



# Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education



## 1 ROLE

### 1. Role of the Council

- State Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Special Education Advisory Panel
- Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities
- Governing Board of the Special Education Service Agency
- Beneficiary Board for the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

## 2 MISSION

### 2. Mission

Creating change that improves the lives of Alaskans with disabilities

## 3 THE COUNCIL IN ACTION

### 3. Making Sustainable Change — An Example of the Council in Action

The Council manages the Alaska Works Initiative, a strategic effort funded by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to improve Medicaid programs and employment infrastructures. The Council works with state agencies, business & industry, service providers and the university to improve employment outcomes for Alaskans with severe disabilities. The Council also receives funding from the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to manage the microenterprise grant program, which helps Trust beneficiaries start their own businesses. In addition, the Council received funding from the Department of Education & Early Development to start a Project SEARCH program, which provides internship opportunities to youth with intellectual or developmental disabilities in their last year of school at a host business.

- From 2009 to 2010, there was a **5.6% increase** in the number of Alaskans on social security who worked (Note: nationally, there was an average **4.8% decrease** in the number of people on Social Security who worked).

## 4 MOVING TOWARDS EMPLOYMENT

## 5 OUTCOMES

## 6 PRIORITIES

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### 3. Continued ... Sustainable Change

- In fiscal year 11, the number of people with developmental disabilities who were employed increased by 10.6% (358 to 396).
- In fiscal year 11, 13 Trust beneficiaries started their own businesses.
- Three Project SEARCH sites were established at Mat-Su Regional Medical Center, Providence Hospital and Fairbanks Memorial Hospital; other partners include the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, local school districts and disability service providers.

### 4. Moving toward Employment: Stories of people who have benefited from the work of the Council

- Katie, age 21, was the first student to be hired by one of the host hospitals participating in Project SEARCH. Katie was in the program at Mat-su Regional Medical Center (MRMC) only five months before she was hired to work as a technician in Environmental Services. She works 20-25 hours per week, is a union member and makes over \$13 an hour. One of the goals of Project SEARCH is to change the culture of a workplace into one that accepts disability in the workplace. At MRMC, Katie and the other Project SEARCH students have certainly accomplished this.
- Becca is starting Becca's Alpacas in the Mat-Su valley, thanks to start-up funding from the microenterprise grant program. Her business will primarily raise, breed, and sell alpacas. She may also collect and sell alpaca waste as fertilizer for local gardeners, and shear alpaca fleece and have it made into yarn to sell locally and/or online.

### 5. Other Outcomes for Alaskans with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities in Fiscal Year 2011

As a result of the Council's work with 119 entities participating in partnerships or coalitions, the following number of people benefited:

- 627 people have needed health services.
- 3,019 people received formal or informal supports.
- 3,297 people have transportation for work, medical and personal needs.
- 81 individuals got and kept employment consistent with their interests and abilities.
- 2,301 students have the education and support they need to reach their educational goals.
- 1,821 infants and young children have services and supports needed to reach developmental goals.
- 384 individuals have homes of their choice.
- 928 people have information, skills, opportunities and supports to live independently, productively and included in all aspects of community life.

### 6. Fiscal Year 2012-13 Priorities

- Ensuring the continuation of complex behavior collaborative consultation and training services to meet the needs of individuals with cognitive disabilities and challenging behaviors
- Implementing autism insurance reform
- Changing the funding formula for the Special Education Service Agency (SESA) and removing its sunset clause in state statute
- Increasing the employment and self-employment rate of people with disabilities
- Improving services and supports to women with disabilities who are victims of sexual or physical assault
- Increasing access to services for people residing in rural and remote areas of the state