



Oregon Competitive Employment Project

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Leadership Council

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Social Security Administration

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Tina Treasure

State Independent Living Council

Mike Volpe

People with Disabilities Advisory Council

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Oregon Advocacy Center



A very fond farewell

We recently said goodbye to Damon Terzaghi, who was an Operations and Policy Analyst for the Project since its beginning. Damon accepted a position in Washington D.C. with one of our technical assistance partners, the Centers for Workers with Disabilities (CWD).

Damon is not only brilliant (our nickname for him was "The Brain"), he was truly a joy to work with. We don't expect, we know that there are great things ahead for him. Luckily for us, Oregon will still benefit from some of that brainpower as he will be one of our consultants.

Godspeed Damon and we look forward to working with you in your new capacity!

Hello to our newest team member!

We hope you will all join us in providing a warm welcome to Sherri Rita, who will be joining the Project team on December 17th. Sherri worked for many years in California's Protection and Advocacy providing legal services to people with disabilities. Most recently she served as the Deputy Director of the Yolo Family Resource Center, a private non-profit agency in Woodland, California that serves children and their families in child abuse prevention and youth development. Sherri will be working very closely with the Work Incentives Network project, and we look forward to having her on the team!

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Employment Summit 2007

The second annual Employment Summit by the Victory Alliance Foundation was held Sept. 14 in Salem. The Competitive Employment Project staffed a resource booth at the job fair and talked to job seekers and their families, employers, and school and state personnel.

Other project partners who had resource booths at the summit included the Oregon Business Leadership Network, Oregon Advocacy Center, Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities, and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

The Summit offered a variety of information for both employers and job seekers. Molly Sullivan, the Project's Program Analyst introduced the project's Work Incentive Network during two breakout sessions at the summit. Other breakout sessions included Hiring People with Disabilities: Resources for Employers, Self-Employment Opportunities, and Preparing for the Job Interview: Putting your best foot forward.

More information on the summit can be obtained by writing the Victory Alliance Foundation, P.O. Box 20460, Keizer, OR 97303.

Project Staff participates in a Youth Services Summit

Karen Bigler, an Operations and Policy Analyst for the Project attended The Performance Institute's Youth Services Summit – "Promote Positive Youth

Development and Successful Transitions to the Workforce!" in Arlington, Virginia on September 24-26, 2007. The summit included sessions on Connecting Youth Workforce Development to Youth Services, Youth with Disabilities in the workforce, Strategies for Engaging the Business Community, and How to effectively reach today's Youth. Some of the summit highlights included a session on Ohio's Workforce and Youth with Mental Health and Behavioral Issues program called Greater Cincinnati's STRIVE P-16 program. Its' focus is on creating educational pathways, beginning in preschool and continuing through the completion of college degrees or advanced technical programs post-high school; educators and other stakeholders form state, local and regional P-16 councils that plan for whole system reform; and attention is paid to key transition points between various levels of school. Another highlight included a One-Stop Service Center for High Risk Youth in Olympia, Washington called Community Youth Services. At the One-Stop, youth can receive a continuum of care that includes WIA Job Training, Emergency Shelter Services, Therapeutic Foster Care, Independent Living Skills for Foster Youth, Transitional Housing, Juvenile Justice Services, AmeriCorps and a day shelter facility called Rosie's Place.

For more information about the Youth Services Summit, contact Karen Bigler at Karen.C.Bigler@state.or.us.

National Consortium for Health Services Delivery Holds 2007 Fall Conference

The National Consortium for Health Services Delivery (NCHSD), one of the Project's technical assistance partners held their Fall conference in Chicago September 19th and 20th. 32 Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) states, including Project staff from Oregon were in attendance. Representatives from the Social Security Administration and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services participated in sessions.

As always, NCHSD engaged us with useful information through sessions including building a sustainable benefits and work incentive planning system; systems change and supported employment; options for developing a national message around employment for persons with disabilities; enhancing youth employment outcomes; and self-employment strategies.

More information about the sessions and all conference materials can be found on line at: www.nchsd.org/resource/conferences/2007.asp.

Project SEARCH National Conference

The Project sponsored Janet Straw's (Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Program Technician) attendance at the annual Project Search conference in Cincinnati, Ohio July 29-31st. One of our Leadership Council members, Lucy Baker, Executive Director of the Oregon Business

Leadership Network and a representative from Oregon Health Sciences University were also in attendance.

The conference addressed the development, funding, education, and roles of business and other key stakeholders when creating a Project Search.

Project SEARCH provides employment and education opportunities for individuals with significant disabilities. The program is dedicated to workforce development that benefits the individual, community and workplace. The first Project Search was started at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital and is now being replicated nationwide.

Project SEARCH at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center has been identified as a model program by several national organizations including Virginia Commonwealth University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Workplace Supports, the University of Iowa Employment Policy Group and the National Transition Alliance for Youth with Disabilities.

More information on Project Search can be found in the Competitive Employment Project's 2007 Summer newsletter and at: www.cincinnatichildrens.org/svc/alpha/p/search/.

State-Federal policy exchange

Oregon was among 6 states invited to participate in the first State-Federal Policy Exchange that took place in Chicago September 17 and 18th. Federal partners included the Social Security Administration,

the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and Department of Labor.

Attending from Oregon were Stephaine Taylor, Administrator Department of Human Services (DHS) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs); Travis Wall, DHS/OVRs Program and Policy Manager; Cathy Cooper, DHS Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Deputy Assistant Director; Marge Reinhart, DHS Children, Adults and Families Field Services Senior Operations Manager; Sharon K. Hill, DHS Division of Medical Assistance Programs Delivery Systems Developer; Michael Moore, DHS Addictions and Mental Health Division's Adult Coordinator of Health Services; Sherry Stock, Executive Director of the Brain Injury Association of Oregon; and Sara Kendall, Project Manager for the Competitive Employment Project.

Oregon, Alaska, California, Connecticut, Maryland, and Washington got a chance to communicate ideas and issues one-on-one to federal partners. Discussions centered on clarifications to the Medicaid State Plan Rehabilitation Option; benefits planning services and workforce delivery systems; youth transition services; personal assistance in the workplace; integrating employment into the Mental Health system; and building and funding a seamless, comprehensive workforce system.

The Social Security Administration has pledged funding to continue these

discussions. All federal and state attendees found it to be an invaluable, eye-opening experience, and the Oregon attendees have already begun working together on several initiatives.

For more information contact Sara Kendall at sara.kendall@state.or.us or 503-945-5857

Work Incentives Network:

When you work you win!

The Work Incentives Network (WIN), Oregon's benefits and work incentive planning system is up and running! With assistance from national consultants Ray Cebula from Cornell University, Laura Gallagher-Watkin and John Coburn from Health and Disability Advocates, Molly Sullivan, the Project's Program Analyst completed the first round of trainings for WIN Work Incentive Coordinators and Information and Referral Specialists at the end of September. All the WIN staff must attend 8 to 10 days of training, complete a field assignment and pass a rigorous certification test before they can begin providing services.

The WIN staff are housed in Centers for Independent Living (CIL) across the state. They cover different areas of the state and are mobile within those areas. The CILs are still in the process of hiring 3 out of the 10 total staff and we hope to have a "full house" by mid-December!

WIN staff work closely with the Social Security Administration funded Work Incentives Planning and Assistance program, which is run by the Oregon Advocacy Center and known as "Planning for Work".

Here is a list of your current certified Oregon WIN staff:

Independent Living Resources (ILR)

2410 SE 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97214

- Samm McCrary, Information and Referral Specialist: samm@ilr.org or 503-232-7411
- One vacant Information and Referral Specialist position

Lane Independent Living Alliance (LILA)

99 West 10th Avenue #117
Eugene, Oregon 97401

- Emma Levert, Information and Referral Specialist: elevert@lilaoregon.org or 541-607-7020

605 Cottage Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301
503-378-8077

- One vacant Work Incentive Coordinator position

Central Oregon Resources for Independent Living (CORIL)

20436 Clay Pigeon Court
Bend, Oregon 97702

- Gene Rada, Work Incentive Coordinator: gener@coril.org or 541-388-8103

SPOKES Unlimited

415 Main Street
Klamath Falls, Oregon 97601
541-883-7547

- One vacant Information and Referral Specialist position

Independent Abilities Center (HASL)

305 NE "E" Street
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

- Ronnie Shainin, Work Incentives Coordinator: Ronnie_hasl@yahoo.com or 541-479-4275

- Nelson Ferguson, Information and Referral Specialist: Nelson_hasl@yahoo.com or 541-479-4275

Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living (EOCIL)

1021 SW 5th Avenue
Ontario, Oregon 97914

- Jennifer Bonnell, Work Incentives Coordinator: jbonnell@fmtc.com or 541-889-3119; toll free: 1-866-248-8369

322 SW 3rd, Suite 6
Pendleton, Oregon 97801

- Sarah Thompson, Information and Referral Specialist: sthompson@fmtc.com or 541-276-1037; toll free: 1-866-248-8369

Did you know that there are 13 SSI/SSDI benefits programs and 30 Oregon state-specific work incentive programs that people with disabilities can access to assist them in achieving their employment goals? Or that a person with a disability does not even have to be an SSI or SSDI recipient to make use of some of the state-specific work incentives?

The WIN staff can give you information on all these programs and much more, so feel free to contact them if you would like a presentation at your agency or business! And be sure to send them referrals so we can all work together to enhance the quality of life in Oregon by achieving, maintaining and advancing the competitive and inclusive employment of persons with disabilities.

For more information on Oregon Advocacy Center's Planning for Work program: www.oradvocacy.org/programs.php.

For more information on Work Incentives Network: www.oregon.gov/DHS/vr/cep/index.shtml.

Good information!

Ride Connection is a nonprofit, community service organization established to link accessible, responsive transportation with community needs in Portland and the surrounding areas.

Ride Connection coordinates a Network of over 30 providers. Their service representatives schedule over 358,000 rides for more than 10,500+ individuals annually!

Ride Connection also offers training to people with disabilities and maintains a high standard of training for drivers and escorts.

They also welcome volunteers! For more information on Ride Connection: www.rideconnection.org.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has developed a new Web page on its site called Resources for Returning Veterans and their families that provides valuable information on prevention, treatment, and recovery support for mental health and substance use disorders. Publications, fact sheets, and links to relevant agencies are provided along with information on SAMHSA-funded programs, agency activities, and training and technical assistance opportunities. Additionally, SAMHSA convened a meeting on May 10 with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense and veteran's service organizations to better understand the needs and to identify ways local community-based substance abuse and mental health service organizations can be prepared to assist veterans and their families.

Please visit the Web for the information: www.samhsa.gov/vets/.

CEP staff contacts

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- **Sherri Rita**, Policy Analyst, 503-947-5123, Sherri.L.Rita@state.or.us
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