

# **EMPLOYMENT FIRST UPDATE JANUARY 8, 2018**

Happy New Year IL Employment First Community of Practice!! We made it.

I am excited to start 2018 Employment First work with a sense of comradery and solidarity in our mission to improve employment and economic opportunities for persons with disabilities.

I am not going to say that this path is an easy one, that I have all of the answers or that our community of practice is always in agreement on strategies for system change. Change is difficult. I recognize that it involves experimentation and an element of risk. It requires mobilization of diverse stakeholders and peer to peer conversations that evolve into broad advocacy efforts. We shall continue to reach for change, overcome challenges, and stumble (or gracefully reach) toward progress in the coming year.

We are stronger together. We are working hard. We are trying to change things together and learning from one another in the process. The Illinois Employment First Initiative is committed to expanding this community of practice, creating new educational opportunities, showcasing success around Illinois, and bringing people together. I can't do my job without innovators in the field and insights from people who have disabilities, employers, community rehabilitation providers, teachers, Government representatives, family members, direct service staff, and advocacy groups. Thank you for being a part of this movement. I think we can figure this out together. Teamwork makes the dream work.



I want to share a quote and hope that you embrace it with me as part of our 2018 attitude toward systems transformation. I appreciate your work and dedication.

*"Strive to be uncynical, to be a hope-giving force, to be a steward of substance." – Maria Popova* 

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#### **1. LEAD BY EXAMPLE**

We have been trying to lead by example at my worksite in Chicago by partnering to create workbased learning experiences for transitions-aged youth. IDHS has partnered with the Chicago Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities and CPS to support the Youth Employment Program through participation in job shadow day and by hosting summer interns. I also want to share an article from the National Louis University P.A.C.E. Program Newsletter to spotlight an initiative of the Illinois Department of Human Services, Office of the Secretary, which began in September:

"This Fall, P.A.C.E. students had the opportunity to intern at a number of new partnership sites, including the Illinois Department of Human Services, Office of the Secretary, where second-year student Ashley interns. Tania Morawiec, Employment First Manager with the Illinois Department of Human Services, Office of the Secretary, shared her experience with P.A.C.E. at NLU and the importance of embracing the Employment First philosophy through internships and employment opportunities.

"Illinois Department of Human Services, Office of the Secretary, wanted to lead by example and live the mission of Employment First by providing a work-based learning experience. P.A.C.E. has been great to collaborate with because they took the time to learn about our needs and workplace culture--this ensured a strong job match for our intern. P.A.C.E. also provides a job coach who checks in with us weekly. Ashley, our intern, is getting to know her new team and has chipped in to help with several projects. We have tried to create a highly-structured list of project action steps so that Ashley can be as autonomous and self-directed as possible. We want her to feel supported while we promote independence.

"We are getting to know Ashley's skills and interests and she is learning more about our complex system of services and supports. We are committed to making sure she feels like part of the team and understands our mission. We also want her to get to know stakeholders and be a part of our community-based activities. Ashley has attended a financial inclusion taskforce meeting at the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, helped plan a local disability employment awareness event and met the Lieutenant Governor of Illinois at an event celebrating Disability Employment Awareness Month."

The Employment First philosophy embraces integrated, community-based employment opportunities and the understanding that all people have value to add. At P.A.C.E. we continue to seek out employers and organizations that embrace this mission and we provide education to those who are still unsure as to how individuals with disabilities might fit within their organization. Tania and her team at the Illinois Department of Human Services, Office of the Secretary, offer P.A.C.E. interns the opportunity to learn, discover their interests, strengths and challenges while working."

I WOULD **LOVE** TO HEAR HOW YOU ARE LEADING BY EXAMPLE AT YOUR BUSINESSES OR AGENCY!! PLEASE CONTACT ME IF YOU WANT TO SHARE! <u>Tania.Morawiec@Illinois.gov</u>

# 2. SUCCESS STORY, Mark, Featured Employee Interview



#### Where are you employed?

"I work 25-27 hours a week at Mariano's in Utility. I always liked the grocery store environment. It's a team environment, structured. I always wanted to work at one."

#### What advice do you have for job seekers who have disabilities?

"Get hooked up with an agency. It saved me so much and cut through the red tape. It's a lot easier. When I tried to search for work alone, there were challenges. I went on a lot of interviews. They were not always accommodating. Right away they said employees with seniority get the best hours. They did not seem personable; the atmosphere did not seem welcoming.

Don't give up. It's really easy to give up but you are in it for the long haul. It will pay off. I did a lot of volunteer work. Volunteering looks good on a resume and you gain transferrable skills."

#### What was the most helpful support you received from your employment specialist?

"Assistance with applications. We met once or twice a week. He gave me constructive criticism, really good feedback. He helped me to understand employer expectations.

A couple of times it got tough. The store was short staffed. I did the work of 2 people. My employment specialist has given me positive encouragement. When things get hard, I take a breather, step away so I can focus. I didn't always know how to do this. I go and get the help I need. I know who to go to, the structure of the organization. David helped me but I learned early on too. Managers are approachable and sympathetic."

#### What type of support did you receive when you were in school?

"In high school I was told by teachers that I probably would not be heading to a job. I did fairly well in school, so college was pushed. It was all about statistics. You are just a statistic. Schools are really focused on test scores and statistics-it just grinds on you.

I graduated with an Associate's Degree in 5 years. My counselor at school was very supportive. I had a lot of tough times there, but she helped me through it.

I went to a couple of support groups but found they were not a good fit. Just because people are Autistic, it doesn't mean they have the same interests."

# **3. WEBINARS**

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# Please register for Arc of Illinois Lunchtime Webinar – Person Centered Planning in Illinois on Jan 9, 2018 12:00 PM

CST at: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8359430061978424835

The title of The Arc of Illinois Lunchtime webinar scheduled for January 9th, 2018 is Person Centered Planning in Illinois. Andrea Medley, Life Choices Statewide Coordinator and Kit O'Brien Cota, Life Choices Program Manager at Illinois DHS will be presenting. This presentation is designed specifically for families and the focus of this presentation will be on how the person-centered process is affecting the individuals served by Illinois DHS Division of Developmental Disabilities. There will be time for questions at the end of this presentation.

Family members/caregivers interested in participating are asked to **please watch the following presentations online prior to January 9th** to get the most benefit from the information that will be presented.

• An Overview of Life Choices, Life Choices System Transformation 4-24-17 (21 minutes) <u>https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/6925994549886236417</u>

• Person Centered Planning Process Discovery, Personal Plan, Implementation Strategies (18 minutes) <u>https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/5972061561954248195</u>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

 Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program, Community of Practice Monthly Webinar Topic: Staffing to Provide Competitive Integrated Employment January 10, 2018, 3:00-4:00 ET <a href="http://www.econsys.com/eflsmp/copwebinar/">http://www.econsys.com/eflsmp/copwebinar/</a>

During this month's CoP webinar, participants will learn about strategies to recruit, train and retain staff that support the Employment First mission of the agency. Rick McAllister will discuss approaches to enhancing recruitment efforts. He will share a training paradigm that builds skills and supports retention with a focus on the value of competency based staff development.

#### Webinar Objectives

- Share strategies that will augment the recruitment process, and help us clarify our vision of which candidates can best support the Employment First mission.
- Provide a structure for staff training and development that facilitates the acquisition of skills needed to deliver competitive integrated employment services, and will also support effective retention efforts.
- Discuss staffing considerations as we shift from sheltered employment to competitive integrated employment. Discuss how these skill sets compare in very different positions-
- Provide a focus on using competency-based assessment from the initiation of recruitment through long-term retention.

# Special Guest: Rick McAllister



Rick McAllister, M.Ed., has over 30 years of experience in consulting, training and the day-to-day managing of service-based organizations. He is a nationally recognized speaker on employment strategies, leadership, management, and designing creative and effective organizational structures. He has extensive experience providing technical assistance to private, federal, and state sponsored employment initiatives. Rick has a bachelor's degree in business administration and a master's degree in applied behavioral analysis. He is the Managing Partner/EVP of Management Analytics

Resource Collaborative, LLC, a consulting group based in New Hampshire.

#### Webinar Procedures

- 1. In advance of the webinar, we strongly recommend you test your connection and review the <u>Adobe Connect Instructions and Troubleshooting Tips</u>.
- 2. On the day of the webinar, enter room here: <u>http://www.econsys.com/eflsmp/copwebinar/</u>.
- 3. In the GUEST field, enter your **first and last name followed by state abbreviation (i.e., Jeff, Smith, DC)**.
- 4. To connect your audio, follow the prompts to enter your phone number (direct line), and the system will immediately call you back (see <u>step-by-step instructions</u>).

If you are unfamiliar with Adobe Connect, please review these tips before participating

 Strategies for Pain Management and the Prevention of Opiate Misuse Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families Date: January 10, 2018 Time: 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. ET Register: <u>https://goto.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1174536&tp\_key=ef92a9137c</u>

Throughout the country, communities are striving to address the effect of serious pain in service members, veterans, and their families (SMVF) by offering prevention, treatment, and recovery alternatives, while simultaneously confronting the public health demands of the opioid crisis. As communities work to achieve these goals, the role that pain management and opioid use play in the lives of SMVF must be factored into their efforts.

Pain management is an important consideration for many SMVF. The National Institutes of Health cited a recent study that found that "veterans were about 40 percent more likely to experience severe pain than nonveterans[1]." Because opiate misuse is linked to factors including chronic pain and non-medical use of prescription opioids, community-planning efforts must take into account the unique needs of SMVF. Special consideration must be given to the inter-relationships of opioid misuse and conditions SMVF may experience, such as depression, chronic pain, post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, and suicidal ideation. Coordinated planning and implementation of military-culturally competent, alternative strategies that will address chronic pain and prevent SMVF opioid misuse and addiction are needed.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) SMVF Technical Assistance (TA) Center will conduct a webinar in partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and RAND, focusing on essential information surrounding the relationship between pain management and opiate misuse and addiction among SMVF. Presenters will also review other compounding factors that SMVF may experience. Strategies will be presented detailing how to support communities in their work to reduce the effects of severe pain, which can contribute to SMVF abuse of opioids. Research on SMVF alternatives for pain management will be included.

#### **Target Audience**

Representatives serving SMVF from state, territory, and tribal behavioral health systems; health care providers; suicide prevention coordinators; mental health and addiction peers; military family coalitions and advocates.

Register for the webinar today.

Please note:

- Participants will only be able to hear the webinar through their computer via headphones or speakers
- Participants are asked to test their system before the broadcast
- The webinar archive will be made available to registrants after the webinar
- Continuing education units are not available for this webinar

If you have any questions about your registration, please contact Lisa Guerin at (518) 439-7415, ext. 5242, or by email at <u>lguerin@prainc.com</u>.

 January 10, 2018, 2:00 p.m. ET Webcast: PAS and the New Section 501 Affirmative Action Requirements

In this webcast, the Job Accommodation Network and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission will explore Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act's new affirmative action requirements that go into effect in January 2018 regarding the provision of personal assistance services (PAS) for eligible federal employees. Presenters will also provide information about the elements of reasonable accommodation procedures for federal agencies. Time will be allotted for questions, which can be submitted ahead of time to jan@askjan.org. Register for the January 10 webcast.

# • CHTI to Host Free Webinar on "Engaging Elected Officials in Your Work"

On January 17, 2018, at 9:30 a.m. ET, the Community Health Training Institute (CHTI) is offering a free 90-minute webinar on "Engaging Elected Official in Your Work: Tips, Tools, and Talking Points." "Engaging a variety of people who can champion your work in places you may not be able to reach is an important strategy for implementing PSE (policy, systems, and environmental) change," they write. "This webinar will explore why it is important to engage elected officials in the community work you do, and different strategies for how to engage them. The presenter will provide a brief overview of the structure of local governments, and strategies for preparing talking points that members of your coalition can use in phone calls, emails, or visits to elected officials." For more information and to register, <u>click here</u>.

• Topical Webinar Five-Part Series on the Transition to Employment Among Youth Receiving SSI

# Date: Wednesday, January 17, at 2 p.m. (EST) 60 minutes

**Topic:** Benefits Counseling as a Tool to Improve Employment Outcomes for Youth Who Receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Young people with disabilities, especially those who receive SSI, need policies, programs, and interventions that can help them make a smooth transition into adult life, particularly into employment. However, many youth receiving SSI benefits fall behind their peers when it comes to achieving economic success and independence as adults, which raises questions about the effectiveness of existing supports. This issue is of particular policy interest given the major growth in the number of youth receiving SSI benefits over the past decade. Part 1 of this five-part webinar series will explore how benefits counseling, when paired with other interventions, can improve employment outcomes for young people with disabilities.

# This session will highlight:

- The effect that benefits counseling has on employment outcomes
- Best practices in benefits counseling, including strategies on when to provide benefits counseling to transition-age youth (such as before, during, or after employment)
- Lessons learned from large-scale studies on the provision of benefits counseling

**To register:** Register in advance by clicking on the link below. <u>https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/1568036/23D1DC53C5D4CFCDE5FC6CF9F90AA315</u>

• PEAT Talks: Expanding Accessibility Awareness in Higher Ed

January 18, 2pm-3pm ET



**Larry Goldberg** of <u>Oath</u> and **Jeff Wieland** of <u>Facebook</u> will discuss how <u>Teach Access</u> is working with industry, academia, and advocacy groups to expand the quality and quantity of undergraduate programs that teach the <u>fundamentals</u> of accessibility

Read more

# Release of 2017 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium

The NIDILRR-funded <u>Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Statistics and</u> <u>Demographics (StatsRRTC)</u> will host a release of the <u>2017 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium</u>, February 13th, 2018, 9am-2pm ET at the National Academy of Sciences Building, Washington, DC, and via webcast. <u>The Compendium</u> is a web-based tool that pools disability statistics published by various federal agencies together in one place. When working on legislative and other matters relating to persons with disabilities, the Compendium will make finding and using disability statistics easier. The Compendium release event includes a roll-out of new data and statistics, and a panel of representatives from government agencies discussing trends and data usage. Registration is free and required for both webcast and in-person attendance.

# • Doors to Wellbeing to Host Free Webinar on "Self-Care for the Peer Specialist"

On January 30, 2018, at 2 p.m. ET, Doors to Wellbeing will host a free webinar on "Self-Care for the Peer Specialist." "Workshop participants will learn to define mental health and wellness for themselves, understand how their mental health and wellness affects their work as a peer specialist, and develop personal tools for improving and maintaining mental health and wellness." For more information and to register, <u>click here</u>.

# PEAT Talks: Facebook and the Accessible Workplace

#### February 15, 2pm-3pm ET

In recent years <u>Facebook</u> has become a tool for professional networking and on-the-job workplace productivity through its enterprise collaboration software, Workplace. In this webinar, Director of Accessibility **Jeff Wieland** and Director of Policy **Monica Desai** will discuss why and how Facebook has made accessibility a priority.



Read more

# RESOURCES

Let's Talk Employment: A Guide to Employment for Family Members
 The NIDILRR-funded <u>Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Improving Employment</u>
 <u>Outcomes for Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities</u> has published <u>Let's Talk Employment: A</u>
 <u>Guide to Employment for Family Members</u>. The guide is designed for families who wish to

support a family member in recovery in getting and keeping employment. It provides a narrative and links for 15 major topics related to employment, including vocational resources, disclosure planning, peer support, and more. The guide is a companion to the Family section of the <u>Repository of Employment and Vocational Recovery Resources</u>. This project is also supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

ApprenticeshipWorks Guides for Youth, Educators/Service Providers, and Business
 The US Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) has released its
 ApprenticeshipWorks Guides for Youth, Educators/Service Providers, and Business, which
 introduce young people with disabilities, employers, and service providers and educators to
 the benefits and opportunities of inclusive apprenticeship. ODEP's efforts in apprenticeship
 promote inclusive program models that fulfill employer needs by attracting a diverse array of
 candidates. Visit ODEP's blog post on Apprenticeship and the American Dream to learn more
 about the many advantages of apprenticeships in today's economy for both employers and
 employees, including employees with disabilities.

• Did you know that Equip for Equality has an **Employment Rights Helpline** that provides **free legal advice** for employees and job seekers in Illinois?

#### Helpline staff can:

- Discuss your **rights** under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Answer your employment rights questions
- Assist with reasonable accommodation requests
- Help you understand your options
- Provide fact sheets, template letters and forms about common employment rights issues
- Provide other assistance, as needed
- How to contact the Helpline
- Toll free: (844) RIGHTS-9 (toll-free) or (844) 744-4879 (toll-free)
- TTY: (800) 610-2779 (tty)
- Email: <u>employment@equipforequality.org</u>

#### Learn more: www.equipforequality.org/employment

# • New Research Briefs Highlight Results of Surveys of Self-employed Individuals with Psychiatric Diagnoses

The NIDILRR-funded project on <u>Self-Employment Starts with You</u> has published a series of research briefs highlighting the results of surveys of self-employed individuals with mental health conditions. "Characteristics of Businesses and Business Owners" describes the survey participants, their experiences with barriers to and supports for self-employment, and the types of businesses they run. "Being and Becoming Self-Employed" provides insight into the experience and challenges of self-employment, and strategies for overcoming the challenges and reclaiming employment. The third brief, "Planning for the Future: Growth-Oriented Entrepreneurship," presents findings related to growing a business and planning for the future. More research and resources for entrepreneurship are available from <u>www.ReclaimingEmployment.net</u>.



Permanent supportive housing providers interested in diversifying their funding sources may want to consider Medicaid as a way of supporting its services. The complexity involved with administering Medicaid can be a barrier for many PSH providers, however. In response to this issue, Heartland Alliance Health's (previously known as Heartland Health Outreach) Health Neighborhood Demonstration Project is implementing innovative ways to help permanent supportive housing providers benefit from Medicaid funding and improve health outcomes for HAH participants without having to take on the burdens of becoming Medicaid billers.

<u>Read our newest brief</u>, which outlines the Health Neighborhood model and implementation, lessons learned, and key considerations for other organizations considering similar partnerships.

#### Read It Today!

The <u>newest report</u> from Heartland Alliance's Social IMPACT Research Center, Equitable
 Access to Secure Choice: Addressing the Barriers to Retirement Savings for Low-Income
 Workers in Illinois, shares the barriers that many Illinoisans (especially low-income workers,
 women, immigrants and people of color) face when it comes to saving for retirement. The
 report also provides financial, messaging, and implementation considerations that should be
 addressed so that Illinois' new retirement savings program, Secure Choice, is accessible to all
 eligible workers. <u>Read the full report</u>.

Last week, we joined IMPACT and the Illinois Treasurer's Office for a webinar about Secure Choice and the report findings. Take a look at the <u>webinar recording</u>

 The Temple University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) on Community Living and Participation of Adults with Psychiatric Disabilities is reminding you of past publications that have focused on strategies for supporting consumers' active engagement in community life. Whether it is returning to work, tackling that perennial New Year's resolution to exercise regularly, going back to school, or sustaining involvement with a religious congregation or a civic group – there are some guidelines for helping people to stay involved and connected. Take another look at:





# Helping People Connect to the Religious Congregations and Spiritual Groups of Their Choice

A useful look at what mental health programs and interested congregations can do to support those with mental illnesses to participate in both the 'faith' and 'fellowship' life of local congregations. Learn More

#### **ICAN PLAY Leisure Manual**

A step-by-step guide to supporting individuals in participating in exercise and recreational activities in their neighborhoods, building new relationships with the people they meet there Learn More



Mental Health and Wellness Through Civic Participation



#### **Beyond the Diagnosis**

Participating in civic life – as a volunteer, as a voter, as an advocate, and more – is a wonderful way to keep the community spirit of the holidays alive and well

This manual provides guidance on how those with mental illnesses can share their stories of community inclusion – what they are doing to connect and the impact it is having – that can reinforce the interests of other service recipients while playing an important public education Learn More

#### Learn More



A Practical Guide for People with Mental Health Conditions Who Want to Work

#### **Promoting Supportive Academic Environments**

Here's another New Year's resolution – going back to school – that can be addressed by helping academic settings to build truly welcoming environments for faculty and students with mental illnesses Learn More

# A Practical Guide for People with Mental Health Conditions Who Want to Work

Finding a job in the New Year can seem an overwhelming task, but here's a soup-to-nuts guide for tackling the challenge of competitive employment Learn More

• The Value of Peer Support



Bringing Recovery Supports to Scale Technical Assistance Center Strategy recently released four informational briefs that highlight the value of peer supports. The briefs explain the role of peer support workers, describe their unique contributions to an organization and articulate how they make a difference in the lives of peers, families and caregivers. Download these free briefs now to have this helpful information at your fingertips: <u>Peer Support</u>, <u>Peers Supporting Recovery From Mental Health</u> <u>Conditions, Peers Supporting Recovery From Substance</u> Use Disorders, and Family, Parent, and Caregiver Peer

<u>Support in Behavioral Health</u>! For more information on peer support services, including core competencies for hiring peer support specialists, click <u>here</u>.

# **REVERSE JOB FAIRS, EFSLMP INSIGHTS**

EFSLMP SME Insight The Iowa Reverse Job Fair Effort, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services David Mitchell, IVRS Administrator Michelle Krefft, IVRS Resource Manager for Employment

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides a chance for state systems to think differently regarding service delivery to individuals with disabilities by emphasizing competitive integrated employment. In Iowa, WIOA has provided chances for various employment systems to come together with new energy, purpose and innovation as we work together to align processes, increase capacity and move employment forward for individuals with disabilities. An example of this type of collaboration is the Reverse Job Fair concept. Iowa has developed a collaborative group of partners including the Employer Disability Resource Network (EDRN), who have worked together to host the Reverse Job Fairs. The partners represent a diverse group of individuals and organizations and could differ for each geographic area that would be attempting to partner as it should be unique to their partnership efforts and needs/gaps identified. Examples of the partners that we are working with include: Iowa Department for the Blind, Older Worker Program-Aging Resources of Central Iowa, Disability Resource Coordinator-Iowa Employment Solutions, Iowa Workforce Development, Central Iowa Center for Independent Living, Goodwill Industries, Candeo (Community Rehabilitation Providers), Iowa Department of Human Rights and Veteran Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

The Reverse Job Fair takes the typical business career fair, where job candidates travel from booth to booth – but reverses the action. In the Reverse Job Fair, job candidates host their own booth, and prepare their marketing materials to highlight their skills, abilities and interests. This allows the candidates to present themselves

in a manner that showcases their work contributions and provides a new method of communicating with businesses that fits the comfort level of the job seeker. Business hiring authorities travel from booth to booth to learn about the candidates. Job candidates prepare in advance, by practicing their 30-second elevator speeches, and creating poster boards, models, or video and picture demonstrations, as creative displays of work skills that might meet a business need.

The Reverse Job Fair provides flexibility in approaches and set-ups. You can target specific industries, career pathways, organizations, youth and adults. One is limited only in their creativity to think outside the box in ways to identify connections between businesses needing qualified workers and your job candidate pool.

Traditionally, we identify job candidates that would benefit from this type of event as the first step in the process. We then choose a location; we have found that the location needs to be free, have accessible transportation and adequate parking. For past Reverse Job Fairs, we have used a church, the Vocational Rehabilitation training room and our partners' training rooms. Once job candidates are identified, we begin preparing them by hosting a workshop that explains the concept and expectations and helps job candidates in identifying their presentation style, props and table displays as well as making a good first impression and updating their resumes. This workshop is separated into classes that job candidates rotate through, similar to a conference with breakout sessions.

Next we have preparation days, when the team gets together with the job candidates to help them create their skill boards and supporting documentation for the fair. Right before the actual event, we hold a trial run through, allowing our candidates practice. We have business partners involved in this step. They provide feedback to our candidates to help them be their best for the actual event. This has proven to be another way to engage our business partners.

While all this work is going on with the job candidates, the organizers target business partners to participate. We have created a collaborative database, which is used to invite the employers. The invitation identifies how many candidates will be there and the goal areas of these participants. Businesses register to attend, and the registration includes job descriptions of their current openings that are then used in the workshops with our job candidates to prepare them specifically for those openings; using the language of the job description in the resumes to demonstrate transferable skills. Not all business partners who attend have current openings, but they know the value of a good employee and are always seeking that person. Our team, as well as our partner teams, personally invite businesses we work with. Average numbers for Reverse Job Fairs are coming out at 20 job candidates and 60 business representatives at each event.

Iowa has held several Reverse Job Fairs and the latest one was at a Project SEARCH site where 12 job candidates participated and all 12 of the individuals were hired within 30 days and prior to graduation. This is significant and reflects the value of the Reverse Job Fair model. In addition, these students were able to showcase their skills and abilities to our business partners and were hired in their goal areas. Reverse job fairs have happened across Iowa by numerous teams. EDRN is hosting

our fifth one within two years, and we plan to have two each year moving forward, as this seems most manageable.

This concept allows our job candidates to take the information they learn about themselves through the discovery process and utilize those strengths to showcase their skills. Our business partners felt energized by the fair and indicated they prefer this model over traditional job fairs. It is an organized manner to find talent for their current job openings.

This initiative is a win-win proposition for all involved. We have witnessed the boost in self-esteem and confidence gained by job candidates who utilized the materials they developed to comfortably talk about their work interests. Not only did the Reverse Job Fair provide opportunities for connections between job candidates and business, it provided relationship and partner building between our employment service professionals and business hiring personnel. We gained a greater understanding of the needs of our business partners, which helped us identify service strategies. We are recognizing this strategy as a valuable tool to further engage our business partners.

### MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD, GET INVOLVED

#### ICCB Adult Education Strategic Plan Open Forum

The Illinois Community College Board will be holding a webinar as well as face-to-face meetings for feedback on the Illinois Adult Education Strategic Plan. On January 9th, there will be a statewide webinar, and on January 10th and 12th there will be two informational meetings. For more information visit <u>this link</u>. To learn more about the Adult Education Strategic Plan, visit the Illinois Community College Board's site <u>here</u>.

Happy New Year! As we enter 2018, we appreciate our accomplishments from 2017 and look forward to working with you to advocate more/stronger/louder at the state and federal level, train more people throughout the state, and connect individuals, parents and families with services, supports and each other.

#### GUBERNATORIAL AND ATTORNEY GENERAL FORUMS

Along with our friends at Access Living and other supporting organizations for the non-partisan Disability Candidates Forums, we are pleased to announce that **public registration for the January 18 Forum for the Illinois Governor's Race is now OPEN!** <u>Go to this link for free online registration</u>. You may register up to two spots; space is very limited so be sure to register ASAP. Please note there is very little room in person so please consider attending a watch party and/or plan a watch party and let <u>meg@thearcofil.org</u> know!

YOU can help <u>submit questions</u> to ask the candidates at the forums! Since the Governor's race forum is the soonest, we are accepting suggested questions at this link. Questions need to be submitted no later than Monday, January 8 at 5 pm. A small committee from the host organization will select 8 to 10 questions that will be asked at the forum. Because time will be limited, if there are extra questions, we MAY ask the campaigns to answer the extra questions in writing, and the responses will be posted online.

Save Feb 9 at 3 pm for the Attorney General Candidates' Forum - Registration and information to follow.

• If you haven't had the chance to join ePolicyWorks latest online dialogue, the <u>Careers in the</u> <u>Arts Toolkit</u> online dialogue, it's not too late. Over the last several weeks, dialogue participants have submitted 154 comments and 106 votes on 38 innovative ideas for resources that would benefit people with disabilities pursuing education, training, and employment opportunities across arts disciplines.

Don't miss this chance to submit your ideas, comments and votes before the dialogue closes at midnight on **January 8**. Simply click on the link, <u>https://careersinthearts.epolicyworks.org/</u>, to participate at your convenience. Join us now to discuss the strategies, challenges and solutions that will create better employment opportunities for people with disabilities seeking careers in the arts.

Need help logging in? Please email us at <u>ePolicyWorks@dol.gov</u> for assistance.

#### **Participants Wanted - Peer Support and Stress**

Do you currently work as a peer support provider? We hear a lot about stress in the peer workforce, but there hasn't been much research about it. **You can help change that!** 

You may be eligible to participate if all of these apply:

• You were trained and currently provide direct peer support services in a mental health organization, paid or unpaid

- You use your own recovery experience to assist others with mental health, & other life challenges
- You are over age 18 and work in the United States

This study was designed by a certified peer support specialist, with input from peers and allies. If you want to learn more, please send questions to the investigator, Stephania Hayes, by e-mail: <a href="mailto:stephania@berkeley.edu">stephania@berkeley.edu</a>

# • Are You a Supporter of the License to Work Act?

January is time for legislative session to start up in Springfield again. That means it's time to keep fighting to end driver's license suspension for non-driving violations by passing the License to Work Act. Too often, these are failure-to-pay violations that trap individuals in poverty without the ability to drive. Is your organization listed as a supporter of the bill? Check out our <u>fact sheet</u> to see the current supporters (listed on the back) and email Eric at <u>eric@cjc.net</u> to get added to the list!

# • ACL Seeks Public Input on Data Collection from Traumatic Brain Injury State Partnership Program

Reminder that the Administration for Community Living released the proposed semiannual performance measures for the ACL Traumatic Brain Injury State Partnership Program. The <u>Notice of</u> <u>Comment Request is now available in the Federal Register</u> and will be **open for public comment until** January 12, 2018. The <u>proposed data collection forms</u> may also be found on the ACL website for review. ACL seeks to collect performance measure data from state grantees consistent with the TBI State Partnership program's purpose and ACL's mission to "maximize the independence, well-being, and health of older adults, people with disabilities across the lifespan, and their families and caregivers." Data will be collected on a semi-annual basis about the types of practices, protocols, and activities performed by each grantee, as well as the cost of each activity and the number and types of people they served. ACL will also request information about the number and types of individuals who receive TBI-related home and community based services. Finally, ACL seeks information regarding the involvement of people with TBI in advisory and program support roles.

The data collected will allow ACL to determine the extent to which the grant program is meeting its goals of expanding and improving services, generating sustainable funding streams, and enriching service systems to better serve individuals with TBI and their families. The data will also help ACL develop and expand baseline information around the nature and scope of the incidence of TBI. Additionally, this data collection will help ACL illustrate the return on investment of the TBI funds in terms of system change (i.e., changes in policies and practices and the development of networks). **Submit electronic comments on the collection of information to tbi@acl.gov by January 12, 2018.** Submit written comments to:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Administration for Community Living

330 C Street SW

Washington, DC 20201

Attention: Thom Campbell.

For further information, contact Thom Campbell by telephone: (202) 795-7263 or by email: <u>tbi@acl.gov</u>.

# • DONT FORGET TO APPLY FOR PARTNERS IN POLICYMAKING - APPLICATIONS DUE JAN 19

PARTNERS IN POLICYMAKING<sup>®</sup> (also known as PARTNERS) is a leadership training program designed for parents of school age children with developmental disabilities and adults with disabilities. PARTNERS teaches leadership skills, and the process of developing positive partnerships with elected officials and other policymakers who make decisions about the services that individuals and their family's use. PARTNERS is accessible, informative and empowering. The graduates of PARTNERS often become members of boards, councils, task forces and advisory committees; some run for elected office. PARTNERS is about systems change – creating, working towards, and achieving a vision of shared values about people with disabilities.

#### Participation in PARTNERS requires:

- A commitment to attend <u>all eight weekend sessions</u>
- An interest in learning and practicing new skills in a comfortable and safe environment
- A desire to build and strengthen a network of people from diverse cultural backgrounds and life experiences

• A willingness to learn from national and state experts who share our vision and values Classes begin soon (February 23 - October 13, 2018) and class size is limited so submit your application now. If you are a provider, please share this information with self-advocates and/or parents!

# IL-PCP Brochure IL-PCP Application

#### CLICK HERE TO APPLY ONLINE

If you have questions or would like to discuss the types of applicants that you can help find, please contact Allan Bergman at **aibergman@comcast.net**.

#### • Apply to become a part of *The Dream Team*

Are you interested in being part of a brand new, innovative opportunity to grow your leadership skills while designing, planning, and implementing a Mental Health National Youth Convergence?

Doors to Wellbeing (D2W) is looking for young, emerging leaders, within the ages of 18-30, who are interested in building up personal leadership skills and working with a team of youth responsible for leading and organizing a Mental Health National Youth Convergence. Attendance at the event is required. If selected, you will be partnered with a nationally recognized Young Adult Mentor to learn from and have as a guide.

#### DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS JANUARY 15, 2017.

Learn More & Apply Now!



The Chicagoland Equity Network--of which Health & Medicine is a steering committee member--is pleased to host a Chicagoland Equity Summit Delegation to together attend the <u>PolicyLink</u> <u>Equity Summit 2018: Our Power. Our Future. Our Nation</u>. April 11-13, 2018 in Chicago and to use this to help catalyze advances in social justice locally.

If you are already working on or interested in advancing equity in the Chicago region, we invite you to join our delegation of people from across sectors and disciplines working for justice. **Click here to join the Chicagoland Equity Summit Delegation!** 

#### According the PolicyLink, the Equity Summit 2018 is:

A call to activists, organizers, and leaders to step into our power, activate our imaginations, and set the national agenda. That agenda will build on what's been learned about advancing equity and justice and push to achieve the scale required for all to reach our full potential.

Collectively, we know what works. We recognize that the antidote to fear, hate, and twisted nostalgia is to dismantle structural racism, design systems of inclusion, and accept that our fates are intertwined...<u>Read more.</u>

Why join the Chicagoland Equity Summit Delegation?

--Connect with other equity leaders locally and nationally—during the summit and beyond! We are working to bring together at least 300 Chicagoans as part of our delegation!

--All members of the Chicagoland Equity Summit Delegation will be able to **utilize a reduced registration rate** as part of our delegation



Questions? Learn more here or email us at info@hmprg.org

# Help us bring the equity conversation to Chicago!

Health & Medicine and our partners are planning a locally focused post-summit *Demanding Justice Now* conference to bring the lessons from the national summit to Chicago.

Demanding Justice Now, part of Health & Medicine's Chicago Forum for Justice in Health

*Policy* series, will create space to discuss the current political context from the perspective of fighting for equity in Chicagoland. Simultaneously responding to attacks at the federal, state, and local levels, it is now more necessary than ever that Chicagoans offer analysis of the injustices harming people's health and develop collective responses that advance equity.

Health & Medicine is convening a planning committee to help develop this cross-sector and interdisciplinary discussion about advancing equity in the Chicagoland region. **First Planning Committee Meeting:** 

Thursday, January 11, 2018 UIC School of Public Health (1603 W Taylor St), Room 932 (9th floor) 5:30-7:00 pm Light dinner will be provided For more information and to rsvp, click here.

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT



#### I Use a Wheelchair. And Yes, I'm Your Doctor. - Cheri A. Blauwet, The New York Times

Most physicians with mobility disabilities will tell you that the problem is not that we lack the ability to do our job competently. The larger barrier to entry for prospective doctors with disabilities, however, is bias, both overt and hidden.

**Read More** 

#### EXCERPT:

"People with disabilities often express fear or dissatisfaction with our health care system because they face poor access and discriminatory attitudes. This must change. Perhaps having more doctors with disabilities is one solution. As with any underrepresented group in medicine, professional diversity should reflect our population's diversity. That simple change can bring awareness, empathy and a shared experience that ultimately makes all of us better."

CHAIN OF LOVE

"How do you account for your remarkable accomplishment in life?" Queen Victoria of England asked Helen Keller. "How do you explain the fact that even though you were both blind and deaf, you were able to accomplish so much?"

Ms Keller's answer is a tribute to her dedicated teacher. "If it had not been for Anne Sullivan, the name of Helen Keller would have remained unknown."

"Little Annie" Sullivan, as she was called when she was young, was no stranger to hardship. She was almost sightless herself (due to a childhood fever) and was, at one time, diagnosed as hopelessly "insane" by her caregivers. She was locked in the basement of a mental institution outside of Boston. On occasion, Little Annie would violently attack anyone who came near. Most times, she generally ignored everyone in her presence.

An elderly nurse believed there was hope, however, and she made it her mission to show love to the child. Every day she visited Little Annie. For the most part, the child did not acknowledge the nurse's presence, but she still continued to visit. The kindly woman left cookies for her and spoke words of love and encouragement. She believed Little Annie could recover, if only she were shown love.

Eventually, doctors noticed a change in the girl. Where they once witnessed anger and hostility, they now noted an emerging gentleness and love. They moved her upstairs where she continued to improve. Then the day finally came when this seemingly "hopeless" child was released.

Anne Sullivan grew into a young woman with a desire to help others as she, herself, was helped by the kindly nurse. It was she who saw the great potential in Helen Keller. She loved her, disciplined her, played with her, pushed her and worked with her until the flickering candle that was her life became a beacon of light to the world. Anne Sullivan worked wonders in Helen's life; but it was a loving nurse who first believed in Little Annie and lovingly transformed an uncommunicative child into a compassionate teacher.

"If it had not been for Anne Sullivan, the name of Helen Keller would have remained unknown." But if it had not been for a kind and dedicated nurse, the name of Anne Sullivan would have remained unknown. And so it goes. Just how far back does the chain of redemption extend? And how far forward will it lead?

# **IN THE NEWS**



**Justice Department Scraps ADA Guidance** by Michelle Diament | January 4, 2018 Attorney General Jeff Sessions revoked numerous guidance documents including over a half dozen pertaining to the Americans with Disabilities Act and said more withdrawals may be forthcoming. (Ting Shen/Xinhua/Sipa USA/TNS)

https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2018/01/04/justice-scraps-ada-guidance/24546/

"Attorney General Jeff Sessions said he's rescinding more than two dozen guidance documents including several clarifying the implications of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Among the 25 revoked documents are a number of ADA-related items dating as far back as 1995 offering guidance on everything from service animals to accessible building practices as well as a 2016 letter on employment of people with disabilities.

Sessions called the revoked documents "improper or unnecessary" and said they were outdated or went beyond what the law called for. The move announced in late December came after President Donald Trump issued an executive order requiring all federal agencies to identify regulations for "repeal, replacement or modification." The withdrawn guidance was identified through this process, Sessions said.

Disability advocates indicated they are particularly worried about the U.S. Department of Justice's decision to pull a <u>statement issued</u> under the Obama administration addressing the implications of the ADA's integration mandate on employment.

"The civil rights of persons with disabilities, including individuals with mental illness, intellectual or developmental disabilities, or physical disabilities, are violated by unnecessary segregation in a wide variety of settings, including in segregated employment, vocational and day programs," the Obamaera <u>guidance</u> stated. The document warned states that they needed to modify their policies to ensure that employment programs offer people with disabilities the opportunity to work in integrated settings.

"We are extremely concerned about the withdrawal of this guidance document, both because it sends the wrong signal to public entities that are seeking to comply with the ADA and because it may reflect a diminished concern with the importance of providing employment services in the most integrated setting," reads a statement from the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities and the Collaboration to Promote Self Determination, two umbrella groups representing dozens of disability advocacy organizations.

Taking away the guidance does not change any of the ADA's mandates, disability advocates noted. Nonetheless, withdrawing the guidance, which serves as an interpretation of the law, can create uncertainty, they said.

"Guidance documents are important tools to educate all stakeholders about the requirements of the law in a clear fashion, and the withdrawal of some of these guidance documents may create confusion and misunderstanding," the advocacy coalitions cautioned. Sessions indicated that the Justice Department is continuing to review guidance to identify other documents that may be ripe for repeal, replacement or modification."

• Sherbin, Laura, and Julia Taylor Kennedy. "<u>The Case for Improving Work for People with</u> <u>Disabilities Goes Way Beyond Compliance</u>." Harvard Business Review. • Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi of RespectAbility shared, "Our landmark report, <u>Disability & Criminal</u> Justice Reform: Keys to Success woke a lot of people up. We were thrilled with the coverage it got on the PBS NewsHour <u>HERE</u>. However, one aspect of that work is to shine a light on the horrific levels of rape and abuse of people with disabilities. As a rape survivor myself, I am constantly beating a drum on this issue. Indeed, I published <u>an oped</u> about it yet again this week. We know that tonight's Golden Globes will focus on #MeToo. But sadly, people with disabilities are disproportionally impacted by rape and abuse. Thus, I am thrilled to let you know that at a moment of reckoning in the United States about sexual harassment and sexual assault, a yearlong NPR investigation finds that there's little recognition of a group of Americans that is one of the most at risk: adults with intellectual disabilities. **The series starts on Monday, January 8 and runs through January 18th.** 

Jan 8: Morning Edition. Correspondent Joe Shapiro talks about the series with host Steve Inskeep

Jan 8: All Things Considered: The epidemic of sexual abuse of people with intellectual disabilities. Numbers obtained by NPR show they are sexually assaulted at rates more than 7 times those for all adults without disabilities.

Jan 9: Morning Edition: A visit to a Sex Ed class for people with intellectual disabilities. They talk about how they want relationships, but how the sexual violence of their past often gets in the way.

Jan 10: All Things Considered: On cases that go unnoticed when people have difficulty communicating.

Jan 16: All Things Considered: Police and prosecutors are often reluctant to take these cases. NPR goes back to Essex County, New Jersey, where the first case to get widespread attention--in Glen Ridge, New Jersey, 25 years ago--was prosecuted. And look at what prosecutors have learned since.

Jan 18: Morning Edition: Therapists Nora Baladerian and Karyn Harvey talk about the stunning violence in the lives of their clients.

Jan 18: All Things Considered: Self-advocates speak--thoughtfully--of the effects of sexual violence. This piece is entirely in the voices of people with intellectual disabilities (plus Joe Shapiro).

There will be print stories (with photos and art) on-line at <u>npr.org</u>. And the radio stories can be heard there.

# **EMPLOYER CORNER**

• January 12, 2018 Deadline: Disability Equality Index

The deadline to register for the 2018 Disability Equality Index (DEI) is fast approaching. Sponsored by the American Association of People with Disabilities and the U.S. Business Leadership Network, an EARN partner, this confidential benchmarking tool offers employers an opportunity to receive an objective rating on their disability inclusion policies and practices. Companies that score 80 percent or higher are named "DEI Best Places to Work." The deadline to register is January 12, 2018; registered

companies will then receive access to the survey the week of January 22, 2018. <u>Learn more about the DEI</u>.

# • January 17, 2018, 1:00 p.m. ET <u>Twitter Chat: Inclusion@Work: Strategies for Building a</u> <u>Disability-Inclusive Culture</u>

Workplace disability inclusion is about more than hiring; it's about facilitating a disability-inclusive culture across an organization's employment lifecycle, from application to onboarding to advancement. In this Twitter chat, EARN will join the Campaign for Disability Employment to discuss "Inclusion@Work," EARN's employer policy framework outlining seven core components of a disability-inclusive workplace. Don't miss this opportunity to engage, learn and share how these components can and are being put into practice by businesses both large and small. Join using the hashtag #CDEInclusion.

# Workforce Recruitment Program

The 2018 Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) database is now available! Managed by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Defense's Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity, the WRP is a recruitment and referral program that connects federal employers with highly qualified students and recent graduates with disabilities seeking internships or permanent jobs. The WRP is also available to private-sector employers seeking to diversify their workforce with people with disabilities, whether as short- or long-term hires. Learn more about the WRP for <u>federal</u> or <u>private</u> employers.

# Mobile Accommodation Solution (MAS) App

The Mobile Accommodation Solution (MAS) app – the iOS version of which is now available in the app store – is a first-of-its kind tool that helps employers and others manage workplace accommodation requests throughout the employment lifecycle. Using the app, employers can track the status of requests; access fillable forms; and store, print and export records that can be imported into enterprise information systems. The app was developed by West Virginia University's Center for Disability Inclusion in partnership with the Job Accommodation Network and IBM; funding came from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research. <u>Get the MAS app</u>.

# "Future of Work" Podcast Series

The Partnership on Employment & Accessible Technology (PEAT) recently launched a free podcast series in collaboration with the human resources web portal Workology.com. Titled "The Future of Work," the series explores workplace technology trends in the context of accessibility and impact on the employment of people with disabilities. The first two episodes are now available. The first features Cisco's Pat Romzek, who speaks about inclusive hiring. The second features Inclusive Design Research Centre's Jutta Treviranus and focuses on machine learning and artificial intelligence in the workplace. <u>Access "The Future of Work" podcast series</u>.

#### Strategies to Drive Awareness and Engagement at a Large Enterprise

Getting thousands of employees to understand and integrate an accessibility mindset into their day-to-day work is no easy task. At Capital One, the accessibility team has launched a range of creative internal efforts to promote widespread awareness of accessibility standards and best practices.



Read more

# RESEARCH

• "Associations between the Peer Support Relationship, Service Satisfaction, and Recovery-Oriented Outcomes: A Correlational Study" just came out in the Journal of Mental Health. This is among the first studies to demonstrate that strong peer relationships facilitate positive outcomes.

You can find the article published here.

 Greg Townley, a Center colleague from Portland State University, published an article with Brusilovskiy, Snethen, and Salzer entitled, "Geospatial Research Methods to Examine Resource Accessibility and Availability as it Relates to Community Participation of Individuals with Serious Mental Illnesses" in the American Journal of Community Psychology. This study involved geospatial and other data from 294 individuals where we found, among other things, that car access has important implications for community participation.
 You can find the article published here.

• Full Disclosure: When Mental Health Professionals Reveal Their Mental Illness at Work

"Results from a survey conducted by Temple University Collaborative associates suggest that mental health staff who have mental health issues and work as therapists, counselors, case managers, etc. (i.e., non-peer-specialist roles) report positive and supportive responses from their colleagues following disclosure," the TU Collaborative writes. "However, many also acknowledged their own fears of and/or experiences with workplace discrimination and a 'social distancing' of colleagues following disclosure or after requests for workplace accommodations. Take a look at this publication to review the survey results and see what policy, program, and practice initiatives you can implement to build even more welcoming work environments within our mental health community for all." To download the free eight-page publication, *Full Disclosure: When Mental Health Professionals Reveal Their Mental Illness at Work*, click here.

- <u>Changes in Beneficiary Characteristics and Employment-Related Outcomes from 2005 to 2015</u> Principal investigator: Gina Livermore (Mathematica)
- Making Ends Meet: How Low-Income DI Beneficiaries Meet Their Needs
   Principal investigators: Alexis Henry and Jack Gettens (University of Massachusetts Medical
   School)
- Butterworth, J., J. Christensen, and K. Flippo. "<u>Partnerships in Employment: Building Strong</u> <u>Coalitions to Facilitate Systems Change for Youth and Young Adults</u>." Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, vol. 47, no. 3, 2017, pp. 265–276.
- Carter, E.W., E. McMillan, and W. Willis. "<u>The TennesseeWorks Partnership: Elevating</u> <u>Employment Outcomes for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities</u>." *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, vol. 47, no. 3, 2017, pp. 365–378.

- Cavendish, Wendy, and David Connor. "<u>Toward Authentic IEPs and Transition Plans: Student,</u> <u>Parent, and Teacher Perspectives</u>." *Learning Disability Quarterly*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2018, pp. 32– 43.
- Molfenter, N.F., E. Hartman, J. Neugart, and S. Webb. "Let's Get to Work Wisconsin: Launching Youth with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities into the Workforce." Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, vol. 47, no. 3, 2017, pp. 379–390.
- Christensen, J.J., K. Richardson, and S. Hetherington. "<u>New York State Partnerships in</u> <u>Employment</u>." *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, vol. 47, no. 3, 2017, pp. 351–363.