



The Oklahoma Navigator



Supporting People's Abilities

The Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration and the Social Security Administration (SSA) jointly created the **Disability Program Navigator (DPN)** as an advocate for adults and youth with disabilities who choose to work. The Navigator assists persons with disabilities in "navigating" through the complex system of support programs and services that will have the greatest impact on their success of gaining, returning to or retaining employment. To find the Navigator closest to you visit our Website: <http://www.oesc.state.ok.us/Emp-Trng/disability-navigator.shtm>

What is a Navigator:

- ⇒ A Resource
- ⇒ Facilitator
- ⇒ Problem Solver
- ⇒ Systems Change Agent
- ⇒ Relationship Builder

What a Navigator can do:

- ◇ Facilitate universal access to the One-Stop system for persons with disabilities.
- ◇ Address the needs of people with disabilities seeking training and employment.
- ◇ Provide training on issues and programs related to people with disabilities.
- ◇ Conduct outreach to the disability community, as well as to local and regional disability advocacy organizations on resources available through the One-Stop Career Center.
- ◇ Development of relationships with mandatory partners and other services systems.
- ◇ Develop linkages and collaborate with employers, employer organizations and community service providers.
- ◇ Identification and assistance with implementation of solutions to physical, communication and/or program access challenges.
- ◇ Identification of resources and connecting seekers with these resources.
- ◇ Presentations to disability-related organizations, school systems, etc. to educate them about the workforce development system

Oklahoma Disability Navigators

Ada

Monica Huffstutlar
monica.huffstutlar@oesc.state.ok.us
(580) 332-1533 * (580) 421-9265 Fax

Bartlesville

Gene Null
gene.null@oesc.state.ok.us
(918) 331-3400 * (918) 331-0044 Fax

Clinton

Frank Boswell—Project Lead
frank.boswell@oesc.state.ok.us
(580) 323-1341 * (580) 323-9176 Fax

Enid

Loretta Drennan
loretta.drennan@oesc.state.ok.us
(580) 234-6043 * (580) 234-8405 Fax

Lawton

Deborah Smith
deborah.smith@oesc.state.ok.us
(580) 357-3500 x141 * (580) 357-9629 Fax

McAlester

Janet Whalen
janet.whelen@oesc.state.ok.us
(918) 423-6830 * (918) 423-4771 Fax

Muskogee

Etha Tatum
etha.tatum@oesc.state.ok.us
(918) 682-3364 * (918) 682-4311 Fax

Norman

Jay Winfrey
jay.winfrey@oesc.state.ok.us
(405) 701-2059 * (405) 701-2042 Fax

*Oklahoma City Eastside **

(405) 713-1890 * (405) 713-1898 Fax

Oklahoma City Rockwell

Sidna Chambers
sidna.chambers@oesc.state.ok.us
(405) 470-3200 * (405) 470-3223 Fax

Shawnee

Derek Lewis
derek.lewis@oesc.state.ok.us
(405) 275-7800 x287 * (405) 878-9742 Fax

Tulsa

Carolyn Dubie, MHR
carolyn.dubie@oesc.state.ok.us
(918) 596-2151 * (918) 596-9999 Fax



Pictured: Diann Wilson, Project Coordinator for Big Five Community Services, Freedom Express Grant and Cinda Hughes, Ms. Wheelchair America 2004

Inspiration Story

Cinda Hughes, Ms. Wheelchair America 2004, is currently employed by the Oklahoma State Senate in Oklahoma City as a Receptionist / Research Assistant. Cinda's duties include answering a 50-line telephone, tracking daily activities of a staff of seventy, and submitting a monthly report on staff arrivals and much more. Born with Arthrogryposis Multiplex Congenita, a limited muscle development in which Cinda describes as her muscles being like strings instead of rubber bands. Cinda does not consider herself "confined to a wheelchair", instead she uses the resources of a wheelchair to make mobility successful. Raised in Anadarko by her grandparents, Cinda was the first quadriplegic mainstreamed into the local public school system. As a member of the Kiowa tribe, Cinda was appointed by Governor David Boren to serve on the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Advisory committee on Exceptional Children while she was attending high school. Upon graduating in 1980, Cinda won scholarships to Brigham Young University and the University of Oklahoma.

She attended Brigham Young from 1981 to 1983 when the death of her grandfather Cinda moved back to Oklahoma to help her family. Among numerous activities and projects, Cinda became involved with the first University of Oklahoma sponsored American Indian film festival. This brought about a cable television magazine program which she co-hosted and co-directed for over a year.

One would think that with her many skills, talents and impressive resume' Cinda would be able to land a wonderful career. Unfortunately that was not the case. Cinda found potential employers unwilling to give her the opportunity to demonstrate what she could offer. Continuing to volunteer with various non-profit organizations and serve as an advocate for individuals with disabilities, Cinda did not allow herself to "bow to defeat" and eventually came to the affection of her current employer, the Oklahoma State Senate. Cinda states "the best place to enact social change is from within the political establishment".

Still actively involved in many social causes, Cinda serves on the Board of Directors for ACLU-Oklahoma, as well as the Advisory Board for the Oklahoma Office of Handicapped Concerns. In 2000 and 2004, Cinda served as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention and in 2004 was the first Native American crowned Ms. Wheelchair America. Cinda is a true inspiration and is currently in great demand as a public speaker throughout the country on disability, political, and Native American issues. Recently, Cinda volunteered as the spokesperson in a television commercial for Freedom Express, a grant awarded to Big Five Community Services to assist individuals with disabilities with public transportation. The above picture is of Cinda Hughes with the Project Coordinator for Freedom Express, Diann Wilson.

To read more about the Ms. Wheelchair America Program go to their website:

<http://www.mswheelchairamerica.org>

The Navigator Corner by Monica Huffstutlar

Cinda is truly amazing and I enjoyed interviewing her for this section. Her participation and advocacy is too numerous for me to list in this small space. I hope that everyone will get the opportunity as I have to meet Cinda and know her story. I know she will inspire you as she has me.

Highlighted Resource:

**The Job Accommodation Network
(JAN)**

<http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu/>

JAN, a free consulting service of the Office of Disability Employment Policy of the US Department of Labor, provides information on job accommodations to enhance the job opportunities of people with disabilities by:

- * Providing individualized worksite accommodations solutions
- * Providing technical assistance pertaining to the ADA and other disability related legislation
- * Educating about self-employment options

WORK INCENTIVE GRANT

The Work Incentive Grant project for southern and south-eastern Oklahoma is funded through a competitive grant awarded by the United States Dept of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Washington, DC.

The Work Incentive Grant project is designed to enhance the employability, employment and career advancement of people with disabilities through enhanced service delivery in the new Workforce Oklahoma Centers and system established under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA).

The WIG grant has assisted KEDDO and Big Five Community Services to equip the One-Stop Centers in Southern and Southeastern Oklahoma with the latest in Assistive technology. To locate an office nearest you contact:

Southeast Workforce Investment Board
C/O Kiamichi Economic Development District of
Oklahoma (KEDDO)
Hwy 2 North * P.O. Box 638 * Wilburton, OK 74578
1-800-722-8180 * <http://www.keddo.org>

Southern Workforce Investment Board
C/O Big Five Community Services, Inc.
1502 N. 1st Street * P.O. Box 1577 * Durant, OK 74702
1-888-439-5331 * <http://www.bigfive.org>
Or
1-888-840-WORK (9675) * <http://www.workforceok.org>

Highlighted Definition:

**Social Security's definition of
Disability:**

The inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity (SGA) because of a medically determinable physical or mental impairment that can be expected to result in death or that will last for as least 12 months.

Ticket to Work

Ticket-to-Work is a Social Security Administration (SSA) program which provides individuals with disabilities more choices in obtaining employment services, vocational rehabilitation services and other supportive services. Persons who receive SSDI or SSI benefits due to a disability or blindness receive a *Ticket* to obtain services from a state vocations rehabilitation (VR) agency or another approved provider (Employment Network). This program is voluntary and services are provide free of charge to the benefit recipients. For more information about the Ticket-to-Work program contact MAXIMUS, Inc. toll free at 866-968-7842 or 866-833-2967 TTY. Also visit the SSA website at: <http://ssa.gov/pubs/10061.html>.

A Note from the Navigator:

The Disability Program Navigators hope you have found this edition of The Oklahoma Navigator useful. With the many day-to-day demands of our jobs, it is easy to miss opportunities to share ideas with each other. This newsletter has been created to assist you in staying informed on disability issues and information. Our goal is that you may have a more in depth knowledge of the programs and services that are available to better serve your clients or yourself. The Oklahoma Navigator is for individuals with disabilities, agencies, organizations, and employers. If there is someone you would like added to our emailing list, or if you have any questions, feel free to contact your nearest Disability Program Navigator. Each month you will be hearing from a different Navigator to give you a variety of information.

February's issue has been created by myself, Monica Huffstutlar of Ada. I am the Disability Navigator for Pontotoc, Garvin, Coal, Atoka, Bryan, Marshall, Murray, Love, Johnston and Carter counties. You can contact me at 580-332-1533 or monica.huffstutlar@oesc.state.ok.us.