

Unlocking Potential:

An Introduction to Customized Employment



About

THE GEORGE
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Learn More: <https://trainvr.org>

Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center- Quality Management

Our Mission:

Partnering with State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies (SVRAs) to enhance service delivery and maximize outcomes through quality program and resource management.

We offer Technical Assistance, Staff Training and Communities of Practice addressing:

- Fiscal and Resource Management
- Program and Performance Management
- General Quality Management of Organizations

Learn More: <https://www.vrtac-qm.org/>



Presenters



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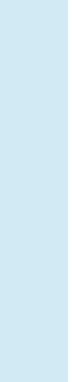
Learning Objectives

- Understand and explore the core principles of Customized Employment (CE)
- Learn about key considerations and essential elements for successful CE implementation
- Identify tools, processes and resources necessary to initiate and sustain CE at the state level

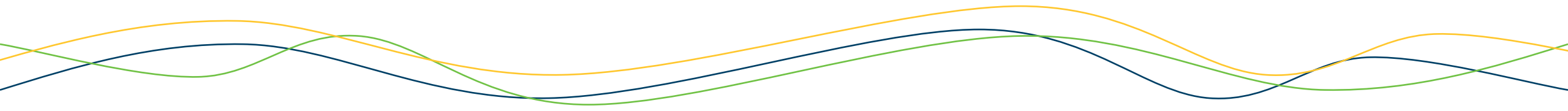
What is Customized Employment?

- Customized Employment (CE) is a personalized approach to employment that tailors job responsibilities to fit the strengths, needs, and interests of individuals with disabilities while also meeting the needs of an employer.
- CE focuses on creating mutually beneficial work arrangements rather than fitting a person into an existing job description.





**Are Customized Employment
and Supported Employment
the same thing?**



Why Customized Employment?

CE benefits job seekers who may have difficulty **performing all essential functions of existing job** descriptions and could otherwise be excluded from CIE when competing with job seekers without disabilities ([Inge et al., 2018](#)).

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Defining customized employment as an evidence-based practice: The results of a focus group study

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Abstract

BACKGROUND: Customized employment has generated support at the national, state, and individual participant levels to expand employment for people with significant disabilities. The next step is movement from practitioner-based descriptions to evidenced-based practices that can be consistently replicated.

OBJECTIVE: The objective of this qualitative research study was to begin the development of a research-based description that agencies can use to replicate customized employment when supporting individuals with significant disabilities.

METHODS: Twenty-eight professionals representing national experts and implementers of customized employment participated in five phone-administered focus groups. The calls were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to identify themes associated with customized employment implementation.

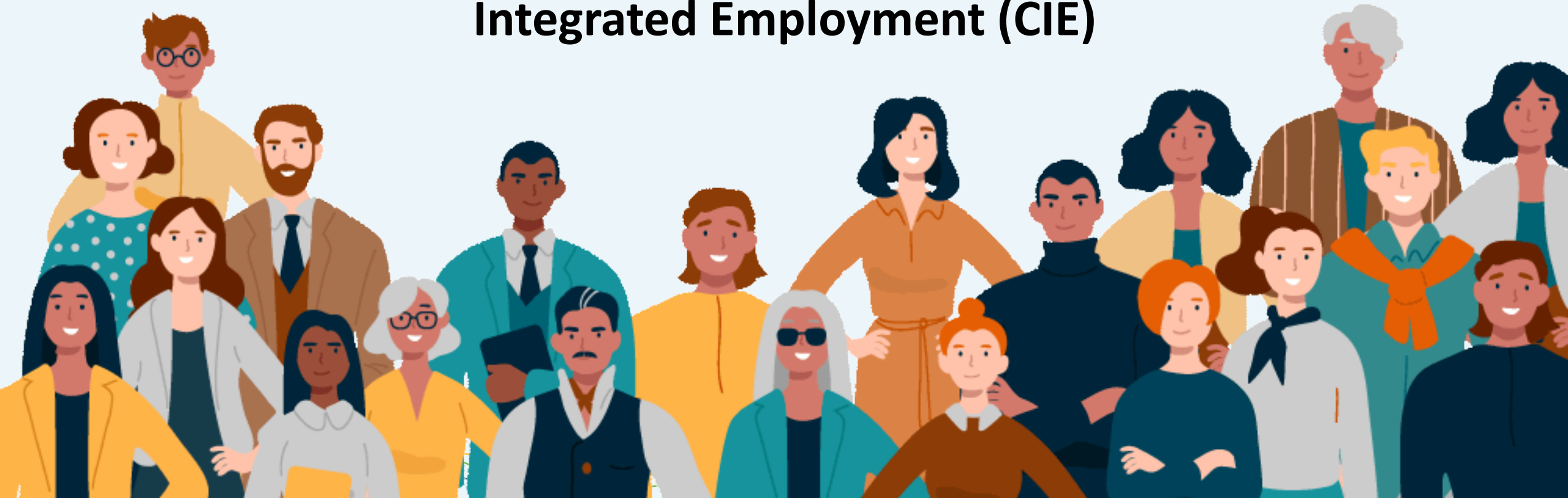
RESULTS: Twelve key components or practices emerged as comprising customized employment.

CONCLUSION: This research provides insight into the practices that are associated with customized employment that facilitate integrated employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Additional research is needed including random control trial studies to further the development of a replicable set of evidence-based practices.

Keywords: Customized employment, discovery, disability, qualitative research, focus groups

Employment First Foundation

A **belief** and **value** that all people regardless of level of disability are capable of full inclusion and working in **Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)**



Employment First

Employment First works towards systems change and culture shifts in employment policies, service delivery practices, and funding structures that increase employment for people with disabilities, including individuals with significant disabilities.

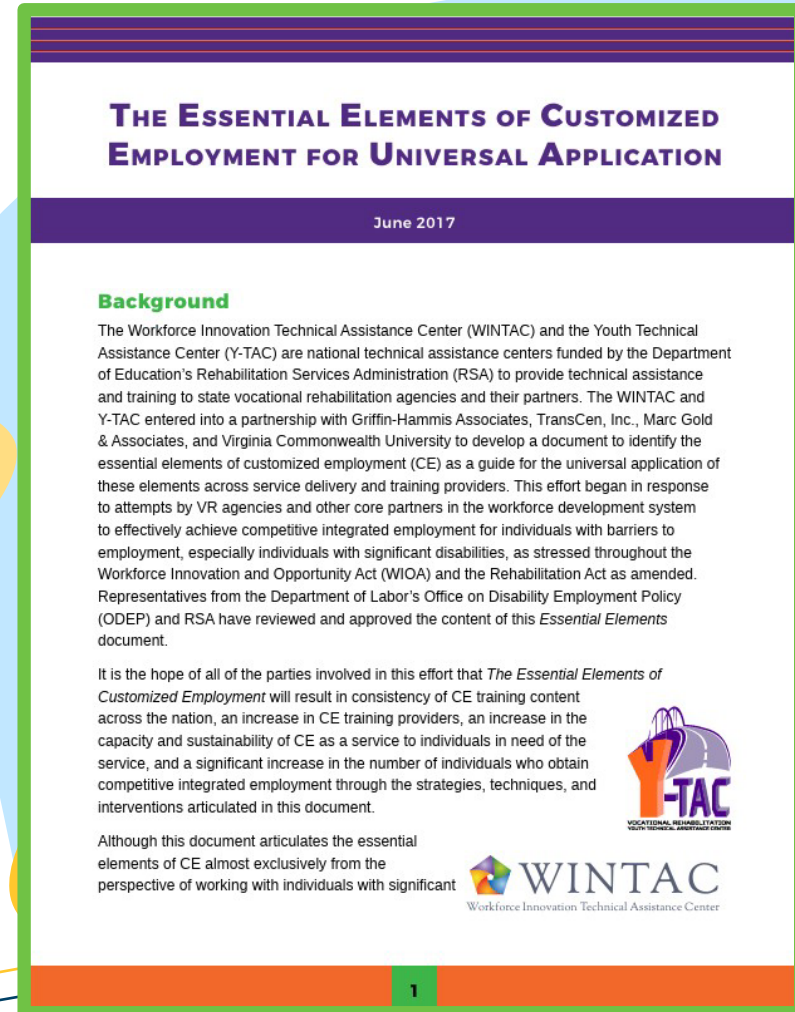


CE and SDSU-Interwork Institute

2002	2002 to 2007	2011	2014	2016 to 2020	2020 to Present
Federal Register publishes initial definition of Customized Employment	ODEP Funded CE Demonstrations	ODEP created CE competency model	WIOA Codifies CE in Law and publishes 2nd definition in Federal register	WINTAC, (Workforce Innovation and Technical Assistance Center) Essential Elements CE CoP	CE CoP continues (25 states) VRTAC-QM SWTCIE grants

The Essential Elements of CE Service Delivery

- In 2017, the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) and the Youth Technical Assistance Center (Y-TAC) established "[The Essential Elements of Customized Employment for Universal Application](#)."
- Recognized document identifying the Essential Elements of CE
- Purpose: Serves as the guide for universal application of these elements across service delivery and training providers.



Essential Elements of CE Service Delivery

1. Overview of Essential Elements of CE
2. Conducting Discovery and Creating Discovery Documents
3. Planning for CE
4. Employment Development Representation



Key Considerations

- ✓ Must meet WIOA criteria for CIE

CIE means work performed on a full-time or part-time basis (including self-employment) for which an employee is:

- Paid at or above minimum wage and not less than the customary rate paid by employers to employees with similar skills, training, and experience performing the same or similar duties;
 - Eligible for the same level of benefits as other employees;
 - Working at a location alongside other employees with and without disabilities; and
 - Offered opportunities for advancement similar to those for nondisabled employees in similar positions.
- ✓ Negotiation of Job duties – the job duties are set as a result of negotiation with an employer, may involve job carving, restructuring, modification, or creation.

Person Driven Practices

- ✓ A qualitative “**no fail**” process that presumes all individuals can work through the person-centered, non-evaluative approach of Discovery!
- ✓ Requires individualization, involving a job for one person
- ✓ Job seekers have a job development representative
- ✓ The Customized wage employment or customized self employment is chosen by the job seeker

Discovery Process

The process of Discovery and CE:

- Requires letting go of assumptions and labels.
- Strives to view the employment seeker descriptively rather than evaluatively and in typical aspects of their lives, optimistically.
- Helps uncover the job seekers talents, capabilities, contributions, and conditions for success employment.
- Provides an opportunity for employment for individuals that may have been perceived or labeled as unemployable.

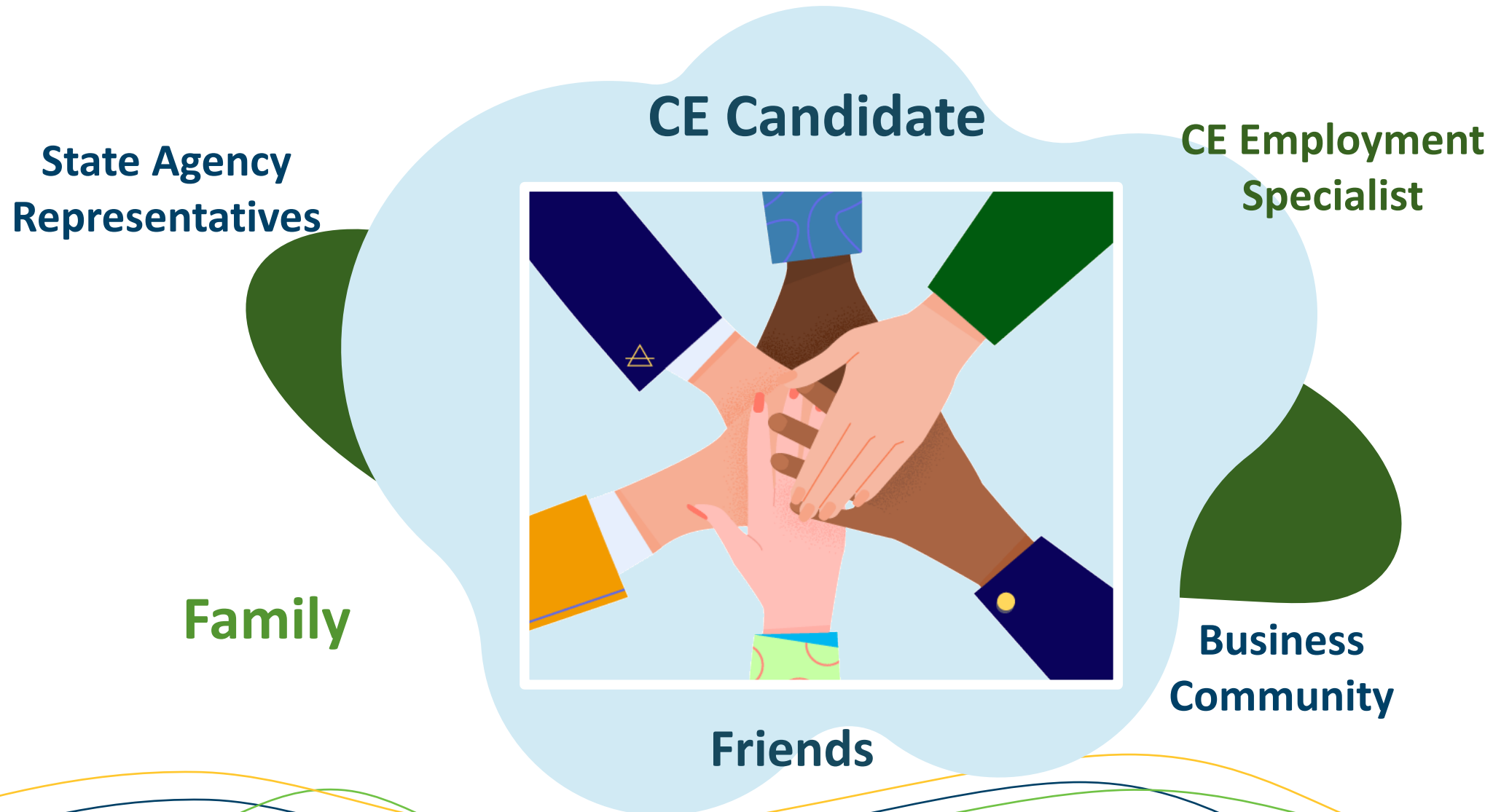


CE is a Universal Model

- Customized Employment is a model designed to support the employment processes for individuals with all types of disabilities.
- Historically, the most served disability population is individuals with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities



CE Implementation Requires Partners & Teamwork



The Essential Elements of CE Systems Implementation

**Vision, Leadership
and Strategy for
Sustainability**

**Communication &
Stakeholder
Commitment**

**Data Tracking &
Evaluation**

**Policy, Procedures
& Funding**

**System & Service
Provider Capacity
/ Training**

**Referrals &
Service Delivery
Design**

Customized Employment Works!

Ron O'Hair, MS

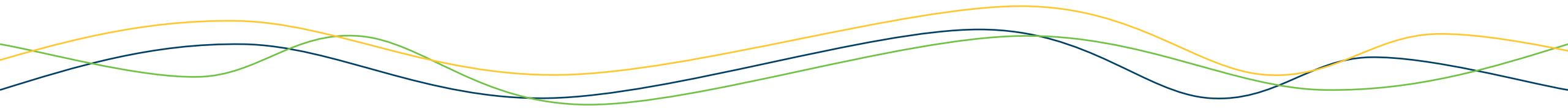
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Resources to Get Started in your State

- [Defining Customized Employment as an Evidence-Based Practice: The Results of a Focus Group Study](#)
- [The Essential Elements of Customized Employment for Universal Application](#)
- [VRTAC - Quality Management](#)
- [TACQE – Quality Employment](#)
- [Office of Disability Employment Policy, ODEP](#)
- [Customized Employment Competency Model](#)
- [Workforce Innovation National Technical Assistance Center, WINTAC](#)



Resources to Get Started in your State (2)

- Customized Employment Community of Practice for VR Professionals
- Office of Disability Employment Policy(ODEP), US Department of Labor
- APSE – Employment First



Thank You!



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Disclaimer

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