

# LIGHTING THE WAY:

HELPING FAMILIES SEE POSSIBILITIES IN COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT FOR PROFESSIONALS



Families play a crucial role in the lives of youth and individuals with significant disabilities. They are often the first and most consistent influence a person with a disability will have. Families are responsible for supporting decisions and coordinating services and support, all while trying to cultivate and honor what youth want for themselves.

For many families, their youth's transition to adulthood is an uncertain time. Where will they work? Where will they live? Will they have friends and be able to do things they enjoy? Families of youth with significant barriers to employment may not be able to envision employment in the community for their sons and daughters. They may get messages from professionals that sheltered work or day programs are the safest and only option. When this happens, you have families resistant to exploring competitive employment.

Many employment providers will cite families as a main barrier to employment success for people with disabilities. However, instead of vilifying families, it is more constructive to examine why families do what they do and come up with ways to establish relationships so employment can be an option. This session is intended to serve as an introduction to the topic of building partnerships with families.

Intended impact includes:

- Improve partnerships between employment professionals and families of youth and individuals with disabilities in Michigan.
- Provide regional teams of professionals/parents with a presentation to educate professionals on ways to engage families.
- Expand capacity within Michigan's employment and provider community to partner with families.
- Improve the ability of families in Michigan to understand the value of competitive employment and their role as partners in the employment process.

An interactive presentation will be given by staff of Heritage Southwest ISD and young adults employed in the community, on Thursday, August 19, 2021 from 9am-11:30am.

## FREE-VIRTUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

To register please go to the following Survey Monkey Link: [Click Here](#)  
If you need assistance filling this out, contact: [Carrolls5@michigan.gov](mailto:Carrolls5@michigan.gov)  
Zoom links will be provided one week prior to the start on the event  
Registration deadline, July 30, 2021

Sponsored by DD Council & Heritage Southwest ISD

