

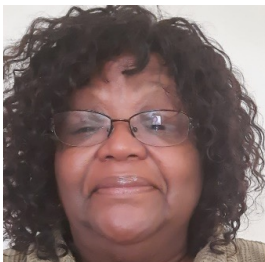


Minority Youth and Centers for Independent Living (MY-CIL) Project Webinar

Advice from the Experts: Minority Youth with Disabilities Share Program Improvement Opportunities with CILs

March 22, 2023; 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. ET

Speakers



Barbara Anderson, FAST TRACK/Independent Living Specialist, Southern Illinois Center for Independent Living

Barbara Anderson is a FAST TRACK/Independent Living Specialist with the Southern Illinois Center for Independent Living. Anderson enjoys working with the transition-age students and young adults and connecting youth with other community resources. Anderson has worked at the Southern Illinois Center for Independent Living for 13 years. Before that, Anderson worked in human resources as the manager of the employment and testing area at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, where she also earned a degree in workforce education and development. Anderson enjoys traveling and learning. Anderson has a Mr. Anderson, two sons, and three grandchildren.



Apple Gabriel, youth participant

Apple Gabriel, who graduated from high school in 2020, plans to pursue a Bachelor of Commerce at the University of Illinois. Gabriel hopes to open a milk product manufacturing business one day. When Gabriel is not working part-time as a transcriber, Gabriel enjoys reading novels, watching movies, hanging out with friends, and listening to music. Gabriel has one sibling.



Michael Hanna, Equip Coordinator, Able South Carolina

Michael Hanna works at Able South Carolina, a disability-led organization seeking transformational changes in systems, communities, and individuals. He manages and oversees the Equip Leadership Group, where he works to empower the Equip Leaders, a diverse team of young adults with disabilities, to provide peer mentoring services across South Carolina. With his team, he can usually be found developing new groups and programs or directly working with youth in schools and the community to reach their goals. Hanna's educational background includes an undergraduate degree from Presbyterian College and a Master of Arts in counseling and rehabilitation from the University of South Carolina School of Medicine. He is passionate about helping others achieve their goals and firmly believes that, with the proper support, anyone can achieve their objectives.



Sharon McLennon-Wier, Ph.D., M.S.Ed., CRC, LMHC, Executive Director, Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York

Dr. Sharon Melisse McLennon-Wier has been working in the field of rehabilitation counseling and mental health for more than 25 years. McLennon-Wier received her Ph.D. from Seton Hall University in counseling psychology in 2012. Before that, she obtained a certificate in U.S. law and methodology from New York University's School of Continuing Education in 2003; a Master of Science in rehabilitation counseling at Hunter College, City University of New York in 1998; and a Bachelor of Science in biology from Syracuse University in 1993. Some of her previous employment endeavors include working for Berkeley College as the director of disability services for New Jersey and New York campuses, New York State Commission for the Blind Harlem District Office as the district manager, the Shield Institute for Clinical Services as a rehabilitation counseling consultant, Lavelle School for the Blind as a transition coordinator, and the Educational Alliance's Pride Site II Substance Abuse Treatment Center as a vocational coordinator. In addition, she has been an adjunct psychology professor for more than 12 years. She has taught at Berkeley College, Concordia College-New York, Iona College, Long Island University, and Seton Hall University. McLennon-Wier is a certified rehabilitation counselor and a New York State licensed mental health counselor. She has published several articles and book chapters on the aspect of disability, and she is a board member of the National Rehabilitation Association's Metro New York chapter and the Lavelle Fund.



Oliver Olivia, youth participant

Oliver Olivia graduated high school and works part time as a receptionist and virtual assistant. Olivia hopes to pursue a Bachelor of Commerce in finance. Olivia's hobbies include cooking, swimming, playing video games with friends, and watching movies and documentaries.



Amanda Reichard, Ph.D., Project Officer, National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research

Dr. Amanda Reichard has conducted research on disability and health, wellness promotion, access to health care services, public health surveillance, and policy. Reichard co-chairs the Disability Statistics Subcommittee for the Interagency Council on Disability Research and the Federal Interagency Workgroup on IDD Administrative Data. She has worked in public health for more than 20 years and has often been a part of academic groups working to improve the field's ability to identify people with disabilities for surveillance and research.



Aditya Singh, youth participant

Aditya Singh, who is from New York City, plans to pursue a degree in data science from Harvard University. Singh graduated high school in 2020 and is currently self-employed, working part time driving for Uber. Singh's hobbies include playing football, watching movies, and listening to music. Singh has a pet dog.
