



ILLINOIS EMPLOYMENT FIRST UPDATE 9/6/2017

Hello Illinois Employment First Community of Practice!

I want to frame this Employment First Update as a call to action in celebration of National Rehabilitation Awareness week taking place from September 17-23, 2017.

Our work in this community of practice is team-oriented. Rehabilitation often centers on an interdisciplinary team approach to care by physiatrists (physicians specializing in rehabilitation); physical, occupational, respiratory and recreational therapists; speech and language pathologists; rehabilitation nurses, psychologists, vocational counselors and other professionals who work with patients to restore the greatest level of function or independence. The rehab team helps individuals overcome obstacles and accomplish normal tasks of daily living. Natural work-based supports, family members, neighbors and friends are all involved in rehabilitation efforts. Don't forget that the "captain" of any rehabilitation team is the unique individual we are serving. Nearly 50 million Americans are disabled. Disability does not discriminate - any person may become disabled. Therefore, everyone is a potential candidate for rehabilitation. Increasing awareness of disability and rehabilitation issues expands opportunities for innovation and unifies stakeholders under a shared vision.

Please consider participating in one of the following E1 training options, planning an activity or hosting an event to help broad audiences understand your Employment First work.

Some ideas include:

- Write a guest editorial to area newspapers regarding the positive impact of rehab.
- Hold a rehab technology fair highlighting the assistive equipment available which enables people to live independently.
- Invite local schools to participate in poster contests using "Celebrating the Successes of People With Disabilities" as a theme. Display art work through- out your facility.
- Hold rehab trivia contests.
- Encourage local businesses to participate by displaying educational information and posters.

- Develop a feature story about attitudes toward people with disabilities and their rehabilitation. People perceive disability in many ways, and some of their perceptions may be based on incorrect information.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to recovery, empowerment, employment, inclusion and success. If you host an event please let me know so I can share ideas with the wider community of practice!

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1. **FREE DHS DEMAND SIDE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TRAINING SERIES BY CORNELL'S DIVERSITY PARTNERS INITIATIVE (Please fill out attached form and follow registration links)**



The Diversity Partners Project at Cornell University's Yang-Tan Institute on Employment & Disability is partnering with the Illinois Department of Human Services to present a **no-cost**, four-part webinar series that addresses topics to improve competitive integrated employment options for people with disabilities. The content of the series is aligned with the Employment First initiatives already advanced by the state of Illinois. **Agency leaders and program personnel who provide employment services (or aspire to) are encouraged to attend. There is currently no limit to the number of program personnel who can participate.**

The curriculum of this series is informed by the interests and needs of Illinois based rehabilitation service providers and strengths-based assessment strategies. The training series, scheduled between 10/25/17-11/29/17, seeks to strengthen the bridge between labor supply and demand in the disability focused workforce development system.

To aid supervisors, Cornell University has also created an Illinois dashboard for tracking employee participation in the comprehensive Diversity Partners Training Suite which includes:

- Over a dozen modules in 6 topical areas
- Self-assessment, guided learning, tools and resources

Added benefits of participation are access to the dashboard, connection to service providers committed to the Employment First Initiative, and **free CRC CEUs!**

To participate in this free training series:

1. Please complete the attached participant agreement and send it to Tania.Morawiec@illinois.gov
2. To register, click on following links.

Registration links:

[Taking the Lead: Developing an Employment First Culture in Illinois](#)

[Preparing for Competitive Integrated Employment Supports](#)

[Improving Pathways to Employment](#)

[Building Relationships to Improve Employment Outcomes](#)

Testimonial:

"I believe [Diversity Partners] is a really innovative, up-to-date and necessary/valuable approach to the work we do and our constituents!"

– *Employment Specialist at Capabilities, Inc., a disability service provider.*

2. FEATURED DEI VIDEO SERIES WEBINAR:

DEI Video Series Announcement Webinar

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) is excited to announce the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) video series available online. DEI aims to improve education, training and employment opportunities for youth and adults with disabilities who are unemployed, underemployed and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits. The DEI video series covers a broad range of topics for jobseekers and workers with disabilities, and their employers. The short, informational design allows jobseekers and employers to gain an easy introduction to topics including the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodation, how to seek services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and much more!

On **Monday, September 18, 2017 at 11am (CST)** we will be hosting a webinar for you to learn more about the video series.

We will cover the following topics:

- What is DEI (Disability Employment Initiative)?
- Where are the videos located online, and how can my organization use them?
- What information is available for employers?
- What is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act?
- What are some services jobseekers with disabilities can take advantage of?
 - IDHS- Illinois Department of Human Services
 - DRS- Division of Rehabilitation Services
 - DMH- Division of Mental Health
 - IDES- Illinois Department of Employment Security
 - Equip for Equality
- Additional questions.

ENTERING THE WEBINAR

You can access the webinar using the webinar address: <http://siuccwd.adobeconnect.com/deivideos/>. When you enter the webinar, please make sure to enter your name AND YOUR ORGANIZATION. "Click to Enter." You do not need a password to enter this Webinar.

AUDIO OPTIONS

Option 1: Computer Speakers (Recommended) The webinar will be broadcasted live online with the ability to login to the webinar and listen through your speakers. With Option 1 you will be able to ask questions via chat.

Option 2: Phone Call into the conference call 866-803-3878 and mute your computer speakers. There is no pin needed to participate in this call.



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity
OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING
Bruce Rauner, Governor





3. WEBINARS

- [Recent ADA Rulings and the Future of Digital Accessibility: Winn-Dixie and Other Important Decisions](#)

Tuesday, September 12, 2pm-3pm ET WEBINAR

The Florida Federal District Court recently ruled that Winn-Dixie's website violated Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and mandated that the company adopt a website accessibility policy that conforms to WCAG 2.0 criteria. In this webinar, nationally-recognized disability attorney **Bobby Silverstein** will discuss the impact of this groundbreaking ruling and other important decisions.

[Register Now](#)

- [Improving Behavioral Health Integration through Culturally Appropriate Service Delivery](#)

September 13, 2017
3:00 - 4:30 PM ET

Presenters: Juliet Bui, HHS Office on Minority Health; Rachele Espiritu and Suganya Sockalingham, Change Matrix; Green County Health Care, North Carolina; Hope Clinic, Texas; Refugee Women's Health Clinic, Texas

Register for free here: https://goto.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1157861&tp_key=f0e8c3fdd6

Racially diverse and ethnic minority populations continue to experience disparities in behavioral health services access, treatment, and outcomes. Though the factors contributing to these disparities

may include social determinants such as housing, education, and job status, provider bias and a lack of cultural and linguistic competency (CLC) may also play a role. Failure to address and acknowledge a patient's culture while providing integrated care can result in poor provider-patient communication and low health literacy.

Primary care settings are ideal for screening, assessing, and treating mental health and/or substance use conditions. Join CIHS to hear how culturally and linguistically competent behavioral health integrated care delivery models in primary care can improve the accessibility and the quality of physical and behavioral health services.

- [Webinar: Creating Inclusive Higher Education Work Environments for People with Mental Health Disabilities](#)

In the higher education workplace environment, policies and practices that support success for faculty and staff with mental health conditions are also sound management practices that benefit all workers and employers. During this webinar, hosted by EARN in collaboration with the Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC), a panel of experts will explore this issue in depth. While geared toward higher education, the content that will be shared is widely applicable, and employers in all industries are encouraged to participate. [Register for the September 14 webinar.](#)

- [Upcoming Webinar: "Mental Health Needs and Service Use Among Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness"](#)

Date: Tuesday, September 19, 2017

Time: 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM PT (1:00 PM – 2:00 PM ET)

Description:

This webinar presents data from a new national study of homeless young adults (age 18-26) gathered through drop-in centers and shelters in seven cities across the country – the Homeless Youth Risk and Resilience Survey. The webinar will include data from the study and the voices of youth who participated to provide more information about the intersection of homelessness and mental health problems. Examining patterns of mental health service use and unmet need in this group will provide an understanding of how young adults are managing their mental health needs while homeless. Presenters will also describe the implications for programs providing mental health services for adolescents and young adults. Potential solutions to increase connection and supports for these young people through early identification and intersystem communication will be discussed.

Presenters:

- Sarah C. Narendorf, PhD, LCSW – University of Houston, Graduate School of Social Work
- Matthew Uretsky, PhD, MSW, MPH – Portland State University, School of Social Work

- [Webinar: Reasonable Accommodation Update](#)

Thursday, September 20, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. ET

Sponsored by the ADA National Network, this webinar will address recent reasonable accommodation court decisions so that employers can better understand their responsibilities under the relevant provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It will also review the process for implementing reasonable accommodations from both the employee and employer perspective. The presenters will be Equip for Equality's Director of Legal Services, Barry Taylor, and Staff Attorney, Rachel Weisberg. [Register for the September 20 webinar.](#)

- [PEAT Talks: How and Why to Make VPATs a Priority](#)

Thursday, September 21, 2pm-3pm ET WEBINAR

Over the years, [Elsevier](#) has responded to hundreds of customer requests for Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates (VPATs). In this webinar, accessibility experts **Ted Gies** and **Jay Nemchik** will discuss the business significance of VPATs, and their best practices for handling requests.

[Register Now](#)

- **“EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT: MEETING NEEDS, ADDING VALUE”**

Join the **Diversity Partners Team** at **2:00pm EST on September 25th** for our Webinar, **“Employer engagement: Meeting needs, adding value.”**

As an Employment Service Professional, you are charged with meeting the needs of both employers and job seekers. Join Diversity Partners' Jeffrey Tamburo, to learn more about the importance of enhancing your value to employers in order to establish and sustain relationships. Then hear from Michelle Kreff, Resource Manager for Business Services for Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, as she describes her real world experiences with employers, along with strategies to assess and meet the needs of businesses.

[REGISTER FOR THE WEBINAR HERE](#)

- [Connecting Youth Experiencing Homelessness to Employment Webinar](#)

Date: Wednesday, September 27, 2017

Time: 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM CDT

[Register Here](#)

Our colleagues at the **National Alliance to End Homelessness** and **A Way Home America** will kick off the webinar with a high-level overview of ongoing policy and systems change efforts that are

underway to help advance economic opportunity for youth experiencing homelessness. From there, **Heartland Alliance's National Initiatives** staff will present our Opportunity Youth Employment Toolkit, which highlights program design features and components used by successful employment programs targeting youth experiencing homelessness. In addition, practitioners from **New Moms/Bright Endeavors** in Chicago, IL, and **Daybreak Dayton/Lindy & Co.** in Dayton, OH, will share their on-the-ground insights and best practices for designing and delivering employment services to young people experiencing homelessness.



[Register today!](#)

Disability Policy Webinar

Thursday, September 28, 1:00–2:30 p.m. (ET)

Innovating Services, Improving Outcomes: A VR Model for Serving SSDI Clients

[Register for the webinar.](#)

On Thursday, September 28, 1:00–2:30 p.m., ET, **Mathematica's [Center for Studying Disability Policy](#)** will host a webinar featuring a panel of experts. The panel will discuss the experiences of VR agencies in Kentucky and Minnesota that implemented the SGA Project innovations, which were designed to help beneficiaries prepare for and find jobs with earnings high enough to leave the disability rolls.

As the main source of job services for people with disabilities, state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies have the potential to help people receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) become more independent and economically successful. But recent research suggests that VR services for these individuals could be improved. Although SSDI beneficiaries who receive VR services see their earnings increase, only a small share earn enough to leave the disability rolls.

To this end, the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of

Massachusetts-Boston and Mathematica Policy Research received a grant from the Rehabilitation Services Administration to develop the Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) Project Demonstration. This demonstration focused on improving employment outcomes for state VR clients who receive SSDI.

- **Archived Webinar:**

SOAR Webinar: Yes, You Can Work! Working While Applying for and Receiving SSA Benefits

In this webinar, held on November 30, 2016, the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center, the Social Security Administration (SSA) and SOAR leaders discussed working while applying for and receiving SSA benefits.

In this webinar, the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center, the Social Security Administration (SSA) and SOAR leaders shared empowering and myth-busting information about working while applying for and receiving SSA benefits.

Presenters provided information on SSA work incentives and resources available to applicants and beneficiaries. The SOAR Ta Center shared our new *Yes You Can Work* flyer and conversation guide written for providers to use in the field when discussing the benefits of work. Participants also heard from a local SOAR providers who shared their experience providing integrated SOAR and employment supports in the community.

Webinar Materials:

<https://soarworks.prainc.com/article/soar-webinar-working-applying>

4. COMMON ATTRIBUTES OF COMPANIES THAT EXCEL IN DISABILITY INCLUSION

The National Organization on Disability identified Five Common Attributes of Companies that Excel in Welcoming People with Disabilities into Workforce via their Disability Employment Tracker.

<http://www.nod.org/news/featured/2017/07/24/new-analysis-of-u-s-employers-reveals-five-common-attributes-of-companies-that-excel-in-welcoming-people-with-disabilities-into-workforce.html>

The successful practices revealed by NOD's 2017 Disability Employment Tracker include:

Companies with a higher than average representation of people with disabilities (>4%) share these practices:

 **STRATEGY & METRICS**

- ✓ Senior leaders discuss/publicly promote overall diversity
- ✓ Plan for improving disability inclusion practices
- ✓ Diversity champion accountable to drive disability strategy

 **CULTURE & CLIMATE**

- ✓ Employee/business resource groups affinity groups
- ✓ Disability-specific employee/business resource group with annual budget

 **TALENT SOURCING**

- ✓ Recruiters know how to find accommodation process

 **PEOPLE PRACTICES**

- ✓ Post-offer and pre-employment, new hires asked if accommodation needed

 **WORKPLACE & TECHNOLOGY**

- ✓ Universal design principles applied in new facility buildouts

Strategy & Metrics. Senior leaders discuss and publicly promote overall diversity. Further, they have a plan of action for improving disability inclusion practices that is driven by a disability champion who is accountable to advance this strategy.

Climate & Culture. Priority is given to creating employee/business resource or affinity groups that are specific to disability. Most critically, those groups have annual budgets that allow them to take visible and impactful action.

Recruiter Training. Recruiters, who are on the front line with job candidates, are trained in, and know how to find and use the company's accommodation process. This helps ensure candidates gain access to the supports needed to be a successful candidate and land the job.

People Practices. HR teams are trained to proactively ask new hires if they need an accommodation in the post-offer and pre-employment stages. This improves the employee experience and ensures that there are no gaps in providing support to employees with disabilities from day one.

Workplace & Technology. As new facilities are built, universal design principles – a set of design guidelines that ensure the physical workplace works well for people of every ability – are routinely applied.

“The employers who do hire from this pool consistently rank employees with disabilities among their best, most dedicated workers, with some of the lowest rates of turnover,” added Glazer.

“Furthermore, research has shown that the vast majority of consumers prefer to buy from companies who hire people with disabilities, and Americans with disabilities and their friends and families constitute a huge and growing consumer segment with over \$3.9 trillion in disposable income.”

5. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- **[Jewish Helping Hands Tikkun Olam Grant](#)** - Grants to USA, Canada, and International Nonprofits and Individuals to Aid Underprivileged Communities (*Step One due 9/12/17, Step Two due 12/11/17*). JHH is offering funding of up to \$5,000 for a wide range of economic and social empowerment projects aiding underprivileged populations, with a particular focus in the 2018 grant cycle on projects concerning infant hunger, clean water access, or paths to independence/self-sufficiency.

- **[The Ray Charles Foundation Grant](#)** – Grants to USA Nonprofits for Disability Services, Educational Programs, and Arts for Disadvantaged Youth (*Application Deadline 9/30/2017.*) The Ray Charles Foundation is offering funding on a one-year basis for programs that provide academic services to disadvantaged and underprivileged youth, with a particular focus on youth with hearing disorders and/or who are visually impaired or blind.
- **[The Lawrence Family Foundation Grant](#)** – Grants to USA Nonprofits, Libraries, and Schools for Environment, Human Services, Disaster Relief, Education, Health, and Arts (*Application Deadline 11/01/2017.*) The Lawrence Family Foundation is offering funding to US based qualified charitable organizations intended for, but not limited to, projects that support environmental causes, human services, or disaster relief, health, arts, and culture.
- **[Brady Education Foundation Grant](#)** – Grants to USA Nonprofits to Improve Educational Outcomes for Underserved or Minority Children (*Stage 1 Proposal Due Date 12/01/2017.*) The Brady Education Foundation Grant is offering funding for up to one year to USA nonprofit organizations for the development of new programs or the assessment of existing programs that promote educational success for disadvantaged children.

6. RESOURCES:

Principles for Person-Directed Services and Supports During Serious Illness

The [Administration for Community Living \(ACL\)](#) has developed [Principles for Person-Directed Services and Supports During Serious Illness](#) (PDF). The publication was developed in consultation with stakeholders to ensure that people who have serious illnesses are able to control their care and services. This includes people with disabilities and older adults who may face challenges in making decisions for their own care. The principles defined in the publication will be used to inform policy discussions and enhance existing programs and services related to serious illness among older adults and individuals with disabilities.

Developing Affordable and Accessible Community-Based Housing for Vulnerable Adults

The [National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine](#) have published a report, [Developing Affordable and Accessible Community-Based Housing for Vulnerable Adults](#), proceedings of a recent workshop which explored the role of housing as a social determinant of health for older adults and people with disabilities, particularly among people of color and low-income groups. Accessible and affordable housing can enable community living, maximize independence, and promote health for vulnerable populations. However, the United States faces a shortage of affordable and accessible housing for low-income older adults and individuals living with disabilities. This shortage is expected to grow over the coming years given the population shifts leading to greater numbers of older adults and of individuals living with disabilities. The report is available free in full text.

Characteristics and Experiences of Youth who are Deaf-Blind

The NIDILRR-funded [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Employment for Individuals with Blindness or Other Visual Impairment](#) has published a report, [Characteristics and Experiences of Youth who are Deaf-Blind](#). The report explores data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2) and provides a detailed picture of youth who are deaf-blind and who received special education services in schools across the US from 2001-2009. NLTS2 is unique in that it delivers more

in-depth information about youth who are deaf-blind from multiple perspectives, including parents/guardians, youth, and teachers. This report is the first overview of the secondary and post-secondary school experiences of this population

Along with Their Care Teams, People with Psychiatric Conditions Can Make Their Treatment Needs Known Before a Crisis Hits

Professional and peer mental health counselors can both help people with psychiatric disabilities develop psychiatric advance directives to be used when they may not be able to speak for themselves. Learn more in this week's [Research In Focus](#).

September is [Pain Awareness Month](#), sponsored by the American Chronic Pain Association. Pain can impact the participation of people with disabilities in many ways. People with physical disabilities such as spinal cord injury, cerebral palsy, and multiple sclerosis may [live with pain as a secondary condition](#) to their disability. People with [traumatic brain injury may have chronic headaches](#) (PDF) after their injury. Pain is a key symptom in chronic, inflammatory conditions like rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia, and lupus. Pain can also be a physical effect of depression. We shared [research and resources on pain, pain management, and the impact of pain on participation](#) from the NIDILRR community and elsewhere in our Spotlight blog.

7. GET INVOLVED-CONFERENCE & STUDY

State of the Science Conference on the Employment of People with Physical Disabilities

The NIDILRR-funded [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Employment of Individuals with Physical Disabilities \(VCU-RRTC-PD\)](#) will host the [State of the Science Conference on the Employment of People with Physical Disabilities](#), September 26th and 27th, in Richmond, VA and via webcast. Participants will discuss issues and implications from new knowledge gained from VCU-RRTC-PD's disability employment research activities and will present research on effective policies, practices, and interventions to improve the employment outcomes of people with physical disabilities. The conference will include expert panel discussions around empowering individuals with physical disabilities to access quality employment, independence, and integration into society. Registration is free and required

Rural Youth with Disabilities Interview Study

The NIDILRR-funded [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability in Rural Communities \(RTC: Rural\)](#) is conducting interviews for a [study on how young adults with disabilities participate in social and community events in rural areas](#). Participants must be 18 to 34 years old, be in or from a town of less than 10,000 inhabitants, and have had an IEP in high school and/or a current

disability. Participation involves a 1 to 2 hour interview and participants will be compensated for their time. For more information, contact Rayna Sage, PhD, at 406/243-5233 or rayna.sage@umontana.edu.