LEND Trainee Bio

As we grow our LEND program, we hope to build a network dedicated to understanding disability services. We believe that including your bios will help cultivate an interest in your work, leadership, and how you contribute to LEND. Prospective trainees, other LEND trainees, community organizations, clinics, etc., can develop their understanding of how other trainees have contributed to LEND and view our contributions in the field of disabilities. Feel free to provide as much or as little information as you are comfortable posting publicly. Remember, it is ok to keep this information very general. The website is illinoislend.org if you would like to view what former trainees have posted.

When complete, please upload to your summer assignments folder.

Name: Abby Hardy

Discipline: Special education

Past/current experiences working in the field of disabilities:

I taught for 8 years as a special education teacher for students with significant support needs. Most of my students were kindergarten through second graders who received special education services under the eligibility categories of autism, intellectual disability, or multiple disability. My final year teaching was teaching K-5th, all online during the 2020-2021 school year, which was a real challenge! I then served as a developmental therapist for early intervention for about 8 months before making the move across the country to come to UIUC to pursue my PhD.

Goals for your LEND training experience:

I look forward to learning more about the systems that are in place to support people with disabilities and their families. I am also interested in learning more from self-advocates, family members, practitioners and students across different content areas, to help broaden my knowledge about disabilities and services.

What you wish to contribute, in the future, as an advocate/professional/family member in the field:

I hope to work as a professor and help teach undergraduate students how to be effective special education teachers and strong advocates for their students, especially for students who have more extensive support needs. I also hope to contribute to the field of special education through continuing to

research about trauma and its impact on children with I/DD, and how trauma-informed care in the classroom can be impactful and supportive of these children.

We would also like to post a headshot of each trainee along with the bios. Please upload in jpeg or png file to your summer assignments folder.