



**Summary:** Position Paper- Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) Employment Supports - Funding for Students with Disabilities

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**Abstract:** This document is directed to the Honourable John Milloy, Minister of Community and Social Services, Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). It presents a review, an analysis and recommendations regarding the ODSP funded program which provides employment services to students and graduates with disabilities.

## **Executive Summary**

### **Overview of Author: JobStart**

JobStart has been serving the GTA since 1980 as a not for profit agency providing a range of employment and training services to job seekers including adults, internationally training professionals, newcomers to Canada, persons with disabilities, students and youth. JobStart is funded by three levels of government and the United Way of Toronto with an annual budget of approximately \$4.8 million and 45 staff.

Since 1991 JobStart has been providing services for students with disabilities. These services were enhanced in 2004 through the implementation of an ODSP program for post secondary students and recent graduates with disabilities. All three of JobStart's locations are wheelchair accessible with elevators where appropriate. Software and hardware accommodations are available for clients and staff.

JobStart has fostered strong relationships with many of the colleges and universities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and continues to develop these relationships while generating new referral sources.

### **Consulting Organizations:**

JobStart recognizes and thanks the following organizations who collected and reported data and consulted on the Position Paper. All were previous partners with JobStart to operate a program for persons with disabilities:

- Alternative Youth Centre for Employment (AYCE)
- St. Stephen's Community House
- Youth Employment Services YES

### **Terms of Reference**

This report was produced to review and recommend changes to the ODSP fee for service (FFS) funded program (the Program) which provides employment services to students with disabilities. Inefficiencies have developed over the life of the Program for a variety of reasons. These include, but are not limited to, the implications of the funding model, target client characteristics and labour market influences, all of which are explored throughout this Position Paper.

### **Methods of Analysis**

The report was prepared through the following processes:

- Labour market analysis
- Current program analysis and implications
- Client survey
- Program staff documentation of sample client service delivery and process time tracking
- Preparation of pro forma funding recommendations
- Program statistical reporting through charts and graphs based on historical program data
- Funding model and service delivery framework review and recommendations
- Infrastructure recommendations to enhance service delivery and outcomes

## Key Findings

1. The current funding model places financial and operational strain on the Program's viability due to:
  - The significant discrepancy between the timing of incurring costs to deliver employment services versus the payment of FFS revenues from ODSP.
  - The administrative burdens placed upon the service provider to record and reconcile client approvals, milestone events and retention (on-going monthly) employment records.
  - ODSP Income Support and non-Income Support clients are subject to different payment schemas in the Program.
  - The Program has adopted a Deficit Avoidance Protocol to share revenues among the participating Program agencies, at a less than optimal percentage distribution, in order to balance the Program budget. Program delivery has been compromised through significant cost cutting over time.
  
2. There are critical and unique requirements for providing employment services to students and recent graduates with disabilities in today's labour market:
  - Employer readiness to hire students with disabilities is at various stages due to reasons such as accommodation requirements, work interruption uncertainty and a general lack of understanding with respect to disability awareness, requirements and supports for persons with disabilities within the corporate culture. This has resulted in fragmented work experiences and a typically higher unemployment rate for students with disabilities than non-disabled peers.
  - Post secondary institutional support for students with disabilities varies widely.
  - Students with disabilities often embody a mindset of unease, lack confidence and life skills, carry significant student debt or experience financial barriers as they approach employment. Many clients establish a sense of comfort in the familiar education setting and often extend their education over extended periods to reduce course loads.

## Recommendations

1. Introduce new funding milestones to support pre-employment services as follows:
  - New Placement Milestone - \$3,000 at 2 weeks cumulative employment
  - 4 Week Placement Milestone - \$2,000 at 4 weeks cumulative employment
  - 12 Week Placement Milestone - \$7,000 at 12 weeks cumulative employment
  - Allow clients, who were under employed prior to being approved for ODSP Employment Services, to be considered for the above milestone payments when advanced employment placement is achieved (i.e. employment in their field of study) or if there is an increase in number of hours employed
  
2. Introduce new Retention funding terms as follows:
  - Monthly Retention Revenue \$300 per month for all Income Support (IS) and non Income Support (Non- IS) clients
  - Retention revenue is awarded each month to a maximum of 36 months beginning in the first month of employment
  
3. Introduce funding for Placement Training Incentives as follows:
  - Allow clients the opportunity to gain work experience, skill level assessments and establish connections through offering employer incentives, also referred to as Placement Training Incentives
  - Incentive levels may vary based on the complexity of job skill level, length of training and employer commitment

4. Introduce funding for Client Reporting Incentives as follows:
  - IS and Non-IS clients should be required to report monthly earnings to the service provider within 10 days of the end of each month worked
  - Introduce an ODSP funded incentive to reward clients for timely earnings reporting. It is recommended that clients who report earnings on a timely basis, for 6 consecutive months of work, be paid a \$500 incentive; the maximum incentive to any individual will be \$3,000 which represents 6 payments over 36 months of enrolment in the Program
  - This incentive could theoretically assist clients to fund on-going education and reduce financial barriers.
5. Introduce Program Start-Up Funding as follows:
  - Provide Grant based funding of up to \$100,000 to service providers during their first year of providing services
  - Allow use of Grant funding to establish infrastructure such as staffing, website design, technology purchases, internal system design and support and marketing material
  - Initial Grant funding allows service providers additional support while establishing a pipeline of clients to generate milestone and retention payments during future contract years
6. Revise the Service Delivery Framework as follows:
  - Staffing recommendations include full time staffing of one Manager, four Job Coach/Job Developers (one for each of the four quadrants of the GTA) and one Administrative Assistant, 20% part time Director supervision and 10%-20% full time equivalents for Information Technology and Financial Services support
  - Establish service targets to set funding in each FFS recommended category – milestones, retention, incentives
  - Establish a referral network within the GTA colleges and universities
7. Revise the Program Infrastructure as follows:
  - Improve service provider access to the ODSP system and allow the Program Manager and all staff as approved users regardless of the number of licenses available
  - Improve ODSP reconciliation timeframes to one month
  - Improve revenue recognition process through monthly service provider billings to ODSP for FFS and Incentive Revenues
  - Streamline access to ODSP personnel for client approvals and to resolve client revenue issue reconciliations

## **Benefits**

1. The recommended, revised Program for students with disabilities will foster an effective management and customer centered approach by sharing of client case load, employer leads and contacts, and community demands so that ultimately, client focus and accessibility is optimized to achieve greater employment success.
2. The revised Program will incent service provider staff, improve administrative time management and lead to decreased staff retention issues which exist today.
3. Employment services for students with disabilities will become more accessible and standardized within the GTA.

## **Follow Up**

JobStart would be pleased to discuss and present this Position Paper in a Power Point format to key MCSS representatives.

**Position Paper**  
**ODSP Funding for Students with Disabilities**  
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## 1. Overview of the ODSP program which provides services to students with disabilities (“the Program”)

Four community-based employment agencies across Toronto came together in 2004 to form a partnership to provide pre-employment and job development services for students who have a verifiable disability. These agencies were JobStart, Alternative Youth Centre for Employment (AYCE) - a division of Tropicana Community Services, St. Stephen's Community House and Youth Employment Service (YES). JobStart was selected by these agencies as the Lead Agency for the Program and held the funding contract with ODSP. The Program's mandate was to provide extensive employment assistance to post-secondary students and recent college and university graduates with disabilities in the Greater Toronto Area.

In 2007, ODSP revised the funding model as it moved from grant based funding to a fee for service (FFS), results-based funding framework. The FFS model, as it exists today, provides monetary compensation dollars to service providers premised on strict definitions of employment success.

The current funding model (“the model”) places financial strain on the Program's viability:

- There is a large discrepancy between the timing of matching agency costs incurred to place clients versus the FFS revenues paid upon clients achieving employment milestones.  
The model does not take into consideration the extensive preparation time and the considerable resource investment necessary to serve specific client needs in order to achieve the ODSP funding milestones. Significant Program staff time is incurred to assess and assist the client, often in complex accommodation circumstances, with preparation of job search tools, interview skills, arranging job interviews and accommodation as necessary for the interview and coaching the client through the process and explore career options. Two to three months time may elapse prior to an initial job placement and a further six to nine months to reach 13 cumulative weeks of employment, for a total elapsed time of up to twelve months. The current ODSP funding model awards \$1,000 and \$6,000 milestone payments after six weeks and thirteen weeks of cumulative employment respectively. JobStart must invest in the staff time and administration costs during this client service period of up to nine months before receiving the bulk of remuneration. The average cost of a Job Coach/Job Developer alone for three months is approximately \$15,000 without taking into consideration supervision and overhead costs. If a staff placed approximately two clients into an ideal, continuous employment situation after one month of job search activities, the service provider would recover their costs approximately four months after the cash outlay was made by the service provider.
- FFS payments in the current funding model are cumbersome, complicated and difficult to independently verify and forecast and rely on client cooperation to report earnings to the service provider. ODSP payments vary depending on whether a client is on ODSP Income Supports. The cost to service providers to successfully place a client with an employer does not vary according to whether a client is on ODSP Income Supports or not. The retention income stream is

unpredictable, with significant fluctuations and results in the need for budgets to be highly flexible to accommodate variable FFS funding.

- The ODSP systems to track and award revenues are reconciled three to four months after the events have occurred. This lack of timeliness creates a need for the service provider to estimate monthly retention revenue earned to the best of their ability, then tediously scrutinize and reconcile the retention report each month and discuss all discrepancies with ODSP. The service provider inputs all information in the ODSP database by March 31 to estimate ODSP Fee for Service funding for the audited financial statements. This revenue estimate is subsequently reconciled and verified by ODSP during July. This considerable lag time throughout the year, and at year end, requires significant overhead to manage and reconcile with ODSP and oftentimes, the service provider relies completely on ODSP payments with no ability to verify their accuracy.
- The Program's service delivery framework has remained intact while compromises have been made to the required staffing and management complement and promotion and operating costs due to the above noted financial pressures. These measures have affected results and furthered the need to reduce program costs and increase in-kind contributions. Since the inception of the Fee for Service funding structure the Program has adopted the deficit avoidance protocol to share revenues based on a less than optimal percentage distribution in order to balance the Program budget. Funding for core Program operational costs, such as rent and salaries, must first be established before important marketing, training and out-reach functions can be undertaken to successfully deliver services.

Due to the financial inadequacies of the ODSP funding model to support a balanced budget, combined with the complexities of delivering services within the Program structure, the contract with ODSP was dissolved and renegotiated to take effect January 1, 2012 with a temporary, three month revised funding framework.

## **2. Labour Market Analysis**

A review of Program experience and market literature brings forth the following facts:

- The overriding challenge, inherent in the Program objectives, is the uniqueness of the service for students with disabilities and the various states of employer readiness to hire these clients who may require accommodation, have multiple disabilities, complex social issues and often lack of self-esteem and perseverance in navigating the labour market.
- Research involving persons with disabilities focuses on factors such as recruitment practices, quality of employment, workplace accommodations, and disability management strategies (Statistics Canada, 2006; Piggot, 2007). In contrast, there exists a scarcity of research in areas such as the degree to which people with disabilities retain their jobs and progress in their career. However, the various effects of disability management strategies and employment supports regarding job retention - the length of time an individual has stayed with an employer and how long a person has been attached to the labour force – consistently states that people with disabilities are more likely to experience voluntary or involuntary work interruptions than those without disabilities.

- Despite common misperceptions, many students with disabilities are ready, willing, and able to work, yet remain under-represented in the labour market (Lindsay, 2010). This may be due to such clients having accessibility issues, limited resources, for transportation, and generally finding it harder to secure work than non-disabled students. Post-secondary institutions largely do not provide employment specific services that directly address and consider the specific and individual needs of students with disabilities who are seeking employment. The number of youth with a disability enrolling in post-secondary studies has steadily increased since the early 1990s and this service gap represents a unique and important opportunity for coordinated service provision. Though several Toronto-area university and college campuses state they provide mentorship programs, panel speaker events, job shadowing opportunities and access to assistive aids for students with disabilities, it is clear from our survey that these services are perceived to be ineffective.
- Students with disabilities often feel a sense of comfort or safety while attending school. In many cases this changes as they approach employment with accommodation needs or feel a stigma associated with registering at an on-campus disability services office. Students with disabilities have cited a perceived fear that leaving school may result in a lack of accommodation supports to sustain their current lifestyle and physical and social well-being.
- Nearly 40 per cent of students with disabilities alter their post-secondary pursuits due to educational debt and/or financial barriers (Chambers et al, 2011). Students with a verified disability are permitted to take a lower course load yet still be considered full time. This can extend the time it takes to graduate and delay entrance into the labour market and translates into these students having less time than non-disabled students to begin earning regular full time wages. The age of graduation may be over thirty and renders such students ineligible for Summer Job Services Program assistance. Tailored employment assistance and job placement services for students with disabilities can partially offset the lag time to enter the work force and the high costs of attending post-secondary education through providing students with disabilities appropriate work opportunities and financial supports that they can use to pay for often expensive assistive aids and work-related support services.
- Youths with disabilities between the age of 15 and 24 often lag behind their peers in opportunities that permit and foster the accumulation of work experience, life skills and career readiness capabilities; this often referred to as the 'building blocks' of an independent life role (Gall et al, 2004; King et al, 2006).
- Canada entered a prolonged recession in late 2008 resulting in moderate to severe negative ramifications for almost all demographic groups, including youth who had recently graduated with a post secondary degree or were pursuing college or university studies (OECD, 2008). The economic downturn saw the youth unemployment rate surpassing 20% in Toronto in 2009, up from 15% one year earlier (Toronto Community Foundation, 2009). It is widely known that unemployment rates for youth with disabilities, possessing a post-secondary background, are typically much higher than non-disabled youth peers (Statistics Canada, 2006; Holmes and Silvestri, 2011).
- Elements such as an awareness of career options, job search support, managing work-related relationships, and knowing one's workplace rights and responsibilities are crucial for retained employment and career advancement.

These capacity building components increase possibilities for personal and economic growth through an initial employment placement to a secondary career advancement goal which is often the progression to stable employment experienced by persons with disabilities.

- The large number and extent of disabilities of clients has significant resource implications: different types of disabilities affect people's employment in various ways (Murphy, 2002; Burkhardt, 2003). Some disabilities are more 'episodic in nature' – such as psychiatric and mental disabilities. There is a large body of research that documents the interaction of particular disability types and the ability and/or difficulty of an individual with a disability to obtain a job and remain employed. According to Lindsay (2010), people with physical disabilities are among the top earners of people with disabilities. Persons with hearing disabilities have the highest labour force participation, while those with memory and psychological disabilities have the lowest. People with learning disabilities and those with physical disabilities are among the most successful in labour force participation; possibly due to disability management strategies in addition to advancements in computer software and assistive devices (Thornton, 1998; Statistics Canada, 2008).

### 3. Program Analysis

- A client survey (Appendix I - Methodology, Survey and Results) produced positive findings of the benefits to students accessing the Program. Client responses indicate they value and appreciate access to resources such as interpreters and staff guidance toward opportunities in relevant fields of study, setting career objectives, improving interview skills, resume and cover letter writing, navigating job application processes, setting reasonable expectations, establishing employer contacts and arranging accommodation as required to support the interview process. All of these services assisted them toward goals that would otherwise have been difficult to achieve on their own.
- Program staffing retention issues mounted to 150% staff turnover indirectly resulting from cost cutting requirements of the FFS funding model. At times, staff was required to divide their time between the Program and other agency programs as it was necessary to blend funding for the Program positions to sustain full time positions. Program administration, tracking, verifying and chasing client earnings and documentation continues to be a burden and detracts from the more important employment placement objectives. This Program is very specialized due to the staff requirement to understand the client base and provide a range of employment related services tailored to the distinct needs of students with disabilities. These factors have historically created significant stress for staff and turnover has resulted in inefficient Program delivery, lack of established client and employer relations and on-going staff training requirements.
- The number of clients accepted into the Program peaked in 2010 at 102.
- The level of education obtained by Program clients has been 79% university or college graduates during the period 2007 through 2011 (Figure 1).
- Many internship opportunity programs result in less than 13 weeks of employment where the student was paid a stipend or hired in a voluntary capacity. These internships are critical to students and under employed students with disabilities as they seek work experience aligning to a field of study or career path. Under

the current funding model service providers are not awarded funding to create these opportunities.

- From 2009 to 2011, annual Program deficits have been managed through cost reduction strategies, such as staffing and management reductions, in-kind management and rent contributions, postponing marketing plans and less than full expense absorption. The Program was required to call upon and put into practice, the Deficit Sharing Protocol (a process whereby Program agencies accepted a lesser share of revenues than those actually earned in order to assist with balancing the budget and actual performance). Such cost cutting measures have created increased agency administrative cost pressures and more importantly, less than optimal Program results. Funding pressures also limit the ability to incur travel costs for Program Job Developers to meet students at convenient locations, such as post secondary schools, to conduct assessments and provide job coaching, and restrict participation in community events to market the program to prospective clients and employers.
- Summer internship programs are less than 13 cumulative weeks in duration (the \$6,000 milestone payment requirement). The average government internship program is 340 hours or 9.7 weeks. Students with disabilities involved in the summer programs require more than one job to attain this 13 cumulative week milestone. The Summer Job Services Program is a viable alternative to help students with disabilities. The client would not meet 13 week cumulative date unless the employment continued beyond the summer, or another summer employment opportunity was found.
- The Activity Based Tracking Sheet results demonstrate the effort and lead time often required to place clients in multiple jobs to achieve the 6 and 13 week milestones (refer to Appendix II for Activity Based Tracking Methodology and Results). These pre-employment activities take up to 65 hours on average to complete for each client. This statistic does not take into consideration the further elapsed required by the client to work to achieve 13 cumulative weeks.
- The proportion of Non-Income Support (Non-IS) clients in the Program is significantly higher than Income Support (IS) clients and is steadily increasing each year. Total clients served over the life of the Program were 38% IS and 62% Non-IS (Figure 2). This larger Non-IS share of the client base, who were not accessing or utilizing ODSP funds, had the opportunity to generate Retention Revenue for the Program for 15 consecutive months following the initial 13 weeks of cumulative employment. Conversely, IS clients, those who were paid by ODSP, had the opportunity to generate Retention Revenue for 33 consecutive months. These IS and Non-IS differences assume that IS clients are in a worse position to obtain and maintain employment; this may not necessarily be true as there may be several unique reasons as to why one applies for IS and another does not. It is unclear why the FFS model places Non-IS clients at a disadvantage by an 18 month differential for employment services support as both have limited work experience and require extensive services and support.
- The historical composition of primary disabilities among Program clients has been 33% learning, 18% physical and 14% psychiatric (Figure 3). This implies that current Program clients have promising potential for employment success according to the market research explained earlier and assuming there is a sustainable funding and service design model.

- On average 28% of Program students with a disability self disclosed they have a secondary disability which can further complicate their ability to secure and retain employment.
- In many cases, clients are under employed in part time, casual jobs before applying for ODSP employment services. This renders these clients ineligible for the \$1,000 and \$6,000 milestone payments. These clients are classified as Retention Only-Job Advancement participants in the Program. Service providers must deliver the full suite of services to these clients, yet FFS revenues are awarded for retention months only.
- Historically, 53% of Program clients required two or more job placements (Figure 4), and of those 43% required three or more job placements, to reach the thirteen week milestone (Figure 5). Approximately 50% of clients required over seven months to reach the 13 week benchmark (Figure 6). The effort and cost to job develop multiple placements and document and report client earnings for ODSP over such prolonged periods, for more than half of Program clients, does not correlate to the current \$7,000 funding awarded at the 13 week placement milestone.
- Historically, 12.5% of total clients served did not reach the 13 week milestone (Figure 7). We have no on-going measure of the future success these individuals may have had in the workplace; similarly there is no measure or funding relating to the success of Program pre-placement services. Operating within the current Program funding structure, **all** program specific pre-placement activities such as client intake, liaising with ODSP, skills assessment, developing customized employment action plans and informing clients of appropriate employment opportunities are financially compensated via the sub-set of those clients who attain the 6 and 13 week employment milestones.
- A typical active case load, clients approved by ODSP and not on retention, for Program Job Coach/Job Developer staff is 20 new intakes and 55 open client files at any one time. Each new client requires in the range of 17.5-65 hours of pre-employment placement activities and clients on retention require monthly contact at a minimum. Program staff identified the inherent conflicting objectives of finding the quickest route to employment to finance Program costs while achieving service quality standards to ensure clients are provided with the support to equip them with the tool set for Program and future employment success and workplace autonomy. (Appendix II)
- During the grant based Program period, JobStart staff members were housed at the schools to provide onsite school accessibility for students; this facilitated internet access to the Program web based database, intake forms and job postings and follow up contacts through streamlined access for students to meet with Program Job Developers between and after classes.
- ODSP has taken eight to twelve weeks to approve a new client. This is due to an internal departmental process revision (ODSP modernization) as approval has been transferred from a central to a community based responsibility. Historically the ODSP approval process required two weeks. ODSP attended the service provider's premises monthly to review and approve clients, discuss client issues, review the database and perform file audits. This prior process streamlined the tracking of clients through the Program, including approval, milestone attainments and retention tracking.

- Historically, 20% of Program clients indicated that they require some form of accommodation; the highest percentage of those were ASL interpreters, assistive devices and physical accessibility. Accommodation can only be approved once a client is accepted into the Program. This process can be problematic; for example, a student who is deaf or hard of hearing cannot seek access and assistance if a staff person is not able to secure the support of an interpreter prior to being approved by ODSP and accepted. Accommodation funding should be designed to allow exceptional work-related disability supports to improve client access to services and comply with AODA legislation changes as they relate to Customer Service Standards.

#### **4. Funding Model, Service Delivery and Infrastructure Framework Recommendations**

- The financial strains resulting from the Program pressures above have led to creating an ideal cost model to operate and fund the Program.
- The Program is delivered in the Not for Profit Sector and the current FFS framework is inherently contrary to the balanced budget objective. It is recommended that the funding model include new categories to fund pre-employment services to ultimately balance the budget thereby funding the appropriate staffing model to successfully support clients.
- A review of the Program financials from 2007 through present indicates the highest FFS revenues generated were in 2008 at approximately \$500,000 while the program was funded through Grants with no reductions to the initial staffing model. During 2010, in the Program's second FFS year, funding was approximately \$380,000. This decreasing revenue was matched by severe cost cutting that year and thereafter, including reduced staffing, to avoid Program deficits. Over time these cost cutting measures eroded the service delivery framework required to produce consistent results.
- This model includes full cost recovery for direct client services, such as salary and benefits, rent and office expenses and indirect costs such as administration. These costs were estimated based on an historical analysis of Program delivery costs (Pro Forma Financial Statement - Appendix III).
- This recommended model will require supplemental revenues for the first year of the Program as service providers create the infrastructure and market awareness required to sustain the operating costs during start-up months. These costs would include staff computers, printers, service provider database and website enhancement and marketing materials.

## Recommended Staffing

Job Title	Hours Per Week	FTE %
Director, Programs & Services	7	20%
Manager, Programs & Services	35	100%
Job Developers (4)	35	100%
Administrative Assistant	35	100%
Manager, IT Services	3.5	10%
Technical Support	7	20%
Manager, Financial Services	3.5	10%

## Recommended Funding Framework

Funding Categories	Client/Contract Units	Contract Fees Per Unit	Total Contract Fees	Notes
2 Weeks/New Placements or Advancements	64	\$3,000	\$192,000	Awarded after 2 weeks cumulative employment in a new or advancement placement
4 Weeks	36	\$2,000	\$72,000	Awarded after 4 weeks/1 month cumulative employment
12 Weeks	28	\$7,000	\$196,000	Awarded after 12week/3 months cumulative employment
Retention Months	400	\$300	\$120,000	Retention Months begin in the first month of employment. Number of billable months and fee are consistent for both IS and NON IS clients.
Placement Training Incentives -	44	\$300	\$13,200	Clients work part time on subsidized placement, length of placement varies based on client need
Client Employment and Reporting Incentive	52	\$500	\$26,000	Clients report earnings to service provider 6 consecutive months worked
Accommodation Supports			\$10,000	Client aids and supports
			<b>\$629,200</b>	<b>Total Maximum Contract Value</b>

## Recommended Service Delivery Framework – Targets

Job Title	New Client Starts	2 Week Milestone	4 Week Milestone	12 Week Milestone	Retention Services
Program Manager	92	64	36	28	400
<b>Staff:</b> Job Developers (Total - 4)	23	16	9	7	100

## Recommended Infrastructure

- The ODSP System, which tracks Program data and fees for service, currently allows the service provider licenses for three staff to access the system. . This limited access is cumbersome as each staff manages a defined caseload and requires access to maintain client information and data for recognition of revenue. It is recommended that there be flexibility in the number of licenses and users, to include all Job Developers, the administrative assistant and the Program Manager; all to have access and initial training of the ODSP System.
- Implement an import function in the ODSP system (ESMS) for similar systems of other service providers to upload data to the database which will minimize errors and save staff time.
- Timely recording and reporting from ODSP is important to successfully manage Program results. Shortening ODSP's current reconciliation process, which is often three months behind, would improve the service provider's ability to react to discrepancies, resolve issues and follow up with clients on a timely basis.
- Scheduled monthly meetings and arrangements with ODSP representatives to participate in case management sessions are recommended to address and expedite client approval issues and minimize the need for cumbersome client fee for service reconciliations which often occur several months after the employment in question has taken place.
- Staff and manager time should be focused on service delivery versus the current time constraints due to administrative tracking. ODSP and the service provider must have clearly defined client responsibility guidelines and ensure clients are not required to submit duplicate information to both ODSP and the service provider. Employment evidence should be tracked through the service provider.
- The service provider should provide ODSP with monthly billings for all FFS and Incentive Revenues. ODSP should have a review and audit function included in regularly scheduled site visits to monitor billings from the service provider as is the practice with other FFS programs with other funders.
- Non-IS clients should report monthly earnings to the service provider. IS clients should report monthly earnings to the service provider and ODSP. All earnings should be reported to the service provider within 10 days of the end of each

month worked. A new ODSP funded incentive should be created to reward clients for timely earnings reporting. Late earnings reporting by clients is a significant issue within the Program. It is recommended that clients who reports earnings on a timely basis, for 6 consecutive months of work, be paid a \$500 incentive; the maximum incentive to any individual will be \$3,000 which represents 6 payments over 36 months of enrolment in the Program. This incentive will theoretically assist clients to fund on-going education and reduce student debt or financial barriers.

- Allow clients who were under employed in casual jobs prior to approval for ODSP Employment Services, to be considered for the recommended milestone payments when advanced employment placement or increased hours of employment are achieved. Previously, these clients were only eligible for Retention FFS revenues.
- The service provider database is a key tool to managing the Program, particularly under the current ODSP reconciliation timelines. IT support to manage and maintain this tool is integral to delivering services and tracking results. Program startup will require up to \$100,000 of incremental funding to review and support this tool and other initial costs.
- Website design and maintenance will also require one-time funding to establish new Program information for clients and employers, including on line access to request information and appointments with program staff and explore opportunities to submit client file third party verification of employment on line to facilitate the administrative requirements of milestone and retention tracking.
- Purchasing, installing, training and maintaining specialized software and hardware equipment such as JAWS and TTY which are necessary to meet customer service needs and legislative standards, are costs which should be reviewed annually.
- A full time administrative assistant is recommended to support the Program. This person would speak with clients to arrange appointments and follow up to assist with obtaining required file documentation, including work related payroll verification.

## 5. Summary

The recommendations proposed through this Position Paper represent innovative and ideal suggestions to optimize employment services and employment success to students and recent graduates with disabilities. JobStart would be pleased to discuss and present this position to key MCSS representatives. We are convinced there is a critical need to continue the Program mandate and optimistic that services can be improved upon through implementation of some or all of our recommendations in the future.

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## Appendix I – Client Survey

### Methodology, Client Survey and Results

#### Methodology

- The questionnaire consisted of close-ended questions and a comment section designed to solicit the identification of barriers, needs and opportunities for changes
- Administered by JobStart staff to twenty post-secondary students with a disability who are currently accessing JobStart services
- Survey participants were chosen based on both the three most prevalent disabilities of the program students since FY 2006-07 to FY 2010-11 and the top three Toronto area post-secondary institutions where clients undertook their studies. All clients were assured that they were free to decline in taking part in the survey, and their identities would remain completely anonymous
- Client surveys were done in person at JobStart's Dufferin location or over the telephone

#### Client Survey and Data Responses (underlined)

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (optional / yet all answers will remain confidential!)

1. How likely are you to recommend the Program services to someone looking for similar services as those you received?  
Definitely recommend – 14  
Somewhat likely to recommend - 6  
Definitely would not recommend – 0
2. I received from the Program the information or services that I require to further my employment/training goals.  
Yes - 14    Somewhat - 6    No – 0
3. As a Program client I feel that I have access to a wide range of job placement employment related services.  
Yes - 9    Somewhat - 11    No - 0
4. The Program regularly publishes information about clients who have been successful in employment from using our services. These success stories and testimonials are used for marketing/promotional purposes and may demonstrate our commitment to continuous improvement and support our relationships with the agencies that fund our work in the community. Are you interested in sharing your success story with us?  
Yes - 5    No - 15
5. Did you access Career Services at your respective post-secondary institution?  
Yes - 14    No - 6

If YES, what did you access them for? (I.e. resume/cover letter help, job search workshops and placement services catered to students with disabilities)

Resumes and cover letters - 3    All services - 2    Placement services – 2

6. How would you rate the employment related services at your campus?  
Excellent - 3 Satisfactory - 14 Poor - 2 No answer - 1

7. Did you access your Counseling and Disability Service Centre?  
Yes - 13 No - 7

If YES, did they provide you employment related advice and how would you rate it?

Excellent - 3 Satisfactory - 9 Poor - 7

8. Did your campus give you information regarding the accommodations and assistance that employers are required and/or able to provide to you in the workplace?  
Yes - 5 No - 15

9. Prior to the Program, were you ever provided the information regarding the benefits and risks of disclosing your disability to an employer?  
Yes - 4 No - 16

If so, who provided you this information/what source?

Workplace contact - 1 Career counsellor - 1 Disabilities office - 2

10. During your post-secondary schooling and prior to accessing the Program did you obtain part or full time employment?  
Yes - 11 No - 8 No Answer - 1

If Yes - what was/is the duration?

More than 3 years - 2 1 to 3 years - 6 less than a year - 3

11. If you did obtain employment, were you ever provided advice regarding how to maintain, thrive, or advance in your job?  
Yes - 1 No - 9 No answer - 10

If Yes, who provided you the support?

At workplace - 1

12. Have you ever had professional assistance developing a cover letter or resume?  
Yes - 5 No - 15

If Yes, by whom and when (year)? Various sources and years, i.e. university, high school, service provider, friend, family relative

13. Have you ever participated in a career directions inventory to help identify your career related Knowledge Skills and Abilities?  
Yes - 0 No - 19 No answer - 1

14. At this moment how confident you feel undertaking a job search independently (meaning without assistance of an employment professional?)

Very confident - 4 Somewhat confident - 16 Not at all confident - 0

## Appendix II

### Staff Activity Based Tracking

#### Methodology

An Activity Based Tracking Sheet was designed for staff to document the amount of time frontline Program staff undertook in employment activities for a variety of students with a disability. The tracking sheet outlines the time spent with clients across core program components such as the development and refinement of resume and cover letters, educating clients on the types of positions most appropriate for them, coaching clients regarding interview skills, and preparing them on how to conduct an effective job search.

#### Tracking Tool and Results-Summary Hours Worked

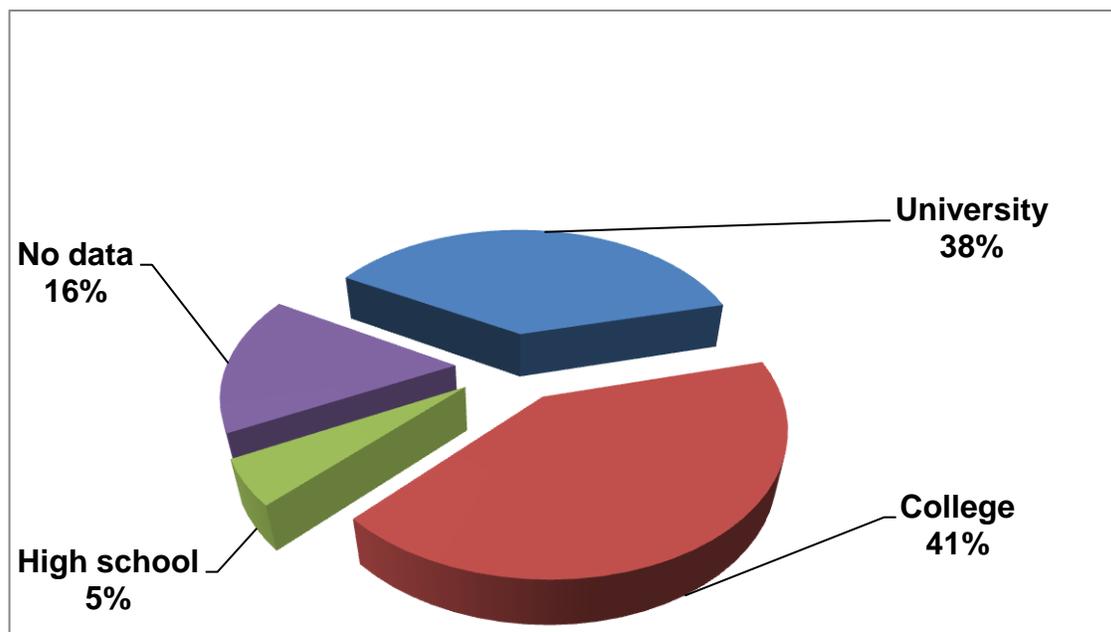
Client Tracking Form by Main Activities			
Client profile		Include a summary of key items and barriers (Income Support/non-IS, education, age, gender, work history, disability, additional barriers beyond disability, etc.)	
#	Process	Considerations to keep in mind. This is not exhaustive	Total time spent on these activities from Aug. 29 to Oct 30,
1	Client intake	Depending on the client; we can either have the first meeting and fill in the application for ODSP Employment Supports or if the client is referred by ODSP, do the intake for the Entry Point program; The time of Employment Support application approval varies from 0 (the referral being received by fax from ODSP caseworker) and up to 3 months (including numerous calls and escalating the issue to the managerial level)	3-6 hours across clients
2	Resume / Cover letter/Job preparation	Clients widely vary regarding their ability to create a resume; some clients don't know how to use a computer, have no email account and no resume. They may be scheduled for Employment Ontario pre employment preparation workshops and/or get one-on-one sessions; for interview skills, clients receive coaching, mock interview questions and have one-on-one sessions to help them prepare for a real interview.	Highly variable: 6-25 hours, across clients
3	Job Development/Contacting employers by email, phone; visit to potential employers/arranging informational job specific interviews	Includes cold calling and outreach to employers, establishing relationships with diversity recruiters from large organizations, meeting employers at career fairs, conferences, workshops, marketing candidates, sending job leads, arranging interviews, follow up with employers.	Highly variable: 2.5-20 hours, across clients
4	Follow up with clients/employers	Check with employers/candidates, determine suitability for the particular position, collect employers feedback on candidates referred to them	Highly variable: 3-30 hours, across clients
5	Activities undertaken to support people in their job	Assisting clients and employers when a client is placed in a work environment.	4-15 hours, across clients
6	Reporting	Client specific information entered in the EP database (intake info, casenotes, exceptional supports, work history, etc)	1-5 hours, across clients

### Appendix III

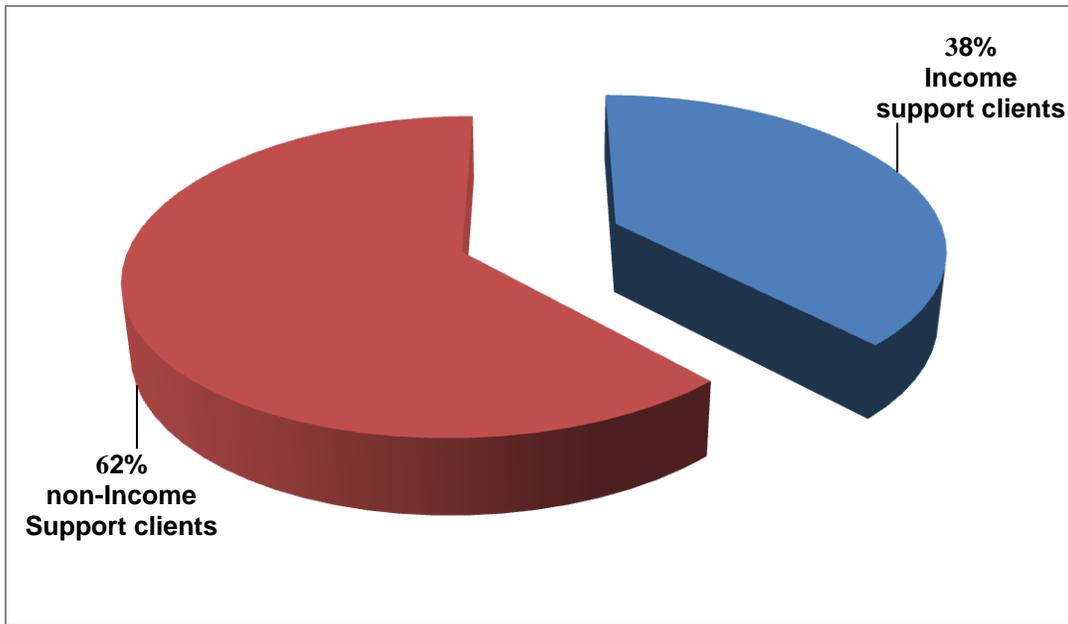
#### Pro Forma Program Income Statement

	Pro Forma Budget	
	\$	Units
<b>INCOME</b>		
New Client Approvals	0	92
2 weeks @ \$3,000	192,000	64
4 weeks @ \$2,000	72,000	36
12 weeks @ \$7,000	196,000	28
Retention @ \$300	<u>120,000</u>	400
<b>ODSP Fee for Service Funding</b>	<u>580,000</u>	
ODSP - Fee for Service	580,000	
ODSP - Training Incentives/Work Trials	13,200	
ODSP - Reporting Incentive	26,000	
ODSP - Exceptional Support	<u>10,000</u>	
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>629,200</u>	
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Total Salaries and Benefits	414,658	
Placement Subsidies and Incentives	<u>39,200</u>	
<b>Total Salaries, Benefits and Subsidies</b>	<u>453,858</u>	
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	175,342	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<u>629,200</u>	
<b>SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<u><u>(0)</u></u>	

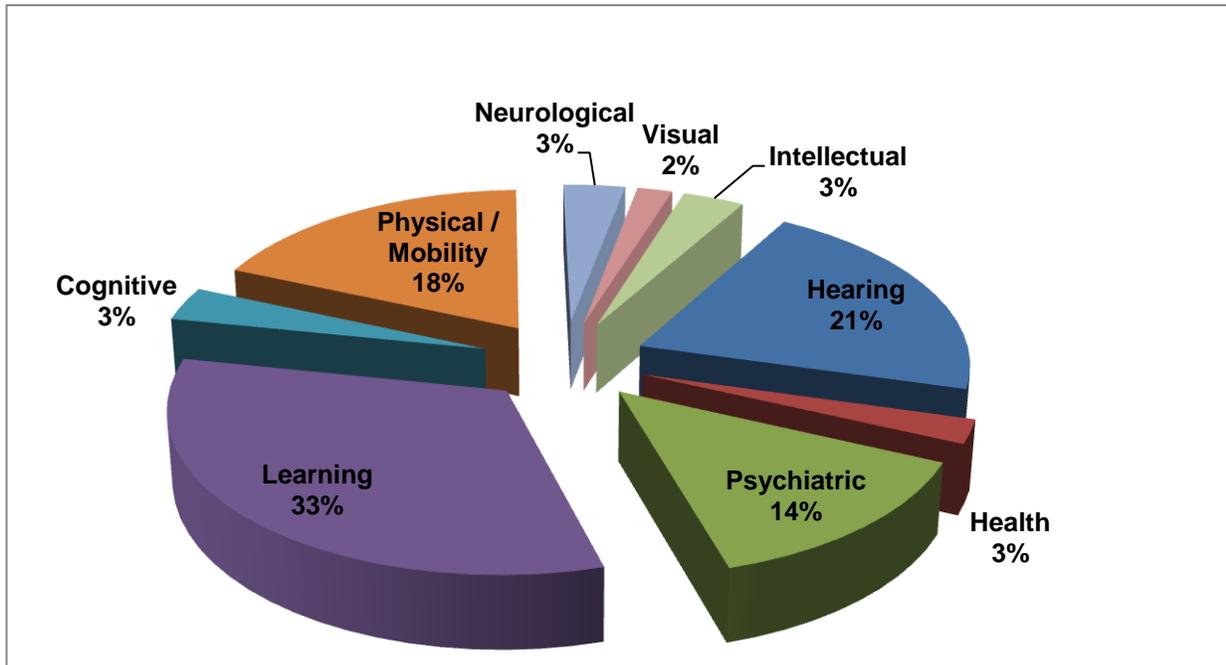
**Figure 1**  
**Level of Education of Program Clients**  
**FY 2007 - FY 2011**



**Figure 2**  
**Total Percentage of Income Support vs. non-Income Support Clients**  
**FY 2007 - FY 2011**



**Figure 3**  
**Primary Disability Type Served by the Program**  
**FY 2007 - FY 2011**



**Figure 4**  
**Percentage of Clients Working Greater than 1 Job to Achieve**  
**The 13 Week Milestone**  
**FY 2007 - FY 2011**

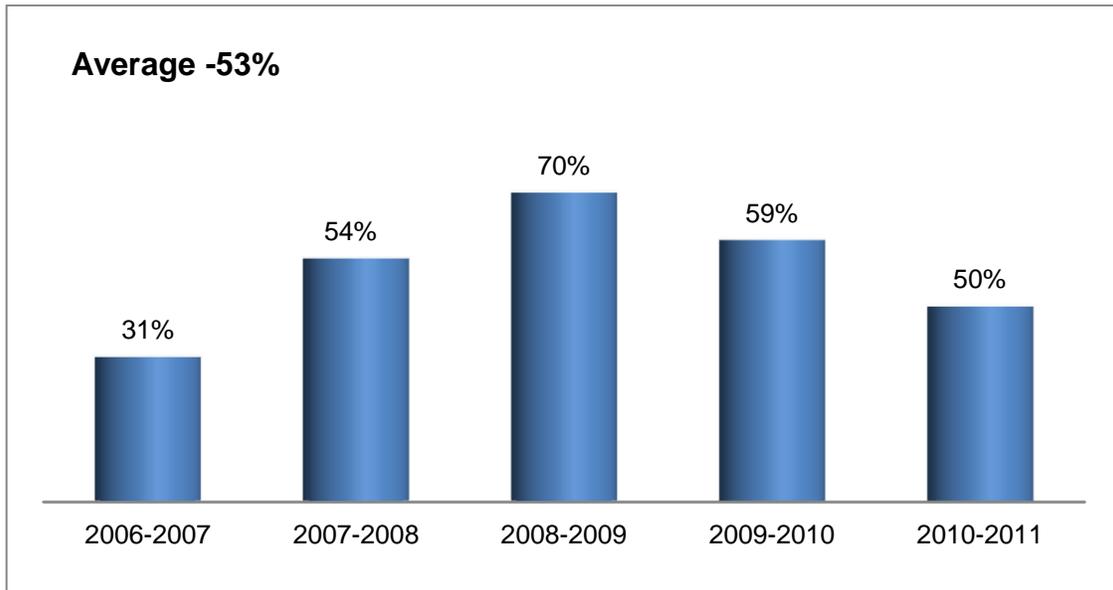
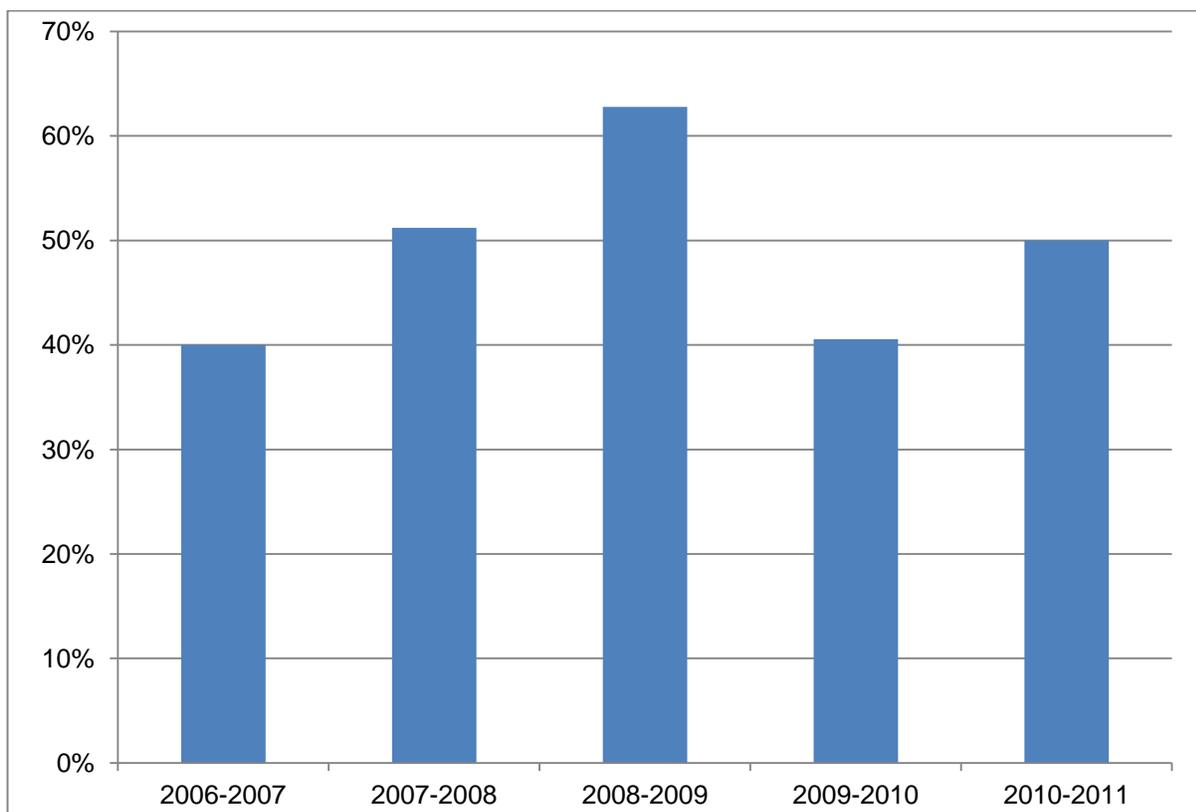


Figure 5

**Number of Jobs Required for All clients to Reach the 13 Week Milestone  
FY 2007 - FY 2011**

Fiscal Year	Client Type	Total # of clients who reached 13 weeks	Number of jobs to reach 13 weeks				Total of 2+ jobs	% of clients in need of 2+ jobs to hit 13 weeks
			1	2	3	>3		
2010-2011	IS	12	6	5	1	0	6	50%
2010-2011	Non-IS	17	10	5	1	1	7	41%
<b>Total</b>		<b>29</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>45%</b>
2009-2010	IS	11	4	2	3	2	7	64%
2009-2010	Non-IS	34	14	12	4	4	20	59%
<b>Total</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>60%</b>
2008-2009	IS	21	7	7	5	2	14	67%
2008-2009	Non-IS	27	7	11	6	3	20	74%
<b>Total</b>		<b>48</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>71%</b>
2007-2008	IS	15	8	2	4	1	7	47%
2007-2008	Non-IS	28	11	9	3	5	17	61%
<b>Total</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>56%</b>
2006-2007	IS	10	6	3	1	0	4	40%
2006-2007	Non-IS	26	18	6	1	1	8	31%
<b>Total</b>		<b>36</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>201</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>55%</b>

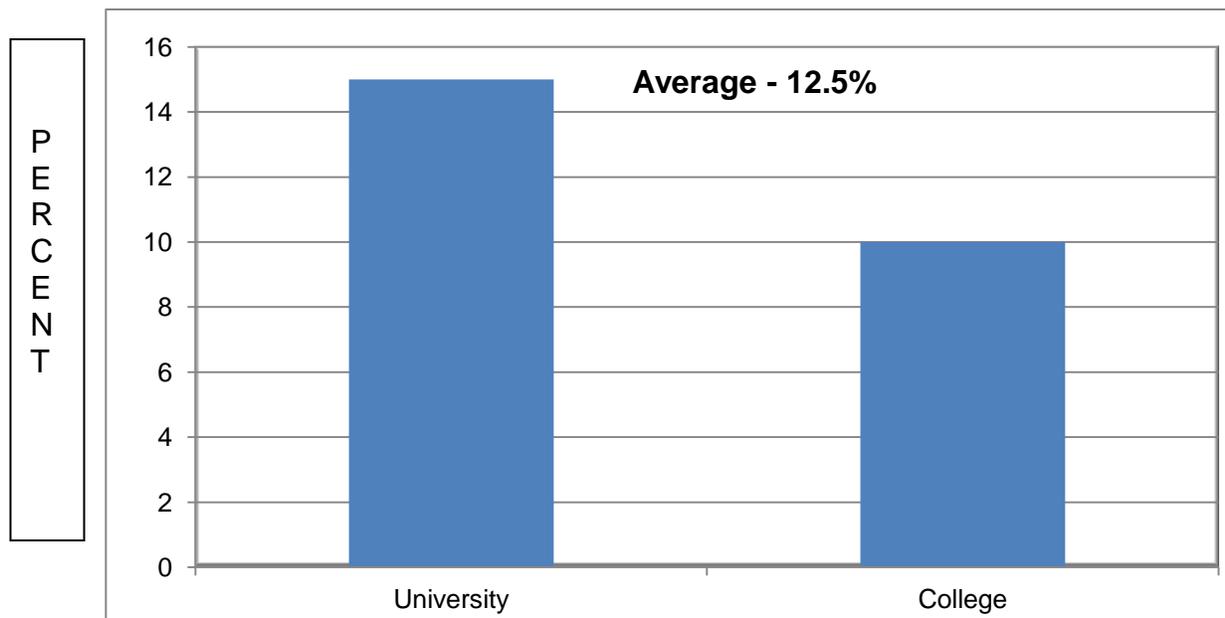
**Figure 6**  
**Percentage of all Clients Who Required Greater than 7 Months to**  
**Achieve the 13 Week Placement Milestone**  
**FY 2007 - FY 2011**



**Figure 7**

**Percentage of all Clients Who Did Not Reach the 13 week Benchmark After Starting a Placement Specified by Level of Education**

**FY 2007 - FY 2011**



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