

Hot Topic

WHY ISN'T ROSS WORKING?

“Leadership, assertive, dedicated, curious, funny - HIGH ENERGY!”

Ross Ryan was born in 1969. He grew up living between California and Connecticut until 1988, when he moved to Oregon. Ross graduated from Silverton High School in 1990. After high school, he got a job at Roth IGA. “It didn’t work out be-



Ross Ryan

cause I was doing everything on my own without supervision.”

In 1993, with the help of the Mt. Angel Development Services (MtADS), he got a job at the Mt. Angel Abby as a dishwasher. “It was a good steady job, Monday through Fri-

day working two hours every day.” He worked there for 13 years. After that job, Ross returned to MATC and has continued to receive services through the present time. Until early in 2014, he worked at the workshop and as part of the janitorial crew. He continues going to the Center weekly to work on art projects and facilitates an advocacy group. As of this September, Ross did not have a routine time to meet with the supported employment staff.

Ross has clearly stated that he wants a job. On October 9, 2013, Ross participated in his Person Centered Plan with X (staff) of MATC. Meteorology and advocacy [continued on pg. 2](#)

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 September, we have 109 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



Hot Topic continued...

were identified as strong employment interests with other interests as theater, politics, and attending community college. He was told that he would soon be referred to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services for job development. As of this date, he does not have a VR Plan for Employment.

Since October, Ross has taken the initiative to increase his skills. He is active in the Oregon Self-Advocates Coalition (OSAC) and works a few hours per month as a paid advocate for the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities (OCDD). Last November, he attended the Pacific NW Employment Forum in Portland. More recently, he participated in both the Oregon and International Gathering for Person-Centered Practices as well as the National APSE Convention in Long Beach, California. He actively participated in discussions at the APSE Convention; sometimes being the only self-advocate voice in the room.



Ross lives alone in an apartment in Mt. Angel and receives supported living services from Catholic Community Services. He states that he would move to Salem or Portland for a job and would be interested in learning to use Cherriots or Tri-Met. He would like a job that uses his skills, is within a 30 minutes bus ride, and is around 32 hours a week.

As an involved advocate and member of the

Executive Order Stakeholder Policy Group, Ross has much to say about employment services.

One of the problems for getting a job that Ross identified is that there is staff turnover with “no back-up.” He states that “Y. transferred and Z. split – we got nobody now.”

Regarding the Career Development Plan, “If you want to waste paper, go ahead if it will help me get a job...”

When asked about his services, he says, “They (service providers and VR) care, but they don’t care.” “They’re not used to working with people like me.” “I hear a lot of excuses from Managers and Case Managers.” “They say, ‘We have not found a job. We have to wait and see if there are any openings.’ Then they beat around about the job.”

“I go to a lot of meetings and they have lots of notes and graphs (about employment), but I need to physically see first-hand that people are getting jobs and that their lifestyles are getting better.” TM

Why isn't Ross working?

~ By Ross Ryan and Tara Asai

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Hot Topic continued...

This Puzzle is Tough to Piece Together



Pg.1

Motivated and skilled job seekers with contributions

Pg.2

System people that "beat around the job;" "they care but they don't care."

Pg.4

13.1% receive individualized employment services with average wages of \$8.58/hour

Pg.8 Building competent employment staff and community partners

Pg.2

Lots of paperwork, meetings, notes and graphs without physical evidence of jobs

Pg.9

System changing—many families lost, dazed, and confused

Pg.3

43.2% who receive Day Services make \$0.00/hr.

MISSING PIECES...

Pg.4

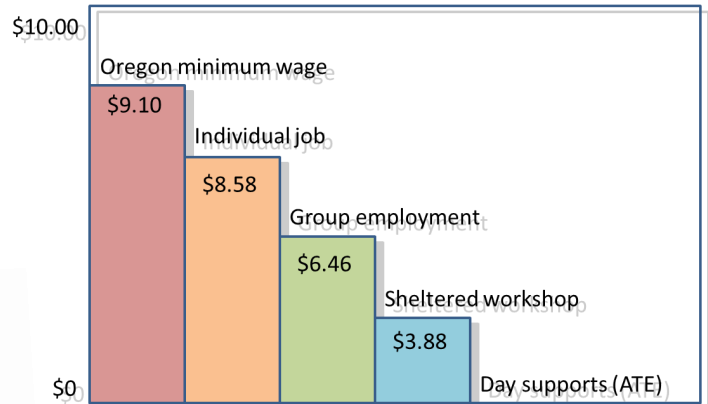
Having Integrated Employment defined as 20-hrs/week, minimum wage or higher, fully integrated

Pg.3-4

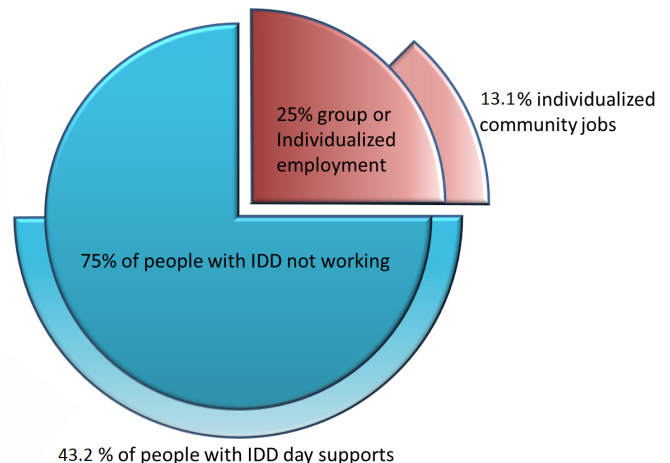
Physical evidence that people are getting jobs and lifestyles are improving

Did you know?

Consider the July 2014 Oregon Employment Report:



<http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/employment/employment-first/Pages/data-reports.aspx>



Consider Wages and Hours:

⇒ People in Oregon with I/DD continue to work at as little as 1- 2 hours / week.

Consider Quality Assurance:

◇ In July, Oregon DHS posted on their website a paper discussing the improvement of employment outcomes through Quality Assurance. There are no defined quality standards. Quality assurance without quality standards is not very reassuring.
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Hot Topic continued...

- ◇ The federal standard of best practice supported employment is 20 hours / week minimum wage, and in community settings with an opportunity to routinely interact with co-workers. Oregon has not defined a standard.
- ◇ Olmstead and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) direct public policy toward fully integrated employment with wages at or above minimum wage.
- ◇ The State of Oregon supports and subsidizes sub-minimum wage and segregated settings.
- ◇ Continuing a system which dooms people with intellectual disabilities to second-class economic and social citizenship is neither assuring nor a quality outcome. It is just a very low standard.

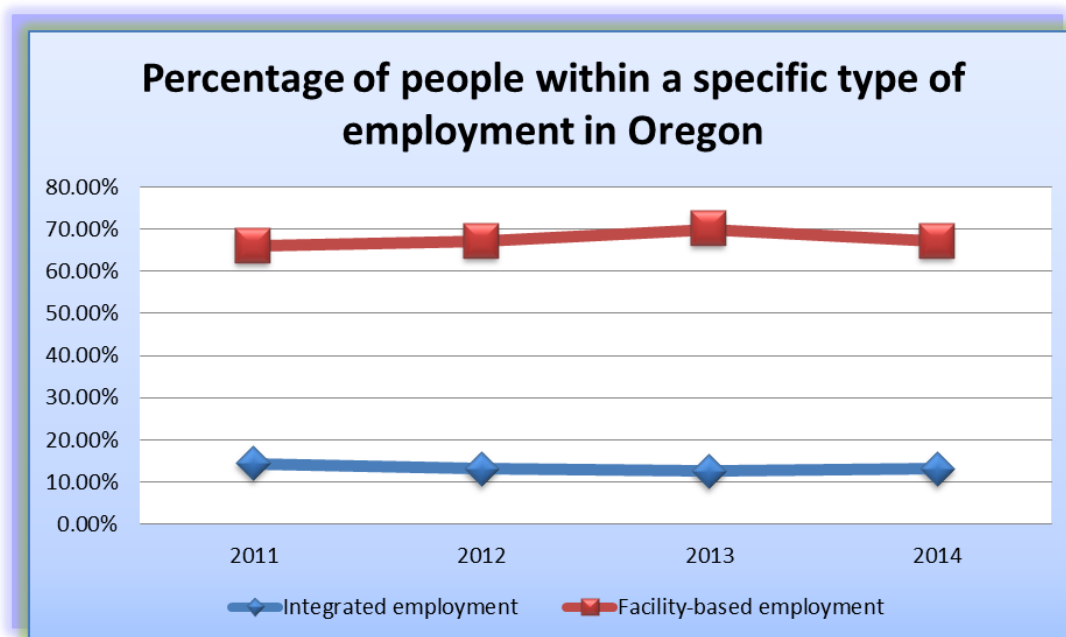
~ Debra McLean, Aug. 2014

Agreement reached with Rhode Island and the Department of Justice

In April 2014, the State of Rhode Island and the Department of Justice reached an agreement with the following provisions:

Supported employment placements that are individual, typical jobs in the community, that pay at least minimum wage, and that offer employment for the maximum number of hours consistent with the person's abilities and preferences, amounting to an average of at least 20 hours per week across the target population. The state will provide supported employment placements for 2000 people.

Follow stories on Facebook...



Board Talk



Paula Johnson

Oregon APSE Treasurer
APSE Foundation President
Program Specialist for Project SEARCH at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center – www.projectsearch.us
Senior Director of Jobs at Best Buddies International – www.bestbuddiesjobs.org

Building Relationships with Employers That Lead to Improved Outcomes

As I was starting my career in Seattle in the early 1980's, I had the honor of meeting Eunice Kennedy Shriver. She visited the small electronics workshop where I worked and spent the day meeting the workers, many of whom had lived most of their lives in a state institution. She watched individuals with intellectual and development disabilities performing complex assembly work and was very moved by what she observed. At the end of the day, Mrs. Shriver thanked us for our commitment to employment for people with disabilities and then asked a very poignant question. "What's next for these individuals?" To be honest, we had not thought about work for people beyond the workshop. This question has remained with me over the past thirty years and has shaped my ongoing commitment to integrated employment for all people with disabilities.

With Employment First gaining momentum across the US and Oregon, I applied this same question to the employers in our communities. What is next for the partnerships we are building with companies and what are employers asking or telling us?

Each time I meet with an employer I am encouraged by his or her willingness to explore the possibilities of including individuals with disabilities in their workforce. I firmly believe that it is no longer a question of "if" a company will consider hiring a person with a disability *continued on page 6*

Oregon APSE Governing Board

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Janet Stevely, At Large

Elections of officers and Board of Directors

is happening this fall. Nominations are being accepted by the Elections committee and voting will happen in November. If interested, please contact: oregonapse@gmail.com.

Please keep your information [up to date](#).

Newsletter Editors

Tara Asai, Kristi Cule, Annabel Nickles and CJ Webb

Board Talk continued...

but “how” this will be accomplished. It also raises the question of how we, as employment professionals, have been communicating with employers.

My experience has taught me that when we take the time to truly understand the needs of employers, outcomes improve. When I first started job development activities years ago, I thought that I needed to do all the talking and would present a job candidate to a prospective employer without even knowing if the person would be a good match for the job. I didn’t do my homework and was unprepared to answer many of the questions that were asked.

Fast forward to 2014 - we know so much more about how to build strong relationships with employers.

1. Utilize your personal networks to gain introductions to employers. If they know and trust the person who has referred you, this often helps you to build rapport more quickly.
2. Research the company before you meet with your contact. Employers appreciate it when you ask specific questions about their products or services.
3. Take the time to tour the worksite and, when possible, talk to employees who currently perform the job(s) being considered.
4. Ask lots of questions about the needs of the company and offer suggestions or ideas of how to structure a position that promotes efficiency.
5. Share the business benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities. Often times, employers are not aware of benefits

such as reduced turnover and absenteeism, or improved customer satisfaction. They also may not know of the employment services and resources that assist the employer and employee with a disability to be successful.

6. Present candidates who are interested in this line of work and also have skills that match the company needs.
7. Provide skilled employment professionals who can assist with training the new employee. Systematic instruction techniques will promote learning of more complex tasks, which often equates to better wages.
8. Maintain contact with the employer and employee to insure that both parties have the support they need.
9. Above all, believe in the job seekers and keep your expectations high. Your enthusiasm will set the tone with employers.

There are many inspiring stories of people who have gained competitive employment in their communities. However, the national data still indicates the unemployment rate for people with disabilities continues to be at astoundingly high levels. We know that good jobs with good hours and wages are possible for people with disabilities. Let’s consider these questions:

1. What’s next for people with disabilities who are unemployed or leaving segregated work settings?
2. What’s next for job development and the types of jobs that will be developed?
3. What’s next for you as you engage employers in your community?

I think Mrs. Shriver would be pleased with the vision of Employment First and would encourage us to be relentless with our actions to achieve employment for all. ~

A Cool Life

...in Hot Southern Oregon

Matt May enjoys a variety of sports. His favorite teams are: Green Bay Packers (he's a Cheesehead), Detroit Tigers, Portland Trailblazers, Sacramento Kings, D.C. United soccer, and OSU Beavers football. For Matt, taking pleasure in life is important, and work is a part of making him happy.

He began his working career while in high school in the late 90's in Medford, Oregon. He had several work experiences, including food prep at Loaves and Fishes and cleaning at the VA Domiciliary, and his favorite job was at Ray's Food Place. In 1999, he was hired by Ray's to manage the bottle return and for janitorial duties. That same year, Matt moved from his mom's house into his own apartment with the support from Living Opportunities. Matt enjoyed his work and the friends he made, but unfortunately as with many others affected by the recession, in 2010, Matt was laid off as part of downsizing their operation.

Matt kept himself busy, playing golf, watching Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) events, and assisting the football coach as general manager of the South Medford School Panthers. This includes managing the equipment. Matt also began volunteering at Northwest Seasonal Workers (NWSW), helping with recycling and supply management for the food service. However, he really missed his paycheck.

Without much luck over the next few years, in 2012, Matt was connected with Lee, a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor. Matt was very clear with Lee about what he did

not want to do, but he knew he wanted to work around other people.

"Short Mary and Tall Mary took me to different businesses where I got to try out a lot of different jobs."

Matt sampled a variety of jobs, and his experience at NWSW came in handy at Blackstone Audio as he knew how to use a box cutter. There were many aspects of jobs Matt liked but the best fit had not happened yet. Lee and Matt asked Living Opportunities to develop a job, based on Matt's skills and strengths, as a service clerk, which entails cleaning, recycling, and providing quality control on products while being able to be outside "having fresh air." *continued on pg. 10*



Matt proudly presented the Living Opportunities Employer of the Year

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

Upcoming Events

2nd Annual Pacific NW Employment Forum

[Heathman Lodge](#)

Vancouver, WA 98662


**This is an opportunity to
learn and connect with
others working towards
employment for all!**

**Sponsored by the Oregon &
Washington APSE Chapters**

9:00 am to 4:00 pm with
Monday evening networking,
social hour until 6:30pm

Dates: November 3-4, 2014

Location: [Heathman Lodge](#)

Registration fee: \$75 for
members, \$150 for non-
members*  see other column
for information about an introduc-
tory APSE membership

[Click here to register!](#)

**The first PNW Employment
Forum Awards Luncheon will
be held on Nov. 4th.**

Nominations for Employment
Specialist, Employment Mentor,
Employee and Community Part-
ner Awards are open. Send to
oregonapse@gmail.com

Call for Presenter



[Click here to apply](#)

**Deadline to submit your proposal
is September 30, 2014.**

Around the State

Education Update on Employment First

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) has launched two major initiatives. They recently finished the first round of the Educator Institute on Networking and Transition. Held in seven locations around the state, this full day training provided information on raising expectations for transition aged youth. Educators learned about Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Office of Developmental Disability Services (ODDS), family support, and advocacy. They also learned more about Person Centered Planning and explored a variety of curriculum and transition assessments. This training provided networking opportunities for educators and adult service partners. Given the interest and feedback, ODE plans to provide three more sessions in the fall. Here are a couple of comments from participants.

"Great training—lots of information – got the 'thinking' going for next year, thank you."

"Thank You! Appreciate the bringing together of folks. Relaxed and collaborative environment."

ODE also assisted in hiring staff for the Transition Technical Assistance Network comprised of a Secondary Transition Liaison from ODE that supports eight part-time Transition Network Facilitators located around the state. Working with school programs, and local Employment First groups, the Facilitators will provide information and technical assistance statewide to improve outcomes for transition aged students and families.

Heather
Lindsey,
Secondary
Transition
Liaison
[Transition
Technical
Assistance
Network](#)
ODE



Around the State continued...

Directions, Map, or a Schematic?

What do I need to support my son in his pursuit of employment? We've been working on it for several years... yes, years. I'm learning the language, identifying potholes, pit falls, and other barriers to our destination. Employment First is a monumental initiative for systems to actualize change that families have wanted for years. We are now in the throes of that change... and it is challenging; while the systems "storm and norm" to a new way of doing business, families like myself, are out there trying to navigate a system feeling blindfolded, spun around and pointed in a direction and told "employment first!" Many are lost, dazed and confused.

With all of that said, I remain optimistic that an earnest effort is going into making the system work. What we ask is to keep in mind that families need an accessible, responsive, results-oriented system that holds itself to high expectations. And as such, a system that does not require directions, map or schematic to make your way through. We've got a lot of work ahead of us, but on behalf of my family and the families we work with at FACT, keep it up and press on! While you are "priming the pumps" of system change, we are building demand by sharing with families "You're son/daughter can work!"

So when will we get there? When a well-oiled system meets families demanding employment opportunities... that's when the magic will happen. In the meantime, please remember that on the other end of these efforts is an individual ready to contribute to community his/her gifts and talents with an expectation of fair compensation.

Roberta Dunn
Executive Director, Family and Community Together (FACT)
<http://factoregon.org/>

~THE FOCUS ***Around the State*** column features stories from Oregon APSE members that illustrate Oregon's pioneering spirit from various regions of the state.

If you have a story, please contact us at:
oregonapse@gmail.com.

Upcoming Events

NW Conference on Professional Development

This educational conference brings together national and regional experts, with leaders of service provider organizations, and staff.

[Click for registration](#)

Dates: October 22-24, 2014

Registration fee: \$300

[Eugene, Hilton](#) for number

Room block ends Oct. 8th

APSE webinars offered

[Click to find out more.](#)

* There is an introductory membership to APSE at the same time as registering for the [Pacific NW Employment Forum](#).

Recent Events

National APSE Convention Highlights

[Go to page 10.](#)

Oregon APSE Governing Board

began developing a strategic plan for Oregon APSE during a Retreat on the McKenzie River on **Friday, September 12, 2014.**

Cool Life continued...

By June 2013, even though longer than desired, Matt started work at Hyundai dealership of Butler Automotive Group, where he uses his experience doing general janitorial work. He was particularly happy to reconnect with his old friend, Eric, from when he worked at Ray's. He works Monday through Friday for 2 ½ hours per day and loves his job, where he is a valued member of the Butler team. In May 2014, Matt proudly presented the Living Opportunities Employer of the Year award to Linda and Chuck Butler.

"I know my routines.... Lisa ... has fresh coffee for me every morning so I don't fall asleep. I get my paycheck—it comes every two weeks."

Since going back to work, Matt has continued volunteering for NWSW and the Panthers. He was able to save enough to buy a PlayStation3 and a laptop. Now, he has a new savings goal to buy a printer...

"Life is cool. Yes, I am a cool dude. 100%."

~ Jean Atalla, Living Opportunities

Living Opportunities provides employment, residential, and consultation services. Their theme is "changing lives ..." To learn more, visit www.livingoppops.org

APSE National Convention Highlights

Kristi Cule received a complimentary registration for her essay on why she would be a good representative for Oregon APSE. One session she attended on VR discussed the key elements of motivation, autonomy, mastery, and purpose. She took detailed

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

National Convention Highlights

notes. She also enjoyed meeting people from other states. One recommendation that she has for National is that they be sure that everyone gets an equal opportunity to sing karaoke.

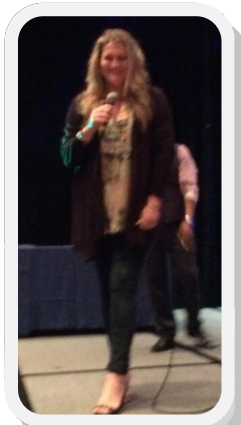


Kristi Cule

Tyson Tenando received a Personal Achievement Award.

Oregonians—Mariah Boyd, Gary Chiaravalli, Natasha DeSantis, Kristina Grant, Holly Powell, Jennifer Quigley, Toni Smith, and Nicholas Von Pless passed the Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) Exam on

June 30, 2014. They join a distinguished group of 600 graduates across the country.



Erica Brown belted out the karaoke tunes.