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The Focus



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Planning My Way to Work

A transition guide for students with disabilities leaving high school

NEWLY
UPDATED

Oregon Department
of Human Services

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

OCDD
Oregon Council on
Developmental Disabilities

THE 2022 Transition Guide is Released!

We are excited to share the 2022 edition of **Planning My Way to Work**.

"I really wish I had the opportunity to have this guide when I was going through my transition program. It would have helped me to see in real time what it is I want in my life and what I want to avoid. I knew at that age that I didn't want to go into a sheltered workshop but people often didn't ask me what my vision was for my life. Having these tools, I would have known the supports that were out there to help me get there!" Nick Kaasa





The Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities published this transition guide with help from the Oregon Department of Human Services, Office of Developmental Disabilities Services and the Vocational Rehabilitation program. This guide will help people with disabilities to be leaders in their lives and stay organized as they transition from school to adult life.

Planning My Way to Work puts students in the driver's seat. This guide is not about teachers or professionals talking about what they think is best for students, it is about working side by side transition-aged students to create a transition experience that is based on the student's preferences and choices.

This guide is full of questions, resources and worksheets to help you organize your thoughts, create a vision for the future, make choices and decisions, and make a plan with help from your parents, teachers and others you choose. You can use the guide based on what you care about most or use a section when the topic relates to what's happening in your life. View the **2022 Planning My Way to Work** Guide in [English](#), [Русский](#), [Soomaali](#), [Español](#), [简体中文](#), and [Tiếng Việt](#).

Thank you for sharing! Ryley Newport, Oregon APSE Public Policy
Chair and Nick Kaasa, Oregon APSE Member



Oregon's Brokerage Services A Continuing Conversation



As discussed in the last issue, 2021 marked the 20th anniversary of the brokerages. As we did not have space to cover all the interviews, we are continuing this month with Larry Deal, Executive Director of Independence Northwest.

How do person-centered approaches fit into brokerage values and services?

When self-advocates, family members, and community advocates were designing the services, they wanted to ensure that 1) people had choice in who provided supports, 2) people would direct those services, and 3) that services were truly person-centered. In the years since, the term "person-centered" has become co-opted by bureaucratic systems. People talk about "person-centered" forms, but person-centered planning is not a form with fields, it's an approach. To paraphrase disability leader Judith Snow, when we are doing real person-centered work, we don't know how it's going to end – it's about seeing what we learn as we go and incorporating that learning into the final outcome.





How has the evolution of brokerages shifted employment services?

When brokerages first opened in 2001, it was the first time there was an opportunity for individualized ongoing employment services for Oregonians with developmental disabilities living in their own or family home that were not provider driven. I remember going into VR offices and meeting with VR Counselors explaining that we could pick up funding services where they left off and they were baffled by this development. It hadn't been done before – Oregon was on the cutting edge at that point.

How are brokerages presenting employment as an option, especially given the pandemic?

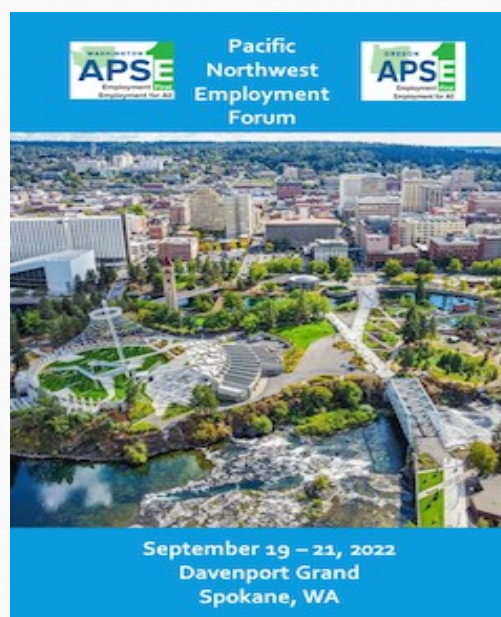
I think it's important to talk about how employment is not just about having a job or earning money. It can be, of course, but often it is how each of us develops social capital, experiences purpose, and engages with our community. We have a responsibility to ensure people we serve who might say they aren't interested in employment understand all the other opportunities they could be turning down by choosing not to pursue a job. And we have a responsibility to job seekers to help them find a job that matches their strengths, gifts, and capacities. The pandemic has presented options we've not seen before – we have more customers getting jobs now than before the pandemic. As long as the working environment can be made safe, we are seeing great success.

What other initiatives over the years have your agency engaged in to promote supported employment?

INW has focused on strong connections with employment providers, engaging to support capacity expansion wherever possible. One of our primary focuses is ensuring our Personal Agents are well-versed in VR and employment opportunities so that we can be consistent and ensure equity across customers in this realm. We aren't interested in just checking boxes on forms and we take our responsibility as connectors seriously.

BACK TOGETHER AGAIN

- Sponsor a Keynote
- Exhibit Your Company
- Present a Session
- Nominate an Award Winner





EARTH DAY APRIL 22, 2022



*"We need to act (boldly), innovate (broadly), and implement (equitably). It's going to take all of us. **All in.** Businesses, governments, and citizens – everyone accounted for, and everyone accountable. A partnership for the planet." (earthday.org)*

This could be APSE's employment mantra, but this is in fact from the non-profit, Earth Day.org. Earth Day reminds us that as global citizens we can all take actions to protect our environment. Oregon APSE would like to celebrate Earth Day 2022 by recognizing employees who believe in sustainability and are contributing to a better future. Thank you to Alyssa Lockwood, Resource Development Manager, [Garten Services, Inc.](#) who shared their stories.



Dorothy Kilmer thrives at her job at Geppetto's Italian Restaurant helping owners Julie and Roger Hoy with daily restaurant opening duties. But, before getting a job at the restaurant, Dorothy worked in sheltered employment at Garten Services' Recycling Facility as a sorter for 17+ years, sorting plastic on the container belt. In 2020 Garten completed their transformation from sheltered to supported employment so Dorothy could no longer work for them. As much as she likes her current restaurant job, Dorothy still had a passion for recycling. To help fulfill her desire, Garten thought creatively and hired Dorothy part-time on their Waste Less Event Services team through a local

temp agency. Dorothy educates the community about where recycling goes during high-traffic events like the Marion County Fair. Dorothy enjoys her role because she gets to educate the public on sustainability while sorting valuable materials out of the waste stream.

[Garten Landscaping](#) operates on sustainable, eco-friendly methods with employees applying these earth wise practices. “The Walker Brothers,” Bennie, Clint, and James are triplets working alongside each other on Garten’s Landscape team since 2020. Led by Landscape Manager Gerald Nichols, the Walker Brothers travel throughout the Willamette Valley to maintain landscaping for over a dozen commercial and government buildings. Diligently rototilling and mowing yards, pruning shrubs and trees, planting vegetables and fruits, The Walker Brothers are contributing to a greener more sustainable Earth.



UPCOMING EVENTS

April 22-23. [Earth Day Events in Oregon](#)

May 4, 4-5PM, APSE Hour, Employer Awards, Metro Region

May 12, 11A-12P, 50 Ways to Engage Employers: Employer Series #3, APSE Webinar

May 26, 9am to 10:30am, [Oregon APSE Training](#), Power of Language, CJ Webb

APSE Northwest & Pacific Regional Training

Those participating in the first APSE Northwest and Pacific Regional Training on March 21st were treated to an engaging three hours. Regional Delegate, Paula Johnson, hosted the event which was packed with information. Tricia Jones-Parkin (Utah) led off with an overview of applying the concepts of being person-centered

in employment. National APSE Board member, Kie O'Donnell (Rhode Island), followed with building relationships and social capital. Concluding the training was Jennifer White (Washington), with her inspiring message of listening and learning from people we serve and applying our best technology to create innovative supports. Kudos for an excellent training!

