Connecticut’s Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board: Every Voice Matters
Youth Leadership to Sustain Efforts
National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT)
Capacity Building Institute (CBI)
May 9, 2019
Presenters

**Michael Scanlon**, Youth Advocate and Outreach Specialist, CT STRONG, Advanced Behavioral Health, Inc. and Youth Advisory Board CORE Team Member, mscanlon@abhct.com

**Emily Ball**, Youth Speaker, Disability Specialist, and Youth Advisory Board CORE Team Member, emily317@gmail.com

**Denver Jones**, Youth Advocate, Public Speaker, Youth Advisory Board Member, jonesdenver18@gmail.com

**Jake Shumbo**, Youth Speaker, Youth Advisory Board Member, Youth Advisory Council Member, State Advisory Council Member, jakeshumbo15@gmail.com

**Beth Reel**, Transition Coordinator, Youth Advisory Board Coordinator, REACH Grant Director, CT Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), breel@cpacinc.org
Thank You!

NTACT
National Technical Assistance Center on Transition
CT Secondary Transition Community of Practice
CORE Team Members/Supporters

Past Members:
Dr. Patricia Anderson
Patti Clay
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Scott Kupis
Lisa Paragone
Jessica Monahan
Robin Tousey-Ayers

Supporters:
Bryan Klimkiewicz
John Flanders

Current Members:
Alycia Trakas
Missy Wrigley
Karin McMahon
Amy Norton
Nicholas Gelbar
Lois Eldridge
Emily Ball
Karen Hensley
Tanya Lawrence
Jake Shumbo
Michael Scanlon
Allison Kopie

Beth Reel
Tim Doyle
Myra Scott
Andrew Arboe
Brian K. Smith
Thank you
Goal: We will increase districts’ knowledge of practices to increase student involvement in the transition planning process.

Increase % of students participating in/facilitating PPT (IEP) meetings.
Focus Area: Student Development Benchmarks

Goal: We will increase opportunities across the state for students with disabilities to participate in co-curricular, extracurricular, and community activities by creating a youth advisory board.
Jake Shumbo

“I want to leave you with this:

**NEVER, EVER**, I mean **EVER** underestimate your students’ abilities,

**Overestimate us!**

Set high Goals!

Push yourself to push us.

Challenge us

Challenge yourself

Believe in your students

Believe…..In…..Your…..Self.”
Jake Shumbo

Hello, my name is Jake Shumbo.

At age 13, I sustained a traumatic brain injury.... A...WHOLE...NEW..WORLD was opened up to me....

A world where the easiest tasks became monumental.

In this new world, I could either stay quiet and let decisions be made without me.....

or I could speak up and be an advocate for myself.

I chose the latter.

I didn’t do this alone.

I’ve had amazing support from my family,
Jake Shumbo

my team in high school...

and now at my transition program at LEARN in East Lyme, CT.

I have a voice.

I now lead my PPT meetings.

I am fully supported.

Being part of the PPT and the planning discussions

is so important, ....after all... it is all about ME!
Jake Shumbo

Since I do have a great support structure. I’ve been exposed to different leadership opportunities.

- I’m a member of the CT Youth Advisory Board – which has allowed me to be part of this amazing conference.

- I’m a student representative on the State of Connecticut Special Advisory Committee for Special Education – working with officials from all over the state on topics that impact Special Education

- I was a presenter at the 2018 Back to School Conference for ALL Connecticut Special Education Directors and Administrators – where I shared my thoughts on the importance of the student voice.

It really makes me proud to have the opportunity to speak on behalf of students that might not have the chance.
PLEASE, NEVER give up on your child or student.

Listen to what they have to say, and make.. them.. part.. of the planning process

This is their future; they should be part of it!

Give them the opportunity and chance to speak up for themselves

Ask them questions, and more importantly, HEAR their answers

Don’t ever assume to know what they want

Support and empower them!
Jake Shumbo

I’ll stop for now even though I could probably go on all day!

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you…AND Thank you for listening.

It is an honor to be here representing the CT Youth Advisory Board.
Denver Jones
Michael Scanlon
Michael Scanlon

- Mental Health and Disability Advocate
- School experiences
  - Trauma - “invisible” struggles
  - Had both mainstream and alternative k-12 education
- Leadership - honor your way of showing up
- Supporting student leadership and voice
  - Honor your leadership style. No one way of leadership
  - Take into account follow through and reasons why behind decisions
- Encouraging youth to the planning table
  - Have the mindset of a hosting a party (creating an environment that is comfortable)
Emily Ball

https://youtu.be/hZowtOYCLi8
Questions?
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### Additional Resources

- **CT Transition Community of Practice**
  - [www.cttransition.org](http://www.cttransition.org)