Overview of the Education Division

The Training and Learning Collaborative (TLC) is the education division of the Northeast Independent Living Program, Inc. (NILP). The legal entity that will be party to contract is Northeast Independent Living Program, Inc. NILP is a consumer controlled, cross-disability Independent Living Center (ILC) of Massachusetts. TLC is a partnership comprised of a qualified team of professionals who are persons with disabilities and/or have many years of training and consulting experience in the disability community. This combination of lived experience and technical expertise provides organizations of any size, the knowledge and skills to ensure quality and culturally competent service delivery for disability awareness education, and compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA).

Our consultants and educators identify themselves with the Disability Community on various levels. We are professionals living with a disability, family members, and community advocates that share and teach a diverse range of topics within the disability community. The TLC vision is to provide technical assistance and training to all organizations on a fully customizable basis. Our model is steeped in the values and beliefs of consumer self-determination and equal access for all from the perspective of people who live with all types of disabilities.

Our focus is primarily aimed at educating and providing disability cultural competence to key staff, managers, senior leaders, as well as all other employees who have the responsibility to serve their clients and customers. In addition, TLC consults with municipalities and organizations that are in need of ADA Transition Plans and ADA Accessibility for their customers.

TLC is a “One Stop” Resource Center for all of your training needs. A sample of our courses:

- Independent Living Disability Awareness and Empowerment
- Consumer Self-Determination and what it means for a person with a disability
- ADA Awareness and Compliance
- Multicultural Awareness in the Disability Community
- Deaf Culture and the barriers in the Deaf and hard of hearing community
- The Peer Voice and what it means in working with a person with a MH disability
- “Recovery is Real” with Mental Health Diagnoses
General Background

The Northeast Independent Living Program, Inc. (NILP) is a (501) (c) (3) non-profit organization with a strong track record of serving the needs of the Northeastern Massachusetts community residents with significant disabilities for over 35 years. From the outset, NILP has been staffed primarily by persons living with disabilities and, under its by-laws, a majority of its board and staff, are comprised of persons living with disabilities. Our philosophy states that people with disabilities are the best determinants of their own needs and service choices. Through role modeling and peer counseling with other individuals with disabilities, we become empowered to make changes in our lives and become more self-sufficient and self-reliant.

Approach to Providing Services

Our Northeast Independent Living Program (NILP) consumer base have attended focus groups, stakeholder meetings, Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) work groups, and numerous meetings. This community involvement has been a means to educate the general community. In addition, their extensive personal and professional knowledge about the disability community has brought critical changes to services for persons with disabilities.

The Independent Living (IL) Philosophy is Self-Determination, which is the core of what we do. Self-Determination means that the person with the disability is the key-decision maker in the direction of their lives. We are a trusted Independent Living (IL) partner that delivers ADA technical assistance and Cultural Competency Training to all potential customers through our comprehensive network of Consultants and Trainers. Our goal is to educate organizations about potential areas of misconception that surround all people with disabilities and also to de-stigmatize the language when relating to the disability community.

Our recommendations for an accessible workplace environment include:

- Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Understanding best-practice models for providing care and services for people with complex physical, behavioral, and/or intellectual/developmental needs.
- To provide communication services in the language and manner necessary for all people with disabilities to readily understand.
- Collect data appropriate for measuring quality of services and outcomes.
The Training and Learning Collaborative™

Education Division of The Northeast Independent Living Program, Inc. (NILP)

TLC is a response to an increased need for disability education and training. The disability community often refers to the quote from our civil rights activists: “Nothing About Us Without Us”. This is our commitment to being your partner in “Equal Access for All”.

The Training and Learning Collaborative (TLC) Model is based upon an organizational development model matched with peer roles customized to meet your company’s needs. Our educators, consultants and OD professionals with real life experience regarding the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) to ensure compliance and cultural competence.

TLC has exceptional and unique expertise that cannot be duplicated anywhere.

- As people predominantly with disabilities, we have a deep background in education and disability awareness which provides a more complete understanding of what is required in training.
- We offer a complete 360-degree perspective in all related ADA design and compliance areas.
- We draw on and collaborate with our peer community resources to customize our training on a local, regional, and national basis.
- Our consultants provide a flexible range of services, including training, technical assistance, and resource connections, which enable you to anticipate and respond to meet your changing workplace needs.

By selecting TLC, you reap significant benefits as a partner to a disability based organization that will not sacrifice quality in achieving the spirit of the ADA!

Testimonials from TLC participants:

“This training has totally changed my perspective on people with disabilities.”

CMS Duals Insurance Provider Employee, Boston

“The training was amazing. It really opened my eyes to a different understanding of people with disabilities.”

Aging Services Provider, Case Manager