

***Transforming and Improving Practices
through Customized Technical Assistance (TIP) Grants***

**SUMMARY OF GRANTS
YEAR ONE & TWO**

Council Goal 3: Children and adults with developmental disabilities meaningfully participate in all facets of community life, and are valued and supported by their communities.

Objective 3.5: Increase community-based employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities, including people with significant support needs.

Objective 3.6: In collaboration with people with developmental disabilities, their families, and stakeholders, increase opportunities for people with developmental disabilities living in rural areas to find and maintain employment by reducing barriers unique to rural areas.

Overview

The purpose of this initiative is to improve the employment outcomes of people with developmental disabilities by building the capacity of community service providers licensed by the Developmental Disabilities Administration. Through customized technical assistance by subject matter experts, providers are improving the way services are provided so that more people with developmental disabilities are supported to get and keep the meaningful work they want in their communities and to have meaningful days when not working. All grant recipients are participating in a learning community to share their efforts to improve employment outcomes and receive mutual peer support.

Funding for this initiative was made available through a partnership between the DD Council and Maryland Works. In year one, a total \$128,312 (\$70,571 from the Council) funded 13 jointly selected grant proposals, 5 of which focus on Objective 3.6 and increase opportunities for people with developmental disabilities living in rural areas. In year two, a total \$96,405 (\$73,702 from the Council) funded 10 jointly selected grant proposals, 3 of which focus on Objective 3.6 and increase opportunities for people with developmental disabilities living in rural areas.

YEAR ONE: Summary of Grants and Final Report

1. Appalachian Parent Association: Technical assistance will help develop a strategic plan that addresses the following areas: staff resistance/cultural environment; subminimum wage/closure of sheltered workshops; organizational structure; enclave crews and activity crews; employment data and process; and financial stability. (\$10,000; rural)

Final Report: Contracted with their subject matter expert and developed a strategic plan and vision for the agency that the Day Program Vocational Services will convert from a facility-based/mobile crew model to an Employment First model. As a result, they met these additional goals: (1) As of 7/1/2017, 14 of 46 people now participate in either customized employment, competitive employment, self-employment or community-based services instead of sheltered workshop activities; and (2) The percent of stakeholders that have increased their willingness for change is 68%.

2. Bay Community Support Services: Technical assistance will help with a cultural change in all programs so that the entire agency understands and values what it means for people to have meaningful days. Technical assistance will also help the agency learn how to support people to have meaningful days through the development of plans and processes; and then how to monitor and measure outcomes. (\$10,000; rural)

Final Report: Developed a more open environment regarding employment and what a person's day should look like – worked with all staff and all families to increase knowledge and understanding about employment and meaningful days. They created a manual for staff about the process of discovery to assist people in achieving their goal of gaining employment or a more meaningful day and IP meetings now include a more in-depth discussion to ensure people are having meaningful days. In addition, 2 vocational managers have received training and credentialing in the Discovery Process and are working with other vocational staff to ensure those practices are implemented in daily activities.

3. CHANGE: Technical assistance will help ensure employment specialists have the support and coaching needed to focus on customized employment approaches for individuals and their families who are seeking independent employment options. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The agency employment team was increased and restructured so that they can help more people get work and have more opportunities outside the Day Center. In addition, CHANGE implemented a new organizational strategy focused on utilizing Discovery as part of person centered planning for each individual served. Under the grant, 9 people went through the customized employment process and are now working in the community and there is an agency – wide commitment to customized employment.

4. CHI Centers: Technical assistance will help the agency to continue its transformation from a sheltered workshop day model to a community supported employment model through the development of agency wide strategies and goals. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The employment and day services was restructured to better support people as they work outside of the building and engage in more community activities. CHI let its 14c subminimum wage certificate expire in August 2017. In addition, since June, 7 people are not employed in paid jobs in the community. About 3/4 of the people supported in Day Program go out in the community at least once per week and each Coordinator is starting to pilot a group of people going out 5 days each week.

5. Head Injury Rehabilitation & Referral Services: Technical assistance will help develop a strategic action plan and develop a culture within the agency that strives for continual improvement and reflection. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert helped develop a strategic plan. As a result, the agency identified how to improve communication to be more effective and improve services. In addition, 5 people were identified to begin the Discovery process and additional staff were trained and certified to do Discovery. 3 of those people now have jobs in the community and the other 2 have completed the Discovery process and are looking for jobs.

6. Humanim & Compass: Technical assistance will help build capacity to work with students and create Pre-Employment Transition Services that have employment as the outcome for students.

Ultimately, the agencies will work with students in the year before exit from the school system in order to create a more seamless transition to adult services. (\$11,250)

Final Report: The Pre-Employment Transition Services program structure, curriculum, and outcomes were developed. The program is pending approval from DORS and will be implemented in 2018 for students 18-21 years old.

7. Itineris: Technical assistance will help with developing better protocols for the Discovery Process so that it is more extensive and individualized with informational interviews and job trial sites in preferred employment areas. In addition, assistance will help in developing strategies for talking to potential employers about the benefits of working with people with disabilities. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert helped develop a strategic plan, met with staff, families, and Board of Directors to discuss the Employment First model and the process of Discovery, and helped the agency establish a strategic plan and new partnerships. The following goals were met: (1) professional development about Employment First initiatives; (2) reorganized and reassigned staff to support employment outcomes; and (3) increased partnerships by 10%.

8. Providence Center: Technical assistance will focus on improving their staffing model (how to create the necessary positions to support employment outcomes), closing their sheltered workshops, and building their discovery and customization process. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The agency developed a transformation plan for one program location based on the focused work with the subject matter expert that includes evaluation components for the individuals and for the organization; and the use of person centered planning process, and the Community Participation and Presence map as tools to direct our transformation. As a result, people are spending more time engaged in community activities and 7 people got jobs. In addition, the agency established more partnerships with local agencies; increased communication with stakeholders about the importance of employment; developed a grant proposal to support people leaving sheltered work; and committed to discontinue the use of subminimum wage by 8/31/2017.

9. Spring Dell Center: Technical assistance will help change the perspective of staff about individuals with complex disabilities in integrated employment through a real demonstration model. Technical assistance will also provide demonstration on how to effectively implement the customized employment process to include discovery, job development, and job coaching with an adult with complex developmental disabilities. (\$7,062; rural)

Final Report: A subject matter expert provided guidance and demonstration of customized employment process for people with significant support needs. By receiving technical assistance through the process for 2 people with significant support needs, the agency developed a process and lessons-learned to be implemented with more people.

10. The Arc of Howard County: Technical support will help with the development of a short term strategic plan for the Employment Services Program. This will be a plan to increase customized employment and increase meaningful days when not working. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert assisted the agency to align their infrastructure and create a plan for implementation of best practices in employment. In addition, meetings with families and individuals were held to discuss upcoming changes and address concerns about supports in the community. 18 people are currently job searching and/or attending the discovery

classroom working on job skills and hands-on training through volunteer opportunities in the community.

11. The Arc Prince George's County: Technical assistance will help the agency develop new ways of serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities by integrating them into the community via employment as well as recreational and social opportunities. Innovative approaches will lead to the closure of the Largo Day Center. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert helped implement sustainable practices to build the capacity of the agency that lead to more people with developmental disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, working in integrated settings and participating in more community activities of their choice; and to develop Personal profiles for all individuals to assist in the development of employment profiles as well as activities in the community. In addition: (1) the first Day Center (with 88 people) closed in June 2017; the second Day Center (with 53 people) is closing March 2018; and the largest (with 100 people) is scheduled to close in 2019 ; (2) 149 individuals are now engaged in person-centered activities in the community that were previously receiving services the facility based day centers; (3) 15 individuals that were previously served in day centers are now employed; and, (4) The Arc has made 15 additional business partnerships.

12. The Arc Southern Maryland: Technical assistance will help to develop a pilot strategy to move the people they support in segregated day programs to integrated competitive employment and/or other inclusive community programs. In addition, the technical assistance consultant will help design and implement an enhanced program evaluation system. (\$10,000; rural)

Final Report: A subject matter expert helped develop measures for employment outcomes. A Steering Team comprised of people with developmental disabilities, family members, staff, and the consultant was created to review outcomes and develop action items. In addition, a pilot program was developed for 5 people and staff were trained. One of the Team members is implementing strategies from the project with other individuals in the day program to expand the supports beyond the 5 targeted individuals.

13. The Arc of Washington County: Technical assistance will help the agency to understand how to increase the number of people supported in competitive jobs and community settings, with a special emphasis on people with more significant support needs, both strategically and operationally. (\$10,000; rural)

Final Report: The subject matter expert worked to transform and improve practices in supporting people in community based settings with a special focus on employment, and within the overall organization. In addition, the expert has worked closely with employment specialists to guide them in the Customized Employment process, and away from the old traditional job development model. He has also provided them with TA with specific people on their caseloads who have barriers to employment. As a result, 8 additional people have jobs in the community.

YEAR TWO: Summary of Grants

1. Bayside Community Network: Technical assistance will help review current strategies, develop a strategic plan, meet with stakeholders, and help develop new ways to support people with developmental disabilities so that the agency transforms from a sheltered work/day program model to a community employment model. (\$10,000; Rural)
2. Community Living, Inc.: Technical assistance will help transform the agency from facility-based to community-based with person-centered supports. A strategic plan will be developed to help implement continual strategic, programmatic, and organizational changes to increase the number of people supported in competitive jobs and meaningful activities, with an emphasis on people with more significant health/support needs. (\$10,000)
3. Gallagher Services: Technical assistance will help with a cultural change and assist with using person centered thinking and planning so that people with complex support needs have measurable improvements in employment and meaningful days when not working. (\$10,000)
4. Melwood: Technical assistance will help develop a strategic plan and a staffing/scheduling model that supports people to engage in meaningful employment in their communities. Consultation will also help identify agency strengths, available resources, and how to create and expand resources. In Charles County, technical assistance will support efforts to partner with the school system and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) to increase employment outcomes for transitioning youth. (\$10,000; Rural)
5. Opportunity Builders: Technical assistance will help develop a business plan to phase out subminimum wage contract work; support people to get community jobs; include coaching and support for staff; and enhance procedures and policies that ensure meaningful days when people aren't working. (\$10,000)
6. Rehabilitation Opportunities: Technical assistance will help improve the agency's strategic plan and develop a clear and concise work flow chart so that everyone is working together to increase employment outcomes. In addition, an effective, seamless process will be developed to move people from sheltered workshops to community employment. (\$10,000)
7. The Arc Baltimore: Technical assistance will address and improve staff culture, accountability through data tracking, skill building and capacity, organizational infrastructure, and, efforts to implement customized employment, including discovery, job development, and job coaching. (\$10,000)
8. The Arc Central Chesapeake Region: Technical assistance will target people supported on the Eastern Shore by developing a cohesive plan specific to achieving outcomes in rural settings that includes better use of resources, identifies needed changes, improves staffing models, and includes a program evaluation system. (\$8,905; Rural)
9. The Arc Montgomery County: Technical assistance will help employment staff develop a process that includes tools, timeframes, and assignments designed to streamline the discovery and

customization process that can be replicated; and, provide on-side technical assistance as staff go through the discovery process with an identified pilot group. In addition, technical assistance will help establish and/or identify opportunities for trainings and workshops for staff, board members, people supported, and families to increase understanding. (\$7,500)

10. Ardmore Enterprises: Ongoing technical assistance will provide strategy and advice to close the day center, utilize person-centered planning and thinking to create meaningful days and successful employment matches for people, and measure data-driven outcomes with better tracking of employment and meaningful day initiatives. (\$10,000)