



## **EPIISODE 49: THE PROCESS OF CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT**

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**Presenter:** Katie Wolf Whaley, Director, Supported Employment Training Project, University of Kentucky – Human Development Institute

**Host:** Barry Whaley - Project Director, Southeast ADA Center

**VOICE-OVER ANNOUNCER:** Blog Talk Radio. (Music) Welcome to WADA ADA Live! Talk radio. Brought to you by the Southeast ADA Center, your leader for information, training and guidance on the Americans with Disabilities Act, and here's your host.

**BARRY WHALEY:** Good afternoon, and welcome to WADA ADA Live! On behalf of the Southeast ADA Center, the Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University and the ADA National Network, I want to welcome you to episode 49 of ADA Live!

Hello, everybody! I'm Barry Whaley, the project director for the Southeast ADA Center and the host of today's show. October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. On today's episode of ADA Live, we will discuss Customized Employment, a flexible process that personalizes the employment relationship between a job seeker and an employer. In Customized Employment, a job seeker with a significant disability is matched with an employer's very specific job needs in a way that benefits both the employer and the job seeker, regardless of pre-existing job descriptions.

And before we begin, as a reminder, ADA Live! listening audience, you can submit your questions about Customized Employment at any time at [ADALive.org](http://ADALive.org).

It's my pleasure now to introduce today's speaker, she is my friend, she's my colleague, and happens to also be my beautiful wife, Katie Whaley. Katie is the Principal Investigator and Director of the Supported Employment Training Project at the University of Kentucky's Human Development Institute. In her role she coordinates training and technical assistance for service providers and presents on personalized employment supports for people with disabilities across the state, as well as nationally. Katie is the President of the Kentucky APSE, the Association of People Supporting Employment First, and sits on the national board of directors. Katie has a Bachelor of

Arts degree from Ohio Wesleyan University and a Master of Social Work from the University of Kentucky. So, Katie, I want to welcome you to our show. It seems that our personal life and professional life have collided again.

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** Yes, it has. Thanks so much for having me today.

**BARRY WHALEY:** It's great for you to be here. Our listeners may have heard about customized employment but they may not know a lot about it, so let's begin with talking about what's the difference between customized employment and just going out and getting a job?

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** Well, customized employment really is it's a different way of getting a job, and as you said, this is National Disability Employment awareness month. And sometimes I ask myself, why do we have such a month? And I think a lot of it is because the employment numbers for people who have disabilities are just too low. There's a lot of confusion around how to interpret the unemployment numbers for people with disabilities so they hear different things, but according to the August 2017 numbers published by Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy, the unemployment rate for people without disabilities is 4.4 percent and the unemployment rate for people with disabilities is 8.4 percent. That's double, but even more important are the labor force participation numbers. These tell us that among people without disabilities 68.8 percent -- almost 70 percent -- of people are active in the labor force. However, only 20.5 percent of people with disabilities are participating in the labor force now. That's 20 percent versus 70 percent, so clearly we need to do something different to help more people with disabilities enter the workforce, and customized employment is one such strategy to help move in that direction.

So rather than competing for an open position against everyone else looking for a job, customized employment, like you said, is that flexible process that matches what a job seeker has to offer with the work needs of a business in a way that benefits both. It's really based on that individual match of the strengths, conditions and interests of the job seeker and the identified unique business needs of that employer.

It's easy to think about employment in traditional ways. You know, this is a job this is an opening you apply for that job. You compete with others, you get the job, and then it's easy to think -- well, I know what I do for a living. You know what my spouse does and what my friends do, and I'm just not sure that I see my son or daughter with a disability being able to compete for those kind of jobs. Maybe he just won't work.

Customized employment allows us to shift our thinking from competition to contribution. Rather than - How can she compete for a job and get one? We can think -- Well, what does she have to contribute? What does she have to offer to an employer? And then we find a business that needs what it is she has to offer, and we

customize or create a job that meets the needs of everyone. It begins with the idea that everybody can work. Everybody has something to offer that is worthy of pay.

**BARRY WHALEY:** That's interesting and I like how you put that. It is moving from that idea of competition to one of contributions. Looking at what unique skills, what gifts, what native talent somebody has and then matching them

to a specific need that an employer might have.

So that's interesting and it is a different way of thinking about employment and thinking about how people get work. I'm curious - how can somebody with a significant disability benefit from customized employment?

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** Well, we know that oftentimes people with significant disabilities get left out of the workforce. When they have, especially when they're seen as maybe not being able to do all of the components of a job description, even with reasonable accommodation. Or sometimes people get stuck in entry level service jobs where they can compete for the job and get it because there are so many openings in these kinds of jobs, but the tasks might not be the best fit for their interest or skills. And then too often there's always a job coach or somebody with them all the time, and they're just not able to be good at it because it's not that great fit. This shouldn't keep someone from having a good job.

So, customized employment really looks at those strengths and interests. What is it that this person has to offer, and then finds them a business that has need of it. So that they have more opportunities, greater opportunities for employment when we think of it in this different way.

This is a business deal - it's a way of getting the work needs of a business done in a different but more efficient or complete manner. So it opens up the work needs of a company in a way that allows for the creation or customization of a job, for that job description to be written. And in this way, the disability doesn't limit what someone can do, but we really figure out what that person can do. Then we target that in a way that allows them to offer that and be useful to employers so that they can meet their overall work demands.

**BARRY WHALEY:** it seems to me that what you describe is pretty logical, that we all have skills. We all have things we're good at, and it's just -- you know, we matched ourselves up over a period of -- a period of years, but here and now we have we have an opportunity to do that for other people, especially people who I would imagine it could be difficult to learn what those skills are. Significant disability can perhaps mask what somebody's unique skills are. Thank you. Can you tell us a little bit about how this works? Is there a process? Is there a formula for doing this well?

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** Sure. When customized employment is done well there definitely is a process that involves four steps: 1) discovery; 2) job search planning; 3) job development; and, 4) negotiation, and then some post-employment support. And it's the first step which you are referencing, usually referred to as discovery, that is really, really critical.

Because like you said, especially when someone has a significant impacted disability, it can often be hard for people to see beyond that to figure out what those skills or those interests might be. There's so much focus on taking care of someone or figuring other things out that work isn't always the first thing people think of. And so the first step of discovery is really critical.

Often this happens when someone has an employment specialist or service provider who's helping them think about work and get into the workforce and support them in doing so. It's often this employment specialist whose job it is - that would go about discovering who this person is - hence the name "discovery." So really figuring that out. And the idea of this discovery process has come kind of as a result of years of a standardized vocational valuation. So for years the standardized vocational evaluations have told us a lot of the things that someone with a significant instability can't do, right? But this process is all about figuring out what someone can do, and so it's really unique to that person.

And so this employment specialist would spend time with him and observe their routines, talk to him and other people who know him well and can offer insight. There's certainly no need to reinvent the wheel of who someone is, so talk to family, to friends, to teachers, to neighbors who might know him. You know, asking people questions. Rather than where do you think you want to work? But - how do you spend your day? and what kind of things do you like to do? - or asking other people those kinds of questions about that person as well they get lots of different perspectives to start to pull bits of information together.

And it could be that someone has a particular interest in cars or in being around children or they like to work in an office. But if someone hasn't been out of school. And you know, lots of times teachers will know that student. So, when is that student at their best? Was it when he was given extra time or when he had a quiet place to do work where there weren't a lot of other distractions or other people? Or is he the kind of kid that he did best when there were lots of other kinds of people around?

You know, if someone often has trouble focusing on something, well, where is that exception, and what kind of things does he focus on best? When is this person most engaged? And so once we learn those kind of things, then it's that employment specialist's job to translate that into what that could mean at a work site.

You know, if someone is most focused and engaged when doing something he really likes and we know that he really likes cars, then we want to find a place of business that involves cars and where other people appreciate cars and have that same interest. If someone likes to work with his hands, is he mechanically inclined? Does he know a lot about cars and can he verbally share that knowledge? Or does he prefer to be around other people who have that same interest and the tasks might not be specifically with the car but with other parts of the business, but because there's that common interest you're going to see more come out of this person and have them be more engaged with their coworkers and you see that motivation and that attention. These are the kind of things that help us narrow down what he might be able to do and to offer a business, and where we start to look. So, you know, we can find what that business has need of that might fit with this person.

So the next step, then, is the job search planning. So once we know some things about this person and what we're looking for, then the employment specialist needs to locate a business that has a need of that in their community, which can sometimes feel like a bit of a needle in the haystack. But it really needs to be targeted and so it definitely is a specific process.

You know, hopefully that employment specialist is engaged in their local business community and attends networking events and knows about lots of different companies and can go in and learn more about that so she can pull from her own working knowledge of businesses. But she also wants to pull from the job seeker's network or their family members or other people around them.

You know, Barry, so often it's not just what you know, it's who you know that helps you get a job. So who does this job seeker and his family and friends and neighbors know that might fit with what we're looking for that can help that employment specialist get in the door?

You know, if I was working with a job seeker who really pays attention to looking nice and cares a lot about personal appearance and seems like there could be an interest in working in a salon. Well, I would go have a conversation with the person who's cut my hair for years. I could pick her brain about different salons in town. What's the culture like there? What do they require of employees? What tasks go on that I might not know about -- I mean, I know people cut and color hair, and they do nails and those kind of things, but I've never worked in a salon. So I'd want to know what else does it take for this business to run smoothly that the typical customer might not be aware of? Because sometimes those are the tasks that we really want to learn about. And so it's using our networks and then going in and asking those businesses more questions.

**BARRY WHALEY:** That's interesting. So just to kind of recap, the process begins with as you said, discovery. Discovery to me is digging deeper. It's going beyond the surface of what you want to do for a job to - How do you spend your day? What are your interests? What unique skills do you have? - and then when we begin that job search planning process, then, rather than just going out and filling out applications or knocking on a door and saying, "Hey, you got any jobs?" Right?

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** Right.

**BARRY WHALEY:** It's more of a targeted process. That's interesting. So I'm targeting specific skills. I should say, specific tasks at a business that align with what I've learned [unclear] about someone. Would you agree?

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** Oh, yes, definitely. I mean filling out applications and just hoping that someone calls you back is not the most effective way to get a job for anybody, especially someone who has a significant disability and is trying to compete in that open labor market. So it's really about targeting that particular employer for more detailed conversations.

**BARRY WHALEY:** I think that's interesting. Thank you so much. So let's stay on this theme of discovery for a minute, and you know we've kind of touched on it. Digging deeper, but why would that be important or why is discovery the center stone or where we begin this process? Can you talk a little about that?

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** Sure. I think it's the basis of it because it's the foundation for everything that comes next. And you're right, what you said earlier, that someone with -- especially someone with a significant impacted disability can be hard to get to know, and be hard to figure things out for, and oftentimes there's so much to take into account. So it's not just what's the specific skill set this person might have. You know, do they have the use of their hands and fine motor skills? Do they have the interest, and attention to detail, and making things look beautiful that they want to share and be able to do something with? Do they have this this interest in cars, and talking about cars, and collecting model cars?

But, then also it's those support needs. So, what is this person going to need to be in place so that they're going to be able to be successful? You know, so then if someone has a lot of sensory issues, and so the lighting might be a big deal in fluorescent lighting, and the noise that it makes is going to keep them from focusing. Now we're going to need to find a business that isn't just a big room with lots of noise and that kind of lighting - where there can be a quieter environment, where someone would be able to wear noise cancelling headphones if they need to.

if you have someone who really does best when she's being encouraged and there's positive support around her, then we want to find a business that has a culture where people look out for each other and they let to know when you're doing a good job. And I think, as we all know, some businesses have that and some businesses just don't. And that doesn't mean there's anything wrong with that business, but it's not going to be the best fit for this person. And so we really - we can never guarantee success, but the more we know about that person and how she can be successful somewhere, the more we can try and stack the deck in her favor by really targeting a particular business and knowing that company's culture, their routines and all of the other things that go along with that workplace that could lead to success and support for that person.

**BARRY WHALEY:** Right. So those are kind of the conditions of work. So it isn't just that I have this unique skill or I have this interest, but it's also the environmental concerns and, quite honestly, in full discovery. Both Katie and I work in the same office building and I control the thermostat; and I like it a lot cooler than she does. So you know right there, that's an example of a condition of employment, and I try to be courteous when I can.

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** Sometimes. [laughter]

**BARRY WHALEY:** Katie -- I know. Thanks, Katie.

ADA Live! listening audience, if you have questions about Customized Employment or any of our other ADA Live topics, you can submit your questions at any time at our online forum at [ADALive.org](http://ADALive.org). I want to pause for a minute now for a word from our sponsor, the University of Kentucky's Human Development Institute.

**VOICE-OVER ANNOUNCER:** We use research, education and the power of the voices of people with disabilities to ensure our world is for all. The Human Development Institute brings together people to creatively answer complex questions that help everyone grow, thrive and age in place in their communities. Together we are building a stronger tomorrow today.

**BARRY WHALEY:** Hi, folks. I want to welcome you back to our show. Again, we're talking to Katie Whaley, Principal Investigator and Director of the Kentucky Supported Employment Training Project at the University of Kentucky's Human Development Institute. We're talking about the process of Customized Employment.

Katie, how would someone figure out where to find a business that would be willing to customize a job for someone?

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** That's a great question, Barry. So that gets us into the next step of the process of customized employment. Right, so once you have - you know - you've learned a lot about this person. Like we said, what their skills and interests are but also those conditions for success, what's it going to take around this person for them to be successful, and we start planning out that job search phase.

Now that we have some targeted businesses identified, and hopefully a way to get your foot in the door and have a conversation, that employment specialist has really moved into what we call "job development negotiation." So now she should, you know, make those calls and introduce herself and set an appointment with that business. Someone - a business from that targeted list to really learn more about that company. Customized employment makes a lot of sense once you know all of the different pieces of what's going on. Certainly that employment specialist wouldn't just go in and presume to tell a business how they should staff their company without knowing very much about it. No one ever takes kindly to that kind of a thing. So she would need to learn a lot about the kind of work that happens there.

So it's doing what we might call, you know, some -- having some informational interview and then maybe moving into a job analysis or doing a needs analysis to learn more about that business - how it works, what's important there, you know, and then learning how that work really gets done. Are there things that don't happen as often as they need them to? Are there places that caused backups or bottlenecks in that business? Are there just sitting around - you know - tasks that wait for someone to have the time to get around to them?

I think probably most of us can think of things that are just always at the bottom of our "To Do" list that we know we need to get to but there's always other things bumping up the priority. So when do those tasks really get done? If we can identify those kinds of things, you know, then we're able to start putting some things together that might make sense for someone to do that work, and this is done through interviews with the people in the business, with hiring managers. Probably taking a tour of that company to see what it's really like there and see that work in progress. Because once you know the job seeker and then once an employment specialist learns about the business, ask those really important questions and get the feel for how things go, and sees things in progress. Then if it seems like it could be a good fit for both the job seeker and that business, then you start talking about, suggesting ideas for a position.

I know of a job that was in an industrial setting that was customized, and it really was because the employment specialist, she spent time there. You know, she spent several hours asking some questions, but then just observing the work that happened, and she noticed that the guys who were welders and tool and die makers - these highly skilled tradesmen - that they were from time to time being pulled away from their

regular tasks to make this smaller piece in a different part of the shop that was needed. And this happened at random times, and often they would chat with people on the way there and on the way back. And, well, I live in Kentucky, so chances are good they were usually talking about basketball, which sometimes can take a little while to talk about the game that happened last night.

So she went to the manager and asked, "So what do they do when they go over into this corner?" - and learned about it, and, you know, she asked - "Have you ever thought about hiring someone just to do this one piece?" And they said, "Well, no" and she said, "Well, would you ever consider it?" and they did.

You know, they didn't have to consider it, but they did, and the more they thought about it -- if we hire him to focus on this one part of what's going on -- and he came in, I'll tell you, at part time and above minimum wage. Now it wasn't as much as what the welders and tool and die makers were making, but he didn't have that highly specific skill set that they had - right? - that warranted that higher wage. So he came in making a fair wage and could focus on that piece of the business while the skilled tradesmen could focus on that skilled work that they were doing, and in the end that business realized this benefited their bottom line, right? It made sense for them to hire someone to do this one component of the work, and they just hadn't thought about it until this employment specialist came in and mentioned it, and brought it up, right?

This is a young man who really partly due to the impact of his disability, he's very particular about how things are done. He really appreciates routine, and he wants to have everything just so and exactly right, and to have it done over and over again, and he likes to focus on one task all day. And, you know, social skills are not his greatest strength so he wasn't going to be going around doing a lot of chitchat with other people in the business. And once he got in that job, this business actually bumped him up to full time because they realized that their company ran more smoothly and efficiently because of this customized position and what it did to the whole work force around them. But it wouldn't happen if that employment specialist didn't spend some time in that business, learned about it and then said: "Well, have you ever considered hiring someone just for that particular task? Right? It's all about thinking about things in new ways and doing what makes sense.

Then the final phase of this process would be post-hire support. So when we're talking about hiring someone with a significant impacted disability getting a job, their employment specialist - who knows that person and now has spent time knowing that company - they're there to make sure that things go well. They want to connect them to the people who would typically train a new employee so they get trained by the folks that really do that work. But they're there to make sure things go smoothly and to offer

some additional help and assistance in helping them learn that job if and when that is needed.

You know, over time they can be there to help renegotiate some tasks. Maybe some things are working really well, and while this isn't going quite like we thought it would, and how can we think about this in a different kind of way. Or, all right, you know, he's really good at this and now we want to take on some more tasks. What are some other things in the business that he can do as well? So that employment specialist can really continue to be a resource for that - that employer over time.

**BARRY WHALEY:** That's interesting. So a couple of things that caught my attention. So, just as in discovery we're digging deeper to learn about some of these abilities, we're also digging deeper to learn more about the needs of the business, and getting to know that business on a deeper level and what their needs are. The other thing that I found really interesting, and I think you flushed this out really well, is we're talking about people doing critical tasks, things that are necessary for the business. This isn't "make work." This isn't, you know, I'm going to put the nut on the bolt. I'm going to take the nut off the bolt. These are things that need to be done. But they are done in a way that. Like with your example is you get distracted from the essential job function, which I find really interesting.

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** Yeah.

**BARRY WHALEY:** You know, the other thing I want to mention, too - just to kind of bring it home to the Americans with Disabilities Act - having that job coach present on the job, that job coach himself or herself, they in fact are the reasonable accommodation for that person to be successful on the job, don't you think?

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** Oh, yeah, definitely.

**BARRY WHALEY:** So, I'm curious - we've talked about digging deeper both with the person - both with - and then with the business. What's the takeaway here? How does the business benefit?

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** So each business is going to benefit in its own way, right? In that example I just gave, they benefitted because the higher skilled, higher paid workers focus on those tasks and the business ends up making - you know, it helps their bottom line.

I've also seen a customized job in a child care center and they benefited by having someone come in on a part-time basis to read books to kids in different classrooms, right? Teachers had so much paperwork to do that they just didn't have the time to get down and read to kids as much as they wanted. And so this woman who uses a

wheelchair and actually does not speak was hired to read to kids. She had access to assistive technology, which means her local vocational rehabilitation agency was able to purchase a device for her where her support staff could pre-record children's books, and she uses the head switch to activate the device and have it read to the children. So one of the kids that was designated to be that day's page turner - that's her role for the day, and she holds the actual book and turns the page when she hears the preprogrammed beep.

So now, not only do the kids have more access to books (and the benefits of that are well documented in the early childhood research), but this center has also increased the diversity of its staff. And when a child care center is being scored in accreditation and certification, diversity is one of the things that's being looked at as being really important. And, you know, then there's the benefit of exposing children to diverse people and toys and music, are also well documented. So that added diversity is really adding to that business in some important ways, and so there's lots of different ways that businesses can benefit from this. The hope really is that they are able to do the work that needs - have the work that needs to be done there and to be - have it done in a more efficient manner. And so the benefits really vary, but it has to benefit in order for this to be successful.

I think it's really important to realize this isn't charity. This isn't pity. This isn't - Hi, I help people with disabilities get a job - Could you just, please, really give her a chance? This is - I'm representing this person who's looking for work and this is what they have to offer, and I want to help your business run better. How can I help you find employees that are going to be a real asset to your company?

**BARRY WHALEY:** Great. We talked a little bit about the benefits the business receives - and it seems kind of obvious, but will you talk a little bit about how the employee benefits?

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** Yeah, I mean - I guess I think first and foremost the employee benefits by having a job and earning a fair wage, you know, and just because the job description didn't exist before this customized employment. Because it often is negotiating a new position that wasn't there before, but they're now a regular employee of that business.

And too often people with disabilities, especially people with significant disabilities, they sit on the sidelines, right? They might be in a program for people with disabilities and spend most of their time just in that program, in that center with other people with disabilities rather than out in the community sharing what they have to offer. So, you know, too often people are seen for that disability rather than for their personal value and what it is that they have to offer the world and be appreciated for.

So it really it comes along with a paycheck, but then it often comes along with friendships, right? I mean, I am friends with some of the people that I work with. That's where I have interaction with people, you know, and feel, you know - I know in my job I feel like I have something to offer and value and there is some self-worth that comes from that. In our society, so often - you know, when we first meet people we ask them their name and that next question is - What do you do? Customized employment allows more people to have an answer to that question. [It] allows folks that might otherwise be seen as unemployable to get a job so they can talk about what they do and be seen in that way when they're meeting other new people.

I know a guy who works for a public radio station in a customized position and so he reshelves music and enters information into this large database, tracking what gets done there. And, you know, it's work that really needed to get done but it was always kind of at the bottom of people's to do list. And when asked what he likes about his job, his first response was that he likes to get paid and then he listed all the people that he works with who he now counts as friends. So this job has really enriched his life in lots of different ways.

**BARRY WHALEY:** It is interesting. You know, you mentioned the obvious question -- what do you do? Because that's kind of a mental shorthand, a way that we assign value to people as through the work they do. So here, you know, people are defined by the work they do and not defined by a disability, so that's excellent. So if I were an employer, where could I go to learn more about customized employment?

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** So customized employment has gotten a lot more attention lately and there are lots of places to get more information. You can find a lot of information online, of course. The Department of Labor, their Office of Disability Employment Policy has all kinds of fact sheets about customized employment and also has videos with more examples of customized jobs, and some of these are geared to providers of employment services and some of them are specifically geared toward employers to hear what other businesses - how they've benefitted and how they negotiated jobs within their own company. Because so often we can see it, it just clicks and it makes more sense to us.

You know, here in Kentucky, where I work we created a video called "Customized Employment in Kentucky" that's available on YouTube and it highlights three different people and the customized jobs that they have. We also have a YouTube channel called "The Employment Files" and it showcases different customized positions -- because it really lets people see different ways that businesses have done this, because while there is a set process to how you figure out customized employment. Like I said, it is really done differently within each business, so the more we can see those examples, it really is helpful.

Every state has a vocational rehabilitation agency and so your local VR, as it's often called, your local "voc rehab" office, will probably know about agencies that would provide customized employment and could talk with your business more about that.

You mentioned that I sit on the board of Kentucky APSE. I think APSE chapters - and you can find more information at [apse.org](http://apse.org) - that APSE chapter will know of providers in your area that could help talk with you about customized employment and how that might be a really good fit for your business.

Lots of universities also have either a Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities or other disability-related departments that might know about opportunities for customized employment, and people who are familiar with the process that could help you do that as well, and even better -- to connect you with other businesses in your own local area that have gone through this process and have seen that it's been really helpful. Because, you know, other providers that do customized employment know a lot about what it is they do. If you're a hiring manager or a business owner it's always so good to hear from other business owners how this has really worked for them and made a lot of sense.

**BARRY WHALEY:** There is a lot of good information. I appreciate that you. We're about out of time. So closing, you know, your crystal ball and tell us what the future looks like for customized employment.

**KATIE WOLF WHALEY:** It would be wonderful to see into the future and really know the answer to that. I think my hope would be that more people become familiar with this idea. And the more we hear about it, the more it really just makes sense and we're not so structured into those traditional ways that we've thought about applying and competing for jobs. I just heard someone talking about a job that they knew that was negotiated for someone back in the early [1990's]. This isn't new, but it's finally been written in some federal regulation and it's getting a lot more attention now. But in my opinion, customized employment is doing what makes sense, and as we have more and more examples of it people really see the wide array of possibilities that are out there, including people with a significant amount of disability.

And we just think for everybody, you know. We start to ask kids with disabilities when they're young - so what do you want to do when you grow up? - And have everybody start to think that work is that expectation, not just for my daughter that doesn't have a disability, but for my child who happens to have a disability as well. That it really opens up work possibilities for more people. That's my hope.

**BARRY WHALEY:** Thank you so much. Listeners, our guest today has been Katie Whaley from the University of Kentucky Human Development Institute. Katie, I want to thank you so much for being with us today.

This episode and all previous ADA episodes are available on our website at [ADALive.org](http://ADALive.org). The episodes are archived in a variety of formats, including streamed audio from our website, accessible transcripts of audio, and also are available to download as podcasts to listen at your convenience.

I want to thank you, our ADA Live! listening audience, for tuning in today. We are thankful for your support and listening in the series for this ADA Live! broadcasts.

Reminder: You can submit any questions on any of these topics by going to [ADALive.org](http://ADALive.org). Join us November 1st for our next episode of ADA Live! We will be talking with Rebecca Williams and Cheri Hofmann about Service Animals. If you have questions about the Americans with Disabilities Act, contact your center at 1-800-949-4232. And remember, all calls are free and they're confidential.

**VOICE-OVER ANNOUNCER:** (Music) Thank you for listening to ADA Live! Talk radio. Brought to you by the Southeast ADA Center. Remember to join us the first Wednesday of each month for another ADA topic, and you can call 1-800-949-4232 for answers to your ADA questions.

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