



THE FOCUS

March 2014

Board Talk

If you had asked me two years ago what APSE was, I would not have been able to tell you. Yet here I am today – a new member of Oregon APSE’s Board – excited to share my story and why I have become a passionate believer in APSE’s mission and active in working for Employment First.

My only sibling, Clark, is a man with a developmental disability. Although I am not a disability services professional (my day job is in high-tech research), I have decades of experience as his younger sister. While we were growing up, our parents worked hard to ensure that both my brother and I had every

opportunity to maximize our individual potentials. Even though we had very different abilities and interests, we each were expected

to stretch ourselves, try new things, and to always do our best. At the time, I didn’t realize how unusual this was, or how fortunate my family was to have access to resources to enable my brother to participate fully in school, community, and work.

Advocating for my brother meant filtering out much of the advice that my family received from professionals working within a system that is fundamentally flawed. I still remember back in high school when my brother was referred to a workshop for an assessment. At the time, I had no concept of what this place was. However, I will never forget the looks on my parents’ faces and my brother’s obvious dismay upon returning home. They were told that Clark had



Clark and Annabel in 1972 in Minnesota

About Oregon APSE

Our mission is to promote equitable, integrated employment of people with disabilities that recognizes their contributions as community members.

We represent the Oregon chapter of the national Association of Persons Supporting Employment First. [APSE](#) is the only national organization with an exclusive focus on integrated employment and career advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

As of March, we have 97 members!

[Join Oregon APSE](#)

We look forward to joining with like-minded Oregonians! To become a member click on “Join” link or email: oregonapse@gmail.com



Board Talk continued...

such a short attention span and limited ability that he would never be able to do anything other than piece work in a sheltered environment.

My parents decided to ignore this guidance. Since then, my brother has only worked in an integrated workplace at competitive wages. Today he has a successful career as an IT Support Specialist with the city of St. Paul, MN, and enjoys the freedom, benefits, and lifestyle that real employment brings (see **Cool Life**). With the excellent support of [Kaposia](#), a provider agency, Clark has continued to grow in his career. If my parents had not believed in his potential, or had listened to the opinions of the sheltered workshop professionals, I cannot imagine what his life would be like today.

When I tried to find a similar agency in Portland (should Clark decide to move here someday), I discovered not every city or even state has such services readily available. Furthermore, I learned about the lack of opportunities for people with IDD in Oregon to pursue integrated work, about Lane vs. Kitzhaber and APSE.

My instant and unwavering reaction was that I supported the lawsuit, APSE, and the Employment First agenda. My family's experiences unambiguously teach how critical access to integrated employment is. As I got more involved, I came to understand that



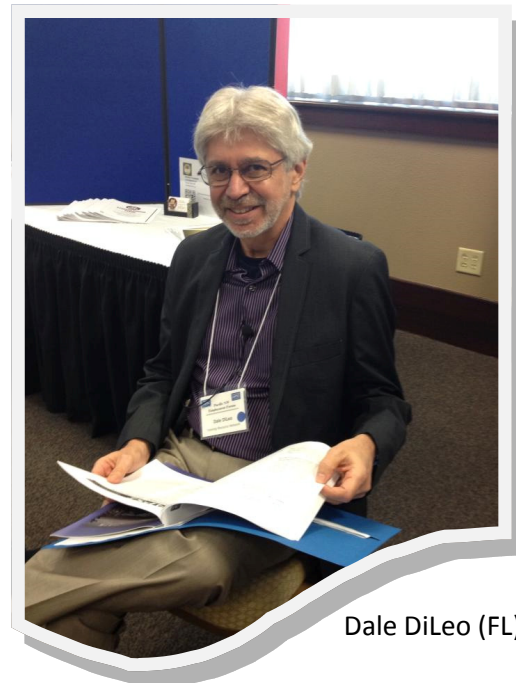
segregation of people with IDD in employment is a civil rights violation.

"Separate but equal" as a legal doctrine was struck down decades ago, yet it persists today. We need to swiftly do away with it altogether and offer a means to pursue real employment as part of a fulfilling, community-based life for all. ~

Annabel Nickles, Secretary

Pacific Northwest Forum Update

Oregon and Washington APSE chapters worked together to bring together over 100 people to talk employment. Dale DiLeo gave real-life, practical approaches to supporting people. In addition, Eric Matthes, John Callhoun, Nick Davis, Ryley Newport and David



Dale DiLeo (FL)

Hoff presented relevant information and inspiring stories. A special thanks goes to the APSE Chapter Presidents, Tara Asai and Cindi Kirchmeier, for the collaboration, as well as Jaimie Laitnen for the extra mile. More photos on page 8. ~

A Cool Life

Clark Nickles always liked computers, so it's no surprise to anyone who has known him for a long time that he has a thriving career in IT. Clark lives in the [Twin Cities metro area in Minnesota](#), and is an IT Support Specialist for the city of St. Paul. He got his start with computers as a teenager playing with early PCs, and even built one together with his Mom. After high school, Clark took computer classes at Hennepin Technical College and completed a certificate in desktop publishing. "Desktop publishing was good, but today that is done all online" he says, reflecting on the fast pace of change in his field. Hennepin Tech referred Clark to the Sister Kenny Institute for help with finding a job. Clark worked in Sister Kenny's offices for a short while until they placed him at 3M headquarters in St. Paul where he learned and did desktop PC support. Clark was at 3M for 12 years before getting laid off in a round of downsizing.



The next couple of years were tough trying to find another job. Through Minnesota's VR system, Clark was referred to an employment agency that found him a job washing dishes. Clark, always the hard worker, performed this job diligently even though it was not a good match and his real ability was in computers and IT.

Things turned around when his advocate (who is also his Mom) got his case reopened and assigned instead to [Kaposia](#), a superb employment services agency in St. Paul. Kaposia had an existing relationship with the St. Paul city government, and when Clark came along they readily matched him with a great position. Clark joined the Operations Division of St. Paul's Office of Technology and Communications in 2005 and took to his new job immediately. His job coach commented on how Clark would volunteer for assignments and how he was teaching her the job. In short order, Clark was working independently with no coaching required. Continued on page 9

Oregon APSE Governing Board

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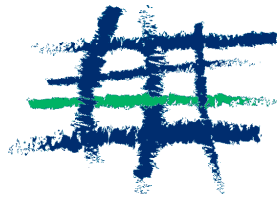
Newsletter Editors

Tara Asai, Kristi Cule, Annabel Nickles and CJ Webb

At the end of 2013, annual elections occurred. Please give a – **WELCOME!** to our newly elected Board Members: **Annabel Nickles**, a Family Member; **Janet Stevely** from Griffin-Hammis; and **Liz Fox** from Alternative Work Concepts. Our re-elected Board Members are: **Cynthia Owens**, **Katie Maple**, **Paula Johnson**, and **Tara Asai**.

We are excited for the new year and working together.

Hot Topic



DISABILITY RIGHTS OREGON

Supported Employment Case Anniversary

January 25, 2014 marks two years since the filing of the *Lane v. Kitzhaber* case.

The lawsuit was brought on behalf of 2700 individuals with intellectual disabilities who receive services in sheltered workshops as well as those who may be referred to or are at risk of entering segregated workshops, and who have not been offered a real opportunity to choose integrated, supported employment services in the community.

Those individuals are asserting their right under the "integration mandate" of the ADA to choose employment services in the least segregated, appropriate setting.

It asks the court to declare that the state is violating the ADA and Rehabilitation Act by their needless segregation of class members in sheltered workshops and failing to provide them supported employment services for which they are eligible. It also seeks an order requiring the state to provide supported employment services to all qualified class members, consistent with their individual needs.

Fifteen months after the case was filed, Governor Kitzhaber issued an Executive Order

that directs state agencies to take steps to achieve "integrated employment for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, consistent with their abilities and choices..." While the Order has a positive goal, it makes no promises to individuals in sheltered workshops that their rights will be honored.

The Executive Order has:

- No clear definition of supported employment
- No required minimum hours on integrated work
- No required minimum wage
- No required community integration
- No required service availability
- No required schedule of implementation
- No required success in finding jobs
- No required adequate funding

There has been confusion among some in the I/DD community about what the case is seeking and how it differs from other changes driven by the EO, Medicaid, rate restructuring and legislative funding. Some go so far as to claim that the intent of *Lane v. Kitzhaber* is to deny choice of services to individuals with I/DD. In fact, the case was filed because individuals with I/DD have been denied the meaningful choice of employment services in Oregon for years.

Lane v. Kitzhaber does not ask for an order that sheltered workshops be closed or that individuals be denied funding or supports. It does ask that the right of individuals to receive employment services in the most appropriate integrated settings including supported employment be honored by the state. Trial of the case is now scheduled for July, 2015.

Hot Topic continued...

**“Justice too long delayed
is justice denied.”**

— [Martin Luther King Jr.](#)

What Are We Waiting For?

**An Editorial Essay on the Second
Anniversary of Lane vs. Kitzhaber**

In addressing Lane vs. Kitzhaber, guidelines from the Executive Order are diffused, setting low standards over too long a time period. While both sides of the lawsuit agree on the value of Oregonians with disabilities entering the work force - “real jobs, real wages”, we see a lack of policy and standards for the structure and implementation of supported employment. Espousing values without clearly laid out policies has left many individuals with disabilities and their families mired in systems that are unwilling to see them as potential workers.

Over the past 20 years, our state has had a grand history of successful supported employment projects. To bring this about, it took leadership, policy, and definitive guidelines. We saw the placement of over 500 Oregonians with developmental disabilities from 1994 - 2001. Many of those original participants are still employed today. Shared expectations of outcomes with strong, visionary leadership, state investment, consistent policies, and partnership across DHS, ODE and VR achieved this success. The state required participating agencies to meet a placement rate of 15+ people per year into real jobs (15 hrs./week with at least minimum wage). In those years, carefully delineated policy and process served as the under-

pinnings to a values based commitment to supported employment. In 2014, it is no longer a matter of educating providers, schools and families that employment is a civil right. This noble sentiment must be the foundation of our system and believed by our own DHS-ODE-VR partners so that **all individuals** with disabilities are assured the opportunity to work at real jobs in the community.

The generations of people who want and can work are already here. Too often, they leave schools and classrooms where valuable resources have been wasted on revolving door work experience or are labeled in special education classrooms where they are deemed “unemployable” and then sentenced to segregation in an adult system of sheltered workshops and alternatives to employment programs.

What is the picture for the lucky few courageous enough to override these labels?

- They sit in offices where their right to work is usurped by endless conversations of “should” or “could” rather than “HOW;” under the false guise of self-determination.
- They are subjected to “community assessments” that are gatekeeping exercises administered by non-believing or unskilled employment specialists and paid for by VR Counselors.
- They are offered a choice of 2-3 local providers who provide sheltered employment or alternatives to employment, and rarely have skilled job developers and employment specialists.

Continued on page 10

***Follow the discussion on the
[Oregon APSE Facebook page!](#)***

Upcoming Events

Town Hall Forums

regarding vocational services
for individuals with IDD in the
Portland Metro region. Please
RSVP taraasai@gmail.com

April 22, 2014

3:30 to 5:30 pm

Community Access Services
1815 NW 169th Pl # 1060
Beaverton, OR 97006

April 23, 2014

7:00 to 9:00 pm

Bethesda Lutheran
Communities
831 SW17th Avenue
Portland, OR 97205
Street Parking is free after 7:00

WA Statewide Transition Conference May 2nd

Hilton Vancouver
301 W 6th St
Vancouver, WA 98660
9:00 am to 4:00 pm

The \$75.00 Registration fee will
include
coffee and
light break-
fast, lunch,
breakout
sessions,
and exhibits.



*if your category is full please
email Marsha@gowise.org and
they will place you on a waitlist.

Around the State

Lane County and Alternative Work Concepts (A.W.C.)

Jason Baker is one of the most dedicated and hardest working employees you could ever meet. He is personable, fun, and very serious about his delivery job for Cinnabon at the Valley River Center Mall in Eugene. Jason has been delivering food and drinks to the employees of the mall for almost 8 years with the help of his support coworker. Jason has always loved to drive his wheelchair and help people out, which made him the perfect candidate for his first delivery job at Bagel Sphere soon after graduating from his high school transition program in the mid-nineties.



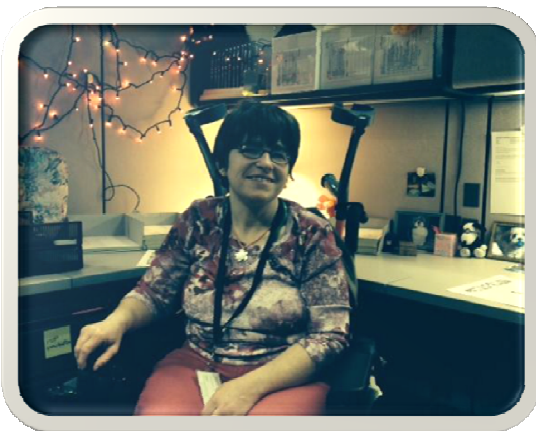
When he decided to look for an inside delivery job, Jason took his same helpful attitude, reliability and sparkling customer service personality to the mall. There, his dedicated customer-base refers to him as "Speedy J" because of his fast and friendly delivery service. Jason works five days a week and makes minimum wage plus tips, rarely missing work because of his love of his job and his commitment to his customers who really miss his service and smile when he's gone. Jason loves his job, baseball, watching movies, drinking iced coffee, saving his money for trips with his family, and helping people every day.

Sean Quddus had been in the job market for 13 years since graduating from his high school transition program in Oklahoma. After moving to Eugene, he demonstrated his motivation to work, reliability, quick wit and knowledge of electronics to A.W.C. These traits made him a great candidate

for a recently created Recovery Specialist position at the local Office Max store. Since Sean started work there, his supervisor noticed a huge difference in the organization and cleanliness of the store as a whole, and promoted Sean to include down stocking as part of his duties. His incredible retail sense, eye for detail and excellent customer service skills were just what Office Max was seeking. He works five days a week as a Down Stocker/Recovery Specialist and hopes to work his way up with the company in the future. In his free time, Sean runs his own eBay business buying and selling collectible action figures.



Darci Harris lives in Creswell with her parents and brother. Since graduating high school in 1998, with support, she has held a variety of positions in the community. Darci was responsible for microfilming all of the tellers' work and filing miscellaneous documents as a US Bank employee for over ten years. As the banking industry went more technological, Darci's tasks were slowly eliminated. She then moved to the local hospital where she worked in different departments that needed clerical support with shredding, photocopying, filing, and packet making. In November 2013, Darci began working in the Lane County Developmental Disabilities office. Continued on page 10



Upcoming Events

Open Doors Forum April 3rd

McMenamin's Kennedy School
5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

National APSE



Dates: July 1-3, 2014

Pre-Conference Day: June 30
Hyatt Regency Long Beach
[Long Beach, CA](#)

Parents and Self-Advocates

Tell your story. How has the implementation of Employment First affected your search for community employment? Describe your experience, in detail, with the county, brokerage, school, providers and OVRs, ***send stories to:***

Erinn Kelley-Siel, Director
Mike Maley, EF Coordinator
Dept. of Human Services
500 Summer Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Pacific Northwest Forum Update



Ryley Newport (National APSE), Jim Corey, and Wally Tablit (WA)



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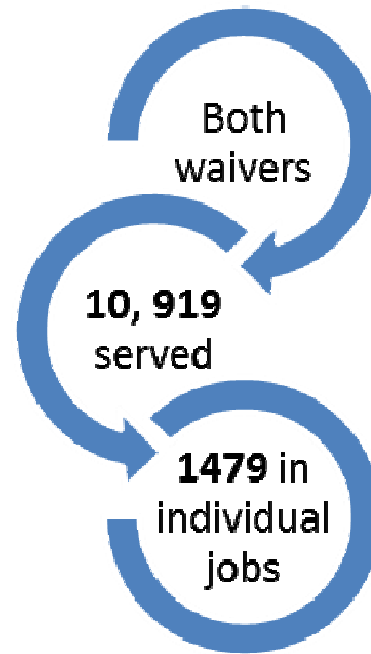


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Did you know?

Data as of September 2013

<https://spdweb.hr.state.or.us/EOS/ORAll.aspx>



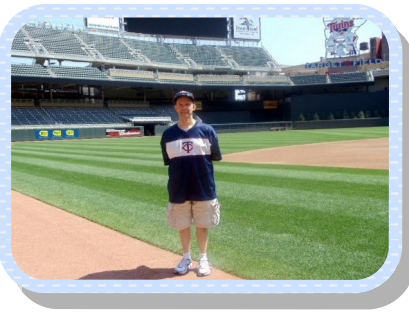
The LEAD Center Policy Update – Employment, Health Care and Disability is a monthly update focusing on the intersection of disability, employment and health care policy. **From January 2014:**

[Senators Wyden and Grassley to Introduce Bill Incentivizing States to Fund Integrated Employment](#)

Senators Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) and Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) have announced their intention to introduce legislation that would give states incentives to move people with disabilities out of sheltered workshops and facility-based day habilitation programs and into integrated em-

A Cool Life continued...

A typical workday for Clark starts early, often before dawn. He commutes from his home in a Minneapolis suburb to his office in the City Hall Annex in downtown St. Paul, sometimes stopping on the way for a latte or a caramel macchiato (he's partial to Starbucks). He reaches his desk by 7:30 AM where he prepares for the day's work. When asked what he likes best about his job, he replies "Variety and change, I get to do a lot of things." Sometimes he orders and configures new laptop computers for city employees, including special ruggedized laptops to be installed in police squad cars. He helps maintain many of the information systems that the various city departments need to get their work done, e.g., keeping [Westlaw](#) up for the City Attorney's office. Lately he's been learning more server administration, and been responsible for giving employees rights to the various IT systems they need for their jobs. "St. Paul can be complex", Clark says. "Fire and police departments are totally different from parks and recreation, or from human rights. I get to work with all of the city departments, and that's fun."



Clark at Target Field

Outside of work, Clark still enjoys spending time on computers, his Sony PlayStation, and keeps up with new gadgets and advances in consumer electronics. Sports in general, and baseball in particular, are of keen interest. Clark likes going to Minnesota Twins games

and buys season tickets every year, often attending games with colleagues from his office.

He is especially looking forward to next year's Major League Baseball All Star Game that will be played at Target



Field in Minneapolis. He also takes frequent trips with his Mom and sister, visiting favorite places like Washington, DC, or Florida for the Twins spring training camp.

The future is bright for Clark. When asked what he is looking forward to next in his job, he says "learning more server administration." A couple of years ago Clark was promoted, and he continues to learn and advance his skills. One of his goals is to work for St. Paul until he retires so he can collect his pension and retirement account savings. And, at the rate he's going, he will make it there with flying colors! ~

The **Cool Life** column showcases stories that demonstrate individuals with disabilities successfully employed by community businesses.

Have a story?

Send an email to: oregonapse@gmail.com

ployment. The legislation would create a 10-state Medicaid demonstration project, entitled Transition to Independence. Senators Wyden and Grassley initially introduced their bill in Dec. 2013, as an amendment to legislation being considered by the Senate Finance Committee.

Hot Topic continued...

- They cannot find a competent job developer / employment specialist or agency to assist them to develop and provide support for a job. ÷

How does the service picture look?

- ⇒ The supply of competent job developers and employment specialists is woefully lacking to meet the demands of job seekers.
- ⇒ There are no real standards for what constitutes quality services. Although employment specialist core competencies have been identified, there are no criteria for demonstrating competency. This laissez faire approach allowing for “watered down” versions of discovery, person-centered planning or customized employment, masks the State’s responsibilities to research best practice and then set standards. As the state has endorsed standards for obtaining a drivers license or maintaining a tattoo parlor – why do we hesitate to regulate and define supported employment? The federal government has done so.
- ⇒ The State does not provide timely support to Counties to implement funding for long-term supports. Service providers are left stranded wondering how they can provide services without losing money.
- ⇒ While promoting best practices of discovery, person-centered planning, and individualized job development, the State provides little guidance or support to make the braiding or blending of funding work for independent contractors or agencies trying to do the hard work.

- ⇒ Employment Specialists return to their agencies from DHS sponsored training and realize that their agencies are not invested in best practice or constrained by system rates and structures so they have no hope to implement their learning. ÷

We must rise above mere pockets of excellence and a resigned acceptance of mediocrity to a **consistent supported system with timely guidelines, specific standards and resources, led by the State of Oregon.** Oregon APSE is not the first to bring this to public attention. Numerous white papers, nationally known consultants and Lane vs. Kitzhaber have and continue to raise these issues. We need to have the courage to work together to address them in a timely manner. ~

By Debra McLean, APSE member and Oregon Chapter Board Member At Large

Around the State continued...

She is responsible for making packets and highlighting information for providers, families and case managers. She is excited about this new job and is doing fantastic. Darci enjoys making new friends with her co-workers and loves having her own office to decorate. Her impressive work history has allowed her to continue to advance and receive a paycheck that “is really big!”

[Alternative Work Concepts](#) provides individualized employment support for people who experience significant disabilities. Believing that all people deserve the opportunity for meaningful employment, they have been recognized as one of the field’s seven best organizations in the country. ~