

Work is about a search for daily meaning as well as daily bread, for recognition as well as cash, for astonishment rather than torpor; in short, for a sort of life rather than a Monday through Friday sort of dying.

— Studs Terkel —

AZ QUOTES



## ILLINOIS EMPLOYMENT FIRST UPDATE 8/3/18

Hello Friends, Colleagues and **Every** Member of the Illinois Employment First Community of Practice,

I am sorry to say that I am leaving my position as Employment First Manager for IDHS. Circumstances are taking my family to Oakland, CA. I will be working on select projects remotely in a limited capacity as IDHS searches for a new Employment First Manager. I will no longer be conducting the daily operational requirements of the IL Employment First Manager role. I have truly enjoyed the last 2 and a half years spent with this dedicated group of passionate advocates.

Thank you for accepting me into the IL Employment First Community and allowing me to work alongside you to expand it! I truly loved my position as the Employment First Manager and I think that Illinois is on the path to becoming a national leader in our disability employment focused work-keep up the good fight! Reach out to me on LinkedIn if you would like to stay connected!

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” – Margaret Mead*

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## 1. **ILLINOIS EMPLOYMENT FIRST EFFORTS IN THE NEWS**

Elejalde-Ruiz, Alexia, and Hailey Mensik. "[Not Just a Feel-Good Step: Businesses Are Increasingly Hiring People with Disabilities, and It's Helping the Bottom Line.](#)" *Chicago Tribune*.

There has been a fourfold improvement in employment opportunities for Americans with disabilities over the past year. According to Census Bureau data, 343,483 more people with disabilities joined the American workforce in 2016. This compares to only 87,201 in the previous year.

## 2. **WEBINARS**

- **Webinar: Getting It Right – An After-Action Report on Major Disasters of 2017-2018**  
The NIDILRR-funded [Pacific ADA Regional Center](#) will host a webinar, [Getting it Right – An After-Action Report on Major Disasters of 2017-2018](#), August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2:30-4pm ET. Presenters will discuss the Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies' After-Action Report, Getting It Wrong: An Indictment with a Blueprint for Getting It Right – Disability Rights, Obligations, and Responsibilities Before, During, and After Disasters, published in May 2018. The report includes accounts of failures of planning and execution, as reported by people with disabilities and allies during recent disasters, and identifies good and promising practices that can be refined, customized, and replicated to better prepare for future disasters. Registration is free and required.
- **Webinar: Pre-Employment Services in Inclusive Higher Education Settings – The What, Where, and How of Good Collaboration**  
The NIDILRR-funded [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Vocational Rehabilitation Practices for Youth and Young Adults](#) will host a webinar, [Pre-Employment Services in Inclusive Higher Education Settings: The What, Where, and How of Good Collaboration](#), August 9<sup>th</sup>, 3-4:30pm ET. Presenters from Think College and the Archive Program at Highline College will share practical resources, strategies, and examples of how pre-employment transition services can be offered to students with intellectual disabilities via a college program. Presenters will also discuss how these services can help students with intellectual disabilities explore and obtain competitive integrated employment. Registration is free and required.
- **Telebehavioral Health and the Consumer, Wednesday August 15, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Eastern**

Are you a consumer of behavioral health services, but are sometimes challenged to access them? Do you live in a remote area? How can you find a qualified online therapist? How do you make sure your private information remains confidential?

## [Register today](#)

*For the Consumer:* Consumers of behavioral health services, especially those in sparsely-populated regions or those who have difficulty getting to a provider, should become aware of how this technology can improve access to care. Webinar participants will learn what kinds of issues can be safely addressed by an online therapist, how they can find a qualified online therapist, how to ensure the information they share remains confidential, and what they can expect to pay for a good online therapist.

*For the Provider:* As telebehavioral health becomes more widespread, providers will need to become aware of several issues that govern the successful provision of online services. Webinar participants will learn about the important legal issues that relate to telehealth (e.g., licensure, informed consent, privacy/confidentiality), ethical issues (e.g., competencies, documentation, marketing), clinical issues (e.g., assessment/screening, boundaries/telepresence, handling emergencies), technical issues (e.g., technology/platform choices, cybersecurity, handling repairs), and other related information.

- **Upcoming Webinar: Enhancing Skills for Peer Support Providers: Research on the AMP+ Skills Enhancement Training**

**Date/Time:** Tuesday, September 18, 10am – 11am PT, 1pm – 2pm ET

Research on peer support in mental health consistently cites a lack of clarity around the role and its skills as a barrier to high-quality implementation. This webinar reports on a study testing the AMP+ skills-enhancement intervention for peer support providers working with youth and young adults. AMP+ provides web-based training and video coaching that is specific to the peer role. Peers reported high satisfaction, improved their skills, and reported reduced work-related anxiety.

[Register »](#)

### 3. RESOURCES

- **Maintenance Guide for Users of Manual and Power Wheelchairs**  
The NIDILRR-funded [Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center \(MSKTC\)](#) has published a factsheet, [Maintenance Guide for Users of Manual and Power Wheelchairs](#). The factsheet discusses the importance of maintaining a wheelchair to avoid breakdowns, which can injure users and limit mobility and social participation. It guides users about when to perform maintenance, parts and functions to inspect, and potential problems to look for in both manual and power wheelchairs. The factsheet is also available in [Spanish](#) (PDF).
- **Adapting Activities for People with Alzheimer’s Disease**  
The [National Institute on Aging \(NIA\) at the National Institutes of Health](#) offers information on [Adapting Activities for People with Alzheimer’s Disease](#). The article offers caregivers information, tips, and resources to make a range of activities enjoyable for a person with Alzheimer’s disease, from everyday chores and recreational activities to planned outings and travel. Tips include choosing the best time for activities, finding meaningful or spiritual activities, and planning ahead to reduce stress for both the person and their caregivers. The information included on this webpage is also [available in Spanish](#).
- **Rocky Mountain ADA Regional Center on YouTube**  
The NIDILRR-funded [Rocky Mountain ADA Regional Center](#) has created a [YouTube Channel](#)

[featuring short videos that answer common questions regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) and accessibility in many areas.](#) Currently, the Center has videos answering questions about childcare and education, service animals, websites, social media, government entities, public spaces, effective communication, and employment. New videos are added regularly.

- **Department of Veterans Affairs Releases New Tool to Help Maximize Income**

On July 20, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) released a new tool for beneficiaries of Social Security Administration's (SSA's) disability benefits, which helps demonstrate how income from employment and/or VA disability benefits will affect Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

Too often, misinformation about how employment will affect income from SSI/SSDI discourages beneficiaries from pursuing their vocational goals. The new VA Income and Benefits Calculator offers a strong visual representation of how working while receiving SSI/SSDI and/or VA benefits is not only possible, but can be an integral part of maximizing income and housing stability.

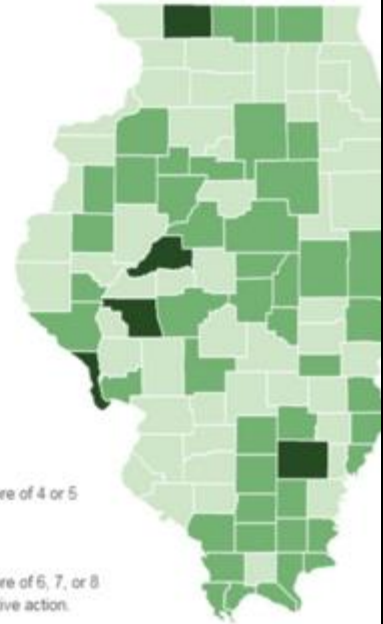
We encourage members of the SOAR community to utilize the new Income and Benefits Calculator with Veterans and non-Veterans to:

- **Begin the conversation**
  - Integrate the Calculator into your engagement strategies to help show that employment is possible while receiving SSI/SSDI
  - Encourage individuals who are applying for SSI/SSDI to also pursue their vocational goals and support them in these efforts
- **Explore what is possible**
  - Use the Calculator to explore how starting work, increasing hours or pay, or saving money for vocational training will affect SSI/SSDI
  - Play around with different scenarios – the possibilities are endless!

[Download the Income and Benefits Calculator](#)

# 2018 ILLINOIS POVERTY DATA:

MORE THAN **HALF** OF ILLINOIS COUNTIES FACE SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS TO WELL-BEING



**52 OUT OF 102 COUNTIES ARE ON EITHER THE POVERTY WATCH OR POVERTY WARNING LISTS.**

- WATCH**  
County has an indicator score of 4 or 5 and needs to be monitored.
- WARNING**  
County has an indicator score of 6, 7, or 8 and needs to initiate corrective action.

- Our newest Illinois poverty data is out now and shows that **over half of Illinois counties are facing significant barriers to well-being**. [These new data](#) show that Illinois residents are faring worse on poverty, unemployment, teen birth, and high school graduation rates and our new analysis found that **52 out of 102 Illinois counties are on either the [Poverty Watch](#) or the [Poverty Warning lists](#)**. This is an increase from last year, when 30 out of 102 Illinois counties were on the Poverty Watch or Poverty Warning lists and the rise only confirms what we at Heartland Alliance see every day: that Illinois communities need meaningful investments, economic opportunity, and policies that work to bring equity to all communities.

In addition to the County Well-Being Index, we have released [county](#), [Chicago metro area](#), and [Chicago community area-level data](#) on a broad range of indicators related to poverty and well-being. These indicators include poverty, rent burden, employment, vacancy, and more.

- [View Our Findings](#)

- **Two New Reports Provide Recommendations for Improving Access to Employment**

Heartland Alliance published [Pathways Forward: Recommendations for Federal Action to Increase Economic Mobility for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness or Housing Instability](#).

The Baltimore City Continuum of Care recently released [Journey to Jobs: Understanding and Eliminating Barriers Imposed on Homeless Jobseekers](#)



## 4. **TRANSITION AGE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES**

IDHS worked with the Governor's Office on a Proclamation declaring July 24, as Transition-Ager Youth with Disabilities Career Development Day. The Proclamation includes mention of IPS, Customized

Employment and Project SEARCH! The first year of implementation is about building awareness. Next year IDHS hopes there will be coordinated events across the state to celebrate Transition Aged Youth with Disabilities Career Development Day (7/24/19)!

We scheduled it on the CPS job shadow day at the IDHS Office of Secretary during July's ADA celebration month. On alternating years IDHS holds an event to celebrate the ADA. This year we did not have an ADA event. We wanted to do something to commemorate the ADA and celebrate collaborative efforts across the State of Illinois to help young adults who have disabilities explore meaningful careers. Employment First is not just about a getting an integrated job, it is about finding meaningful work and advancing in career paths tied to growth fields.

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, transition-age youth who have disabilities and their advocates in Illinois face challenges to their goals of finding competitive, integrated employment with opportunities for advancement; and,

**WHEREAS**, a 42% employment gap exists between Illinois residents who have disabilities and non-disabled residents; and,

**WHEREAS**, nationally, 28% of people who have disabilities live in poverty compared to 13% of non-disabled people; and,

**WHEREAS**, exposure to work-based learning experiences during transitional years is the number one indicator of successful employment during adulthood; and,

**WHEREAS**, evidence based and promising practices like Individual Placement and Supports (IPS), Project SEARCH, and customized employment exist in Illinois to help young adults reach their employment goals;

**WHEREAS**, the opportunity to participate and advance in competitive, integrated work linked to a field of interest is an essential component of person-centered planning and self-determination; and,

**WHEREAS**, competitive, integrated employment is recognized as a social determinant of health that contributes to financial security; and,

**THEREFORE**, I, Bruce Rauner, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim July 24, 2018 as **TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES CAREER DEVELOPMENT DAY** in Illinois, and urge all Illinoisans to recognize that young adults who have disabilities can succeed in competitive, integrated employment with individualized supports.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.



*Deese Witt*  
SECRETARY OF STATE

Done at the Capitol in the City of Springfield,  
this ELEVENTH day of JULY, in  
the Year of Our Lord, two thousand and  
EIGHTEEN, and of the State of Illinois,  
two hundredth.

*Bruce Rauner*  
GOVERNOR

- [Pathways State of the Science: Social Network Enhancement Strategies to Address Limited Support Networks in Young Adulthood](#)

This month we're continuing to highlight our State-of-the-Science briefings and project summaries available online. This review focuses on populations where systems involvement is presumed to impact the size, strength, and supportiveness of social networks, including young people who have experienced out-of-home placement in foster care, juvenile justice, or residential treatment.

[Read the state-of-the-science brief »](#)

- EFSLMPME Insight: WIOA and Transitioning Students and Youth  
Richard Luecking, EFSLMP Subject Matter Expert

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The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 has the potential to be a game changer for facilitating post-school employment success of students and youth with disabilities. Not only does WIOA confirm the importance of providing vocational rehabilitation (VR) services while students with disabilities are still in secondary school, it essentially mandates it. Indeed, 15% of each state's allocation for VR services must be spent for services to students and youth. Importantly, WIOA specifies five categories of what are called Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS): job exploration counseling; work-based learning experiences; counseling on opportunities for enrollment in post-secondary education programs; workplace readiness training; and instruction in self-advocacy. However, the implementation of Pre-ETS is still relatively new. VR agencies, VR vendors, and their school systems partners continue to sort out which categories of Pre-ETS to use and how best to use them.

*What do we know so far?*

The Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) for VR Practices and Youth has conducted relevant and early studies on how Pre-ETS are being applied.

First, one study found that there is a wide variety in the authorization of the five Pre-ETS in the early implementation of Pre-ETS in a sampling of states. Overall, work-based learning experiences are used less often than workplace readiness training or job exploration counseling. One possible explanation of this circumstance is because the latter two Pre-ETS can be provided in larger groups and are therefore more expediently authorized.



Another RRTC study surveyed VR counselors about their perceptions of what skill are important in serving transitioning youth. One finding of this study was that engaging employers and securing work-based learning experiences was perceived to be important to counselors. However, they rated themselves to be underprepared to perform these skills.

Finally, another study evaluated the impact of a transition intervention that included early VR case initiation and work-based learning experiences. It found that students who received this intervention were significantly more likely to be employed at school exit, to experience successful VR case closure, and to cost VR less money to serve.

*What does the early research suggest about continuing application of Pre-ETS?*

In short, the research shows that although the value of work-based experiences is well established, their use is not in proportion to this finding. Moreover, VR and its partners are not as prepared to deliver them as they would like or need to be. The bottom lines: 1. Although work-based experience may be labor intensive to facilitate, they have the most promise for positive impact among the five Pre-ETS categories, and 2. VR counselor, VR vendors, and school personnel need to develop capacity to facilitate work-based learning experiences. The future impact of WIOA and Pre-ETS would be well served if both of these phenomena are addressed.

*Where can you get more information on the RRTC studies?*

For more information:

- *State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies' Early Implementation Experiences with Pre-Employment Transition Services*, a research brief of the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) on VR Practices for Youth. (Miller, Sevac & Honeycutt, 2018)
- *Transition Practices of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors Serving Students and Youth with Disabilities*, a research brief of the RRTC on VR Practices for Youth. (Luecking, Fabian & Neubert, 2018)
- *Vocational rehabilitation outcomes for students participating in a model transition program*. A research brief of the RRTC on VR Practices and Youth, Luecking and Fabian, 2017).

Available from:

<http://vrpracticesandyouth.org/vocational-rehabilitation-vr-practices/center-publications/>

## 5. SEEKING INPUT

- It is time to gather input for **The Statewide Independent Living Council of Illinois next 3 year State Plan** which will cover the years of 2020-2022. Below is a link to our survey page, which will allow you to either complete the survey online through Survey Monkey, or download, print, and then return the completed survey to our office. Please distribute this widely, as well as complete one yourself. We are asking for the surveys to be completed no later than **August 20<sup>th</sup>**.

The more input we receive the better State Plan we will be able to write.

The survey link is <https://silcofillinois.org/spil-input-survey-2018>

- **National Center for Mobility Management Seeks Input on Coordinated Transportation**

The National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM) is seeking input from state and local stakeholders to inform the future of transportation coordination. Your feedback will help to shape the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) federal interagency work group plan and focus areas by identifying promising practices, barriers, and challenges around coordinated transportation.

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[Complete the National Transportation Coordination Survey](#)

## 6. LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- **Assistive Devices for People with Vision Loss, August 9, 2018, 10:30 a.m. – noon, Presented by Luke Scriven, Assistive Technology Manager**

The Chicago Lighthouse is a world renowned social service organization servicing the blind, visually impaired, disabled and veteran communities with comprehensive vision care and support services. Luke Scriven will talk about the technology and trainings that are available.

- Cell Phones—Demonstrate how smart phones and tablets can be used by people who are blind or low vision
- Products for Reading—Including Talking Book Program, iPads and Android Tablets, Kindle, Amazon Echo, Google Home, and others
- Evaluations and training on the latest wearable devices: eSight, IrisVision, Orcam, NuEyes and Jordy
- Beacon Technology—Indoor navigation using iPhone apps
- Desktop CCTV's—Purchase includes delivery, set-up and training

**For more information, to register or to request special accommodations, please contact Mariana Sanchez, Linkages Coordinator, at 773.508.1106 or [linkages@cje.net](mailto:linkages@cje.net)**

- **DBAS PEER LEADERSHIP CENTER: EMPLOYMENT LITERACY, A FREE COURSE FOR PLC MEMBERS**

Employment Literacy is a free course designed to give you the information and tools you need to find, apply and work at a new job. This self-paced course lets you decide what information you need depending on where you are in your employment journey. You can choose the topics and interviews relevant to you. In this course, the main focus is gaining employment as a peer specialist, but much of the content and recommendations are useful even if you're not applying to be a peer specialist.

[Explore Courses →](#)



- **PARTNERS IN POLICYMAKING - CLASS 2 APPLICATION IS OPEN, DEADLINE: August 17, 2018**

We are thrilled to continue with Partners in Policymaking, which is an investment of the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities, financed in part by a grant from the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, under provisions of P.L. 106-402 to HIGH Impact Mission Based Consulting & Training.

Partners in Policymaking® is a leadership training program designed for parents of school age children with developmental disabilities and adults with disabilities. The Partners program was created by the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities more than 30 years ago, and has since been offered nationally and internationally. Partners teaches leadership skills necessary to develop positive partnerships with elected officials and other policymakers who make decisions about the services that you and/or your family 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. It is based on the belief that the most effective and enduring public policy decisions are made by the people who need and use services in partnership with elected officials and other policymakers. It is about becoming confident in oneself, competent in the knowledge and information received, and comfortable in sharing life experiences and expertise one brings to the program.

Participation in Partners requires a commitment to attend all eight weekend sessions. You must have an interest in learning and practicing new skills in a comfortable and safe environment. You must have a desire to build and strengthen a network of people from diverse cultural backgrounds and life experiences and must have a willingness to learn from national and state experts who share our vision and values.

#### APPLY ONLINE

Partners in Policymaking Downloadable Application

Visit the ICDD website to view the Partners in Policymaking Class 2 Brochure

For more information, please contact Jan Bergman (Partners Project Coordinator) at [janb.ilpip@gmail.com](mailto:janb.ilpip@gmail.com).

- **The Arc of IL Annual Health Care Conference  
Illinois Health Care Coverage Options and Benefits Information for People with Disabilities**

**September 13, 2018**

**Doubletree Hotel, Alsip, IL**

Reserve your space now, [click here to register!](#)

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*K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan*  
Institute on Employment and Disability



Are you a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor? Join Cornell University and the CRCC e-University in the new online course, *Maximizing Workplace Disability Inclusion* to earn 7 continuing education clock hours.

The course, designed by researchers at Cornell University in the *K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan* Institute on Employment and Disability in the ILR (Industrial and Labor Relations) School provides a high-level overview of effective employer policies and practices that improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The purpose of the course is to better equip rehabilitation counselors with the knowledge and skills to more effectively consult with employers in the public and private sectors around disability inclusive workplaces.

As a result of this course, you will be able to:

- Define effective policies and practices that improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities across 6 topical areas (Recruitment and Hiring; Career Development and Retention; Disability and Inclusion; Compensation and Benefits; Accessibility and Accommodation; and Metrics and Analytics).
- Aide employers in developing or enhancing their policies and practices that improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.
- Use the BenchmarkABILITY® tool (<https://providers.benchmarkability.org>) during employer consultations to access workplace disability inclusion.

This course is instructed by Susanne M. Bruyère, PhD, CRC.

<https://www.crccertification.com/bruyere-susanne>

To learn more and to register for this course please visit: <https://www.crccertification.com/workplace-inclusion>. The course is available now. Once you register, you have 24/7 access. As a registered Certified Rehabilitation Counselor and upon successful completion, you will receive 7 pre-approved continuing education clock hours.

The research serving as the basis for this course was funded by a grant from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research, Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and awarded to Cornell University's Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Employer Practices Related to Employment Outcomes for Individuals with Disabilities (grant no. 90RT5010).



#### [Honor a DSP • Submit a Story](#)

**Share stories about how DSPs support people to achieve their outcomes!**

To celebrate the **2018 DSP Recognition Week**, which occurs from September 9th through September 15th, CQL | The Council on Quality and Leadership and The National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) are encouraging people receiving supports and provider organizations to submit stories about Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) **who are using Personal Outcome Measures®** to help people achieve their personally-defined outcomes. If your story is selected, it will be shared on CQL and NADSP website and social media pages. You will be able to preview the story prior to it being published online. In 2017, these success stories highlighted numerous DSPs who are using the Personal Outcome Measures® and supporting people to reach their goals.