



# The Insider

The University of Kansas  
Life Span Institute at Parsons

[www.parsons.lsi.ku.edu](http://www.parsons.lsi.ku.edu)  
Patty Black Moore, Editor

## The ABLE Act



**On April 16, 2015, Kansas became the 8<sup>th</sup> state with signed legislation approving the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act of 2014.**

The ABLE Act allows many people with disabilities and their families the opportunity to save money in much the same way as parents and grandparents have been able to utilize the Internal Revenue’s 529 plan to save for college education. Creating an ABLE account allows for deposits of up to \$14,000 per year with a cap of \$100,000 without the risk of losing eligibility for Social Security, Medicaid, and other government benefits.

Previously, people with disabilities who received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) could not have more than \$2,000 in assets and remain SSI eligible. The ABLE Act changes that. And more than that, the interest earned on the person’s ABLE contributions will be tax-free if

used for expenses such as: education; housing; transportation; employment, training, and support; assistive technology; health, prevention, and wellness; financial management; administrative services; funeral and burial expenses.

So who is eligible? You are, if your disability manifested before you turned age 26 and if you are already receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI). We won’t know the exact regulations until they’ve been written, however, it is estimated that 5.8 million U.S. citizens may be eligible for an ABLE account. The resource for this information about the ABLE Act is at this link: [www.allsup.com/media/files/ABLE-infographic.pdf](http://www.allsup.com/media/files/ABLE-infographic.pdf)

An example of how an account will work was provided in the June 2015 *AT Program News*. Susan Tachau, executive director of the  
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*The Able Act, continued from page 1*

Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation wrote about the ABLE Act in her article, *The best thing since the ADA*. To help others understand the potential, Ms. Tachau envisioned AT purchase strategies using ABLE accounts in a variety of scenarios.

One example:

Nathan has Down Syndrome and lives in his own apartment in a small town. He also has a significant hearing loss and needs hearing aids. Because Nathan's household income is below 250% of the federal poverty level, he is eligible for the Audient hearing aid program. Audient provides dual digital hearing aids for \$1,400, including: (1) a fitting, (2) three adjustments, (3) ear mold(s), (4) fully digital hearing aid(s), and (5) a one-year manufacturer's warranty.

- Nathan opens an ABLE account to save money and receive gifts while maintaining his SSI and Medicaid.
- Once Nathan has \$1,400, he applies directly to Audient to receive dual digital hearing aids.
- Nathan continues to save in his ABLE account beyond the hearing aid purchase for other qualified needs and wants. ABLE accounts have low or no fees and are consumer directed to serve this purpose.

For more scenarios, read Ms. Tachau's article, at this link, [http://atprogramnews.typepad.com/files/2015\\_spring\\_the-able-act-for-funding-a.t.html](http://atprogramnews.typepad.com/files/2015_spring_the-able-act-for-funding-a.t.html)

If you, or someone you know, would benefit from an ABLE account, contact the Assistive Technology for Kansans' AT Access Site in your region by calling 800-KAN DO IT or 800-526-3648. Ask to talk to an AT Specialist and start saving.

**Just the "STATS"** FY 2015 results for training and technical assistance provided by University of Kansas, Life Span Institute at Parsons' faculty and staff include: 413 in-state activities impacted 16,702 participants and 30 out-of-state activities impacted 1,673 participants.



## KITS Project

The Kansas Inservice Training System (KITS) staff met at LSI-Parsons on Monday, June 29, 2015, for their annual planning meeting.

*Pictured (front row, left): Peggy Kemp, David Lindeman, Misty Goosen, and Kim Page, (back row, left): Phoebe Rinkel, Karen Rowland, and Chelie Nelson.*

## The Business Office: HR News

While the Parsons' Business Office staff (from left, Laura Hanigan and Tammy Schoenhofer) are happy to provide others with an array of work related information, they only work five days a week and that's where the KU Human Resource Management website comes in handy.

Do you have questions about the HealthQuest Savings Discount, want information about job benefits, need a detailed explanation about the different components of pay and compensation, or any



other human resource related issue including the popular HR Pay calendar? Then check out the KU Human Resources website at this link, <http://humanresources.drupal.ku.edu/>.

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## PRESENTATIONS

- Carlin, K. (2015, June). *Safety First: A set of guidelines and procedures for maintaining a safe environment*. Workshop presentation at Northwest Kansas Educational Services Center, Oakley, KS.
- Espe-Sherwindt, M. (2015, June). *Powerful partnerships with families: Linked lives - Families and our use of family practices*. Paper presented at the KITS 2015 Summer Institute, Lawrence, KS.
- Kemp, P. (2015, April). *Individualized family service plan (IFSP) outcome training*. Presentation at Sedgwick County Infant-Toddler Services, Wichita, KS.
- Jones, S. (2015, February). *Telecommunication Access Program (TAP): Intro to new materials, demonstration practices, and applications*. Presentation for regional TAP demonstration center (RCIL, Inc.), Topeka, KS.
- Jones, S. (2015, February). *Telecommunication Access Program (TAP): Intro to new materials, demonstration practices, and applications*. Presentation for regional TAP demonstration centers (RCIL, SKIL, Families Together, PILR, OCCK), Wichita, KS.
- Jones, S. (2015, February). *Telecommunication Access Program (TAP): Intro to new materials, demonstration practices, and applications*. Presentation for regional TAP demonstration center (Three Rivers), Wamego, KS.
- Jones, S. (2015, March). *Telecommunication Access Program (TAP): Intro to new materials, demonstration practices, and applications*. Presentation for regional TAP demonstration center (CFI, Inc.), Kansas City, KS.
- Jones, S. (2015, April). *An overview of Assistive Technology for Kansans (ATK) programs: K-Loan, ATK-KEE Reuse, and TAP*. Presentation at Kansas Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) 2015 HCBS Educational Summit, Topeka, KS.
- Jones, S. (2015, May). *Introduction to the Kansas Telecommunications Access Program (TAP)*. Presentation at Deaf Culture Center, Olathe, KS.

## PRESENTATIONS

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- Lindeman, D. P., Nelson, C., & Rinkel, P. (2015, April). *Developing online technical assistance to support implementation*. Poster presented at the 2015 Council for Exceptional Children Convention and Expo, San Diego, CA.
- Lindeman, D. P., Rinkel, P., Nelson, C., Goosen, M., & Kemp, P. (2015, April). *Enhancing participant perception and content of online learning through continuous improvement*. Poster presented at the 2015 Council for Exceptional Children Convention and Expo, San Diego, CA.
- Lindeman, D. P., & Woods, J. (2015, April). *Application of implementation science in two states: Professional development initiatives*. Poster presented at the 2015 Council for Exceptional Children Convention and Expo, San Diego, CA.
- McWilliam, R. (2015, June). *Powerful partnerships promoting child engagement*. Paper presented at the KITS 2015 Summer Institute, Lawrence, KS.
- Nelson, C. (2015, May). *Understanding and using myIGDI data for tiered instruction in early mathematics*. Presentation at the Spring Meeting of the Kansas Preschool Programs, Topeka, KS.
- Pretti-Frontczak, K. (2015, June). *Powerful partnerships for effective practices*. Paper presented at the KITS 2015 Summer Institute, Lawrence, KS.
- Rinkel, P., Miller, N., & Lindeman, D. P. (2015, April). *Rethinking the use of physical intervention in preschool: Effective prevention and response strategies*. Paper presented at the 12th National Training Institute on Effective Practices: Addressing Challenging Behavior, St. Petersburg, FL.
- Roberts, D. (2015, April). *myIGDIs early literacy and numeracy fidelity course*. Workshop presentation for Kansas Preschool Program, Newton, KS.
- Roberts, D. (2015, April). *myIGDIs early literacy and numeracy fidelity course*. Workshop presentation for Kansas Preschool Program, Topeka, KS.
- Rush, D., & Shelden, M. L. (2015, June). *Powerful partnerships with team members*. Paper presented at the KITS 2015 Summer Institute, Lawrence, KS.
- Sack, S. (2014, July). *Initiatives of the Assistive Technology for Kansans Program*. Presentation for Kansas Partnership for Accessible Technology Task Force, Topeka, KS.
- Sack, S. (2014, September). *Increasing employment and improving health through digital technology*. Presentation at the National Home and Community Based Services Conference, Washington, DC.
- Sack, S. (2014, September). *Improving the Dual Party Relay System for persons who have hearing loss*. Presentation at the National Directors of Relay Communication Systems Conference, Portland, ME.
- Sack, S. (2014, September). *Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) equipment distribution for Kansas*. Paper presented at the National TEDPA Conference, Portland, ME.
- Sack, S. (2015, June). *New technologies, barriers to their development, and unmet needs*. Presentation at KU Research: Science Speed Dating in partnership with Nerd Night Lawrence, Lawrence, KS.
- Sack, S. (2015, July). *ATK State Financing Activity: i-Pad Training*. Assistive Technology Act Program Project Director's Meeting, Washington, D.C.



## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

### Kansas Inservice Training System (KITS): Summer Institute

David P. Lindeman, Ph.D.  
Project Director

Funded by: Kansas State Department of Education and Kansas Department of Health and Environment



### KITS 2015 Summer Institute: Powerful Partnerships

Engagement is at the center of learning. Engagement is also the catalyst for creating powerful partnerships. Fifty-seven early childhood professionals gathered at the KU Adams Alumni Center in Lawrence the second



*Pictured above, Phoebe Rinkel, KITS Technical Assistance Coordinator, Preschool Technical Assistance Specialist; Nancy Miller, Student Services Consultant for Blue Valley school district; and Kristie Pretti-Frontczak, KITS Summer Institute - Day 4 speaker)*

week of June to participate in the 22nd annual Kansas Inservice Training System (KITS) Summer Institute: *Powerful Partnerships*.

During the KITS 2015 Summer Institute, nationally recognized experts examined the importance of those positive partnerships, not only for young learners, but also for those adults who work together on their behalf. Daily presentations focused on how early childhood professionals engage and create partnerships with the children they serve, their families, other educational partners and coworkers, and even within themselves.

As a result of attending this year's KITS Summer Institute, participants are able to establish partnerships utilizing specific intentional practices that have an evidence base to promote learning, to empower families, to support community partners, and to build upon their own personal strengths. This year's schedule included the following presentations:

- Tuesday, June 9: *Powerful Partnerships with Team Members* – Dathan D. Rush, Ed.D., CCC-SLP and M'Lisa Shelden, PT, Ph.D., Morganton, NC.
- Wednesday, June 10: *Powerful Partnerships Promoting Child Engagement* – Robin McWilliam, Ph.D., Nashville, TN.

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*KITS Summer Institute, from page 5*

- Thursday, June 11: *Powerful Partnerships with Families: Linked Lives – Families and Our Use of Family Practices* – Marilyn Espe-Sherwindt, Ph.D., Tallmadge, OH.
- Friday, June 12: *Powerful Partnerships for Effective Practices* – Kristie Pretti-Frontczak, Ph.D., Hinckley, OH.

The KITS Summer Institute is open to all people working with children in Kansas; but priority is given to those professionals working with children, birth to eight, who have disabilities. To attend the Summer Institute,

participants must submit an online registration and enroll for college credit with one of the six partnering universities: Emporia State University, Fort Hays State University, Kansas State University, Pittsburg State University, Wichita State University, and University of Kansas.

*Submitted by Karen Rowland, KITS Program Assistant*

More information is available at <http://kskits.org/training/KITSSummerInst.shtml>



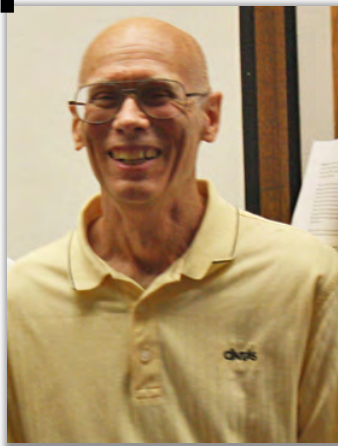
## **YEARS OF SERVICE Recognized at Parsons**

**The Life Span Institute at Parsons' staff celebrated their colleagues' Years of Service with a party at the Parsons Research Center, June 16, 2015.** We used to call it a reception, we've even called it a ceremony, but the truth is we're friends, have been for years, and getting together to recognize the accomplishments and longevity of Parsons' staff is a very good reason to have a party.

Really, this year we owe it all to our own Laura Hanigan, pictured standing in the many of the pictures on page 7-8. She emceed, mixed, baked, decorated, and hosted the



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2015 annual recognition for this year's six staff members recognized with the familiar five-year pins as well as the gifts for twenty and twenty-five years of service to the University of Kansas.

Here's the edited version of the program.

**Alan Engels**, (pictured above, left) IT support technician, received his ten-year pin and was reminded by our emcee that even though he tries hard to get us to understand the how and why of computers, all we really want is for them to work! And our IT department excels at that.

**Laura Doyle-Colvin**, (pictured above, center) accounting specialist, who ten years ago was a

bank teller, took on the job of payee with Southeast Kansas Respite Service, and her colleagues agree she was the right candidate for the job. She received her ten-year pin.

**Debbie Moody**, (pictured above, right) administrative assistant, joined the LSI/Parsons 15 years ago as the receptionist at the UCDD building. She supports the projects in a plethora of ways including ordering supplies, processing travel, and more unique roles such as makeup artist for a project's video shoot. She received her 15-year pin.



**Sandy Hill**, (pictured left with Laura Hanigan) office assistant, began her career as the receptionist at the Research Center in 1999. She collects data, orders supplies, directs phone calls, and many other activities that are required to maintain a smooth operation. She has assisted students and international visitors in obtaining a place to stay, furnishings for their home, and introducing them to the southeast Kansas area. She appears relieved to receive her 15-year pin.

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*Years of Service, continued from page 7*

**Patty Black Moore,** ( from left: Laura Hanigan, Patty; seated from left, Tony Grady, Diane Salyers) communications coordinator, took a position with a community disability organization, taught a training course developed by Kathy Olson, a former Parsons’ project director, and soon after joined the Parsons’ crew. She creates public awareness materials, conducts video interviews, produces the quarterly newsletter, and the Parsons’ annual report. She received her 20-year pin and KU certificate of appreciation.



**Sheila Simmons,** (pictured right) research project manager, visited Kansas to waterski at Big Hill Lake near Parsons more than 25 years ago. She manages the Assistive Technology for Kansans program as well as related ATK projects and is co-coordinator of the Kansas AgrAbility program, in collaboration with Kansas State University. Additionally, she co-founded the Parsons Community Garden. She received her 25-year pin and KU decorative pen and holder.



## COMMUNITY SERVICE

### KU Research Speed Dating: Another way to network

Dozens of people gathered at the Cider Gallery in Lawrence on June 22 “for a night of rapid research conversations with KU experts”. People who paid \$10 each had 10 minutes to hear a short presentation of the researcher’s area of expertise, take the opportunity to ask a few questions, and then quickly, move on to the next table. KU Life Span Institute at Parsons’ senior scientist, Sara Sack, “an expert in technology

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that helps people who have speech-language disorders” talked about 3-D printed prosthetics (an example is pictured left), communication and speech output technologies, assistive listening technologies, and promising research.

Following the event, Dr. Sack said, “The event was fantastic! It was fun and had such an amazing turnout: Lots of young researchers and software developers; Six rounds of tables with 10 participants and extras, changing every 10 minutes. It was really intense! I met several people that I’m sure we’ll continue to have contact with and one participant wanted to have her picture taken with me. Now I just wonder where that picture will turn up.”

The event was held in partnership with Nerd Nite Lawrence and supported by the KU Natural History Museum, the Spencer Museum of Art, the Life Span Institute, KU Libraries, and the KU Office of Research. For more, follow this link <http://biodiversity.ku.edu/visit/events/research-speed-dating>

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Visit the KU Life Span Institute (LSI) at Parsons website at <http://parsons.lsi.ku.edu/>

Additionally, The Insider is archived online at <http://www.parsons.lsi.ku.edu/newsletters>

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