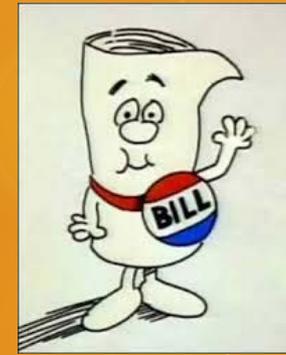


# Employment

April 30, 2014

# Legislative Update:



## The Employment First Bill:

- HB 211 was passed in the House 34-0, unanimously with 21 co-sponsors.
  - There were zero fiscal notes from the Departments of: Administration, Health and Social Services, Labor and Workforce Development, and Education and Early Development.
- SB 163, the Senate companion bill to HB 211, was also passed unanimously in the Senate, 19-0, with 11 co-sponsors.
- The bill now awaits the Governor's signature to be Alaska State Law that in the provision of public services to people with disabilities in Alaska, employment in an integrated and competitive environment is the first and preferred outcome.

# 5-Year Plan: Employment Goals & Objectives



**Goal 5.1** Advocate for a minimum of 5 new or amended state or public programs, policies or practices per year that improve employment opportunities

- **5.1.1** Advocate for the State of Alaska to become a model employer and increase the use of the provisional hire program (Mostly accomplished)
- **5.1.2** Increase opportunities for people to become self-employed (Mostly accomplished)
- **5.1.3** Increase the employment of youth transitioning from high school to adult life through Project SEARCH (Partially accomplished)
- **5.1.4** Change the DD home and community-based waiver and Medicaid State Plan services to increase employment supports (Partially accomplished)
- **5.1.5** Advocate for “Employment First Legislation” (Mostly accomplished)
- **5.1.6** Provide support to the Peer Power employment initiative
- **5.1.7** Work with the Center for Human Development and other stakeholder to operate the Microenterprise grant program



# Employment & Transportation Ad Hoc Committee Report

*April 2014*

**Lucy Odden, Chair**

Governor's Council on Disabilities  
and Special Education

# Committee Members

- **Lucy Odden (Chair)**
  - Sean O'Brien
  - Amy Simpson
  - Alexis Henning
  - David Levy
  - Sharon Miranda
  - Dave Fleurant
  - Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus
  - Ric Nelson
  - Smitty Cheemuk
  - Doug Mills (Public member)
  - Erin Atwood (Public member)
  - Leah Karmun (Public member)
- 
- Rich Sanders (Staff)
  - Patrick Reinhart (Staff)
  - Kristin Vandagriff (Staff)



# Employment Accomplishments



- Through Alaska's State As a Model Employer (S.A.M.E.) Task Force, we were successful in getting the DVR provisional hire option listed on the Hiring Manager's Pre-Posting Checklist.
  - This requires managers to sign off that they have considered this option for every position that they post.
- Customized Employment and/or self-employment training has been completed in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Kenai/Soldotna, and we are putting these trainings into a webinar format to get easier training access for more remote Alaskan regions.
- We have 4 policy recommendations for changes currently under consideration by SDS with respect to I/DD home and community-based waiver and Medicaid State Plan services.
- We have advocated for Employment First Legislation (HB 211/SB 163) and it has passed the House & Senate unanimously and is waiting for the Governor's signature.
- We have provided support to Peer Power, having participated and/or co-sponsored 6 job fairs across the state, disseminating disability employment resources and self-advocacy information.
- We have continued to be a part of the Microenterprise grant fund process and by the close of this fiscal year (FY14), we will have fully awarded the funds allotted.

# Recommended Priorities for FY15



- 1) Advocate for changes in the intellectual and developmental disabilities home and community-based waiver and Medicaid State Plan services to increase employment supports
- 2) Increase the employment of youth with disabilities in transition from school to adult life
- 3) Work with the Center for Human Development and other stakeholders to increase provider capacity to provide employment services and supports
- 4) Work with partners to develop & implement a plan to double the number of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are employed by 2016

# Alaska Integrated Employment Initiative (AIEI) Priorities:

1. Increase the number of youth and young adults utilizing supported employment services with SDS.
  - Currently, this number has fallen from 139 when the grant started, to 84 at present.
2. Increase the hours worked by youth and young adults with I/DD served by DVR to 20 hours or more per week.
  - Baseline average was 13 at the start of the grant.
3. Increase the percentage of youth and young adults with I/DD served by DVR.
  - From the 20% baseline when the grant started to 25% of the caseload upon the 5 year mark.



# Trust Beneficiary Employment Initiative Priorities:



- Create a 5 year strategic plan
  - Hold focus groups
  - Review data, policies and procedures
  - Facilitate a large Employment Stakeholder meeting (May 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>)
  - Plan to allow for data to measure improvement in employment outcomes
  - Provide for long-term sustainability
- Goal is long term systems change and capacity building, collaborating with beneficiary stakeholder groups and existing employment programs to best enhance the current system.

# Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Priorities:

- The Job Centers have been working on collaboration with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), meeting with almost every office manager.
  - This collaboration is to increase referrals of ticket holders when DVR is assisting them with their job search, prior to DVR case closure.
- The State Lead Disability Resource Coordinator has also met with:
  - the DVR Business Services Team
  - the Anchorage Business Connection lead,
  - Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training coordinator
  - US Department of Labor's Veteran's Employment and Training Director
    - to coordinate outreach, marketing and promotion of Individuals with Disabilities to Federal Contractors
- Piloting Workforce Investment Act co-enrollment with DVR in Juneau, with plans to expand into the future.
- Currently the Job Centers have 28 tickets assigned for the Social Security Ticket to Work program.

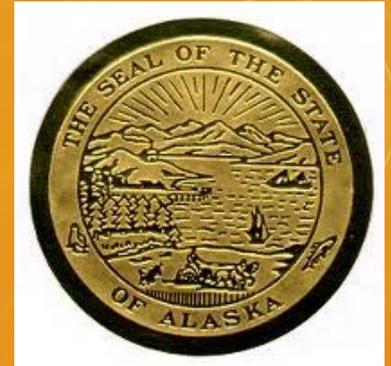


# Project SEARCH Priorities:

- Project SEARCH has 4 sites currently in Alaska:
  - Anchorage, 7 students
  - Fairbanks, has 8 students
  - Mat-Su has 8 students
  - Kenai has 4 students
  - **Priority #1 is to maintain these 4 sites.**
- Several trips and quite a great deal of time has been spent trying to begin a 5<sup>th</sup> Project SEARCH site in Juneau; however, currently this is on hold due to school district funding constraints.
  - **Priority #2 is to continue to work towards a 5<sup>th</sup> site in Juneau.**



# State As a Model Employer (S.A.M.E.) Priorities:



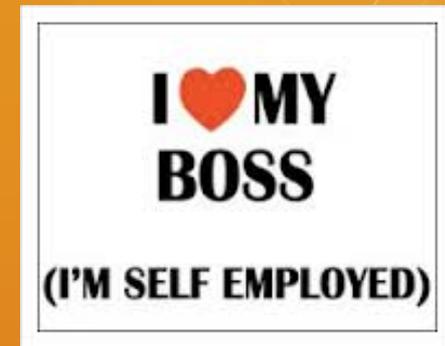
## ○ 3 Key Priority Areas to Target for the Future:

1) Central accommodation fund within state government for reasonable accommodations

2) The potential of a Project SEARCH site in state government (we will be talking with the unions to address concerns)

3) Online training materials

# Trust Microenterprise Grant Fund Priorities:



- Increase the number of applicants with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) who apply:
  - By enhancing awareness of the grant program via the DD provider network
  - Through self-employment trainings via our partners at Center for Human Development
    - Less than a handful of people with I/DD applied this past year

# Partner Priorities and Recommendations

# Disability Law Center of Alaska (DLCA)

- Research findings:
  - Segregated employment/subminimum wage
  - Transition services provided through the school
  - Transition services provided through Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
  - Transition services provided through Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation
  - Medicaid
  - Benefits counseling
  - Transportation



# Center for Human Development (CHD)

- Survey results for youth and young adults (ages 16-26) with I/DD and their parents
  - 23 youth answered, 20 completed the survey
  - 66 parents answered, 55 completed survey
    - Both parents and youth found completing high school or transition program and getting a good paying job to be of high importance.
    - Youth viewed living in the same house or apartment as family; having children; taking care of parents, sisters, brothers, or other family members, and looking good (attractive to others); as being much more important than parents did.
- Customized employment and self-employment trainings
- 2-tier benefits counseling training in process

# FY15 Priorities Discussion: **Employment**

- At this time we will utilize the large post-it notes to compile everyone's suggestions for our FY 15 employment priorities.

