



Matthew Wappett

Matthew Wappett is the Executive Director of the Utah State University Institute for Disability Research, Policy & Practice (UCEDD), with an affiliate appointment as a Research Associate Professor in the USU College of Education and Human Services. He was formerly the Co-Director of the University of Idaho Confucius Institute and had an affiliate faculty appointment as a Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Dr. Wappett has also served as the Associate Director of the UI Center on Disabilities and Human Development and had a faculty appointment in the UI College of

Education. Dr. Wappett's background is in special education and disability studies; most of his research has been focused on creating inclusive environments to accommodate the needs of diverse populations.

Dr. Wappett also conducts research and writes about the effects of laughter in the classroom and genuinely enjoys teaching people how to laugh! He has been referred to by many as the "Laughter Doctor"! He has been a featured speaker at state and national conferences and training events. Dr. Wappett's teaching and research on creating inclusive learning environments has recently turned to the effects of environmental stress on learning and social interaction.

Dr. Wappett earned his Ph.D. in Special Education, an M.Ed. in Educational Studies, and a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Utah. Dr. Wappett has also attended Clinical Training for Mind Body Medicine through the Harvard Medical School. He completed his secondary teaching certification while pursuing his Master's degree at the University of Utah.



Quinton Jones

Quinton Jones is the Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs and the Title IX Officer for Murray State College in Tishomingo, Oklahoma. As an inspirational and motivational speaker, Mr. Jones delivers every presentation with perseverance and love. His presentations inspire joy and self-preservation in his audience. Quinton's strength and passion are credited to his great-grandparents, who raised him. He credits his career successes to his pillars of strength, his former teachers, and coaches throughout his educational career. Mr. Jones graduated from high school in New Boston, Texas. He continued his education and played football at Henderson

State University in Arkansas. While in Arkansas, he completed his bachelor's degree with a major in speech and communication and a minor in political science from the University of Arkansas at Monticello. He earned his Master's in Marriage and Family Therapy from the University of Louisiana in Monroe, Louisiana. His previous employment is with the Chickasaw Nation, where he was the director of the Chickasaw Children's Village for more than ten years, working with over 80 students each of those years. Before that, he was a teacher Aide at his hometown elementary school. While continuing his education toward a PhD in Educational Leadership, Mr. Jones firmly believes that local education is the most essential pillar of any community.



Wendy Hardwick serves as a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Specialist for the Oklahoma State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG). In this role, she provides coaching and professional development to school districts across the state, supporting system-level MTSS implementation and capacity building. She also works directly with early-career special education teachers, offering practical, job-embedded coaching focused on classroom instruction, student support, and data-informed practices.

Wendy has a strong background in behavior, including leading self-contained behavioral classrooms and receiving extensive training in behavior intervention and support strategies. Her expertise spans Tier 1 prevention, Tier 2 targeted supports, and Tier 3 individualized planning. She helps educators implement clear expectations, proactive strategies, and team-based problem solving to promote positive student outcomes and reduce challenging behaviors.