



Department of Special Education, Foundations and Research

East Carolina University

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The East Carolina University Teacher Support Program (ECU TSP) is reaching out to individuals working directly with learners with DeafBlindness in intervener or instructional assistant positions to join the latest Intervener Cohort. Cohort members will complete select Open Hands, Open Access (OHOA) DeafBlind Intervener online training modules to refine their work supporting learners with DeafBlindness. The modules are designed to be completed through the 2022-2023 school year. The ECU TSP will provide facilitator/mentor support to Cohort members studying the OHOA modules throughout the school year.

Open Hands, Open Access (OHOA) was created by individuals working with children who are DeafBlind for the purpose of providing training for Interveners. Interveners are paraprofessionals who are specially trained to work one-on-one with children who are DeafBlind. The primary responsibility is to be certain that the child has access to all information and activities that occur during the school day. DeafBlindness creates unique and complex challenges caused by the combined effect of vision and hearing loss. These challenges are mainly in the area of communication, concept development, social and emotional development. "An intervener responds to these challenges by serving as a link between the learner and his or her world, and by helping to expand it" (Alsop, et. Al., 2007).

Concurrent with the OHOA module professional development activities, cohort members are also invited to participate in the National Intervener Certification ePortfolio (NICE) process leading toward submission of a portfolio for review for National Intervener Certification by the Para Center at the University of Colorado-Denver. Cohort members making sufficient progress toward national certification will submit an ePortfolio following the 2022-2023 school year.

The Modules will begin on September 6, 2022. Individuals who are interested in the free trainings should contact Julie Brickhouse, ECU TSP Technical Consultant at [brickhousej17@ecu.edu](mailto:brickhousej17@ecu.edu). Please also share with anyone you work with who may be interested in obtaining Intervener certification.

Please respond to Julie Brickhouse by August 26, 2022.

Thank you,

Andrea Blackwood, ECU TSP Technical Assistance Coordinator  
Julie Brickhouse, ECU TSP Technical Assistance Consultant  
Patty Dischinger, ECU TSP Technical Assistance Consultant  
Sandra Warren, ECU TSP Director