

Youth Employment Session
“Where are we, where do we want to be,
and how do we get there?”

Taking Care of Business: Improving Employment for Young People with Disabilities

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Youth Employment Session:

Where are we, where do we want to be, and how do we get there?

INTRODUCTIONS

- Where we're from
- What we do
- Particular areas of interest
- How we got engaged in the movement
- Fun and/or interesting things about yourself

➤ **Josie**

➤ **LeDerick**

➤ **Daniel**

Our Stories

- Further background on how we “made it”,
- What worked/didn't
 - Non-“personal qualities” or “bootstraps” means
 - Resources we were fortunate to have/come upon
 - “We don't want to be exceptional, but the common rule”
- Current struggles
- What we would have benefited from knowing before that many young PWDs don't

➤ Josie

➤ LeDerick

➤ Daniel

A word of Caution...

- Multi-Modal Approach Needed
- Look Deeper- Far more options than full guardianship, institutionalization, or Food, Filth, and Flowers
- Cooperation is KEY!
 - Schools, employers, parents, and state/private/local agencies need to be on same page
 - Who's this actually for??? True Advocacy (whether self, familial, or professional) begins at this realization

Being Active and Involved

- Sports
- Politics
- Pageants/Modeling
- Performing Poetry/Spoken Word
- Speaking Publicly
- Community Groups
- Volunteerism
- Sitdown Comedy

Fanning the Flames

- When fostering a sense of Self-Advocacy, it's important to remember that you're not looking to be "one-and-done" in your outcomes. Rather, you're looking to start a chain reaction.
 - Identifying community members
 - Fostering leadership and critical thinking
 - Engagement works and lasts at its best when you give the **POWER TO THE PEOPLE**

The Good...(stats)

- Kessler Foundation Survey (2015) shows that nearly 80% of PWDs that are not employed want to be...most of these feel they can/should be at some point!
- TPD College Loan Forgiveness!

The Bad...

- In 2014, 17.1 percent of persons with a disability were employed. In contrast, the employment-population ratio for those without a disability was 64.6 percent.
- The ratio for persons with a disability declined by 0.5 percentage point from 2013 to 2014, while the ratio for those with no disability increased by 0.6 percentage point. (US Bureau of Labor, 2015)

The Ugly...

- Plainly put, Unemployment for the disabled is only marginally different now than when the ADA went into effect 25 years ago. Status Quo is no longer a valid option.
- While the country's unemployment rate has fallen below 6 percent, at least 70 percent of disabled people ages 16 to 64 are unemployed.
- Roughly 54 million people in the US are disabled, and the as the population ages, many programs and funding streams are addressing sustaining those who are not working. The underlying issue and inequity **MUST** be addressed... (US DOL, 2015)

Reasons for optimism=not changing the wheels, just pointing them forward

- Better Outcomes are ultimately what we want
- The Workplace Culture surrounding disability, employment, and preparing for work is progressing
- If you're "doing it right", then nothing needs to change
 - We'd like to acknowledge that MANY are already carrying out the due process, guidelines, seeing results, etc.

Current Laws

- WIOA State Plans, Strategies, and Working with (NOT through) it
- Updated Section 503 of Rehab Act
- ABLE Act Implementation

Blazing Forward Towards the Path of Inclusion through Work

- LeDerick- IDEA, Project Eye to Eye, school Outreach
- Daniel- Career ACCESS, work with MPACT and other Mo workgroups, DMH Action Plan
- Josie- #Iwanttowork, HB 400, Termination Discrimination

Disability and Environment

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Connecting Student with Disabilities

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Project Eye-to-Eye

- Project Eye-to-Eye

Eye to Eye's mission is to improve the life of every person with a learning disability. We fulfill our mission by supporting and growing a network of youth mentoring programs run by and for those with learning differences, and by organizing advocates to support the full inclusion of people with learning disabilities and ADHD in all aspects of society.

The IRIS Center (Vanderbilt/Claremont)

- [Age Appropriate Transition Assessment](#)
- [Building Bridges Toward Science Careers for Youth with Disabilities](#)
- [Career-focused Mentoring for Youth: The What, Why, and How](#)
- [Choices in Transition: A Model for Career Development](#)
- [DO-IT: Helping Students with Disabilities Transition to College and Careers](#)
- [Enhancing Academic Achievement and Transition Outcomes Using Technology](#)
- [IDEA Regulations: Secondary Transition](#)
- [Measuring Transition Success: Focus on Youth and Family Participation](#)
- [NSTTAC Indicator 13 Checklist Form](#)
[A](#)
- [Perspectives on Life after High School for Youth with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: Findings of a Statewide Survey of Families](#)
- [Postsecondary Education and Employment Outcomes for Transition-age Youth with and Without Disabilities: A Secondary Analysis of American Community Survey Data](#)
- [Postsecondary Education: Preparation Is a Necessary Ingredient for Success](#)

- [Providing a Quality Accommodated Experience in Preparation for and During Post-Secondary School](#)
- [Questions to Ask Colleges About Assistive Technology Resources](#)
- [Self-Determination: Supporting Successful Transition](#)
- [Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- [Supporting Dynamic Development of Youth with Disabilities During Transition: A Guide for Families](#)
- [Supporting Youth with Disabilities to Access and Succeed in Postsecondary Education: Essentials for Educators in Secondary Schools](#)
- [Tapping Employment Opportunities for Youth with Disabilities by Engaging Effectively with Employers](#)
- [Teaching Social Skills](#)
- [Transition Planning: Community Mapping as a Tool for Teachers and Students](#)
- [Transition to Preschool](#)
- [Vertical Teaming: Making Connections Across Levels](#)
- [What Does Health Have to Do with Transition? Everything!](#)
- [Work-Based Learning and Future Employment for Youth: A Guide for Parents and Guardians](#)

LeDerick's Personal Endeavors

- Community Outreach
- Public Speaking Series
- <http://www.ledgerick.com/bio.php>

#IWANTTOWORK

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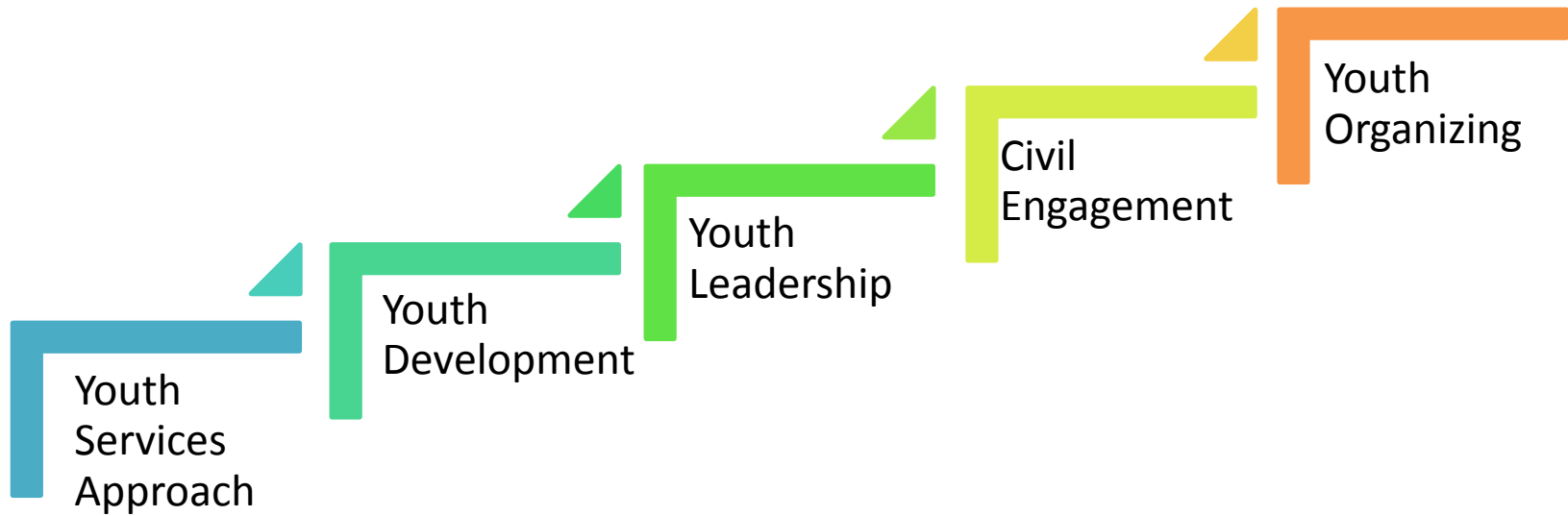
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#IWANTTOWORK



#IWantToWork is a self-advocacy campaign powered by social media and staffed by young people with disabilities who want to be fully ready to enter the workforce. The goal is to make Pennsylvania becomes an Employment First state through [legislation](#) to ensure people with disabilities have access to fully integrated employment.

Youth Engagement Continuum



Principles of Effective Youth Leadership Programs

- Real life / authentic experiences
- Relevancy and tailoring to needs and specific contexts
- The right level of challenge and risk
- Safe spaces and support
- Role models
- Reflection
- The history, values, and beliefs of communities
- Leadership styles
- Awareness, understanding and tolerance of other people
- Experiential learning and opportunities
- Service to others

Adult Allies – Ideal Beliefs



Confidence in
Youth

Sharing the
Power

We all have
Unique Talents
and Strengths

Every Opinion
Counts!

Replication of Successful Programing

- **Self-a-fy It**
- **Youth led, youth driven**
- **Supportive allies**
- **Create parallel trainings for youth, families, and professionals**
- **Supportive and progressive leadership**
- **Strength-based**
- **Project ownership**
- **Youth expertise**
- **Mentoring**
- **Continuous programing**

CareerACCESS is a



Adult
Coaching
Counseling
Employment
Support
Services

Career building alternative to the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Program for young adults with disabilities who are seeking independence through employment.

Why CareerACCESS?

As a group, young adults with disabilities 18-30 face major challenges building careers.

CareerACCESS pilot projects would work with young adults with disabilities who are building careers.

CareerACCESS would set up state pilot projects to test alternatives to today's SSI program.

What are these projects?

Pilot projects, set up in at least three states, would test self-directed career building services while offering cash stipends to those enrolled.

What is the goal of CareerACCESS?

The disability policy goal is to test alternative approaches to providing publicly funded supports and services without requiring the applicant to prove an inability to work.

Who Could Apply?

- Applicants would be 18 to 28 years of age with a disability that meet or equal the current Social Security medical definition of disability for adults 18 and over.
- The pilot project would not require applicants to prove an inability to work.
- Applicants must have little or no income when they apply, with assets below \$2,000.

How Do I Apply?

- **SSI applicants, 18 to 28, in a pilot project state are automatically enrolled in CareerACCESS.**
- **If the applicant decides not to apply for CareerACCESS, the application for the SSI program as it exists today is available.**

What are the Services and Supports?

Young adult participants access coaching and counseling while receiving coordinated employment support services and a cash stipend.

The goal is Independence Through Employment at competitive wages.

Coordinated Employment Support & Services

The CareerACCESS participant would create and act on an Individualized Career Plan (ICP) to meet one or more objectives:

- ❖ Great jobs with competitive wages;
- ❖ Access to complete and affordable health coverage, personal assistance services, and related community based supports;

Coordinated Employment Support & Services

And...

- ❖ Completion of a school, vocational, training or retraining program;
- ❖ Receipt of requested reasonable accommodations;
- ❖ Receipt of benefits and financial planning services; and,
- ❖ Receipt of self-employment and business startup services.

Coaching & Counseling

What is the role of the Career Coach?

- ❖ The Career Coach locates and brokers services identified in the **CareerACCESS** participant's Individualized Career Plan(ICP).
- ❖ The Career Coach services work in tandem with the participant's cash stipend to enable self-directed career building.

Income, Earnings & Assets

What are the Participant Earnings Rules?

- ❖ Participants receive monthly stipends to use during enrollment. The stipend is the current SSI federal benefit rate \$733/month.
- ❖ The \$733/month stipend is reduced \$1 for every \$3 in earnings after certain incomes are reached.

Income, Earnings & Assets

When would the cash stipend change?

- ❖ When the participant's earnings plus their stipend reach \$2450/month. This equals 250% of the current Federal Poverty Level.
- ❖ Participants and pilot project staff would access easy to use online wage reporting tools to track and report changes that would affect their career building stipend.

Income, Earnings & Assets

Are there income or asset limits for participants?

- ❖ There are no earnings limits but your cash stipend will be reduced once your income exceeds 250% of the Federal Poverty Level.
- ❖ There are no asset limits while building a career in the project.

The CareerACCESS policy initiative needs YOU!

**Bringing CareerACCESS pilot projects to states
Will take more work.**

**WID, PolicyWorks and NCIL
Need more young adults and their stories
To educate state and federal policy makers about CareerACCESS.**

How do I learn more and get involved?

Find CareerACCESS information at:

- ❖ www.ourcareeraccess.org
- ❖ www.facebook.com/ourcareeraccess
- ❖ www.twitter.com/ourcareeraccess
- ❖ www.instagram.com/humansofssi
- ❖ www.yotube.com/ourcareeraccess

Integrated Services

- Collaboration is KEY...figure that one yet? ;-)
 - So many agencies don't even know what their counterparts do/don't for young PWDs in schools or the community.
 - Brainstorming: Breaking out of our Silos
- Just as important as how is WHEN...Get them early!
 - Many young PWDs receive NO MODEL for being successfully involved in careers while disabled
 - Particularly low-SES
 - Can be impacted by social or cultural "glass bubble"
 - All your life you've signed paperwork saying you CAN'T, WON'T, and NEVER WILL be able to work...what are you supposed to think???
 - Lifetimes of Learned Helplessness and low social perception of outcomes
 - Learned Poverty and Learned
 - Example: Supermarket → You're so brave! (?)

The importance of KNOWING YOUR RIGHTS in Self-Disclosure

- When to disclose...
- When not to...
- Most importantly, knowing that the choice is YOURS as a person with a disability!
- <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure>

Intersections of Diversity

- Newly arisen issues in education and the workplace concerning gender and gender roles
 - Understanding the WHOLE person
 - Personal Insight onto Intersentionality
- LeDerick

Great, you're working! Should be all set...right?

- Sustainability of Careers
- Fear surrounding benefits
- Cost of Disability
- Realistic, affordable way to continue supports(?) as needed
- Can the person manage money? Do they KNOW how to save?
 - Systemically inclined to Mattress NEEDED cash

Discussion! We'd love to have you involved in working towards solutions.

- Audience, have anything you would like to ask or share???



- Transgender discourse and conversations as they might relate to various disabilities
- Discussion surrounding changing the “Definition of Disability”
- What makes a “good advocate”? A person employable or not? In what ways, despite meaning well, might we overlook some that would otherwise valuably contribute?

Contact

Feel free to contact us and follow up!

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Thanks for being part of the solution!