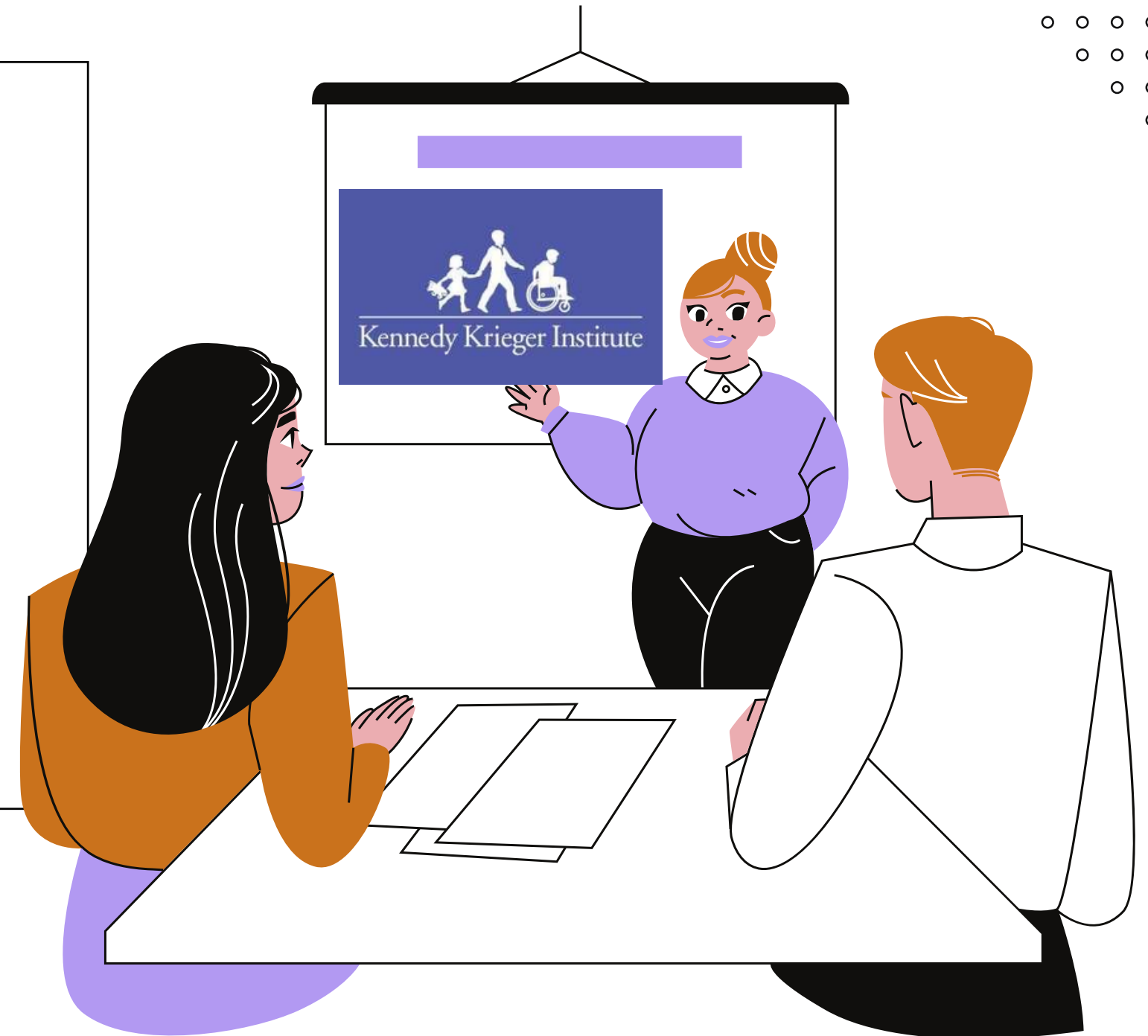


Intern Presentation

Rokhaya Kane

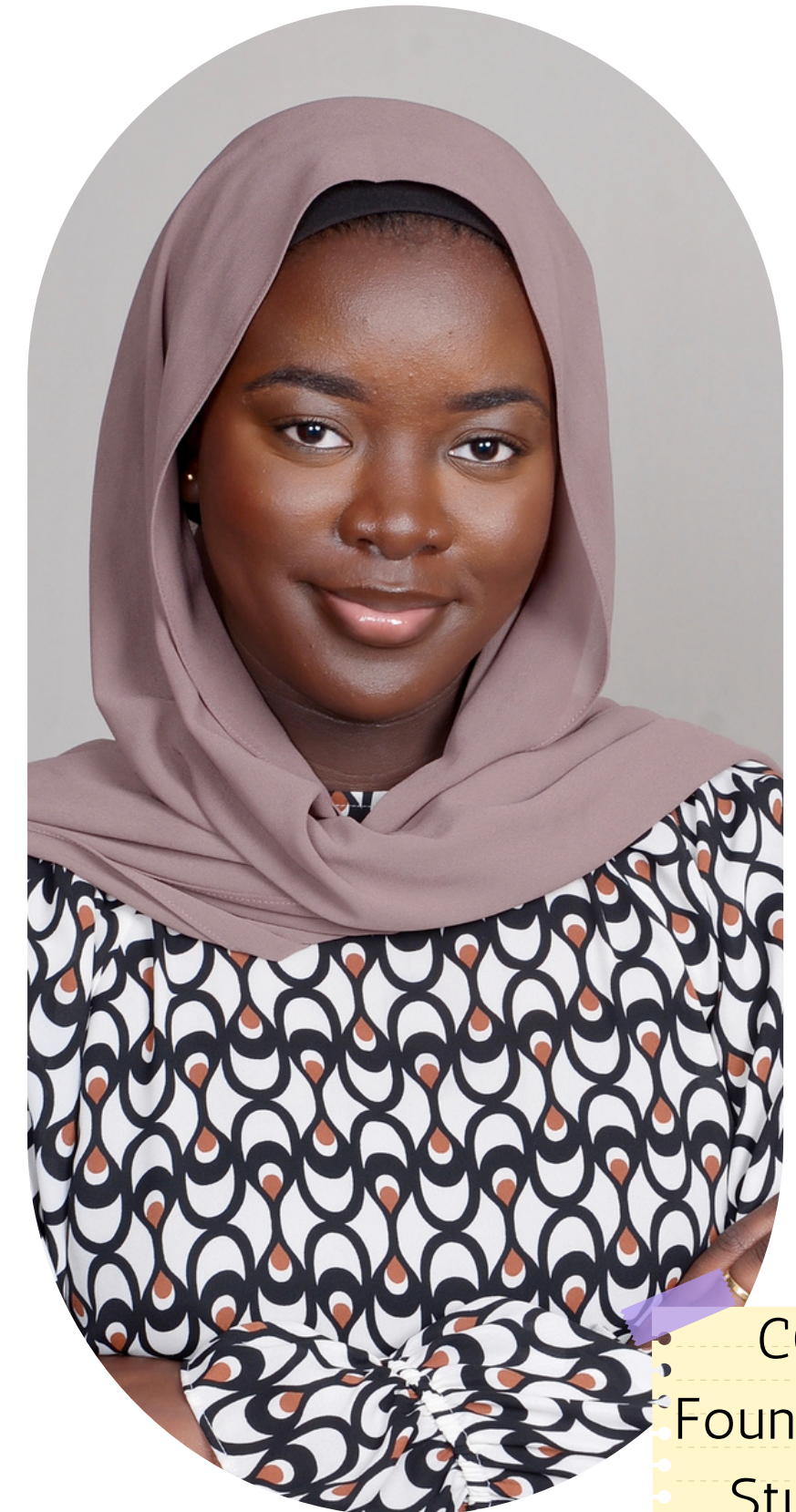




Introduction

Hi, my name is Rokhaya Kane. I am a senior at The University of Maryland Baltimore County. I will be graduating this semester with a Bachelors of Arts in Public Health and Biological Sciences. Upon graduation, I will be attending the Gillings School of Global Public Health at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill where I will be pursuing a Master's of Public Health with a concentration in Global Health.

Fun Fact: I am an international student from Dakar, Senegal.



CORE
Foundations
Student
Trainee



Neurodiversity at Work Responsibilities

1

Provided in-person services at the Spinal Cord Center on Mondays and Wednesdays

2

Attended and led the virtual CDS sessions on Thursdays and Fridays

3

Filled out service notes weekly for community members in the virtual and in-person sessions

4

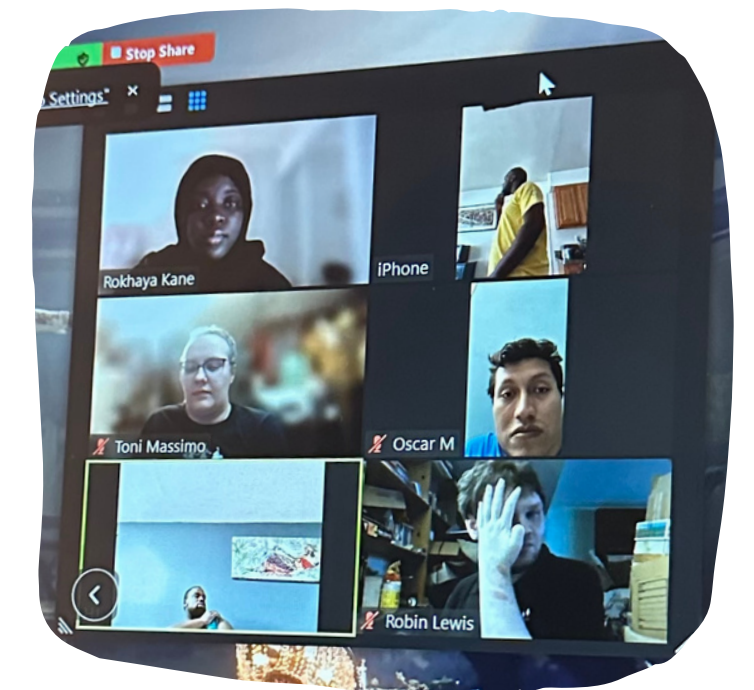
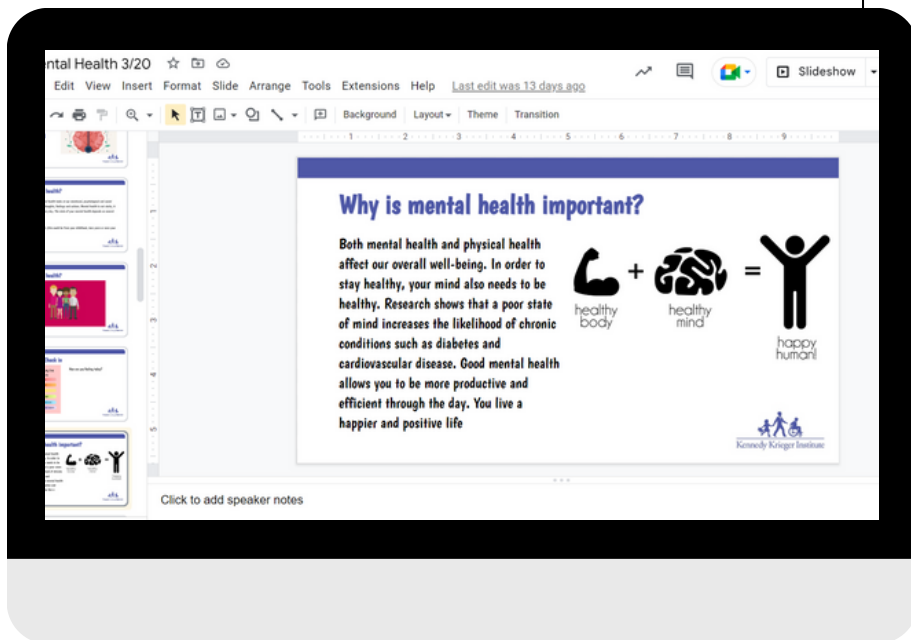
Created Weird Celebration slides for the daily virtual sessions

5

Designed Daily Professional Development presentations (DPDs) on various topics including mental health and SMART goals

6

Created weekly schedules and sent out family communications weekly on Fridays for two community members



Interview Candidates

Karen Hartlove

*Inpatient Rehabilitation Team
Coordinator, Child Life and Therapeutic
Recreation*

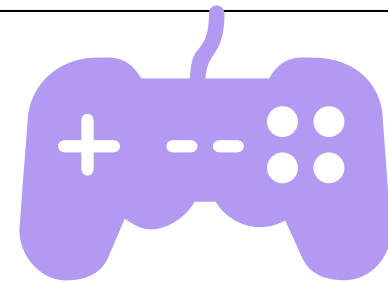
She is a big Maryland Terps fan!



Joe Wilson

*Employment Services Coordinator,
Neurodiversity at Work*

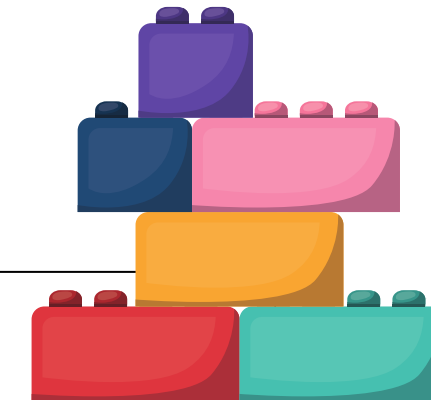
He is a musician and loves
making video games too!



Joshua Yutzy

*Community Member, Neurodiversity at
Work*

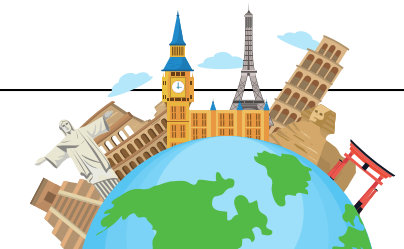
He loves playing video games
and is really good at Lego!



Joan Warren

Parent, Neurodiversity at Work

She loves traveling, swimming
and skiing!

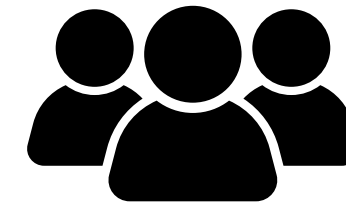


Overarching Themes from Interviews

Diversity & Inclusion



Team



Community members



THEME 1

JOSHUA

- He had a lot of fun at Kennedy Krieger High School and made a lot of friends who shared common hobbies with him.

JOAN

- "What sets Kennedy Krieger apart from other adult service agencies is its meaningful, purposeful life framework."
- Community members have the autonomy to reach their greatest sense of independence by being engaged in the community and interacting with others.

DIVERSITY
AND
INCLUSION

JOE

- He was a special education student in middle school and high school and has the opportunity to help individuals going through a similar experience.
- His favorite part about being at Kennedy Krieger is the ability to see people feeling comfortable and understood.

KAREN

- She likes the motto of "Nothing About Us Without Us" followed by Kennedy Krieger which encourages full participation and inclusion of community members living with disabilities.
- She values the ability to meet the families she serves where they are and offer support in any way possible.

- One of the factors that attracted Joe to Kennedy Krieger is the people that work here.
- He likes how dedicated and passionate everyone is and values listening to his coworkers' ideas and being mentally present in staff meetings.

JOE

KAREN

Theme 2: Team

JOAN

- Karen shared that the staff is committed and passionate across all departments at Kennedy Krieger.
- She likes working with a dedicated team of individuals who have a mission and a vision.

- The staff is engaged, excellent and dedicated.
- "We definitely need more people who are passionate about serving the neurodiverse community and better promotion of these roles in high schools."



Theme 3

JOE

- "The community members are the heart and soul of Kennedy Krieger".
- He loves working with the community members and seeing them succeed.

Community
Members

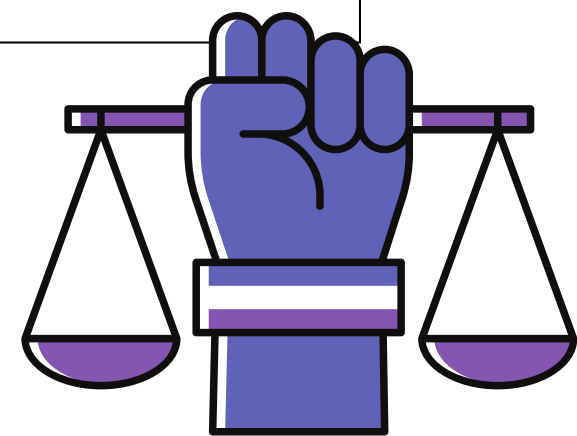
KAREN

- She loves working on an in-patient unit at Kennedy Krieger; you get to follow patients' progress and support the family throughout the journey.
- Just like Meaningful Community Services, her department offers individual and community outings for members as well as a parent lounge.
- It's all about the patients and their families!



Takeaways

- Humility and patience are key values to have both in the workplace and in life.
- Never assume you know what people need. It is important to actively listen to whoever you are helping to know the best way you can support them!
- Teamwork is highly beneficial for both the organization and those we are serving. It gives room to more efficient and impactful work and there's so much we can learn from one another.
- Equality, diversity and inclusion are the foundations of a successful society.
- Never underestimate what individuals living with disabilities can do!!





Enhancing the Neurodiverse Workforce

ROKHAYA KANE & AMINA ABUBAKER

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND BALTIMORE COUNTY, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY AND PUBLIC HEALTH

INTRODUCTION

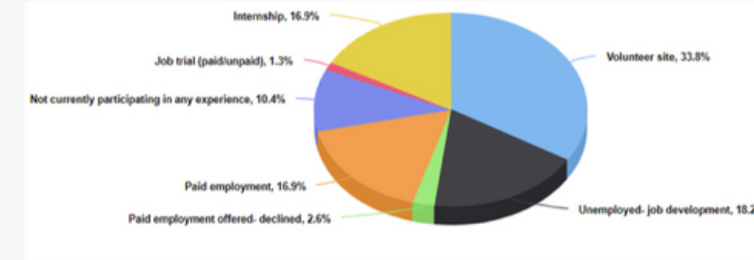
Individuals with neurodevelopmental disabilities have the ability, willingness and desire to be an asset to any workplace, yet their national unemployment rates remain high. The Neurodiversity at Work department, offered at Kennedy Krieger Institute, is charged with changing this dynamic. The purpose of this program is to support individuals with disabilities using a person-centered approach and several community programs are in place to work with those who need them, including Project SEARCH and CORE Foundations. CORE Foundations supports individuals with disabilities as they obtain and maintain meaningful employment and community engagement for lifelong success (Core Foundations, 2023). Project SEARCH is a 10-month transition program for individuals 18 through 24 years of age that provides hands-on job training through integrated worksite rotations, career exploration, and mentoring from experienced staff (Project SEARCH, 2023). Individuals in both programs will have the ability to enhance their employability and independent living skills, leading to a more diverse and inclusive workplace and community.

BACKGROUND

- Neurodiversity is looking at the way each of our individual brains work differently and highlights the different ways of thinking and interacting with the world around us.
- Neurodiversity is not considered a deficit but rather an untapped resource which deconstructs the idea of "one size fits all" and promotes better inclusion of individuals and their uniqueness.
- There is a significant lack of neurodiversity in the workforce with at least 78.7% of individuals living with a disability being outside of the labor force.
- As work is a primary agent of socialization which impacts one's mental wellbeing, independence, self-esteem, and sense of belonging, those who are without work are left dependent on family members and systems of support such as the government for social and economic development.
- Because of the growing, recognizable need to serve the neurodiverse community by promoting independent living, the Kennedy Krieger Institute's Board of Directors started an initiative in launching the Neurodiversity at Work Department where person-centered services form the direction of service provision.
- Person-centered services refer to services that are in alignment with the person's own goals and abilities and range from employment to volunteering and social opportunities.

RESEARCH METHODS

- We collected data from Kennedy Krieger Institute's website and database to analyze the outcomes of each program and compare them to other national agencies offering employment services to the neurodiverse community.
- We reviewed data from the U.S. Department of Labor, most notably the *Measuring the Employment Status of Individuals with Disabilities in the Current Population Survey* report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022) and from the Stanford Neurodiversity Project by Stanford Medicine.



Graph 1 - Job Experiences of Community Members at the Kennedy Krieger Institute Neurodiversity at Work Department

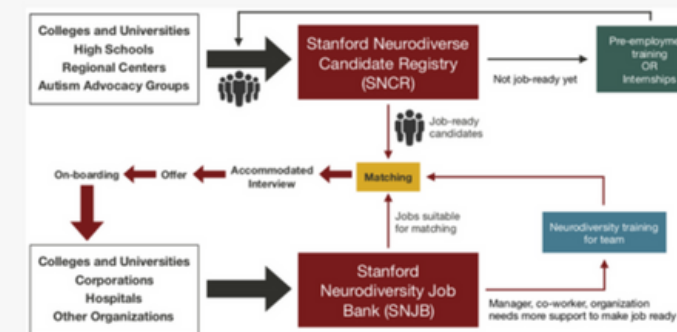


Figure 01- Innovation in Neurodiversity at Work through Research: A Framework Developed by Stanford Neurodiversity Project

significantly over the past 5 years and has gone from serving 6 community members to approximately 50 community members in 7 different counties.

- While institutions like Kennedy Krieger focus on connecting community members to services, other organizations such as Employer Assistance Resource Network (EARN) target recruiters to hire and retain workers living with disabilities. They develop hiring and training programs to give employers the tool they need to hire and accommodate neurodiverse individuals.
- The Stanford Neurodiversity Project SNP developed a unique framework which targets both populations: neurodiverse job-seekers and employers.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

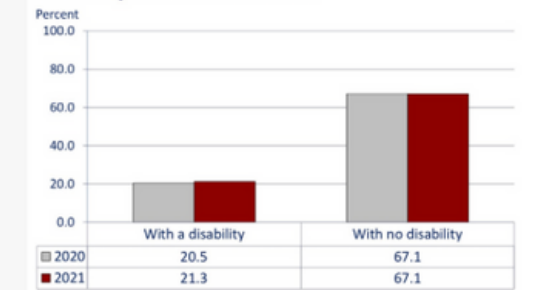
Most statistics collected at the federal level do not currently differentiate between disability other than those used for determination of Social Security benefits (whether SSI or SSDI such as blindness and End Stage Renal Disease), so it is difficult to tell how much of the disability statistics are reflecting the neurodiverse population. There needs to be a non-marginalizing way to determine the disability so that it is possible to accurately determine whether a person is a member of the neurodiverse population if the desire is to provide more widespread use of programs such as those developed by Kennedy Krieger Institute.

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1. Kennedy Krieger Institute. (2023). Meaningful Community Services. Kennedy Krieger Institute. Retrieved April 3, 2023. <https://www.kennedykrieger.org/community/initiatives/meaningful-community-services>
2. Stanford Neurodiversity Project. (2023). Neurodiverse Job-seekers and Employees. Stanford Medicine. Retrieved April 7, 2023. <https://med.stanford.edu/neurodiversity/NaW/ND-employee-home.html>
3. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2022). Measuring the Employment Status of Individuals with Disabilities in the Current Population Survey. Division of Labor Force Statistics. Retrieved April 6, 2023. <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ODEP/pdf/CPS.Disability.2021.annual.508.compliant.pdf>

RESULTS

Labor force participation rate for those with a disability increased in 2021



Graph 2 - Comparing the Labor Force Participation Rate for Those Living With a Disability in 2020 vs in 2021

DISCUSSION

- From 2020 to 2021, there was an increase in labor force participation for individuals living with disabilities from 20.5% to 21.3% which can be attributed to the growth of neurodiverse support programs.
- Kennedy Krieger, for instance, has expanded

Intern Poster Presentation at UMBC URCAD (Undergraduate Research and Creativity Achievement Day)

We thank Dr. Rebecca Colangelo of Kennedy Krieger Institute, Prof. Meryl Cozart, and the UMBC Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Public Health for their support.

Letter to Future Interns



Dear Future Intern,

Congratulations, you should be proud of yourself and excited to get to experience this amazing opportunity. Kennedy Krieger is a unique place to intern at and over the next couple of months, you will learn plenty from both staff members and community members. It is normal to feel nervous or anxious as you embark on this new journey and try to navigate your role as a trainee. But remember to believe in yourself, you got this and you are exactly where you belong! Get to know the people you are working with, whether that be community members who you are offering services to or colleagues who you work with. Ask them about their experiences, what works well for them and see how you can improve your own skills. Be open to putting yourself out there and trying new experiences. And lastly, always communicate! The leadership team is pretty flexible, understanding and willing to help. So do not hesitate to reach out.

Throughout your internship, you will grow as a future leader and public health professional. I wish you the best of luck and hope you enjoy your time at Kennedy Krieger.

All the best,
Rokhaya.