

# Fund New and Existing Postsecondary Inclusive Education Programs for Students with I/DD

## KNOW THE FACTS

- **LA currently has 6 postsecondary institutions offering an inclusive education opportunity for students with I/DD**
  - ◊ **12 interested in creating a program since the passage of Act 682.**
- **Demand for these programs is high. Each year, many qualified applicants are turned away due to limited number of slots available at the current programs.**
- **122 individuals have completed their programs with 71% gaining competitive employment.**
  - ◊ **National employment rate of people with I/DD is only 34%.**
- **Programs are or will be certified by the U.S. Department of Education as Comprehensive Transition & Postsecondary programs making students eligible for Pell Grants.**
  - ◊ **LRS funding also covers student cost for those who qualify.**

## What Can Legislators Do?

Appropriate \$3 million in State General Fund to the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund to expand and increase postsecondary inclusive education programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Louisiana.

## Why Do This?

Act 682 of 2022 unanimously passed the legislature to establish the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund in an effort to help increase postsecondary inclusive education opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in Louisiana. \$1 million was added to the fund when created, but with an average startup cost of \$156,000, additional funding is needed to help make programs more accessible statewide.

Individuals with I/DD deserve the opportunity to enjoy the full college experience with their peers. These programs afford students the opportunity for self discovery, to gain independence, learn life skills, build lifelong friendships and create a greater support network. They also receive the education, support and training needed to not only obtain but maintain employment.

Individuals with disabilities are an untapped resource who make valuable and dependable employees. We need to invest in their education and employability in inclusive and competitive environments just as we do for individuals without disabilities. Everyone deserves a chance to live independently and contribute to their community, and these programs do just that.