

FY2017

Rural Institute

For Inclusive Communities

DRIVING CHANGE CHANGING LIVES



RESEARCH

Research that Impacts Rural Americans with Disabilities



RTC:Rural connects research to practice and policy by identifying concerns faced by people with disabilities and developing evidence-based solutions. Our research addresses health, employment, and independent living issues to uncover personal and environmental factors that influence quality of life. We conduct our research with disability stakeholders who help us understand and apply our findings in their communities.

- **Geography of Rural Disability** analyses lay the groundwork for health, employment, and community living research. The **Disability Counts Data Finder** enables users to view and download data on disability rates of any U.S. county.
- **Employment** research focuses on rural barriers such as limited economic opportunity and access to services for people with disabilities. We develop and test employment and service delivery options such as the **Telecom Toolbox**, a website for Vocational Rehabilitation specialists and job seekers that offers online job search tools.

DRIVING CHANGE

- Rural people face unique **Health and Wellness** challenges. We work to identify and address these barriers. Our **Living and Working Well with a Disability** programs are evidence-based, peer-led health promotion workshops provided by organizations that serve people with disabilities.
- **Rural Community Living** research focuses on how the accessibility of rural environments affects community participation and quality of life. The **Rural Disability Resource Library** offers online resources for people with disabilities who live in rural areas, including the **Advocacy Skill Building Toolkit** to facilitate youth advocacy skills.



EDUCATION

Building the Future

In FY2017, we educated 44 student trainees, helping prepare them to be disability leaders in their rural communities.

Katie Barcus-Kuka from the Blackfeet tribe in Browning, Montana is taking online and summer-resident classes to become a certified speech-language pathologist. After completing her degree in 2019 she plans to, "work as a speech language pathologist in my reservation community, helping to provide a much-needed service for the children of my tribe."



Kaitlyn Ahlers, one of three Utah Regional LEND trainees, completed her second year of training with an emphasis in Autism Spectrum Disorders. Kaitlyn's hard work lays the groundwork for a career working with children with autism and their families.

An undergraduate in the Human and Family Development Minor program, Kassie Gahagan, said, "The practicum has helped me to gain valuable real-life experience.... My experience working with children...led to a job as a summer camp counselor."

CHANGING LIVES

SERVICE

Helping People Achieve Independence and Self-Support

Tom Koontz Jr. was a long-haul trucker until an atypical stroke ended his career and left him with a vocabulary of seven words. MonTECH loaned Tom an iPad Pro with communication and therapy apps, and then taught him how to use it. Tom has since received a grant for his own iPad which helps him run his new business. MonTECH helped Tom get back on track so that he can be the independent, self-supporting man he was before the stroke.



MonTECH
Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities

MonTECH loans assistive technology and adaptive equipment to any Montanan with a disability. Last year, MonTECH loaned 846 assistive technology devices, gave 517 technology demonstrations, and trained 1,325 Montanans to use assistive technology.

A Year in Review



\$7,786,071

Rural Institute FY2017 budget



18 Funding proposals submitted worth \$10M



43 Programs & Projects
•15 Service and Support projects
•28 Research and Evaluation projects



44 Trainees representing 20 disciplines



36 Representations on local, state and national committees, councils and boards



36 Reports and Monographs



200 Training activities that served 5,921 participants



37 Conference presentations and posters



20 Peer-reviewed articles submitted to scholarly journals for publication

Visit us:

Rural Institute
For Inclusive Communities

RuralInstitute.umt.edu



RTC.RuralInstitute.umt.edu

MonTECH
Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities

Montech.RuralInstitute.umt.edu



RTC.RuralInstitute.umt.edu/geography



TelecomToolbox.ri.umt.edu



HealthyCommunityLiving.com

DRIVING CHANGE: Research

Healthy Community Living

Independent living skills and multimedia health promotion

Achieving Success by Promoting Readiness for Education and Employment (ASPIRE)

Evaluation of comprehensive independent living and employment support

Living Well / Working Well with a Disability

Peer-led health and wellness training and support

Concerns Report: A Family-Centered Approach to Services

Family and provider survey on children's health services

Effort Capacity and Choice: Investigating a Dynamic Model of Participation

Investigates link between personal exertion and impact on choices

School Climate Transformation: MBI in High Need Areas

Evaluation of PBIS in high-need schools

Factors in Unintended Pregnancy in Women with Disabilities

Improving the health of pregnant women with disabilities

SAFETY Project

Self-advocacy training to prevent interpersonal violence

Texas Model Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Systems

Evaluating ways to improve the health of people with SCI

eHealth Group Weight Management Intervention for People with SCI

Improving the health of people with SCI

Pain, Depression, and Resilience and their Prediction of Life Satisfaction in People with SCI

Identifies impact on life satisfaction

**Rural
Institute**
For Inclusive Communities

Our community-based research leads to effective, evidence-based service and education initiatives that address issues faced by rural people with disabilities.

CHANGING LIVES: Service/Education

Healthy Communities for People with Disabilities

Supporting accessible community initiatives

Rural Institute

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Montana Disability and Health Program

Policy and practice initiatives to promote health and wellbeing

Pre-Employment Transition Services

Technical Assistance Center

Training and assistance to schools and employment providers

MonTECH: Montana's Assistive Technology Program

Technology for independence across the lifespan

Wheels Across Montana

Free access to adaptive trikes

Children's Special Health Services: Montana Transition Resources

Transition-to-adulthood resources for youth, families, and providers

National Disability Navigator Resource

Collaborative (NDNRC)

Resources to ensure accurate ACA Marketplace information

Montana Early Diagnosis

Developmental milestone resources for families and providers

Movin' On in Montana

College experience for high school students with disabilities

Deaf-Blind Project

Assistance to students, families and schools

pepnet 2.0

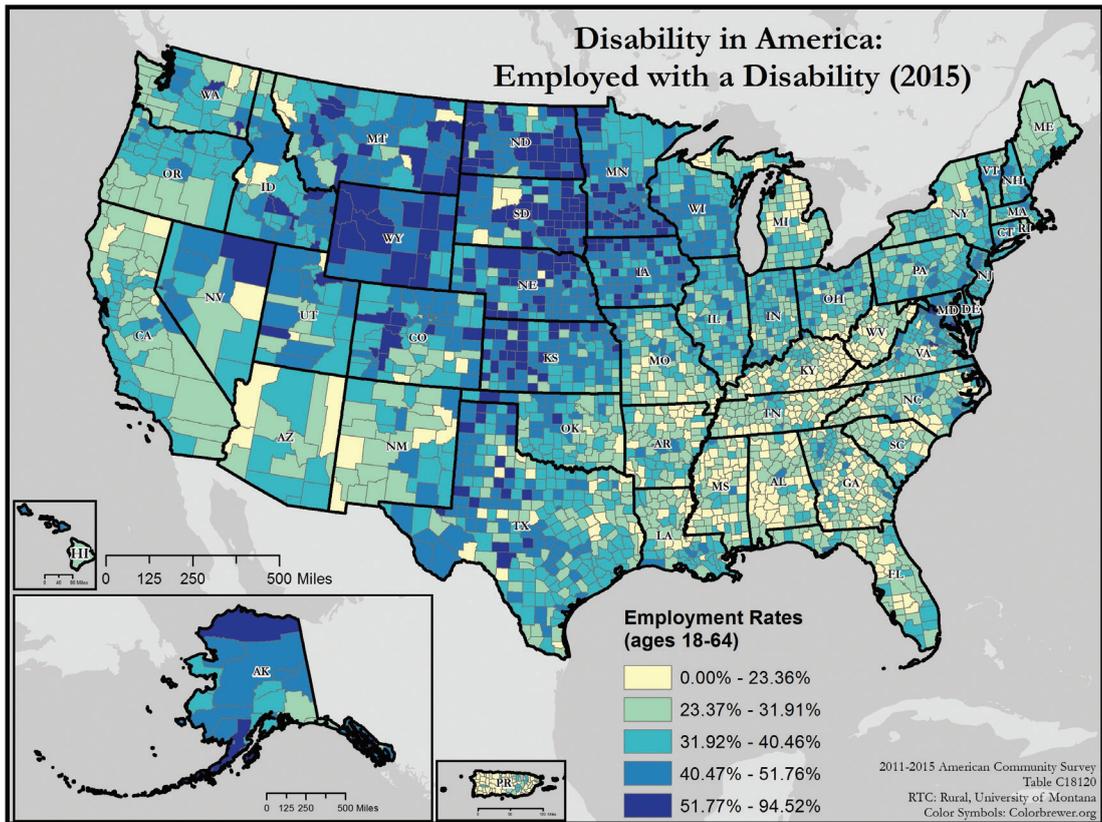
Post-secondary training and resources to serve students who are deaf / hard of hearing

UR-LEND

Leadership Education in family-centered healthcare training

UM OUTREACH

Training speech language pathologists in rural and tribal communities



<http://rtc.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/research-findings/geography/maps-disability-employment>

From the RTC:Rural Disability in America Map Series

RTC:Rural's widely disseminated Disability in America map series illustrates the diversity of rural communities. Developed from RTC:Rural research, these maps allow others to explore and inquire about regional differences, such as employment rates for people with disabilities. Variations in employment are not fully explained by health, education, and economic factors. Consequently, RTC:Rural is identifying factors such as government contracts and access to health and independent living services as elements that influence employment outcomes of people with disabilities.

Follow us on the Following Facebook Pages:

Rural Institute
RTC: Rural Institute
MonTECH
Healthy Community Living
Transition and Employment

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RuralInstitute.org





The Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities is committed to understanding and addressing the unique challenges of living with disability in rural communities. We partner with individuals with disabilities, families, service providers and organizations to develop approaches and promising practices based on clear evidence.

2017 was our largest growth year in over a decade! With nearly \$8 million in external revenue, we trained 6,000 people across the U.S. Through our many projects and programs, we worked with early childhood providers to identify developmental milestones. We developed home modification strategies so people can remain in their homes rather than move into nursing facilities. We investigated the relationships between pain, depression, and life satisfaction of people with spinal cord injury. We helped educators provide effective services to children who are deaf and blind. And, we continue to focus on answering important questions about what works in rural communities so we can identify and develop effective programs and services.

This next year marks our 40th anniversary. We look forward to celebrating our successes and focusing our attention on the future. We invite you to visit our website to learn more about our many research, service and education initiatives. Join us on social media! We appreciate your interest in our efforts and welcome your comments.

Best wishes,
Martin E. Blair, PhD
Executive Director