

# Supporting neurodivergent students during post-secondary transition



**UCONN**

CENTER FOR  
NEURODIVERSITY AND  
EMPLOYMENT INNOVATION

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**Director**

## Who is here?

- Families
- Neurodivergent individuals
- Educators
- Practitioners
- Employers
- Other

## What are your concerns and needs? (about the employment journey)

Please share!

- Career pathways?
- Employers who understand neurodiversity?
- Post-secondary upskilling?

# The #1 way we succeed: More employers who are educated (and make changes!)

Barriers to successful employment exist all along the path for ND individuals:

## FIND OPPORTUNITIES

Finding **employers**  
**who understand** and  
value neurodiversity

## GET AND SUCCEED IN THE INTERVIEW

Screening criteria  
and interviews  
**based on**  
**neurotypical**  
**norms**

## KEEP THE JOB (AND ADVANCE)

Lack of manager and  
firm-wide  
**education** about  
neurodiversity



# About UConn's Center.

UConn Center for Neurodiversity & Employment Innovation (CNDEI).



## Mission:

To **exponentially grow the number of employers** that offer meaningful career opportunities for bright, neurodivergent individuals nationwide.

# 3 areas UConn's CNDEI focuses on:

Create more neuro-inclusive **companies** nationwide

Connect more ND **candidates** with those companies

**Research** – how do neurodiversity initiatives positively impact organizations?  
(i.e., why they should invest in neurodiversity!)

# Neurodiversity: a **natural variation** in the way people think, learn, communicate, and behave.

## **Common labels:**

autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Tourette Syndrome, Non-Verbal Learning Disability, Sensory Processing Disorder, and others.

Neurodivergence is when that variation in thinking, communicating, and behaving falls **outside** of what is typical.

Up to **20%**

How do we teach companies about neurodiversity (so that they make real changes)?

**We needed a model.**

**Wells Fargo's Neurodiversity Program**



# The Power of Partnership: Employer Education



Wells Fargo developed  
**the model of excellence**  
in neuro-inclusive  
employment



UConn creates training  
and **employer education**  
**informed by the Wells**  
**Fargo model**

(for Wells Fargo + other companies)



# Hear from neurodivergent individuals about what good looks like:



# What makes a model of **excellence**?

## HOW THEY SOURCE

### Local Community Sourcing Model

Universities  
Non-Profits  
State Organizations

## HOW THEY INTERVIEW

### Skills-based Hiring Event

They don't even use  
the word "interview"!

## HOW THEY SUPPORT & RETAIN

### Suite of Support & Education

Facilitated Onboarding  
Coaches  
Manager Training  
Buddy Program  
Education for firm



# Make Hawaii a state of neuro-inclusive employer excellence.

Academic-Corporate partnership delivers  
Direct Instruction to coalitions of Hawaii employers to:

**Design Neurodiversity Employment Initiatives**

Delivered by:



# What do employers **need to learn** to become neuroinclusive?

- Module 1:** Identify who you need on your internal team to launch this effort
- Module 2:** Choose where to start: roles, job descriptions, and manager selection
- Module 3:** Build your innovative screening, interviewing, and onboarding processes
- Module 4:** Know how to find and connect with ND candidates
- Module 5:** Plan out the necessary components of post-hire support
- Module 6:** Clarify the education and training needs for your organization.
- Module 7:** Project Timeline and the next 12 months

# What else can we all do?

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Join UConn's efforts with the candidate network and University Council!

**Candidate  
Network!**

**University Council!**

## **Benefits:**

Jobs and internships (the goal is local)  
Companies committing to education and training  
Workshops, education, resources

# Questions / Discussion

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# Reach out to us:

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