed

Achievements for Research Goal 2

Goal 2a: Generate Alabama Post-school Outcomes Survey reports for one-fourth of Alabama’s local education agencies (LEAs)
Actual: One-fourth of Alabama LEAs’ reports generated
Goal 2b: Generate Alabama Parent Survey reports for one-fourth of Alabama LEAs
Actual: One-fourth of Alabama LEAs’ reports generated
Goal 2c: 137 of Alabama local education agencies’ ELPP student data records submitted via the ELPP website
Actual: 133 of local education agencies’ ELPP student data records submitted via the ELPP website

Achievements for Research Goal 3

Goal 3a: 1 state level forum
Actual: 6 state forums
Goal 3b: 1 national level forum
Actual: 0 national forums
Goal 3c: 1 international forum
Actual: 2 international forums
THIS IS OUTREACH.
Outreach

Projects and Activities in Service to the Transition Community

OUTREACH PROGRAMS SERVE TRANSITION STAKEHOLDERS

Contributing to the mission of Auburn University, the Auburn Transition Leadership Institute’s (ATLI) fiscal year 2016 outreach initiatives were delivered through nine projects and/or activities. These initiatives include...

2016 Alabama Transition Conference • The Alabama Transition Conference is one of ATLI’s most expansive outreach continuing education events and one of the largest conferences held at Auburn University. This professional and personal development event regularly attracts over 700 participants each year.

March is Transition Awareness Month • As proclaimed by Alabama governors since 1999, March is Transition Awareness Month. Youth and young adults are invited to the proclamation signing ceremony held at the Old House Chamber in the State Capitol. Corresponding with the Alabama Transition Conference, this time is set aside to recognize all transition service providers and stakeholders.

Alabama’s Youth & Young Adults in Transition “YAiT” • YAiT, pronounced “Wyatt” is a statewide group of students with disabilities who encourage and facilitate the development of self-determination and leadership skills in youth and young adults with disabilities. ATLI has facilitated the development of the YAiT advocacy groups throughout the state, by providing local school systems with support, guidance, and program materials.

State Interagency Transition Team “SITT” • SITT is composed of state leaders representing transition-related stakeholders and service providers. SITT meets quarterly to provide leadership for the delivery of transition services for youth and young adults in Alabama.

Transition Leadership Academy • The Transition Leadership Academy provides local transition teams with leadership skills to direct their local transition services. Local teams consisting of transition stakeholders gather for an intensive 3-day training and technical assistance program. Overall, teams are extended the opportunity to keep abreast of the latest policies and practices in transition so they can develop their own local plans for implementing transition services and programs.

Training iN Transition “TNT” Series • TNT is a comprehensive series of online training modules that provides ongoing professional development for service providers as well as personal development for young people with disabilities.

Directions Newsletter • This bi-annual publication serves as an avenue to meet transition stakeholders and learn about new programs designed to assist in-service and pre-service professionals in improving transition in the state of Alabama.

Community-based Instruction • ATLI provides clinical services in the form of community-based instruction for local high school students with disabilities throughout the school year.

Abilities Unlimited Camp • Abilities Unlimited is a collaborative summer camp for children and youth with and without developmental disabilities. ATLI partnered with the School of Kinesiology to incorporate transition activities into the camp’s curriculum.
Outreach (continued)
Projects and Activities in Service to the Transition Community

THE 2016 ALABAMA TRANSITION CONFERENCE

With a return to where it all began in 1991, the 2016 Alabama Transition Conference was hosted by ATLI at the Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center. This year marks the 26th year of the Alabama Transition Conference, continuing the tradition of one of Auburn University’s largest and most longstanding conferences. It is also one of the longest running conferences of its type in the nation.

Taking into account previous years’ participant suggestions, registration was limited to 650 in order to provide ample space and access for those who attended. Demonstrating the immense popularity of this conference, 635 transition professionals arrived from 106 different local educational agencies. The theme for this year, Transition—Seeking the Way, related to professionals seeking the best way to guide young adults in making the transition into the next phase of their lives. This year, the conference pointed the spotlight into West Alabama to highlight the rich, cultural diversity of the region.

The conference began with a heart-felt welcome and call to action for transition stakeholders by Dr. Karen Rabren, the director of the Auburn Transition Leadership Institute. Her inspirational welcome set the tone for the conference before introducing the Auburn High School Color Guard for the presentation of the colors and Keara Harris, also of Auburn High School, for the singing of the national anthem. She was followed by a warm welcome and opening remarks from Dr. Chippewa Thomas, the director of faculty engagement at Auburn University. Those in attendance were then further inspired by the “groovy” performance of Jaehn (pronounced Jane) Clare, as she related her personal journey after experiencing a life-altering injury. Entertainment continued to overlap with inspiration as Seth Cason, a junior from Boaz High School, introduced keynote speaker, humorist Jody Fuller. Jody related his experiences of growing up in poverty and his life-long struggle with stuttering, through his uniquely hilarious and relatable stories.

The conference then transitioned into two days of learning through 44 concurrent sessions and five workshops. After a long day of presentations, Monday evening brought the networking event through which transition stakeholders from across the state and beyond could casually talk with one another in a more relaxed environment. During this event, 10 exhibitors shared disability-related resources, products, and services; alongside 12 high school, undergraduate, and/or graduate students presenting transition-related posters for the annual poster session competition.

Tuesday morning, sessions continued before wrapping up with a statewide transition update from Dr. Bill East, Executive Director of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, and Stephen Wooderson, Chief Executive Officer of the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation, both introduced by Auburn High School senior, D’Vonte Morris. Finally, a closing session welcomed Jody Fuller back onstage for an encore of his opening session performance.

We are now on to the 27th Alabama Transition Conference…

“As a parent it was very helpful to interact with different areas of professionals. Thankful to have been at the Transition Conference for the first time.”

– Rhonda Davis, Parent/Volunteer with Autism Society of Alabama
Outreach (continued)

Projects and Activities in Service to the Transition Community

MARCH IS TRANSITION AWARENESS MONTH IN ALABAMA

The Alabama Transition Conference is one way in which we celebrate transition in Alabama. Also, during this time students in transition are invited to visit the governor’s office and attend the proclamation signing ceremony, proclaiming March as Transition Awareness Month in Alabama. For the past 17 years, Alabama governors have supported this initiative by “urging all residents—leaders in government, business, labor, education, rehabilitation, and the private citizenry—to work together to meet the challenges of ensuring employment and full community inclusion for young people with disabilities who exit our schools.”

This year, three students in transition (Seth Cason, Keara Harris, and D’Vonte Morris) from Auburn and Boaz high schools attended the ceremony, alongside state leaders from Alabama’s Department of Rehabilitation Services, Auburn University, and Boaz City Schools.

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS IN TRANSITION

Eight youth and/or young adults in transition helped celebrate 26 years of the Alabama Transition Conference. These young people showcased their leadership abilities by not only attending the conference, but rather by taking on active program roles. For example, Seth Cason, a senior from Boaz High School introduced the keynote speaker and met a member of his favorite football team, Deon Mix, offensive lineman for the Auburn Tigers; Keara Harris, a junior from Auburn High School graced the conference attendees with two solo selections during the opening ceremonies; D’Vonte Morris, a senior also from Auburn High School introduced the Transition Update panel members, which included national leaders in transition; and Jacob Marquart, a junior from Troup County High School in LaGrange, Georgia presented and won the student division of the poster session competition; and three young ladies with disabilities, Jamaica Cooper, Marlena Watson, and Trinity Harris from the University of Alabama, “who never would have thought” they would have an opportunity to go to college, shared their experiences in transition by presenting a concurrent session during the conference. NECESSARY TO SAY, PARTICIPANTS WERE IMPRESSED WITH THESE YOUNG PEOPLE!
Outreach (continued)
Projects and Activities in Service to the Transition Community

INTERAGENCY TRANSITION INITIATIVE • STATE INTERAGENCY TRANSITION TEAM

What is SITT? Alabama’s State Interagency Transition Team (SITT) promotes interagency collaboration throughout the state, by focusing on building capacity for the delivery of transition services to youth with disabilities.

In the last few years, membership has grown and become more active; a steering committee developed a vision and mission statement and long range goals; and the team has become a solid resource and advocate for programs, services, and stakeholders across the state. SITT was first formed in 1983 as the State Transition Taskforce, and from 2009 - 2016 ATLI coordinated the team.

Who is involved? Alabama’s SITT is a multidisciplinary group of approximately 36 representatives from at least 19 state agencies and/or organizations providing services for youth and young adults with disabilities. The purpose of this team is to develop a better understanding of each agency or organization’s role and responsibilities in service delivery for Alabama’s youth and young adults with disabilities, and to seek and implement new and better ways of providing secondary special education and transition services.

Purpose. SITT’s objectives serve to:

1. provide structure and support to maximize youth and young adults’ skills, knowledge, and experiences of transition;
2. the provide the necessary structure and support to maximize transition stakeholders’ knowledge of the transition process;
3. strengthen SITT to promote interagency collaboration throughout the state; and
4. develop a cross-agency process of data sharing and analysis to improve outcomes for youth and young adults with disabilities.

Levels of Collaboration and Technical Assistance (TA). The primary role of SITT is to provide TA and disseminate information to local transition stakeholders throughout Alabama. In order to fulfill its purpose, SITT convenes quarterly and provides technical assistance to transition stakeholders who serve students and youth with disabilities in Alabama. SITT accomplishes its aim of increasing collaboration throughout the state, through the development of Alabama’s local Transition Leadership Academy teams. Each year, SITT members serve as content consultants during the Academies, sharing their knowledge and resources.

2015 - 2016 Alabama Transition Services State Capacity Building Plan. Each year, SITT members from the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS), and ATLI participate in the annual Capacity Building Institute in North Carolina hosted by the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition. At this national meeting, Alabama joins other state teams to develop, revise, and/or update its annual state transition plan. This plan is then shared on SITT’s website, hosted by ATLI. Throughout the year, SITT members work to achieve the objectives of the plan according to their respective roles. The plan is reviewed and progress is monitored throughout the year at quarterly SITT meetings.

During fiscal year 2016, the team met on December 7, 2015; March 21; June 13; and August 30, 2016. The SITT website has been available from 2009 - 2016 at auburn.edu/atli. Overall, Alabama’s SITT promotes and assists in the development, coordination, and implementation of activities and services which enhance and facilitate community capacity to support effective transition from school to meaningful adult life for youth and young adults with disabilities.
Outreach (continued)
Projects and Activities in Service to the Transition Community

INTERAGENCY TRANSITION INITIATIVE • TRANSITION LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The Transition Leadership Academy (the Academy) was developed as a means to build and strengthen transition programs and services across the state of Alabama at the local level. The Academy involves a multi-step evaluation and planning process carried out by local transition teams, consisting of three to five multidisciplinary transition stakeholders, which can include, special educators, rehabilitation professionals, job coaches, transition coordinators, 504 coordinators, career technical educators, mental health service providers, administrators, students in transition, and/or parents. Overall, the Academy offers assistance and guidance to transition practitioners and administrators as they set goals and develop plans to improve outcomes for students with disabilities in their local area. The purpose of the Academy is to build capacity within local communities in order to deliver quality transition programs and services for students with disabilities. The ultimate goal of the Academy is to improve transition services, as measured by implementing local transition plans focused on improving federal indicators. The Academy focuses on five specific federal indicators: Indicators 1, 2, 8, 13, and 14.

During the Academy, teams reflect on a collective view of their current transition program and service delivery. They use state and local data (e.g., Alabama Parent Survey Report data, Alabama Post-school Outcomes Survey Report data, Special Education Performance Profile) to actively prioritize areas of strengths and those that may need improving.

The structure of the Academy alternates between large group meetings, content roundabouts, and facilitated team planning meetings, as well as opportunities for sharing and collaborating with other teams throughout the state.

For fiscal year 2016, eight teams registered for each Academy with 28 individuals attending Academy I and 30 individuals attending Academy II, totaling 58 transition professionals of approximately four diverse members per team. Together, they represented the following transition roles: special education teacher \((n = 32)\), special education coordinator \((n = 10)\), job coach \((n = 4)\), transition coordinator \((n = 3)\), rehabilitation counselor \((n = 3)\), rehabilitation unit supervisor \((n = 1)\), guidance counselor \((n = 1)\), parent \((n = 1)\), and other \((n = 3)\) for the following cities or counties: Albertville City, Athens City, Clarke County, DeKalb County, Hartselle City, Henry County, Lowndes County, Marengo County, Monroe County, Opelika City, Pell City, Russellville City, Troy City, Tuscaloosa City, and Vestavia Hills City. Chilton County registered but did not attend.

Eight consultants representing Alabama’s SITT provided technical assistance to the teams during the Academy. ATLI staff members and Auburn University’s Collaborative Approach to Training Transition Specialists scholars facilitated the local transition planning teams in developing their local plans. Each of the teams attending the Academy completed transition plans for their local areas. Prior to the close of each Academy, the ATLI staff members reviewed each team’s local plan and provided feedback.

Continuing Education Opportunities. Team members were eligible for one professional learning unit (PLU), 19 continuing education units (CEUs), or 13 certified rehabilitation counselor (CRC) credits in general content hours and two professional development hours.

Effectiveness. Overall, 100% of the respondents who completed the evaluation reported a positive change as a result of participating in the Academy. More specifically, moderate change or much change was reported at 96% or higher in each of the possible change areas evaluated (i.e., knowledge, 98%; behavior, 96%; attitude, 96%; motivation, 100%).
Outreach (continued)
Projects and Activities in Service to the Transition Community

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT • TRAINING IN TRANSITION “TNT” SERIES

The Training in Transition (TNT) Series is a sequence of modules providing professional development for service providers and personal development for young people with disabilities and their families, since 2007. Beginning in 2009, the TNT series offers interactive web-based modules and training effectiveness evaluations. During fiscal year 2016, a total of 3,269 online training experiences by transition stakeholders have been recorded through the TNT series. The series was made available at the ATLI’s website. The TNT series website allowed interested users to register by selecting one of the four user options: (1) youth in transition; (2) professional; (3) professional with a class; or (4) parent.

More specifically, the TNT series afforded eligible registrants the opportunity to earn continuing education units (CEUs). Certificates of completion and/or CEUs are awarded for completion of each module. All modules except the student-focused module qualify trainees to earn 0.2 CEUs from Auburn University’s Outreach Office of Public Service. In addition, all module participants reported 84% moderate to much increase in knowledge as a result of the trainings during fiscal year 2016.

The training curricula for modules are designed to accommodate the transition stakeholders’ needs, as determined from student outcomes data, classroom monitoring records, practitioner needs assessments, and transition best practices. These training modules cover topics such as the foundations of transition, using assessments for planning, student development, transition standards and the individualized education program, interagency collaboration, and family involvement.

The 10 modules available during fiscal year 2016 met a range of stakeholders’ training needs according to content and background of experiences. Module I: Foundations of Transition (n = 679) expands upon definitions, transition-related legislation governing public education, models of transition, and recommended practices for transition. Module II: Foundations of Transition Assessment (n = 283) includes case studies, assessment types, and examples of transition planning. The My Plan for Transition lessons focused on student development and student-focused planning. These lessons include, Lesson 1, the student-focused version and Lesson 2, professionals’ version. Module III, Lesson 1 (n = 258) showcases student-led training that includes activities for developing self-determination skills. Module III, Lesson 2 (n = 257) addresses student development and student-focused planning with teacher-led training that includes recommended practices for student development and disability awareness. Module IV, Lesson 1: Introduction to Alabama’s Transition Standards and the Individualized Education Program (IEP) (n = 335) provides an introduction to the development and use of Alabama’s Transition Standards as well as an overview of components of Alabama’s IEP as it relates to transition. Module IV, Lesson 2: Using Assessment for Transition Planning (n = 324) discusses how to use assessments to assist in determining students’ postsecondary transition goals in related areas as such as education, training, employment, and independent living skills. Module IV, Lesson 3: Writing Measurable IEP Goals (n = 375) provides guidance on writing measurable IEP goals, addressing students’ transition needs, and focusing on student development for positive post-school outcomes. Module V, Lesson 1: Foundations of Interagency Collaboration (n = 250) presents an overview and identification of transition-related service providers’ roles and community resources, recommended interagency collaboration practices, definitions, legislation, and an introduction to transition-related agencies and organizations, as well as the levels of interagency collaboration. Module V, Lesson 2: Alabama’s Interagency Transition Initiatives (n = 226) provides an overview of Alabama’s interagency initiatives to improve transition services. Module VI, Lesson 1: Welcome to Transition! (n = 282) addresses the need to continuously engage and increase transition awareness in parents of students with disabilities in Alabama.
Outreach (continued)
Projects and Activities in Service to the Transition Community

DIRECTIONS NEWSLETTER

DIRECTIONS is a bi-annual newsletter designed to highlight stories regarding students with disabilities and their transition process. It also serves as an avenue to meet transition stakeholders and learn about new programs designed to assist in-service and pre-service professionals in improving transition in the state of Alabama. Directions is distributed to the individuals highlighted, local high schools, transition-related agency offices, conferences, and Auburn University’s College of Education offices and Office of Accessibility. The newsletter is accessible to online viewers on ATLI’s website.

Each issue of the newsletter affords ATLI graduate students the opportunity to assume the role of guest editor. The following list comprises the publication schedule and features the two 2016 issues of Directions.

**Volume 7, Issue 1** features Seth Cason, a high school student preparing to transition to a community college, and his teachers Michelle Walker and Matthew Pendergrass; Dr. Margaret Jones, an Executive Director of Learning Supports; D’Vonte Morris with Auburn University student and football player Deon Mix, a high school student working and volunteering at a variety of settings; Keara Harris, a high school student preparing to transition to college to study theater or animation; and two Transition Leadership Academy teams, highlighting their experiences. **Guest editors: Kat Cler and Leah Kartovicky**

**Volume 7, Issue 2** features the Abilities Unlimited Camp, partnering with ATLI; a celebration of two ATLI staff members, George Hall, retiring after 15 years of service and Chad Evans, joining ATLI’s team as the research coordinator; Dr. Cari Dunn, a Humana-Germany-Sherman Distinguished Professor; and Theresa Chan, a former ATLI graduate assistant and doctoral candidate. **Guest editors: Kat Cler, Jessica Harris, Leah Kartovicky, Betty Schiffer, and Diana Simpson**
Outreach (continued)
Projects and Activities in Service to the Transition Community

COMMUNITY-BASED INSTRUCTION

This year, ATLI partnered with Auburn High School to implement community-based instruction (CBI) to eight high school students. ATLI staff and graduate associates provided vocational instruction to high school students, ages 16-21, in order to teach the students a variety of transferable, clerical skills such as: sorting office supplies, shredding, counting materials, preparing folders for outreach events, typing in the Microsoft Office Suite, appropriately clocking in and out of the simulated vocational experience, and making buttons for the Transition Conference. These students not only benefited from learning these office skills, but also, the students were training in an active office amongst their peers, in a real life work environment, while also developing appropriate job-related social skills. As students became comfortable in the work environment, many went directly to their work station and began working on their own or with little prompting. All students productivity was monitored independently (e.g., data collection sheet tallying the quantity of their work) as well as by staff, then displayed in the office. As the semester progressed, all students productivity increased on the tasks that they completed.
Outreach (continued)
Projects and Activities in Service to the Transition Community

ABILITIES UNLIMITED CAMP • IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SCHOOL OF KINESIOLOGY

The Auburn Transition Leadership Institute and the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling were in partnership with the School of Kinesiology to host the Abilities Unlimited Camp. During the summer of 2016, Abilities Unlimited was a 3-week summer camp for children and youth with and without developmental disabilities ranging from 5-22 years of age. The camp was hosted Monday through Friday, from 8:30 am until 3:00 pm, with an aftercare program from 3:00 to 5:00 pm. The camp incorporated bicycle training, swimming lessons, and an adapted physical activity/recreation curriculum. Additionally, academic and transition activities were included as part of the daily curriculum.

The goal of the camp was to build motor competence and confidence as well as social, cognitive, and life skills in those with disabilities. ATLI was tasked with incorporating transition activities into the daily curriculum for the campers. While all campers had the opportunity to participate in bike riding, swimming, academics, and fine motor activities, campers, ages 13-22, had a specially designed transition program incorporated into their daily routine.

Graduate assistants at ATLI developed and implemented lessons tailored toward students’ most significant areas of need (e.g., goal-setting, hygiene, social skills, and job preparation activities). Lessons were created to address areas of need, while also incorporating fun activities. The focus of these lessons was to promote self-determination and self-advocacy skills. The students also gained skills to assist them in obtaining a job after high school. Additionally, camp participants engaged in recreation and leisure activities such as learning about gardening, exercising, and dance.

ATLI’s participation in the Abilities Unlimited Camp not only impacted students with disabilities, but also influenced young professionals in the field of special education and kinesiology as to how teaching transition skills can be embedded in multiple aspects of a student’s day. One camp counselor, Haley Chambliss, observed that the transition lessons implemented required students to identify their strengths and weaknesses, which helped teach the concept of goal-setting.

“This summer has been a huge learning experience for all involved.”

– Haley Chambliss, Camp Counselor
Outreach (continued)
Projects and Activities in Service to the Transition Community

Outreach Goal 1

PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENT FOR ALL TRANSITION STAKEHOLDERS

The 2016 Alabama Transition Conference (ATC) drew 711 total participants, with 643 being registered attendees and 68 university volunteers.

A multidisciplinary group of transition stakeholders were well represented. The conference hosted stakeholders from 93% of Alabama counties and 106 of the 137 local education agencies in Alabama.

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"As a parent, it was very helpful to interact with different areas of professionals. Thankful to have been at the Transition Conference for the first time."

– Anonymous participant’s comment from the 2016 conference evaluations

TRANSITION...SEEKING THE WAY!

CELEBRATING 26 YEARS

“I enjoy the style of the presenters. They were approachable, positive, and passionate about their topics. The conference drove home the points of how important transition is to the students of Alabama.”

– Regina Hill-Sankey, Education Specialist

Outreach Goal 2

PROVIDE RESOURCES TO PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS TO IMPROVE THEIR TRANSITION PROGRAMS: INSERVICE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As of September 30, 2016, a total of 3,269 online training experiences have been recorded through the Training iN Transition series. Ten modules were available and met a range of stakeholders’ training needs according to content and background of experiences.

These training modules cover topics such as the foundations of transition, using assessments for planning, student development, transition standards and the individualized education program, interagency collaboration, and family involvement.
Outreach (continued)
Projects and Activities in Service to the Transition Community

Achievements for Outreach Goal 1

Goal 1a: 650 participants

Actual: 711 participants

Goal 1b: 80% of Alabama counties represented at ATC

Actual: 93% of AL counties represented (62 of 67)

Goal 1c: 75% of AL LEAs represented at conference

Actual: 77% of LEAs represented (106 of 137)

“I absolutely love this conference! It’s one of the few conferences that is specified to the population I serve. I learn so much from the presenters, trainers, and other professionals that work with transition-aged-youth. They are really passionate about what they do.”

– Tomekia Danne-Wilson, VR Counselor

“I have been to many of your transition conferences over the years, however, I think this was the best of them all. I love the move back to the Auburn Hotel. Very nice. I liked getting out for lunch and getting to visit shops in the neighborhood. Very well presented. Thank you for providing this for teachers in Alabama.”

– Anonymous participant’s comment from the 2016 conference evaluations

Achievements for Outreach Goal 2

Goal 2a: 500 online experiences

Actual: 3,269 online experiences

Goal 2b: 0 onsite trainees

Actual: 0 onsite trainees

Goal 2c: 84% report moderate to much increase in knowledge

Actual: 80% reported moderate to much increase in knowledge
Outreach (continued)
Projects and Activities in Service to the Transition Community

Outreach Goal 3

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS IN TRANSITION

Three events were coordinated and/or co-hosted by ATLI to serve youth and young adults in transition: (1) a summer camp, (2) community-based instruction (CBI) work experiences, and (3) participation in Governor Bentley’s Proclamation Signing Ceremony.

Twelve young adults with disabilities attended the transition portion of the Abilities Unlimited Camp; nine local high school students with disabilities engaged in vocational experiences at ATLI; and three students with disabilities attended the Governor’s Proclamation Signing Ceremony. Additionally, ATLI hosted eight youth and/or young adults at the 2016 Alabama Transition Conference.

Outreach Goal 4

INTERAGENCY DIALOGUE AND LEADERSHIP ON LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL LEVELS

The 2016 Transition Leadership Academy drew 15 teams with 58 participants to set goals and objectives for their local transition programs.

ATLI coordinated all four meetings for Alabama’s State Interagency Transition Team. ATLI’s director, Dr. Karen Rabren continues to serve on the editorial boards for the Journal of Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals, and the Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation. ATLI’s assistant director, Dr. Courtney Dotson continues to serve as a member and on the editorial board for the Journal of Physical Medicine, Rehabilitation, & Disabilities.

Outreach Goal 5

PROMOTE TRANSITION AWARENESS IN LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL COMMUNITIES

During fiscal year 2016, ATLI published two issues of Directions—its transition awareness newsletter, and Governor Robert Bentley signed the proclamation for March as Transition Awareness Month in Alabama while transition stakeholders looked on including: youth with disabilities from high schools across Alabama, along with transition leaders from Auburn University, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, and Boaz City Schools.
Outreach (continued)
Projects and Activities in Service to the Transition Community

Achievements for Outreach Goal 3

Goal 3a: 2 events will be coordinated for youth in transition
**Actual: 3 events were coordinated**
Goal 3b: 20 youth/young adults in transition will participate in direct services/opportunities
**Actual: 23 youth/young adults in transition participated in conference**
Goal 3c: 7 high school students will be provided community-based instruction
**Actual: 9 high school students were provided CBI**
Goal 3b was adjusted from a goal of 40 to 20 due to limited resources.

Achievements for Outreach Goal 4

Goal 4a: 34 local transition planning teams invited to receive interagency transition planning support
**Actual: 36 local transition planning teams were invited, 15 teams received interagency transition planning support**
Goal 4b: 4 quarterly meetings will be coordinated annually for SITT
**Actual: 4 meetings were coordinated**
Goal 4c: 1 national leadership position
**Actual: 3 national leadership positions held in 2015-2016**

Achievements for Outreach Goal 5

Goal 5a: 2 issues of an ATLI newsletter will be published
**Actual: 2 issues were published and disseminated locally and statewide**
Goal 5b: 1 statewide proclamation on transition will be issued
**Actual: 1 statewide proclamation was issued**
Goal 5c: 1 presentation at a national conference or meeting
**Actual: 0 presentations at a national event**
PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS


FUNDING AND EXPENDITURES

The Institute’s contractual responsibilities for the Alabama State Department of Education were continued during fiscal year 2016, as was funding from Auburn University, College of Education. As shown in Figure 1, these two sources comprised the majority of ATLI’s funding.

In addition, ATLI received two contracts from the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services ($20,000) and the Alabama State Department of Education ($20,000) to support training at the 2016 Alabama Transition Conference. As seen in the figures below, the major Institute expenditure for fiscal year 2016 is for personnel, including part-time employees from the university’s Temporary Employment Services (TES), with operating expenses and indirect costs comprising the remainder.

Figure 1. Fiscal Year 2016 ATLI Funding Sources

Figure 2. Fiscal Year 2016 ATLI Expenditures
Auburn Transition Leadership Institute
Annual Goals
2016 - 2017

INSTRUCTION
I-Goal 1: Provide experiences in instruction, research, and service delivery to Auburn University students
I-Goal 2: Integrate ATLI research into publications and presentations
I-Goal 3: Provide university students with pre-service experiences using research-based methods

RESEARCH
R-Goal 1: Involve local, state, and national transition stakeholders with designing, developing, and/or conducting of research
R-Goal 2: Share transition research results with local, state, and federal agencies
R-Goal 3: Disseminate transition research findings at state, national, and international forums

OUTREACH
O-Goal 1: Engage transition stakeholders in professional or personal development
O-Goal 2: Provide resources to public school systems to improve their transition programs
O-Goal 3: Provide personal development opportunities for youth and young adults in transition
O-Goal 4: Engage in interagency dialogue and leadership on local, state and national levels
O-Goal 5: Promote transition awareness in local, state and national communities