



# TASH connections

*Equity, Opportunity and Inclusion for People with Disabilities since 1975*

Volume 36 | Issue Number 2 | Spring 2010

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**Carol Quirk**  
TASH Board President

Dear TASH members,

In November, TASH announced its National Agenda and among the areas in which we are focusing energy is employment for people with significant disabilities and support needs. We are concerned with the fact that people with disabilities are under-employed and that when they are employed, they are likely to be paid sub-minimum wages.

Currently, there are 425,000 people with significant disabilities who are served in employment programs that use sub-minimum wages as the basis of pay. This is allowable through Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) that links productivity with pay, essentially resulting in a “separate but equal” industry. For the first time in the history of the disability field, there is a coordinated effort to remove Section 14(c) from the FLSA, although not without much consternation and disagreement among those who care about workers with disabilities. TASH is one of the lead voices, and is working closely with the Collaboration for the Promotion of Self-Determination (CPSD) to promote “real” jobs for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and to put an end to sheltered workshops, where people with disabilities are congregated, segregated from mainstream employment, and not provided with jobs that match their interests, needs, and skills.

Since the early 1980s, TASH has promoted “supported” employment: individuals with disabilities are supported by a service provider in a competitive job, and receive a competitive wage for that job. The expectation is that the job will be done to the standard expected by the employer, with supports and accommodations provided by the service provider (job coach) and employer. But what happens when the person’s disability prevents them from being eligible for 99% of the jobs on the market? What happens when the majority of supported jobs are taken by those whose disabilities are not so severe?

We are proud that TASH is among those organizations that recognize and promote the concept of “customized employment” as an additional means for creating jobs for people with the most significant disabilities and support needs. In customized employment, a position is created for the individual, based on unmet employer needs, resulting in a job that is not competitive, but rather designed specifically for that individual. The tasks and expectations for productivity not only match the individual’s interests and skills, but also match an unmet employer need. It provides a value to the employer, and gives value to the individual. Since 2001, the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) of the US Department of Labor has been promoting this strategy, with minimum wage being the threshold for a successful job. Both supported and customized employment allow for on-the-job assistance from a job coach or other service provider, but the difference is in whether other non-disabled employees could compete for the job. In the former, the worker is paid for productivity; in the latter, the worker is paid for their unique contribution. Both options allow individuals with disabilities to join the workforce as fully contributing members of our society, as coworkers, friends, and tax-paying citizens.

Issues related to the employment of people of color with disabilities will be one of the areas discussed in TASH’s Symposium for Change in October of this year. Look for additional information on the symposium coming this summer in Connections and through TASH In Action. We can no longer tolerate disparities in health care, employment and education for people with disabilities; and when that person is also a person of color, the likelihood increases that services and treatment will be unfair, segregated, or negligible. Join us this year in Washington, D.C., to participate in a wonderful experience as we identify the issues and pose strategies for eliminating such disparities.

My best wishes for a healthy and enjoyable summer.  
See you in July!

Carol Quirk

The Americans with Disabilities Act is 20 years old this year! How many of us remember the building excitement of 1990, the letter writing campaigns, the news about Justin and Yoshiko Dart traveling to every state around the country, the hearings in Congress? How many of us wrote the letters, signed the petitions and called our Senators and Representatives? It was an exciting time, one of solidarity and unity in the disability community, and so triumphant in July of 1990 when the largest signing ceremony in U.S. history took place on the White House lawn.

That was 20 years ago, and here we are today. So much has changed—curb cuts are fairly prevalent and most cities now have at least some lift buses. But, unemployment remains depressingly low and there are still many frustrations faced by people who just want to live life like everyone else.

Sam Bagenstos, Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, U.S. Justice Department Office of Civil Rights, spoke about the promise and the status of ADA implementation in a landmark speech in Cincinnati in March, titled “Disability and Integration.” He began by quoting Eleanor Roosevelt (“Without concerted citizen action to uphold [human rights] close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world”); moved on to talk about the noble fight of Lois Curtis to live in her home community, now known as the Olmstead Decision; and underscored the commitment of the Obama Justice Department to enforce Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This commitment is good news for all TASH members and the greater disability community, because this is where the real promise of the ADA lies—that public services must be provided in the most integrated setting.

Mr. Bagenstos said, “Olmstead enforcement is a central priority of the Obama Administration. The President has declared the ‘Year of Community Living’ and he has directed the government to re-double its efforts to enforce the integration mandate.”

The Justice Department has recently filed suit in Arkansas so people have a choice in where they live. They have joined cases in states where people were on the verge of losing benefits that make it possible to live in their communities, mandating that services be continued in order to prevent institutionalization. Tom Perez, Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Rights Division, has spoken about Texas’ institution practices and clearly has an eye on more rigorous adherence to ADA Title II in that state. (We are THRILLED with the Justice Department’s announced investigation into the Judge Rotenburg Center on separate human rights abuse charges—to find out more about this development, visit [www.mdri.org](http://www.mdri.org).)



Barbara Trader  
Executive Director

There remains a question worth asking how far does Title II go? According to Mr. Bagenstos, “The ADA requires states and localities to serve individuals with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate to their individual needs.” How many school children served with public funds are sitting in segregated classrooms? (More than 41 percent of all students with an IEP.) How many of the approximately one million adults receiving Medicaid services go to day habilitation centers all day, paid for with Medicaid funds? How many adults are supported by Medicaid while in sheltered workshops? (Current estimates are 424,000.) These are segregated settings where people are receiving public services in the most segregated settings we know. And finally, what about unmet needs? How many of the 90,000 people on state waiting lists, or the 3.5 million adults who currently do not receive any services, are threatened by potential institutionalization because all their supports are provided by aging parents and family members?

The question of how far Title II goes will remain unanswered until someone like Lois Curtis tests the intent of Title II in court. In the meantime, TASH applauds the Justice Department’s and the Administration’s priority to enforce Title II of the ADA, and urges TASH members to follow these developments closely through TASH in Action, the TASH Facebook page and at [www.tash.org](http://www.tash.org). To read the full text of Mr. Bagenstos’ speech, go to [www.justice.gov/crt/speeches/bagenstos\\_speech\\_cincinnati.pdf](http://www.justice.gov/crt/speeches/bagenstos_speech_cincinnati.pdf)

In solidarity,

Barb Trader

TASH Executive Director

## Call for Nominations: Editor of Connections

The TASH Editorial Search Committee is beginning the search for the new Editor of *Connections*. The Editor serves a three-year term that will begin officially in January 2011. The Editor is an Ex-Officio member of the TASH Board of Directors.

Nominations or direct applications are invited from TASH members with the experience, expertise, and availability described below. Applications from traditionally under-represented groups including people with disabilities, women, and people representing racial or ethnic minority groups are particularly encouraged. The following criteria will be used in making the selection decision:

### Selection Criteria

#### 1. **Prior editorial experience**

*Previous experience with the editorial process (e.g., reviewer, editor, editorial board member).*

#### 2. **Record of authorship**

*Experience with peer reviewed (such as scholarly journals) and/or non peer reviewed publications (newsletters, manuals, grantwriting, etc.).*

#### 3. **Commitment to TASH's mission and vision**

*Support of TASH values as described in resolutions and other association activities.*

#### 4. **Record of leadership**

*Demonstrated record of leadership on the national level in the area of severe disabilities.*

#### 5. **Commitment to excellence**

*A commitment to provide leadership to move in new directions, innovative practices, and contemporary issues.*

#### 6. **Commitment to quality products**

*Evidence of ability to attend to detail, coordinate contributors, meet important deadlines and organize major tasks.*

#### 7. **Resource availability**

*Ability to commit time and resources to*

- (a) the production of Connections for a three-year period,*
- (b) attend the annual conference, and*
- (c) participate in Board meetings.*

If you are interested in being considered for this position, please send a letter of interest and your vita to:

Attn: Jonathan Riethmaier  
 Media Relations and Communications  
 TASH  
 1025 Vermont Ave, NW, Suite 300  
 Washington, DC 20005

Nominations must be received not later than September 30, 2010.

Or email your nomination or notice of interest to:

[JRiethmaier@tash.org](mailto:JRiethmaier@tash.org)

Further application materials will be requested from finalists. If you want to nominate someone for this position, please contact them and request this information.



## TASH's Employment Agenda

This edition of *Connections* is devoted to employment for all individuals with disabilities. Employment has been a core concern for our organization since the earliest days of our existence. However, since the late 1980's, with the emergence of organizations such as APSE, TASH has taken a secondary role in promoting the importance of this critical life outcome. While we remained fully aligned with the values of integrated, community employment our focus shifted to the array of critical issues that challenge the attainment of inclusive schools, communities and lifestyles. The Employment Committee of TASH is excited to announce that with the articulation of a clear national agenda, employment has been raised once again as a primary concern. Along with a focus on inclusive education, community living, inclusion of people of color and human rights, employment is viewed as a critical aspect of our national focus.

One of our first actions was to review TASH's resolution on employment. During 2009, the TASH board of directors approved an amended resolution on employment that extends the previous resolution in important ways. The concept of employment as an aspect of an inclusive lifestyle was added, along with features such as customization, employment first, self-employment and pay of at least the minimum wage. The new resolution also targets employment as an outcome for inclusive education for students with disabilities.

In addition to inclusion of employment as an aspect of our national agenda and the updating of our resolution on employment, the Employment Committee of TASH, in partnership with our national office staff, has focused on a number of issues of importance. In recent months, TASH has joined with the Consortium to Promote Self-Determination (CSPD) to recommend significant changes



in Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act that allows persons with disabilities to be paid less than minimum wage. TASH advocates for the payment of at least minimum wage for all employment and for a phase-out of Section 14(c). We have also recommended important changes to the Workforce Investment Act that contains the Rehab Act as Title IV. TASH has advocated for the inclusion of customized employment strategies as a necessary concept to assure access to employment for persons with the most significant disabilities.

TASH is also a sponsor of the upcoming 2011 Alliance for Full Participation conference that is focused on employment as the organizing theme. We hope to have TASH representation on all of the state teams that attend the AFP gathering. The Employment Committee co-chairs have agreed to edit an employment edition for our journal, *RPSD*. We are currently planning an employment town hall at this year's national conference that will address the full array of issues affecting the attainment of employment for all individuals with disabilities.

Michael Callahan, Co-Chair  
TASH Employment Committee



## Triple Play: Discovery, Education, Employment

*William Phillips*

**A triple play in baseball is one of the most spectacular events to watch and the most productive use of abilities and skills. When working with people who are unemployed or underemployed, a triple play is possible when you use the discovery process, post secondary educational opportunities including job experiences, and customized employment. The discovery process is a tool that identifies individual talents and abilities. Post secondary educational experiences are beginning to be available which include auditing college courses, taking continuing education courses, participating in work experiences and internships. Customized employment allows the flexibility needed to match individual talents to unmet job needs. The following is one man's triple play that helped him become employed in a job that that he finds personally fulfilling.**

Danny decided that his life would no longer revolve around a dishwasher in a restaurant. Since high school, the only job he could find was the worst job in the kitchen. I asked Danny what he did for fun when he was not at work. I observed him for forty hours in his garden, at the local tea room; hanging out at an organic café, and attending local bluegrass concerts. Danny liked growing herbs, blueberries, and salad greens organically. The local café indicated they would buy all of the salad greens that he could grow. It was a beginning. Working with vocational rehabilitation Danny was enrolled as a non-degree seeking student working toward a certificate in gardening through continuing education at a local university. A myriad of courses are offered every year by continuing education and Danny was able to choose courses he wanted that would be beneficial. Danny also chose regular courses to audit so that he could learn how to grow plants in a greenhouse environment; one of the courses

included an internship to work on the grounds at the university. Danny is concluding his coursework at the university and is working toward a plan to be self employed growing niche organic fruits and vegetables. Vocational rehabilitation provided resources for a professional to work individually with Danny to discover his talents develop and implement an individualized plan that included education, work experiences, customized employment, and full integration in the community. A café business owner and Danny have worked out a collaboration to fill an unmet need. The café offered space around the restaurant for Danny to grow plants. Local gardeners have agreed to volunteer time to set up the gardens. Vocational rehabilitation has agreed to fund start up costs including compost, seeds, plants, and cold frames. We observed Danny closely, discovered his talents, and then looked at the community to identify people and resources to help. One of the resources was a regional university that allowed Danny to audit classes and to have meaningful work experiences. Customization allowed Danny to start his own business on his terms and to fill an unmet need in his community. Danny's vision for his future includes living in an apartment within walking distance of the café where he grows organic salad greens and blueberries. He would also like to frequently visit the tea room and sip herbal tea and interact with customers. During his spare time he plans to attend bluegrass concerts and play his guitar. The following are emerging tools that Danny used to realize his dream: discovery, post secondary education, and customized employment.

Discovery involves interview and conversation, observation and time together, organizing new information into a cogent way and communicating it to others; it is what anthropologist, social scientists, ethnographers do all the time. Discovery is a process to get to know people and help them come to terms with getting to know themselves. It is a way to find out the best a person has to offer. We can find out the worst in a hundred different ways, but discovery is a way to find the best they have to offer. It allows us to get at some really tough issues like, how do their complexities really affect their life, the conditions necessary to deal with that, and the tough area of identifying interests. If you want to help people understand their interests, do not ask them, "What are you interested in?" Ask them what they do and then watch them do what they do. We must go where people are at their best and learn about them there. Discovery should cast a pretty broad net to try to find as many ways to understand the student as possible. A comprehensive



discovery process allows us to find areas within a person's life where their disability is not that big of a deal, and helps us understand the person.

Post secondary education, for people with intellectual disabilities, is now available across the nation but experiences vary greatly depending upon location. On one extreme, community colleges open their doors and allow people with intellectual disabilities to enroll as regular students with access to all course and facilities; on the other extreme we find universities that will only allow special segregated programs. The middle of the road seems to be post secondary programs that allow people with intellectual disabilities to enroll as non-degree seeking students to audit classes, participate in college work experiences, and access continuing education courses. The following work-related experiences are part of some post secondary educational experiences: job shadowing, work exploration, and part-time employment.

In 2001, the US Department of Labor coined a term for customized employment. Rather than being based on an evaluation, assessment, or a comparison; customized employment is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs and interests of a person with a disability and at the same time, specific needs of the employer. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, you've customized employment if you have changed, on behalf of the job seeker with the disability, essential or nonessential job responsibilities. Essential job responsibilities include job tasks that can be negotiated on behalf of a job seeker. Nonessential responsibilities can also be negotiated; things like dress, work hours, or pay. If either of those is negotiated, it's customized employment.

When used together, discovery, post secondary education, and customized employment can have dramatic effects for people with significant disabilities. Because it is a productive use of abilities, skills and interests, it is very much like a **triple play**.

*Dr. William L. Phillips, is Dean of the College of Education, Eastern Kentucky University. For more information about this article please contact William at bill.phillips@eku.edu*



## Welcome Jonathan Riethmaier

*In February 2010, Jonathan Riethmaier joined TASH as its Advocacy Communications Manager, a position tasked with building and nurturing relationships with TASH's membership, external audiences and other stakeholders. Jonathan is responsible for TASH's public relations, communications and marketing activities and works closely*

*with members of TASH's staff, board of directors and committees to carryout strategic projects and programs that support TASH's mission and its national agenda.*

*Jonathan's interest in TASH stems from his passion for civil rights and social equity across the human spectrum. From an early age, he has sought a world full of opportunity and inclusion for all people; one that celebrates diversity and the contributions of each individual. Jonathan accepted this position with TASH because of a deep desire to reconcile these personal beliefs with professional goals.*

*Prior to joining TASH, Jonathan worked with Brand Resources Group, Inc., a leading independent public relations agency with offices in Atlanta, GA, and Washington, DC. As an account manager for the agency, his past experience includes work for the Bobby Dodd Institute, a career services and job training non-profit that serves the disability community, as well as national non-profits and associations, including the Heart Rhythm Society, Home Safety Council, Walmart Foundation and National Center for Healthy Housing.*

*His training and experience building lasting relationships is rooted in traditional and time-tested methodologies; however, a product of his generation, Jonathan sees opportunities to leverage new media—including Internet-based tools and resources—to reach out to those in the disability community and beyond with advocacy messages. Among other endeavors at TASH, he currently seeks to extend the organization's audience engagement to online channels, including Facebook and Twitter, to reach people where they live, work and play. This strategy is one TASH hopes can maintain its place with traditional membership while activating the next generation of torchbearers for TASH and the disability community.*

*Jonathan's work has also included stops at WTVM-TV in Columbus, GA, where he served as a production assistant for the ABC-affiliate news program, and with the Cable News Network (CNN). He served as the sole public relations intern at CNN during his senior year of college in 2004. In December 2004, Jonathan graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Relations from Auburn University in Auburn, AL.*

*Among Jonathan's personal passions is culinary coffee. From the rich cultural diversity of communities around the world to the ever-expanding collection of brewing equipment in his own home, he enjoys the intricacies of harvesting, roasting and brewing specialty beans. Born in Huntsville, AL, Jonathan was raised in Arkadelphia, AR, where he met his longtime partner in crime, Darlene. Jonathan and Darlene were married on May 29, 2010, in Washington, DC. They currently reside in Arlington, VA.*

## Medicaid Infrastructure Grants and Integrated Employment: A State Initiative

*Lisa Mills, Ph.D.*

**A**cross the country, a growing number of state agencies that provide Medicaid funded, community-based long-term care services are paying more attention to improving integrated employment outcomes—both numbers and quality. Some are benefiting from Medicaid Infrastructure Grants (MIGs) made available through their federal partner, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). These “MIGs” are specifically intended to support systems change to increase the number of Medicaid recipients with disabilities who are working in integrated community employment: real jobs at real wages.

Wisconsin is fortunate to have a substantial MIG available to support efforts to expand supported employment opportunities. Along with this systems change grant for employment, Wisconsin is also engaged in a complete conversion of the Medicaid funded long-term care system to managed care (called Family Care) and a self-directed supports option (called IRIS). Unlike many states that are eliminating their waiting lists for home and community-based services as the result of court settlements, Wisconsin voluntarily began phasing in this new system in 2000, and as part of the change, committed to eliminating waiting lists for home and community-based services for elderly people and people with developmental or physical disabilities. While the full transition of the system is estimated to take until 2015, right now 38 of 72 counties are covered with nearly 27,000 served.

This unique set of circumstances has allowed for an unprecedented effort to expand supported employment and make it the first option for working age adults with disabilities who need long-term supports to work. Prior to the coming of Family Care and IRIS, waiting lists and limited resources meant that few people with developmental disabilities could get Medicaid-funded supported employment services. People with physical disabilities were on a home and community-based waiver that didn't include the option of supported employment or workplace personal assistance. These realities meant that our Division of Vocational Rehabilitation couldn't serve people who were likely to need long-term support to maintain the jobs that DVR could otherwise help them get. Many schools stopped referring transition-age youth to DVR and they prepared these youth to go onto a waiting list for adult services or go into sheltered workshops if services were offered.

Wisconsin's Family Care and IRIS programs now create an entitlement to home and community-based services, including supported employment for people with physical and developmental disabilities. Work is one of the twelve “outcome domains” used to guide outcome-based planning in Family Care and IRIS. Services are now authorized on the basis that they can cost-effectively help a person meet or pursue one or more of his/her personal outcomes. Wisconsin's MIG initiative has been working hard to illustrate and promote the cost-effectiveness of supported employment by focusing on the connections between employment and good health, and by focusing on the outcomes produced (hours worked and wages earned) rather than simply looking at the cost of an hour of job coaching.

Through policy clarifications, Wisconsin has also been able to level the playing field regarding waiver-funded transportation, making sure that transportation is not only offered and paid for, if needed, when a person goes to a facility-based program (e.g. sheltered work program or day services), but also offered and paid for, if needed, when someone participates in supported employment. Our state also revised the service definitions for employment services provided through the new Family Care waiver. To the supported employment service definition, we added supports for customized employment and self-employment, and we added language to permit paying employers and co-workers for on-the-job supports and to permit the use of workplace personal assistance for people who need on-going supports beyond the job coaching/training phase. With regard to our

prevocational services definition, Wisconsin revised it to clarify that the service is intended to contribute to a person's employability in paid employment in integrated, community settings and to specify that competitive employment or supported employment are considered successful outcomes of prevocational services. The revised prevocational services definition also makes it clear that while members participating in prevocational service may participate in paid work as a component of prevocational services, the provision of prevocational services is always intended to lead to a permanent integrated employment situation.

Despite all of these changes, it's no secret that getting people with significant disabilities jobs in this economy is no easy thing. To address this, a number of Wisconsin's regional managed care organizations are partnering with the Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (WI-DVR) in a comprehensive, customized employment effort. WI-DVR has formally launched a pilot of customized employment in four workforce development areas of the state, covering 32 counties and enabling up to 100 individuals with disabilities, deemed in need of supported employment, to receive customized employment services including discovery, customized employment planning, a representational portfolio and customized job development aimed at matching individual contributions with an employer's unmet needs. To support the pilot, MIG funding is underwriting the availability of a comprehensive, multi-day training on customized employment, which includes sufficient time in-between training sessions for participants to apply the customized employment techniques with a person with a disability interested in securing integrated, community employment. The value of building this hands-on application into the training process should not be underestimated: research demonstrates that training without the opportunity for hands-on application leads to less than 5% use of the concepts learned in training. (*Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. University of South Florida: 2005). Beyond, training, customized employment experts are providing technical assistance to those providing customized employment services to individuals involved in the WI-DVR pilot.

In addition to the WI-DVR customized employment pilot, the Wisconsin MIG initiative is also supporting a Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) rebalancing initiative which assists CRPs that operate facility-based employment and day services to learn and utilize customized

employment strategies in order to assist individuals with disabilities involved in facility-based services to transition to integrated employment. Interestingly, a number of procurement staff who typically call on businesses to obtain contracts for the workshop, are now approaching businesses about unmet needs and the advantages offered through customized employment of a person with a disability.

While Wisconsin, like many states, still faces many challenges to achieving employment for all which is truly individualized, fully integrated within the community and compensated at fair and meaningful rates of pay, the recent develops described above have created tremendous impetus for going forth toward the goal with great expectations and emergent hope that for many years has been absent.

*Lisa Mills, Ph.D. is a consultant with Wisconsin Pathways to Employment. For more information about this article please contact Lisa at [lisa.mills@ahs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:lisa.mills@ahs.wisconsin.gov).*

## Get Connected!

TASH's mission is to eliminate physical and social obstacles that prevent equity, diversity and quality of life for children and adults with significant disabilities.

**Join with us to promote**

**inclusion**

**equity**

**opportunity**

For more information on membership  
and the benefits of TASH visit

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Annual conference, webinar, TASH *Connections* magazine,  
networking opportunities, peer to peer resource directory, all  
available through membership.



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# PASS Plans: A Valuable Resource in Transition to Employment for Youth with Disabilities

Ellen Condon

**M**any youth are eligible for, but potentially unaware of work incentives that could help fund their future employment. Work incentives can make the difference between youth waiting to go to work after they leave high school and transitioning directly to employment. Unfortunately many young people still go unidentified as being eligible for these incentives. Although resources are available, many youth with disabilities and their families are not aware of the resources or do not have enough information about how to access resources or how Social Security is impacted by wages. One opportunity that often goes unaccessed is PASS Plans. The purpose of this article is to explain what PASS Plans are and to provide examples of how PASS Plans can support transition into employment settings.

## What are PASS Plans?

Plans for Achieving Self-Support, referred to as PASS Plans, are a Supplementary Security Income (SSI) work incentive. When an individual collecting SSI begins earning wages, the amount of their monthly SSI benefit is reduced commensurately. PASS plans allow an SSI recipient to set aside otherwise countable income for a specified period of time to achieve a defined work goal/outcome. This income then is not counted against their SSI check, nor is it counted as a resource if the balance of the PASS account exceeds \$2000.

## Eligibility for PASS Planning

To be eligible for a PASS plan one must:

- Be medically and financially eligible for SSI and
- Have income that reduces the monthly SSI check, or resources that could be “sheltered” in a PASS to keep the individual below the \$2000 resource limit (2010 individual limit). Types of income that would reduce one’s SSI check include:
  - An adoption subsidy
  - Survivor’s benefits
  - A parent’s retirement or disability benefits
  - Child support
  - Parent’s income if under age 18
  - Earnings

## PASS Plan Development

PASS Plans need to be in writing, and approved by your Regional PASS Cadre. They must contain timelines, designated action steps, and a budget for achieving a specific vocational goal to be more self supporting.

**For a list of PASS Cadre Offices go to:**

[www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/passcadre.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/passcadre.htm)

**For a copy of a downloadable PASS form go to:**

[www.ssa.gov/online/ssa-545.html](http://www.ssa.gov/online/ssa-545.html)

PASS Plans can fund any goods or services that an individual needs to pursue their stated vocational goal:

- Job development services
- Job coaching
- Transportation to and from work
- Education or training towards a vocational goal
- Vehicles or equipment needed to pursue the vocational goal

The time it takes to get the PASS approved varies between Cadres. However, the clearer you are in establishing the feasibility of your vocational goal, and in explaining your plan and times lines to achieve your goal, the easier it will be for the PASS to be approved. Sometimes attaching a cover letter to the PASS that provides more information about your goal and the PASS or contacting your Cadre representative by phone to provide more information will help expedite the process.

PASS Plans must be in writing, have a vocational goal, a budget, a time line of activities that will be completed to obtain a vocational goal, and the PASS must be approved by Social Security.

### *Examples of PASS Plans*

Below are examples of some of the students who the Rural Institute Transition Projects have identified as eligible for a PASS Plan.

In 1998, \$2,200 was accessed through a PASS plan for a 16-year-old student to expand his work experiences beyond what his school provided during his summer vacation. He was eligible for a PASS because he received an adoption subsidy which was counted against or decreasing the amount of his SSI (Supplemental Security Income) check. The next year he and his 14-year-old brother (who also received an adoption subsidy) used a PASS together to shelter an additional \$24,000 to purchase a van that would support their own business.

In 2001, an 18-year-old student generated over \$5,000 in a PASS to pay for his job coaching and computer training. He was eligible for a PASS because he was receiving Social Security Benefits from his dad's Social Security which reduced his monthly SSI check. He used a portion of his PASS funds while he was in school and the remainder of the money funded services after he graduated from high school.

In 2001, a young woman began saving and sheltering money through a PASS plan while she was in school for her future supports of job coaching, transportation, and job development services. She was eligible for a PASS plan because she received survivor's benefits when her dad passed away. These survivor's benefits reduced her monthly SSI check. When she graduated she was employed due to the combined efforts of school and Rural Institute staff and funding from Vocational Rehabilitation. She had accumulated over \$9,000 in the PASS by that time which she used to buy a wheelchair accessible van, pay for personal care on the job, and pay for someone to drive her to work. Even though she had ongoing support needs in order to work and she was waiting for services from the Developmental Disabilities Program, she went to work immediately after school because of the PASS. Due to her ongoing support needs, Vocational Rehabilitation wouldn't have been able to invest in her placement without the PASS to fund the necessary ongoing supports. Vocational Rehabilitation would have had to wait for her to begin receiving Developmental Disabilities services or extended employment services through Vocational Rehabilitation.

In 2002, a PASS was written into the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) of one student. Transition Services and was approved by Social Security in advance of his graduation "to begin upon the day after graduation, given that he was employed." His PASS was for a small amount, approximately \$180 a month, because he only had countable earned income from a part-time job to shelter. However, his PASS paid for the follow-along support that he needed to keep himself employed until his name came up on the waiting list for Developmental Disabilities services three years after he graduated from high school. His successful transition was due to the school staff efforts, Vocational Rehabilitation funding and the funds from the PASS plan. He wasn't eligible for a PASS until he graduated because he did not have any other income that reduced his SSI check.

This strategy of using a PASS to pay for ongoing support needs was used with several other students in the Mission Valley of Montana as well. The goal was to place the students into paid employment before graduation so they would be earning enough money to reduce their monthly SSI check, thereby making them eligible for PASS plans. While these PASS plans were small, since the students had been placed before graduation and the school had provided the initial on-the-job training, the students' ongoing support needs were fewer and therefore the costs to provide supports were reduced.

In 2005, a student used a PASS to fund transportation, job coaching and a cell phone that he needed to work. He graduated from high school and started his own business with the support of his family, funding from Vocational Rehabilitation and the PASS.

In June of 2009, a young man graduated from high school in Missoula. His Vocational Evaluation through Vocational Rehabilitation determined that he needed ongoing support in order to work. He was (and still is) on the waiting list for services through Developmental Disabilities, a program that will pay for and provide these needed employment supports. Vocational Rehabilitation couldn't pay to place him in a job because they needed to wait until there were funds to pay for these ongoing supports. The most likely transition outcome was for him to graduate and hang out at home until extended employment services were available through Vocational Rehabilitation or supported employment services were available through the Developmental Disabilities program. In reality this could be a long wait—most likely at least three years.

Instead, Rural Institute staff identified that his Social Security benefits made him an ideal candidate for a PASS plan. He was receiving Social Security through his dad's retirement account. These funds reduced his monthly SSI check. We returned to Vocational Rehabilitation and negotiated with them to open his case for employment right away since funds to pay for his ongoing support had been identified.

While the PASS is time-limited, it can fund his additional job coaching and follow-along supports for at least 18 months. By the time the PASS ends, he will need fewer supports and the team can look at additional work incentives or funding sources to pay for his supports. The PASS made the difference between him going to work right after high school or sitting at home. Research has consistently shown that youth who have paid jobs in school or as they graduate are more likely to be employed as adults.

### *In Conclusion*

We need to connect youth and their families to these resources as part of transition planning. Ideally, youth who are receiving Social Security benefits could benefit from a benefits analysis by age 16. What if every youth who applied for Developmental Disabilities services was referred to a Benefits Planner simultaneously? What if every youth who applied for services through Vocational Rehabilitation was referred to a Benefits Planner? What if, at every annual IEP meeting, information was shared about each state's resources that provide free benefits planning for youth and families who receive Social Security supports or may in the future? The Rural Institute has developed Fact sheets for precisely this purpose. **Schools can download and copy these to share with families and youth at IEP meetings. Rural Fact Sheets can be found at: [http://ruralinstitute.umt.edu/training/publications/fact\\_sheets/ssa\\_work\\_incentives.asp](http://ruralinstitute.umt.edu/training/publications/fact_sheets/ssa_work_incentives.asp).**

Equally critical is the need to have all youth placed in paid employment prior to high school exit. There are waiting lists for adult services for youth with ongoing support needs. These waiting lists are not going to go away. We need to maximize the use of the resources we have and work smarter and more collaboratively, rather than continuing to wait for another funding source to pick up the cost of the supports. Students who graduated into paid jobs were able to generate some funding through PASS plans to pay for some of their supports to become more self sufficient.

SSA work incentives aren't going to be the sole solution to improving transition outcomes for youth with disabilities. While some youth will be able to access PASS plans while they are still in school, other youth will need to be employed before they are eligible for this work incentive. PASS plans are time-limited so they can't be used as a long-term support; however, they can augment what schools and families are currently providing for vocational services. PASS plans can be used to leverage funds from additional service providers and should not be disregarded as we strive to assemble all the pieces of the service puzzle for each student.

There are 103 Social Security funded Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Projects (WIPAs) across the country which can provide information and assistance at no cost to the individual. To locate a WIPA nearest you contact <https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/oesp/providers.nsf/bystate>

Visit <http://ruralinstitute.umt.edu/transition> for numerous resources on transition, employment and the use of SSA work incentives.

*Ellen Condon is the Transition Projects Director at the University of Montana's Rural Institute & also works as an Associate with Marc Gold and Associates. She can be reached at 406 243-4134 or at her email address: [condon@ruralinstitute.umt.edu](mailto:condon@ruralinstitute.umt.edu)*

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### .....References.....

Condon, E., Moses, L., Brown, K., & Jurica, J. (2003). PASS the Bucks: Increasing Consumer Choice and Control in Transition Planning through the Use of SSA Work Incentives. [Monograph]. Missoula, MT: The University of Montana Rural Institute.

Social Security Administration Office of Retirement and Disability Programs (2009). Social Security 2009 Red Book: A Summary Guide to Employment Support for Individuals with Disabilities under the Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income Programs. (SSA Pub. No. 64).

# TASH RESOLUTION ON INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT

## Statement of Purpose

TASH recognizes the importance of work in the lives of all people as an element of full participation and inclusion in society. TASH calls for rapid and immediate development of individualized and integrated employment for all people with disabilities and the rapid and permanent replacement of segregated activity centers and sheltered workshops. TASH affirms the right of all people with significant disabilities to full participation in community life with supports tailored to individual abilities and needs. Integrated employment is a critical element of community living.

## Rationale

Despite the fact that individuals with significant disabilities have much to contribute to community workplaces, the vast majority do not have access to integrated jobs due to a variety of factors. In many instances individuals need access to work site supports and yet others need a customized

process that allows them to make discrete contributions in relation to employer needs. Most individuals with significant disabilities continue to be isolated and segregated in a day activity centers and sheltered workshops or are unemployed and unserved on waiting lists. Reliance on community participation must not be seen as a substitute for employment. Furthermore, if individuals with significant disabilities are to achieve full participation and inclusion in society, work is viewed as the most defining aspect of that status. Employment should be an expected life activity for individuals with significant disabilities and they should not be forced into a decision of whether or not to work as an aspect of self-determination. Self-determination provides the right to direct the type and manner of employment and provides individuals a way to opt out of working for those who prefer a different lifestyle.

*Resolution on Integrated Employment continued on page 16*

## Americans with Disabilities Act 20th Anniversary Video Series

Enacted on July 26, 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act is among the chief civil rights victories in American history, legitimizing the rights of millions and prohibiting discriminatory practices based on disability. Now, two decades since the passage of the ADA, TASH invites you to join us and others in the disability community in celebrating this landmark legislation.

..... Visit [www.tash.org/ADAanniversary.htm](http://www.tash.org/ADAanniversary.htm) .....

Visit [tash.org](http://tash.org) to see video interviews with leading figures at the forefront of the disability rights movement. Join us as we post insights from pioneers in the movement on topics ranging from human rights, community living, education, employment and more. We'll also link to resources and highlight programs and events celebrating the ADA 20th anniversary, including TASH's *Symposium for Change* coming October 2010!



*Resolution on Integrated Employment continued from page 15*

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT TASH**, an international advocacy association of people with disabilities, their family members, other advocates and people who work in the disability field, endorses the following features of employment for all people with significant disabilities:

- Integration:** Employment of people with significant disabilities must be in regular employment settings where they work along side people without disabilities. Frequent and ongoing interactions and the development of relationships must be assured.
- Income and Benefits:** Employment must result in paid compensation of at least the minimum wage, up to prevailing wage, for work performed and should include benefits comparable to co-workers performing similar work.
- Customization and Choice:** Job seekers should be offered access to a customized process that allows for a negotiated relationship with the employer. This process serves to avoid strict competitive employment by focusing on the discrete contributions of the individual in relation to specific needs of the employer. Job selection and the duration of any job must be based on the choice of the individual.
- Control of Resources:** People with disabilities and those they choose to support them should be given the option of controlling and directing the funding and resources allocated on their behalf for employment.
- Ongoing Career Advancement:** Employment for persons with significant disabilities must be viewed as careers that evolve over time driven by the individual's interests where positive job changes and advancement occur with access to higher pay, greater responsibility and variety, better working conditions that meet personal needs.
- Individualized and Natural Supports:** The assistance and support provided persons with significant disabilities should be individualized according to their conditions for success, and their abilities. The supports provided should maximize natural features of support provided by personnel in the workplace.
- Funding:** Funding for "day" services at the federal, state and local levels should be directed towards employment as the first and most important outcome for adults with significant disabilities. Funding for community participation, recreation and other non-work outcomes should be designed around the work routines of the individual.
- Education:** Employment should be an expected outcome of the educational process for students with significant disabilities of both high school and college settings. Educational settings should provide information, supports and experiences to all students, including students with significant disabilities, on employment and the importance of a working life.
- Business Ownership:** For those individuals with significant disabilities who wish to own their own business, access to funding, services and supports should be provided in a manner similar to that of wage employment.
- Equal Access:** People with the greatest support needs must be given high priority for employment.



# Embracing Difference...It's Time!

Denver, CO  
December 8-11, 2010

## TASH 35th Annual Conference

EQUITY ■ OPPORTUNITY ■ INCLUSION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES SINCE 1975

### Celebrating 35 years!

For 35 years, the TASH conference has been the largest and most progressive international conference leading the way to achieving equity, opportunity and inclusion for people with disabilities. TASH 2010 will focus on innovative practices to promote inclusion and reduce the disparities experienced by individuals with significant disabilities in schools, community living and employment. The conference will also address human rights concerns and issues faced by people of color. All people have the right to lead dignified lives where personal choices are honored and cherished.

For updates and to register, visit [www.tash.org/2010tash](http://www.tash.org/2010tash)

### Conference Highlights

- **150 peer-reviewed sessions** on topics ranging from advocacy, education, community living, employment, human rights and more.
- **30+ exhibitors** featuring practical products and services to enhance your work and life.
- **Networking opportunities** designed for advocates, professionals, families and individuals with disabilities.
- **TASH Night Out Welcome Dinner and Awards Ceremony** takes place on Wednesday, December 8.
- **Self-Advocate Forum** on Saturday, December 11, is directed and run by self-advocates. The forum focus is making choices for your future.

#### About TASH

TASH is an international grassroots leader in advancing inclusive communities through research, education and advocacy. Founded in 1975, we are a volunteer-driven organization that advocates for human rights and inclusion for people with the most significant disabilities and support needs — those most vulnerable to segregation, abuse, neglect and institutionalization. The inclusive practices we validate through research have been shown to improve outcomes for all people.

### Who Should Attend?

- Administrators
- Adult Service Providers
- Early Interventionists
- Educators/Special Educators
- Family Support Personnel
- Legal/Public Policy
- Parents/Family Members
- Professors/Researchers
- Self-Advocates
- Students

### Keynote Speakers



#### Douglas Fisher

Professor, San Diego State University, San Diego, Calif.



#### Kathy Martinez

Assistant Secretary, Office of Disability Employment Policy, Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.



#### Julie Petty

Self-Advocate, Consultant, Fayetteville, Ark.



#### Kathie Snow

Author, Woodland Park, Colo.

For a complete list of sessions and posters, log on to [www.tash.org/2010tash](http://www.tash.org/2010tash)

# Schedule\*

## Tuesday, December 7

5 p.m.–7 p.m. Registration Open

## Wednesday, December 8

7:30 a.m.–7 p.m. Registration/ Information  
 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. TASH TECH Pre-Conference Workshops (*Full-Day, Morning and Afternoon Sessions*)  
 5 p.m.–5:30 p.m. New Member/ First-Time Attendee Orientation  
 5 p.m.–6:30 p.m. Welcome Reception and Exhibit Opening  
 7 p.m.–9 p.m. TASH Night Out Welcome Dinner and Awards Ceremony

## Thursday, December 9

7:30 a.m.–7 p.m. Registration/ Information  
 8:30 a.m.–10 a.m. General Session I  
 10 a.m.–7:30 p.m. Exhibits Open  
 10:30 a.m.–5 p.m. Breakout Sessions  
 5 p.m.–7:30 p.m. Conference Reception and Poster Session

## Friday, December 10

7 a.m.–3:30 p.m. Registration/ Information Exhibits Open  
 8 a.m.–2 p.m. General Session II  
 8:30 a.m.–9:30 a.m. Breakout Sessions  
 9:45 a.m.–5:45 p.m. Night Out in Denver  
 6 p.m.

## Saturday, December 11

7:30 a.m.–10 a.m. Registration/ Information  
 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Breakout Sessions

\*Schedule is subject to change without notice.

### TASH Night Out Welcome Dinner and Awards Ceremony

#### Wednesday, December 8

7 p.m.–9 p.m.  
 Sheraton Denver Hotel

Ticket price: \$50 donation  
 (*proceeds will benefit TASH*)

Join us for an evening of speakers, awards and celebration!

# Hotel Information

## Sheraton Denver Hotel

1550 Court Place, Denver, CO 80202

Ask for the TASH Room Block

**Discounted Rate: \$160 single/\$175 double plus applicable taxes**

Call 800-325-3535 (or 303-893-3333 local) and identify yourself as part of the TASH Group

### Reservation Deadline:

**Wednesday, November 10, 2010**

Make your room reservations online at [www.tash.org/2010tash/housing.htm](http://www.tash.org/2010tash/housing.htm).

All reservations must be accompanied by a first night room deposit or guaranteed with a major credit card. Attendees canceling a reservation must cancel 48 hours before the scheduled day of arrival to receive a full refund of the deposit.

The Sheraton Denver Hotel is located in the heart of Denver. Just outside the door you'll find an accessible, walkable downtown area, dozens of restaurants, museums and many wonderful areas to explore.

# Pre-Conference TASH TECH Workshops

TASH TECH Workshop sessions include a range of topic areas at a variety of educational levels. This year's pre-conference program has TECHs for the experienced professional looking to gain insight, helpful strategies for parents and need-to-know information for students looking to gain an edge by learning from leading experts.

TASH TECH Workshops are scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2010, and are offered in full-day and half-day formats.

**Please note:** An additional registration fee is required for the TASH TECHs. Attendees may register for a TASH TECH only, or in addition to the conference registration. Pre-registration is advised, as there will be no waitlist for sold-out TECHs.

Registration for TASH TECHs includes admission to one full-day or one-to-two half-day TASH TECHs, TECH handouts (if provided by the presenters) and a conference program. TASH TECH materials are not available for purchase.

**For a complete description on TASH TECH Workshops, go to [www.tash.org/2010tash/TASHTECHWorkshops.htm](http://www.tash.org/2010tash/TASHTECHWorkshops.htm).**

### Half-Day Morning Workshops—8:30 a.m.–12 p.m.

#### TT2 – PBS goes to Preschool: Supporting ALL Young Children within Inclusive Early Child Programs

*Lise Fox, University of South Florida, Tampa, Fla.*

The Pyramid Model provides a tiered framework of promotion, prevention and intervention practices that support the social development of all young children, including children with challenging behavior. This workshop will provide resources and information on the program-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model within inclusive early childhood programs, with an emphasis on the strategies that are used to ensure the early learning of ALL young children. Participants will receive guidance for developing a program-wide initiative, materials for professional development and technical assistance, strategies for monitoring implementation fidelity, and information on collecting and using data for decision-making and outcome measurement.

#### TT3 – Examining TASH's National Employment Agenda

*Michael Callahan, Marc Gold & Associates/Employment for All, Gautier, Miss.*

This half-day session is an in-depth examination of TASH's national employment agenda. This session will discuss the eventual removal of sub-minimum wage, TASH's role in the Alliance for Full Participation conference in 2011, customized employment and the expectation of a working life for all persons with disabilities and other important issues. The session will provide a heads-up opportunity to discuss issues that will be raised in the employment town hall meeting to be held during the conference.

#### TT4 – Recognizing Yourself in the Eyes of the Client: Effective Application of Cultural Reciprocity

*Elizabeth Harry, Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y.; Djeanna Morris, BEGINNINGS For Parents of Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, Inc., Raleigh, N.C.; Songho Park, Parent, La Canada, Calif.; Ginger Kwan, Parent, Kent, Wash.*

Service providers, educators, policy-makers and other professionals seeking cross-cultural collaboration can enhance their effectiveness through understanding and application of "cultural reciprocity." This socio-cultural perspective provides a self-reflective process by which professionals can become aware of the essential cultural underpinnings of special education services under IDEA. Once aware of how these assumptions influence their recommenda-

### Full-Day Workshops—8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

#### TT1 – Keeping All Students Safe: What H.R. 4247 Means For You

*Bob Bowen, The Mandt System, Inc., Richardson, Texas; Barb Trader, Washington, D.C.*

There is a great deal of confusion concerning the Keeping All Students Safe Act (H.R. 4247). Some people believe it prohibits all restraint, while others believe it does not go far enough in ending the use of seclusion and restraint in schools. This workshop will review what the act says and the rationale behind it. We'll also review findings from the House Committee on Education and Labor and discuss how schools can proactively implement training to comply with the act. Attendees will also receive information on how they can use the act to improve safety for all people.



### SUGGESTED PAIRINGS FOR HALF-DAY SESSIONS

Morning	TT2	TT3	TT4	TT5
Afternoon	TT6	TT7	TT8	TT9

tions to families, service providers can develop a reciprocal approach by which they seek to understand the cultural views of the families they serve. Through a respectful exchange of perspectives, providers and families can collaboratively identify common meeting ground on which to build meaningful goals for children with disabilities. This interactive session will present the concept and mechanism of cultural reciprocity with examples drawn from a range of cultures. Resources for further development of cultural reciprocity will be provided.

#### **TT5 – Curriculum Supports in Secondary Schools: Getting to the “What” of School**

*Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey, San Diego State University, San Diego, Calif.*

Students with disabilities in middle and high school require curriculum support to be successful. We can design learning such that more students respond to the initial quality teaching. We can develop appropriate accommodations and modifications so that students engage in the “what” of school - curriculum. In addition, we can monitor students’ progress in general education curriculum and make instructional decisions about supplemental support.

#### **Half-Day Afternoon Workshops—12:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.**

#### **TT6 – Designing Individualized Behavior Support Strategies: Applications for K-12 Students**

*Sharon Lohrmann, University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, New Brunswick, N.J.*

Each year, many students are needlessly placed in self-contained education settings because of behavior problems. However, with the proper behavioral supports, students can experience successful outcomes in general education programs. PBS offers a focused and flexible process for designing inclusive individualized behavior support strategies. The purpose of this TASH TECH is to share a practical process for designing function-based supports for school age children and youth. Specific topics addressed in this session will include: the key types of information to gather, methods and tools for gathering information, considerations for developing meaningful statements of function, and designing function-based intervention strategies. Session attendees will have access to electronic versions of assessment tools, templates, and a user friendly PowerPoint presentation that can be used in school staff meetings or as part of “mini” staff development sessions.

#### **TT7 – What Does the Future Hold? Making the Transition to Support Adulthood**

*Mary Morningstar, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kan.*

This preconference will address critical issues related to effective transition planning and evidence-based practices for high school students with significant disabilities in making the transition to a quality adult life. Information and resources will be presented related to several critical elements needed to ensure that young adults with disabilities are supported during their adulthood dreams. This will include an overview of: (a) transition planning strategies, (b) school and community programs showing evidence of improved postschool outcomes and (c) supports and services needed to ensure the movement to support employment, living and membership in the community.

#### **TT8 – Working Effectively with Families: Building a Shared Vision of Cultural Competency—Theory and Experience**

*Curtina Moreland-Young, Pathfinders & Assoc., Jackson, Miss.; Elizabeth Janks, Wayne State University, Detroit, Mich.; Sookyoung Shin, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kan.*

This session focuses on the experiences of families from diverse cultural groups in accessing services and effectively engaging/collaborating with educators and service providers. The applicability of cultural competency as well as best and worst practices will be examined. Findings from a survey of Family Support recipients on the role of culture will be discussed. Hands on techniques to build cultural competency utilizing lessons learned as discussed by a family panel will be part of interactive exercises.

#### **TT9 – Think College: Establishing and Improving Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities: Standards, Quality Indicators and Benchmarks**

*Debra Hart and Cate Weir, Think College, Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass Boston, Boston, Mass.; Meg Grigal, TransCen, Inc., Rockville, Md.*

This half-day session will review newly validated Standards and Quality Indicators for Postsecondary Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities developed through a Delphi method approach by Think College. Participants will have a hands-on opportunity to familiarize themselves with the Standards and Quality Indicators and apply them using a case study approach.

## **Saturday, Dec. 11, 2010**

**9 a.m.–3 p.m. • Sheraton Denver Hotel**

#### **Directing My Life: Self-Advocate Forum** *(includes lunch)*

**Registration Fees:** Full Conference Registrant: \$15

Self-Advocate Forum Only: \$80

This forum is open to all TASH members and non-members. The focus of this forum is to provide information on legislation, employment and making choices for your future.

#### **Instructional Training Conference: Instructional Practices for Students with Severe Disabilities**

**Registration Fees:** Full Conference Registrant: \$N/C

Teacher Training Only: \$50

This conference-within-the-conference is designed for teachers and related service professionals and focuses on access to the general education curriculum using Alternate Achievement Standards in reading, math and science; designing and implementing standards based educational programs in inclusive settings; and adapting curriculum and assessment practices to enhance student performance on alternate statewide assessments.

#### **Community Living Sessions**

**Registration Fees:** Full Conference Registrant: \$N/C

Community Living Only: \$175

The four sessions devoted to community living on Saturday at this year’s conference will address **three** of the most critical issues in supporting people to live in homes of their own: rights, choices and social relationships. These sessions vary in length from one to three hours and will be coordinated by TASH past-president, Lyle Romer. Presenters will come from federal agencies, supported living organizations and the best independent thinkers in community living. The information provided will be useful to a wide range of conference participants and especially valuable to self-advocates, their families and allies and agencies supporting people to live in our communities.

#### **Early Career Professionals in the Higher Education System: An Information and Networking Forum**

**Registration Fees:** Full Conference Registrant: \$N/C

Young Professional Forum Only: \$175

This forum offers an opportunity for young professionals (i.e., current doctoral students and new Assistant Professors) to access the experiences and expertise of nationally recognized faculty members at various types of colleges and universities across the country. Throughout this session, respected faculty members will share insights and suggestions for young professionals related to surviving and flourishing in the higher education culture. Topics will include developing and implementing an effective teacher preparation program, working with schools and other agencies to effect change in services for individuals with disabilities, establishing a research agenda and identity, obtaining funding for and conducting research, and publishing in multiple venues. Opportunities will be provided for developing a network comprised of the presenters and participating young professionals.



# Registration Form TASH 2010 Conference

December 8-12, 2010 • Sheraton Denver Hotel • Denver, CO

For a complete list of sessions and posters, log on to [www.tash.org/2010tash](http://www.tash.org/2010tash)

## Personal Information

Please type or print clearly TASH Member # \_\_\_\_\_

FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ MIDDLE INITIAL \_\_\_\_\_ LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

BADGE NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE/PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP/POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_ EMERGENCY CONTACT \_\_\_\_\_

**Persons with disabilities requesting reasonable accommodation should contact Mary Staley at [mstaley@tash.org](mailto:mstaley@tash.org), at least 20 working days in advance of the conference to make arrangements for support/accommodations.**

## Demographic Questions

- Which of the following choices best characterizes your relationship with TASH?
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Self-Advocate	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Student
<input type="checkbox"/> General Educator PK-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Related Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Early Intervention/Childhood	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult Service Provider	
<input type="checkbox"/> Professor/Researcher	<input type="checkbox"/> Government Personnel	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal/Public Policy
- Are you a first-time attendee?  Yes  No
- If you are a first-time attendee, would you like to be connected with a TASH buddy at the conference?  Yes  No
- How did you hear about the conference?  Email  Mail  Flyer  Friend

## Policies (please read carefully)

**Payment Policy:** Registration will not be accepted without full payment by check, credit card or valid purchase order number.\*All checks must be in US dollars and made payable to TASH/The Housing Connection. If you fax your registration, please do not send a duplicate copy in the mail.

\*Purchase orders must include a valid purchase order number. Purchase order payment **must be received by the first day of the conference or the registrant must present a payment at the check-in desk. Original purchase orders should include the name and address of the participant(s) and be sent with the registration form(s).**

**Cancellation and Refund Policy for Registration:** A US\$35 service charge will be assessed for processing refunds. All cancellations must be requested in writing (fax and e-mail are acceptable) and must be received (not postmarked) in the TASH office by 5:00pm on **November 17, 2010. No refunds after November 17.** All requests for refunds should state the registrant's name and the amount of payment. "No Shows" will be billed the full registration fee. We regret that we cannot offer refunds for "no shows," however, substitutes are welcome and will be charged a US\$10 badge fee.

**Confirmation:** Confirmations will be sent by email.

## Method of Payment (please check one)

Payments MUST accompany registration form to complete processing. Your full name and address should be typed or printed clearly on your check or bank draft. Only US checks or money orders payable to TASH/The Housing Connection will be accepted.

Check # \_\_\_\_\_  Money Order # \_\_\_\_\_  Purchase Order # \_\_\_\_\_

CREDIT CARD ACCOUNT NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_  Visa  Master Card  Discover

CARDHOLDER'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

## Ways to Register

- On-line:** [www.tash.org/2010tash](http://www.tash.org/2010tash) (credit card payments only)
- Fax:** (801) 355-0250
- Mail:** TASH/The Housing Connection  
175 S. West Temple, Suite 140  
Salt Lake City, UT 84101

To avoid duplicate payment: DO NOT fax your form more than once. If you fax your registration, please DO NOT send a duplicate copy in the mail. Please keep your fax confirmation as proof of your registration.

## QUESTIONS?

Call: Toll-free (866) 748-9564, Local (801) 505-4608  
E-mail: [THC@housingregistration.com](mailto:THC@housingregistration.com)

## Register Early and SAVE!

### Full Conference Registration

The registration fee for TASH 2010 includes admission to all breakout sessions for the three official conference days (Thursday, December 9-Saturday, December 11), general sessions, conference receptions, poster session, Saturday Training Conferences, and conference materials. There is an additional \$15 charge for full conference registrants to attend the Self-Advocate Forum.

**TASH 2010 Registration Rates**

	EARLY BIRD before Sept. 1	REGULAR before Nov. 17	ON-SITE after Nov. 17
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<b>Member</b>			
Individual Registration	<input type="checkbox"/> \$275	<input type="checkbox"/> \$303	<input type="checkbox"/> \$358
Student w/ID	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175	<input type="checkbox"/> \$225
Family Member & Persons w/disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/> \$125	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200

<b>Non-Member</b>			
Individual Registration	<input type="checkbox"/> \$435	<input type="checkbox"/> \$468	<input type="checkbox"/> \$534
Student w/ID	<input type="checkbox"/> \$193	<input type="checkbox"/> \$242	<input type="checkbox"/> \$286
Family Member & Persons w/disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/> \$176	<input type="checkbox"/> \$193	<input type="checkbox"/> \$237

**One Day Only**  Thur.  Fri.  Sat.  \$175  \$175  \$175  
**Welcome Dinner\*** (Wed., 12/8)  \$50  \$50  \$50

**TASH TECHs** (Wed., 12/8) Half/Full Half/Full Half/Full  
 Member  \$75/\$125  \$75/\$125  \$150/\$170  
 Non-member  \$125/\$180  \$125/\$180  \$200/\$225

### Directing My Life-Self-Advocate Forum (Sat., 12/11; includes lunch)

Full Conference Registrant\*  \$15  \$15  \$15  
 Saturday Self-Advocate Forum Only  \$80  \$80  \$80

### Instructional Training Conference (Sat., 12/11)

Full Conference Registrant  n/c  n/c  n/c  
 Saturday Teacher Training Only  \$50  \$50  \$50

### Community Living Sessions (Sat., 12/11)

Full Conference Registrants  n/c  n/c  n/c  
 Saturday Community Living Only  \$175  \$175  \$175

### Early Career Professionals Forum (Sat., 12/11)

Full Conference Registrants  n/c  n/c  n/c  
 Saturday Community Living Only  \$175  \$175  \$175

\*Not included in full registration

**Conference T-Shirts**  \$15  \$15  \$25  
 Please indicate size and quantity. \_\_\_ Small \_\_\_ Medium \_\_\_ Large \_\_\_ X-Large

**Organizational Members:** You may register up to 5 members at the member rate. Please submit applications together by mail or go on-line and use promotion code **org10** to enter your registrants.

**Personal Assistant:** N/C; must attend session and register with the individual he or she will be supporting.

## TASH TECH Workshops: December 8, 2010

An additional registration fee is required for the TASH TECHs. Attendees may register for a TASH TECH only, or in addition to the conference registration. Pre-registration is advised, as there will be no waitlist for sold out TECHs. Registration for TASH TECHs includes admission to one full-day or one or two half-day TASH TECHs, TECH handouts (if provided by the presenters), and a conference program. TASH TECH materials are not available for purchase. **Please check which session(s) you wish to attend.**

### FULL-DAY WORKSHOP - 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

TT1 Keeping All Students Safe: What HR 4247 Means For You

### HALF-DAY MORNING WORKSHOPS - 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

TT2 PBS Goes to Preschool: Supporting ALL Young Children  
 TT3 Examining TASH's National Employment Agenda  
 TT4 Recognizing Yourself in the Eyes of the Client: Effective Application

TT5 Curriculum Supports in Secondary Schools: Getting to the "what" of school

### HALF-DAY AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS - 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 PM

TT6 Designing Individualized Behavior Support Strategies: Applications for K-12  
 TT7 What Does the Future Hold? Making the Transition to Support Adulthood  
 TT8 Working Effectively with Families: Building a Shared Vision of Cultural  
 TT9 Think College: Establishing and Improving Postsecondary Education Options

## Join TASH Today & Save on Your Conference Registration!

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- \$75 Individual Household annual income between \$40,000 and \$60,000
- \$45 Individual Household annual income less than \$40,000, students and individuals with disabilities

### DONATION

Donation to support a self-advocate or family member to attend the conference.

\$10  \$25  \$50  \$100  \$150  \$200  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

T10-6/01/10

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# The Productivity Fallacy: Why People Are Worth More Than Just How Fast Their Hands Move

Michael Callahan

**When Congress passed the sub-minimum wage components of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938 [Section 14(c)], their intention was clear. Members of Congress wanted to ensure that workers who were not able to meet employer productivity standards, because of the impact of disability on work performance, would not be excluded from earning a wage.**

Unfortunately, the consequences of this well-intended legislation have been far more negative than positive in the 71 years since its passage. From the very beginning, the provision was based on an outmoded concept that the FLSA sought to replace—reliance on an absolute connection between pay and productivity. In the years prior to the FLSA, employers were free to connect pay and productivity in a way that too often placed productivity targets far outside the reach of even the most ardent efforts by workers. Theoretically, one could make a decent wage, if one's production was high enough, but workers wore themselves out trying to meet impossibly high standards. Congress sought to remedy this by passing the FLSA and establishing a minimum wage for most workers. Of course employers could still set production standards and even offer incentives for increased productivity but, at the end of the day, employees could expect to receive at least the minimum wage for their hours worked.

## What's a Job Worth?

What happens when disability affects productivity? Congress chose to use a strategy commonly used during the Industrial Revolution to address this issue—pay-for-production. Essentially, workers were only paid for the products they were able to produce, severely limiting their opportunity to earn a decent wage. Section 14(c) might have resulted in the

integration of hundreds of thousands of workers with disabilities. Instead, the sub-minimum wage provisions of FLSA have resulted in the development and growth of a “separate but equal” industry of alternative employers who employ individuals with disabilities and use Section 14(c) as the centerpiece of their business model. Today 95% of all sub-minimum wage certificates are held by human service organizations. By their own admission, the only way these organizations can remain viable is to link pay with worker productivity. For workers with significant disabilities, meeting productivity standards is a “doomed to fail” opportunity regardless of training, matching, or assistive technology. The challenge then is to move beyond a pay for productivity paradigm to one that results in workers with significant disabilities earning at least the minimum wage at jobs in typical community settings.

## Moving Beyond Pay-for-Production

At least one answer to this dilemma is to confront the presumption that pay and productivity are inextricably linked. It is true that productivity is of critical importance to business and that every reasonable effort should be made to assist individuals with significant disabilities to enhance their productivity, but, there is an alternative available to resolve this dilemma—contribution. The concept of contribution offers a richer and broader perspective to solve the equation of employee pay in contrast to a sole reliance on productivity. Of course one aspect of employee contribution is productivity, but it is of critical importance to understand that employers do not use the productivity yardstick to gauge all facets of employee contribution in typical workplaces. Indeed, many tasks performed in the workplace are simply accomplished episodically, once a week, every other day, or once or twice a day. Yet, in many cases, counting productivity is neither economically or logistically feasible. What matters most in most cases is that the task gets done and gets done correctly.

The concept of pay for productivity used by Congress for sub-minimum wage is based on the strictest interpretation of employer expectations. Employers always expect, rhetorically at least, high productivity from employees and compensate them at a reasonable rate less than the value of the productivity. It is true that unless the value of the employees' productivity exceeds pay offered, a for-profit entity cannot stay in business for long. Even non-profit and government entities must strike a balance, theoretically, between pay and productivity to remain viable and

successful. The traditional formula has been that employee pay must be equal to or less than the employer's productivity demands. However, this strict formula does not take into consideration that, beyond the demand for productivity, businesses have needs. The concept of adding value by meeting business needs allows for a focus on those aspects of a business that bring added value to the workplace. When the value equation shifts from meeting demands to meeting needs, pay at or above the minimum wage becomes possible.

### **Customized Employment as a Bridge to Meaningful Employment**

The most common way to add value to a business, beyond typical productivity, is to meet unmet needs. The concept of unmet needs refers to a host of workplace tasks that need to be performed, theoretically at least, but that, in actuality, are not being performed. By targeting unmet business needs as an organizing concept, individuals with disabilities who can make specific contributions can move beyond the demands associated with productivity standards. Since 2001, the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) of the US Department of Labor has been promoting this strategy through its initiative on Customized Employment. Through a series of nearly 40 multi-year implementation projects, the Customized Employment (CE) Initiative has set pay of at least the minimum wage as the threshold for a successful job. This initiative has shown that the contribution of meeting an unmet need is highly valued by many employers, even more so than the original task that was not performed. In other words, CE provides a strategy to broaden the pay for productivity equation to an enhanced, pay for contribution equation.

Beyond addressing unmet needs, customized employment allows for additional strategies to unbundle the demand of employers. For instance, many employers assign episodic duties to highly paid employees that could easily be performed by workers at a much lower (though at or above minimum wage) pay grade. It has been demonstrated clearly from the days of Marc Gold's ground-breaking research to the present-day examples of individuals in customized, supported employment that individuals with even the most significant disabilities can make significant contributions to employers if the demands of preset productivity standards are not present. Gold found that it was possible to teach virtually any individual, regardless of severity of intellectual disability, to perform tasks in a quality manner. This finding fits perfectly with the concept of customized employment that allows a business-friendly strategy to remove the barrier of productivity.

Another perspective regarding the presumed need for sub-minimum wage pay is that individual performance is neither a static nor a general concept. A colleague from the University of Massachusetts, John Butterworth, notes the following:

*The regulations regarding sub-minimum wage clearly indicate that it is intended to be contextual in nature, and that even if an individual is paid sub-minimum wage for a particular type of job at a particular time there should be no assumption that the individual is incapable of earning minimum wage or higher in a different position, or in the same position, with the benefit of experience. In practice, it appears that the contextual nature of sub-minimum wage has often been ignored. Anecdotal evidence and observation indicate that when an individual is incapable of working at a rate to meet the requirements of the prevailing wage for a certain position, this is often used as evidence by service providers that the individual is incapable of working in the community at minimum wage or higher.*

It is estimated that approximately 425,000 individuals with significant disabilities in the U.S. are employed in settings where they receive sub-minimum wage. For the first time in the history of the disability field, concerted efforts are being made to remove Section 14(c) from the FLSA. Conversely, those who favor its continued use are stating their case. What seems to be occurring is less of a debate around sub-minimum wage payments than focusing on the continued existence of the industry of organizations that use Section 14(c) as an essential ingredient contributing to their viability. It has been suggested that the payment of sub-minimum wages is somehow connected to the national value that, *disability is a natural part of the human experience*, as stated in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). How can the case be made that disability is being treated as a natural part of our human experience when people with disabilities are virtually the only segment of society for whom it is legal to pay sub-minimum wages? In fact, this beautifully stated national value seems to argue strongly for the removal, not the continuation, of sub-minimum wage.

At this point, only the most traditionally devalued members of our society are allowed to receive less than minimum wage. This is especially critical in that in recent years there has been an increasing focus on the concept of asset development and access to a living wage for persons with disabilities. How can persons with significant disabilities ever be expected to build assets and earn a living wage, if they must start in the financial hole created by sub-

minimum wage? In the ADA, Congress provided that “the Nation’s proper goals regarding individuals with disabilities are to assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for such individuals.” Equality of opportunity to earn a living wage that result in economic self-sufficiency is only possible for *all* Americans if they are guaranteed access to at least the minimum wage as payment for their work.

Another argument by those in favor of continuing Section 14(c) is that of personal choice—persons with disabilities should have the right to choose to be employed in services that typically pay less than the minimum wage. However, if disability is to ever be seen as an aspect of life potentially associated with all citizens, not just an aberration associated with a small portion of society, personal choice should be over-riden as it is for all citizens on the issue of pay. Job seekers without disabilities do not have the choice to apply for a job for pay less than the minimum wage.

There seems to be a legitimate concern voiced by the organizations that use Section 14(c) as the primary basis of employee pay that its removal from FLSA would be negative, resulting in the loss of sheltered employment for many of the 425,000 individuals who are paid sub-minimum wages. This concern seems to be linked with the observation that access to employment at regular wages offered by Customized Employment are relatively new and not widely accepted and understood by traditional providers of competitive employment services. Both of these points should signal a cautious and measured approach to any effort to remove Section 14(c) from FLSA. However, these concerns should provide the framework for a long term plan to gradually reduce the use of Section 14(c) as more and more individuals receive regular (possibly customized) jobs in the community rather than a rationale to keep this outmoded concept.

### ***Meaningful Work with Meaningful Pay: The Future of Employment for People with Disabilities***

As the arguments pro and con emerge regarding sub-minimum wage payments, it seems of fundamental importance to separate the issues of pay and programmatic services. It is the position of this author that the value of the contributions made by individuals with disabilities to employers goes far beyond how fast their hands and bodies move. By focusing on employer needs, it is possible to achieve pay at or above minimum standards for all people.

The fact that thousands of sheltered workshops depend on sub-minimum wage payments is a different issue. While no one wants tens of thousands of individuals to be left with nothing to do and end up sitting at home (or worse), this doesn’t have to happen. Sheltered employment providers could embrace these new concepts and partner in a plan to gradually reduce reliance on Section 14(c) as they increase customized, supported employment outcomes or, if locally desired, to recast their business model based on a minimum wage threshold for payments to individuals who choose a sheltered form of employment.

At the end of the day, it all boils down to a decision as to how we wish to view the issue of disability and life. Do we see people with disabilities, including *all* people with the most significant disabilities, as co-workers, neighbors, friends, citizens and contributors in the *regular* sense, with support and accommodation as necessary, or do we see them in a *special* sense as individuals who are not expected to join society fully, living lives apart and different from the rest of us. The positive concept of moving beyond productivity as the primary indicator of human worth in the workplace provides a pathway to follow. Contribution can then be the basis of legitimizing typical pay in typical settings.

*Michael Callahan is with Marc Gold & Associates/Employment for All. For more information about this article, please contact Mike at micallahan@aol.com.*

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## Just Do It: Are We Making Progress in Improving Employment Outcomes?

*John Butterworth, Frank Smith, Allison Cohen Hall,  
Alberto Migliore, & Jean Winsor  
Institute for Community Inclusion  
University of Massachusetts Boston*

**F**ederal disability policy over the past 20 years establishes a clear commitment to integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act, IDEA, Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act, and the Workforce Investment Act all address employment. At a state level there is growing interest in establishing employment first policies that strengthen commitment to integrated employment as the first option considered for working age adults. Currently advocates including TASH are discussing additional national policy recommendations that include reducing or eliminating the use of sub minimum wage, establishing a national employment initiative, improving the transition from school to adult life, and making changes to Medicaid regulations that will establish a preference for working in integrated community jobs.

Despite these clear intentions, unemployment and under-employment of individuals with disabilities continues to be a significant and pressing public policy concern. In April 2010 the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that only 31.2% of working<sup>1</sup> men and 26.7% of working age women with a disability were employed, compared with 74.4% of men and 65.8% of women without a disability. Further data published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics suggests that the

number of workers with disabilities has dropped at three times the rate of workers without disabilities since October 2008. For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) the disparity in labor market participation increases. In FY2003, only 26 percent of individuals with IDD supported by community rehabilitation providers (CRPs) worked in integrated jobs, including both individual jobs and group supported employment (Metzel, Boeltzig, Butterworth, Sulewski, & Gilmore, 2007). Individuals who are employed work limited hours with low wages. Data from the National Core Indicators project suggests that individuals supported by state IDD agencies in individual supported jobs only work an average of 52 hours per month and earn an average of \$317 per month (Human Services Research Institute, 2009).

There is both good and bad news in national trends. Nationally, an estimated 21.9% of individuals receiving day supports from state IDD agencies participated in integrated employment services during FY2008, and this percent has slowly declined following the peak of 24.7% in FY2001 (Butterworth et al, 2010). States however vary widely in their commitment to integrated employment. In recent years individual state IDD agencies have developed employment working groups, employment initiatives, and employment-first policies and agendas. The efforts of some of these states are being reflected in their employment outcomes data despite the fact that the federal government, through the Medicaid program, continues to spend four times more money on segregated adult day programs, including day habilitation and sheltered work (\$488 million in 2002), than on supported employment (\$108 million) (Rusch & Braddock, 2004).

### *So where do we stand?*

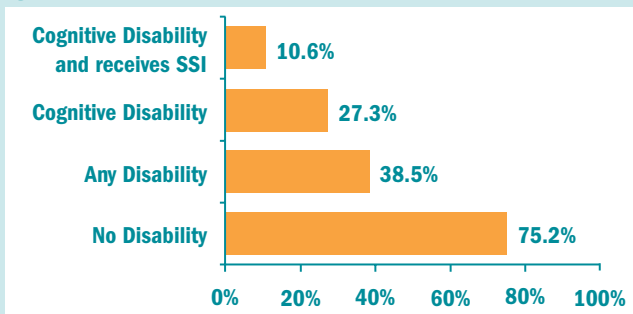
Employment participation for people with disabilities is significantly lower than for people without disabilities. The American Community Survey, a project of the U.S. Census, provides a national snapshot of employment participation. In 2008 only 27% of individuals with a cognitive disability<sup>2</sup> participated in the labor force, compared to 75% of individuals with no disability (*Figure 1*). Only 10.6% of individuals who have a cognitive disability and who receive SSI participate in the labor force.

<sup>1</sup>Working age is defined as age 16 to 64 by the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empst.pdf

<sup>2</sup>Cognitive disability is a broad category based on a response to the question, "Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, does this person have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions?"

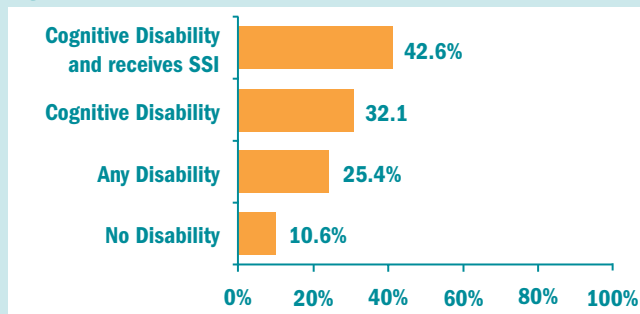


Figure 1



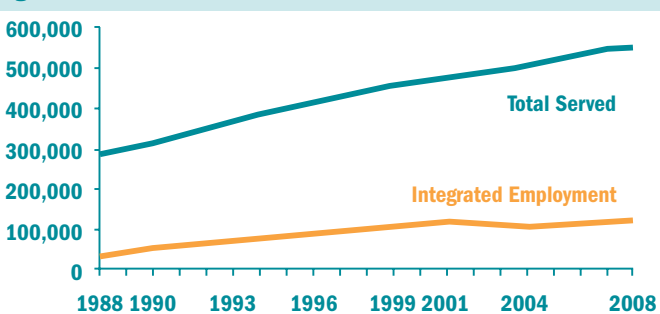
Percent of working age adults (16-64) who are employed. Source: American Community Survey

Figure 2



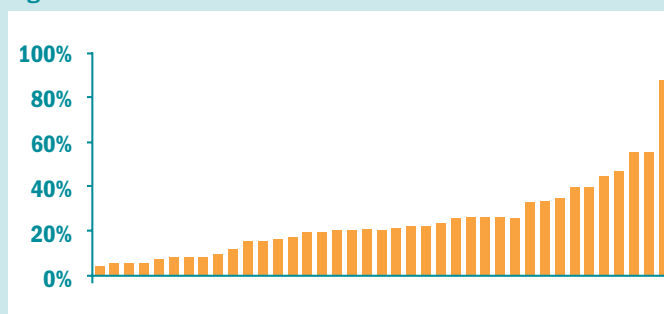
Percent of working age adults living in a household that has an income below the poverty line. Source: American Community Survey.

Figure 3



Estimated number supported in employment and day services by state IDD agencies. Source: FY2008 ICI National Survey of Day and Employment Programs.

Figure 4



Percent supported in integrated employment by state IDD agencies by state. FY2008 ICI National Survey of Day and Employment Programs.

Individuals with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty. Data from the American Community Survey also illustrates the relationship between work, disability, and poverty. Working age individuals who report a cognitive disability and who receive SSI are 4 times more likely to live in a household that is below the poverty line than individuals with no disability (Figure 2).

Participation in integrated employment by individuals supported by state IDD agencies has declined since 2001. Data collected from state IDD agencies suggest that the growth in supported employment that occurred between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s has not continued. While the total number served in employment and day services has increased to over 550,000, the number in integrated employment services has leveled out since 2001 at just over 120,000. (Figure 3). The percent of individuals reported in integrated employment services declined from 24.7% in 2001 to 21.9% in 2008, and commitment across states

toward the expansion of community employment is uneven. The data also demonstrate an increase in the estimated percent of people served in facility-based and non-work settings (from 78% in 1999 to 84% in 2008).

Despite the national trend, some states have been successful in improving employment participation. The percent of individuals who participate in integrated employment services varies widely across state IDD agencies, ranging from 4% to 87% (Figure 4). States that report higher rates of participation in integrated employment include Washington, Oklahoma, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Vermont. In FY2008, 5 states reported that over 40% of individuals served received integrated employment services.

Individuals want to work. Many sources document that individuals with IDD want and expect to work. Eighty-six percent of young adults with intellectual disabilities participating in the National Longitudinal Transition Study 2 (www.nlts2.org) stated they definitely expected to work for

pay after high school, and another 10% said they would probably work for pay. Migliore et al. (2007) asked individuals working in sheltered workshops if they would like to work in the community, and 63% said yes, 11% said maybe, and only 14% said no.

### *Just Do It*

Success in improving employment outcomes requires clear and consistent communication and investment. States that have been successful have vocal leaders who advocate for employment, implement policy and goals that establish employment as a priority, invest in training and consultation that build expertise in the state, direct funding toward integrated employment, develop interagency partnerships with the vocational rehabilitation and education systems, measure employment outcomes, and include employment as a priority in quality assurance measures.

The state of Washington Division on Developmental Disabilities implemented the Working Age Adult Policy in July 2006, establishing the strongest statement of intent in the nation. The policy states that, "Supports to pursue and maintain gainful employment in integrated settings in the community shall be the primary service option for working age adults."

In FY2008 Washington reported that 87% of individuals who receive employment and day supports participated in integrated employment services, and that 59% of individuals are working for at least part of the week in community jobs. Vermont gradually restricted, and then eliminated, funding for sheltered employment over a six year period. Since 2005 the Vermont System of Care Plan prohibits funding for sheltered employment. Additional examples of actions taken by states include Oklahoma's outcome-based funding model that pays providers an hourly rate for the number of hours an individual works rather than the number of hours of services the person receives; and Maine's requirement that employment staff complete an approved training course.

We are in an unprecedented time of emphasis on employment and employment policy. State and grass roots employment first initiatives are recommitting to employment as a priority outcome. Seventeen state IDD agencies have joined with the Institute for Community Inclusion and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disability Services to form the State Employment Leadership Network and share learning about employment policy and strategy.

TASH is active in federal advocacy efforts that have established strong employment agendas including the Justice for All Action Network, the Collaboration to Promote Self Determination, and the Alliance for Full Participation. While we work on policy change at the federal level, we must also implement real change in practice and expectations at the organizational and state levels. Begin job development for someone who is asking for a community job in the community. Stop accepting new referrals to your workshop. Make employment the centerpiece of discussion at service plan meetings. Ensure that employment staff have dedicated and protected time to invest in career planning and job development. Join an employment coalition or planning group at the state or local level. **Just do it.**

"We have a 'strategic' plan. It's called doing things."

—Herb Kelleher. Southwest Airlines.

### *Acknowledgements*

This article reflects the work of the Access to Integrated Employment project at the Institute for Community Inclusion. Information on the project is available at [www.communityinclusion.org/aie](http://www.communityinclusion.org/aie). For in depth data on employment outcomes and services at the state and national levels visit [www.StateData.info](http://www.StateData.info).

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# in the NEWS

## The Push for Full Enactment of Restraint and Seclusion Legislation

On March 3, 2010, the U.S. House of Representatives passed an important bill that, if fully enacted, would assist in the prevention of practices that cause physical and emotional harm to students with and without disabilities. H.R. 4247, known as the Keeping All Students Safe Act, includes language that limits restraint, aversive interventions and seclusion, practices that have resulted in serious injury, emotional trauma and even death.

Though the passage of H.R. 4247 is an important first step, there is much work to be done to ensure a federal standard of protection for all children. Efforts are now focused strongly on the Senate version of this legislation, S. 2860, known as the Preventing Harmful Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Act. TASH, along with the APRAIS Coalition and other advocacy groups, urges you to contact your Senators and encourage them to co-sponsor S. 2860 and push for a vote on this legislation. Further details, including talking points and ways to contact your Senator, can be found at the APRAIS website at [www.aprais.tash.org](http://www.aprais.tash.org).

## TASH Submits Formal Comments on the Reauthorization of ESEA

In March 2010, Congress held a series of hearings to explore the effectiveness and ongoing needs surrounding the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, an important piece of legislation that must be reauthorized every five years. The ESEA funds primary and secondary education, including professional development, instructional materials, resources for educational programs and much more. TASH was present during recent discussions to ensure the needs of individuals with significant disabilities were addressed. When the U.S. House of Representatives called for formal comments on ESEA, TASH provided written comments based on its mission and vision of equity, opportunity and inclusion. These comments address the unintended

consequences that stem from No Child Left Behind, the current form of ESEA. Specifically, TASH draws attention to two areas of concern:

Students with significant disabilities are more often placed in segregated schools, presumably to reduce impact on school accountability, and

Teachers and schools are unprepared to provide students with disabilities, particularly those with severe disabilities, access to the general curriculum.

The complete comments, along with recommendations for the reauthorization of ESEA can be viewed and downloaded at [www.tash.org/information\\_statements\\_resourses.html](http://www.tash.org/information_statements_resourses.html).

## What's Happening in Washington?

On Wednesday, May 12, 2010, TASH held its first-ever *What's Happening in Washington?* webinar to engage and inform participants on the state of disability advocacy in our nation's capital. Barb Trader, TASH Executive Director, provided an in-depth look at issues affecting the disability community from inside the Beltway.

The hour-long webinar included updates on pending restraint and seclusion legislation that will dramatically impact child safety in schools. With the passage of H.R. 4247—the Keeping All Students Safe Act—we're one step closer to full enactment of a baseline of federal protections. *What's Happening in Washington?* examined what advocates and organizations can do to push the Senate version (S. 2860) through!

Other topics included the Community Choice Act and new research showing widespread support from U.S. taxpayers, along with updates on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The goal of these updates was to secure input from advocates NOW to have a lasting, positive change to the supports included in this legislation! The *What's Happening in Washington?* webinar also updated participants on the five core areas of the TASH National Agenda—education, employment, human rights, community living and people of color.

### **Congressional Black Caucus Foundation and National Minority Quality Forum hold the 2010 Spring Brain Trust on Health Disparities**

Held April 19-20, 2010, in Washington, DC, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc., and National Minority Quality Forum invited participants from advocacy groups and other stakeholders to discuss health disparities in the minority community. The two-day brain trust included multiple minority and health topics, and TASH was the sole advocacy group in attendance representing individuals with disabilities. During deliberations, TASH addressed the need to support the disability community through research, data analysis and the implementation of evidence-based health programs with positive outcomes.

Also in attendance was Tony Coelho, former Congressman and primary author of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Coelho presented information on improving enrollment of minorities in clinical trials. His current work on Comparative Effective Research ([www.improvepatientcare.org](http://www.improvepatientcare.org)) supports patient-centered research and outcomes that include input from individuals at every step of the treatment process. TASH's Dara Baldwin engaged panelists on best practices for the disability community. Her comments, focused on improving patient feedback and communication, noted that, while not all people with disabilities are seeking a "cure," they still support early and accurate diagnosis and better medical treatment pathways. Additional information on the brain trust can be found at the following website: [www.cbcbfinc.org/2010-spring-cbc-health-braintrust.html](http://www.cbcbfinc.org/2010-spring-cbc-health-braintrust.html).

### **Opening Ceremony for the Federal Hiring Event for People with Disabilities**

The U.S. federal government held its first job hiring event directly focused on individuals with disabilities on April 26, 2010, at the Washington, D.C., Convention Center. The event, sponsored by the Office of Personnel Management and the U.S. Department of Labor, supports the administration's commitment to outreach, development and increased recruitment across the country to involve individuals with disabilities in the federal government. More than 700 people attended the hiring event, and an additional 5,000 applications were submitted online. More job hiring events are planned in cities throughout the U.S. this year.

Kathy Martinez, assistant secretary for the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), was on hand to show the support of ODEP for this initiative. Martinez is scheduled to speak at the upcoming TASH Summer Symposium as well as the 2010 National Conference in Denver, Colo. For more information on the federal hiring event, visit [www.usajobs.gov/DisabilityHiringEvent.asp](http://www.usajobs.gov/DisabilityHiringEvent.asp).

### **TASH Celebrates the 20th Anniversary of ADA with 2010 Symposium for Change**

As part of the twentieth anniversary celebration of the Americans with Disabilities Act, TASH is holding a Symposium for Change, entitled Eliminating Disparities for People of Color with Significant Disabilities or Support Needs. Held this October (dates to be announced) in Washington, D.C., the symposium will highlight access, service and outcome disparities for people of color with disabilities in the areas of education, employment and health. While individuals with disabilities have traditionally been underserved in these areas, the circumstances are often exacerbated among people of color with disabilities.

TASH embraces this important issue as part of its 2010 national agenda. The Symposium for Change will be one of the catalysts for obtaining grassroots and community input that will move TASH's work forward with a serious purpose for change. Attendees of the symposium will hear panel presentations from researchers, direct service providers, parents, self-advocates and other leading figures in the fields of education, employment and health. They will then work in teams through a consensus process to develop recommendations for research, information dissemination, policy and/or regulatory change and additional support for effective practices.

The symposium will involve TASH members and board members, including Sharon Lohmann, Ralph Edwards, Diane Ryndak, Curtina Moreland-Young and Ginger Kwan. Also, Kathy Martinez, assistant secretary for the Office of Disability Employment Policy, plans to join as special guest and speaker. The symposium culminates with "Capitol Hill Day" led by TASH's public affairs committee. For more information on the Symposium for Change, or to register, visit [www.tash.org](http://www.tash.org) or contact Mary Staley at [mstaley@tash.org](mailto:mstaley@tash.org).



### **New Legislation Seeks to Promote Economic Advancement of Individuals with Disabilities**

Sponsored by the National Disability Institute and the Collaboration to Promote Self Determination (CPSD), a coalition that TASH has been a member of from its inception, a congressional educational briefing was held April 23, 2010, to discuss *Innovative Strategies to Foster the Economic Advancement of Citizens with Disabilities*. The briefing included a panel of advocates working on research and public policy to advance the economic livelihood of individuals with disabilities. Discussed were multiple bills affecting the disability community, including: Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2010 (H.R. 1205/S. 493); SSI Savers Act of 2010 (H.R. 4937); Savings for Working Families Act (H.R. 2277/S. 985); and Saver's Credit-Savings for American Families' Future Act (H.R. 1961/S. 3090).

The discussion centered on public assistance offered to individuals with disabilities. Access to public assistance has been a rigorous process that often creates situations that limit the pursuit of economic wealth. Steve Mendelsohn, a self-advocate speaking at the briefing, noted the federal government's "all or nothing attitude" is outdated and ineffective for many in the disability community who wish to be self-reliant and lead a life of economic health. Steve Beck, representing the National Down Syndrome Society and CPSD, explained that the ABLE Act of 2010 would create opportunities for individuals with disabilities to obtain federal assistance and create economic wealth simultaneously.

The full text for these bills can be found at the Library of Congress THOMAS site at <http://thomas.loc.gov>.



### **Passage of 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Opens Door for Long-Term Services Supports**

With the recent enactment of the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in March 2010, there are a number of long-term services supports provisions that states can implement to improve community services opportunities. These include four provisions that allow states to offer more home and community services, and will become effective in October 2011 or sooner. Advocates are encouraged to act now to ensure their state and Medicaid officials take advantage of the following provisions:

1. **Community First Choice Option (Section 2401):** the federal reimbursement to states for community-based attendant services and supports in the community will be increased by 6 percent.
2. **Removal of Barriers to Providing Home and Community Based Services (Section 2402):** the scope of permissible Medicaid home and community-based services under the current optional State Plan 1915 (i) program will be broadened.
3. **Money Follows the Person (MFP) Rebalancing Demonstration (Section 2403):** the federal support for MFP from 2011 to 2016 is extended by adding more than \$2 billion to provide enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) so that states that did not sign up for MFP in the past can now have the opportunity.
4. **Rebalancing Incentive Payment Program (Section 10202):** provides for enhanced FMAP from 2011 to 2015 for states that "rebalance" long-term expenditures so that more Medicaid funds are expended on community-based services rather than nursing homes and ICF-MR facilities.

These provisions present opportunities for the disability community, provided they are implemented on the state level. Advocates are encouraged to reach out to their state and Medicaid officials early and often.

*This material is used with permission from Steve Gold. More information and back issues of the Information Bulletin can be found online at [www.stevegoldada.com](http://www.stevegoldada.com).*

## **TASH Family Support Training Project Update**

### **TASH Kicks Off Family Support Trainings!**

With 32 national trainers in 12 states and two territories, the TASH National Family Support Training is a force to be reckoned with! This training project, offered in English, Spanish and Mandarin, addresses cultural values and their influence on self-advocates and families. Project trainers have been busy securing training locations, collaborating with TASH chapters, state agencies and local organizations and recruiting self-advocates and family members to get involved in the trainings.

### **Training dates for the 2010**

#### **Basic Family Support Training include:**

Kentucky	May 13-15, 2010, Lake Cumberland State Resort Park
Georgia	May 6-7, 2010, Atlanta
Oklahoma	June 17-18, 2010
Puerto Rico	June 9-10, 2010
South Carolina	June 26-27, 2010
Vermont	June 29-30, 2010
Virgin Islands	May 18-19, 2010, St. Thomas May 20-21, 2010, St. Croix
Washington	August 27-28, 2010 (tentative)
Washington, DC	August 14 and 21, 2010 (tentative)

(Follow-up training will be determined at a later date)

The TASH Basic Family Support Training project includes two-day basic family support training as well as two optional one-day trainings on advocacy and policy-making. Training materials are drawn from *Family Support, Self-Determination and Disability* (Yuan, 2001), *Partners in Policymaking* (Wieck) and *Emerging Disability Policy Framework* (Silverstein, 2000). The project is made possible through a grant from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities.

Stay tuned for updates on how the trainings went in the next issue of *Connections*! Contact Haley Kimmet for more information or questions about the project at [hkimmet@tash.org](mailto:hkimmet@tash.org).



Photo by Phil Smith

**Mentor trainers Shelley Dumas (left) and Susan Yuan (right) lead an exercise at the Curriculum Development workshop that trainers will implement in their home states.**



Photo by Phil Smith

**Illinois Trainer Andrea Smith takes notes during the project's Curriculum Development workshop.**

## **TASH Chapters**

### **TASH New England, California, and Kentucky Chapter Conferences are a success!**

#### **Kentucky:**

The Arc of Kentucky's fifty-fifth conference provided a great opportunity for Kentucky TASH to get its message out and feature best practices in inclusive education, community living and employment. Nearly 200 people attended the conference in Louisville. Barb Trader, TASH's executive director, provided the opening keynote with "TASH's National Agenda—How YOU Can Impact Policy and Practice Nationally." She was later appointed as a Kentucky Colonel, an honor awarded by the state of Kentucky to individuals that significantly contribute to the Kentucky community. Leslie Lederer, Kentucky TASH President says that the conference "helped me look at different issues in a new way that will positively impact the way I do things with my son and other people with developmental disabilities."

Other attendees included U.S. Representative John Yarmuth (KY-District 3), along with staff from the Kentucky Department of Education, Developmental Disabilities Council, Department of Medicaid Services, Social Security Administration and Health and Family Services. Yarmuth discussed healthcare law and its impact on people with disabilities.

#### **New England:**

More than 120 participants gathered at the 2010 New England TASH Conference in Worcester, Mass., to attend sessions on inclusive education, employment, community living, people of color and self-advocacy. Keynoter Stephen Shore regaled the audience with stories on growing up with autism while discussing the different abilities that make up a community. New England TASH Co-Presidents Gail Fanjoy and Linda Rammler passed their presidency on to New England TASH's new President, Valerie Smith.

#### **California:**

Cal-TASH welcomed more 350 participants to its two-day twentieth annual conference in Burlingame, CA, this March. Day one conference keynoter Ellen Goldblatt spoke about the history of services in California and the closure of the Agnews State Hospital. On Saturday, Dr. George Singer, keynote speaker, talked about the media through the ages and how people with disabilities have been portrayed. Participants had 48 sessions to choose from on a variety of topics, including self-advocacy, employment, families, friendships and inclusion in schools. The Cal-TASH Board of Directors has begun planning the 2011 conference in Irvine, CA, for March 4-5, 2011.

Congratulations on a job well-done, Kentucky, New England and California TASH Chapters!



**Matthew Medina, board member of Cal-TASH, sells products from his business at the Microenterprize Marketplace at Cal-TASH's 2010 Conference.**



Cheryl Bogarty and Andrew Shepherd, members of The Arc/KY Advocates in Action Self-Determination Leadership Academy, present on self-advocacy at the 2010 Kentucky TASH Conference.



Quantan Bills, Steve Schreiber (front), Jose Perez (with arms around Steve), Cal-TASH Board Member Scott Shepard (back) and Aaron Burgan enjoy a free moment at Cal-TASH's 2010 Conference.



*"Be the change  
you wish to see in the world."*

-Gandhi

**Get involved,  
Take action,  
Speak out.**

Go to  
**[www.tash.org](http://www.tash.org)**  
 or contact the Central Office at  
**(202) 540-9020**  
 to find out what you can do.





# TASH

## Membership Renewal and New Member Acceptance

Equity, Opportunity and Inclusion for People with Disabilities since 1975

1025 Vermont Avenue, NW, 3rd Floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Phone: 202-540-9020; Fax: 202-540-9019  
e-mail: [info@tash.org](mailto:info@tash.org)  
website: [www.tash.org](http://www.tash.org)

### Please complete the following information

**Address** (will be used as the billing address) (Check here if this is a change of address )

- Mr. Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Nickname:** \_\_\_\_\_
- Mrs. Address:** \_\_\_\_\_
- Ms.** \_\_\_\_\_
- Dr. Contact Name:** (required for all library and organizational members): \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number** (include area code and, if outside U.S.A., Country Code)

- Home phone:** (    ) \_\_\_\_\_
- Work phone:** (    ) \_\_\_\_\_
- Cell phone:** (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address** (check here if you do **not** have an email address )

- (Required for all members, including organizations and libraries)
- Primary email address:** \_\_\_\_\_
- Secondary email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Type** (Please choose your membership type)    **This is a Renewal**  **Member #** \_\_\_\_\_

- Individual**, household annual income greater than \$60,000 = **\$115**
- Individual**, household annual income between \$40,000 and \$60,000 = **\$75**
- Individual**, household annual income less than \$40,000/individuals with disabilities = **\$45**
- Students**= **\$45**
- Supporting Member** = **\$200** (includes \$115 individual membership fee plus \$85 tax deductible donation)
- Sustaining Member** = **\$500** (includes \$115 individual membership fee plus \$385 tax deductible donation)
- Organization** = **275** (includes one subscription to the journal, one copy of Connections, and member conference rates for up to 5 employees/members)
- Library** (annual subscription to Connections and the journal) = **290**

**For libraries only**, required for online access to the journal (further instructions available at [www.tash.org](http://www.tash.org)):

Starting IP Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending IP address: \_\_\_\_\_

What IP range do you want to upload? \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment Type** (Funds must be submitted in U.S. dollars and checks must be drawn on a U.S. bank or an additional fee will be charged.)

- Check (payable to TASH; mail to address above)    Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_
- Visa    Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- MasterCard    Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_
- Discover Card    Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Making a tax-deductible donation to TASH keeps membership more accessible to the individuals we serve.**

I would also like to make a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ at this time.

**Continued on reverse**

## Optional Information

### Family Information

Do you or someone in your family have a disability?  Yes  No If yes, what age(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity:  Asian  Black  Hispanic  Native American  White  Other

### Occupation

Please check the appropriate categories (not more than three) that best describe you:

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator/Adult Services  | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Services Provider            | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Advocate/Person with Disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator/Education       | <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational/Physical Therapist    | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Worker                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator/Other           | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Family Member               | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech/Language                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Services Provider/Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Assistant                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Ed. Teacher                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advocate/Friend               | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Policy Advocate             | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Ed. Support Specialist       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral Specialist         | <input type="checkbox"/> Professor/Instructor College/Univ. | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Development/Trainer            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Case Manager                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Psychologist                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Student                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood Services      | <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Ed. Teacher/Admin.         | <input type="checkbox"/> Supported Employment                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educator/Teacher (K-12)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Related Services Provider          | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                                |

### Interests

Please check the Interest and Action Groups/Operating Committees (not more than three) in which you would like to participate:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> TASH Chapter Activities    | <input type="checkbox"/> TASH Fund Development        | <input type="checkbox"/> TASH Member Services           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TASH Publications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Issues                | <input type="checkbox"/> Paraeducator Issues            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication Issues       | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Policy                | <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel Preparation          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Living           | <input type="checkbox"/> Guardianship Alternatives    | <input type="checkbox"/> Positive Behavioral Approaches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Justice           | <input type="checkbox"/> International Issues         | <input type="checkbox"/> Related Services               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood            | <input type="checkbox"/> Leisure and Recreation       | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality/Sexual Orientation   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education – Best Practices | <input type="checkbox"/> Media Issues                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Health Care Needs      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spirituality               | <input type="checkbox"/> Employment/Transition Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Multicultural Issues           |

### Directory Listing

If you so desire, please choose up to three topics of expertise under which you would like to be listed in the online TASH Resource Directory (by checking here, you are giving us your permission to post your name and email address as a resource on the Member's Only section of [www.tash.org](http://www.tash.org)).

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long term financial planning                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Supported employment                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alternatives to guardianship                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Ticket to Work                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive education advocacy help for parents                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Care                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive education advocacy support for teachers/school personnel | <input type="checkbox"/> Medicaid Waiver                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aversives, restraints, seclusion                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitated communication             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Getting out of institutions  | <input type="checkbox"/> Augmentative communication            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supported Living   | <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage/parenting for self-advocates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self determination   | <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive community recreation        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Microboards  | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to health care                 |

### Comments

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### Building the “Learning Community” for Cultural Competence

Over the past five years, TASH has been on a mission to infuse cultural competency with all of its programs, outreach, membership initiatives and staffing. Some of the funding for this initiative has come from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in the form of a grant program. As part of this grant, TASH has partnered with other leading disability advocacy and research organizations to create a “learning community” tasked with implementing cultural competency. These organizations include the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, the Arc of the United States, Autism Society of America, Association of

University Centers on Disability, National Council on Independent Living, National Down Syndrome Congress and the Council of Parent Attorney and Advocates.

Each organization has committed to having its executive leadership—at least one board member and one staff member—involved in this cultural competency learning community. The National Center on Cultural Competency of Georgetown University will conduct self-assessments for all seven partners this year. One of the major outcomes of this assessment will be a learning manual that will assist other disability organizations in creating, implementing and measuring outcomes of a culturally competent initiative. TASH continues to be a leader in this work by actively engaging these partners and convening quarterly meetings during 2010.

The first such meeting was held March 19, 2010, at the offices of the National Association for Criminal Defense Lawyers. TASH thanks the association’s staff and board for the use of its facilities. The partner organizations began with a debrief of work from 2009, and all partners expressed excitement and commitment about the learning community. Pamala Trivedi of NCCC presented an outline and work plan for self assessments. This work started May 1, 2010, and is expected to be completed by December 2010.

For more information on this program contact Dara Baldwin at [dbaldwin@tash.org](mailto:dbaldwin@tash.org)



### TASH gratefully acknowledges the following donations of time and money

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF DONORS

Serena Lowe  
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Jacki Anderson, California State University, East Bay, CA  
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 Geno Daly, Self-advocate, Anchorage, AK  
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 David Westling, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC  
 Richard Rosenberg, Whittier Union High School District, Whittier, CA

## Policy Statement

It is TASH's mission to eliminate physical and social obstacles that prevent equity, diversity and quality of life for children and adults with disabilities. Items in this Newsletter do not necessarily reflect attitudes held by individual members or the Association as a whole. TASH reserves the right to exercise editorial judgment in selection of materials. All contributors and advertisers are asked to abide by the TASH policy on the use of people-first language that emphasizes the humanity of people with disabilities. Terms such as "the mentally retarded," "autistic children," and "disabled individuals" refer to characteristics of individuals, not to individuals themselves. Terms such as "people with mental retardation," "children with autism," and "individuals who have disabilities" should be used. The appearance of an advertisement for a product or service does not imply TASH endorsement. For a copy of TASH's publishing and advertising policy, please visit [www.tash.org](http://www.tash.org).

**TASH** (formerly The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps) is an international advocacy association of people with disabilities, their family members, other advocates and people who work in the disability field. TASH actively promotes the full inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of life. To learn more about TASH and the benefits of membership, visit our website at [www.tash.org](http://www.tash.org).

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*Change Service Requested*

## TASH Mission

TASH supports the inclusion and full participation of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of their communities as determined by personalized visions of quality of life.

TASH's focus is on those people with disabilities who:

- Are most at risk for being excluded from the mainstream of society;
- Are perceived by traditional service systems as being most challenging;
- Are most likely to have their rights abridged;
- Are most likely to be at risk for living, working, playing, and/or learning in segregated environments;
- Are least likely to have the tools and opportunities necessary to advocate on their own behalf;
- Historically have been labeled as having severe disabilities; and,
- Are most likely to need on-going, individualized support to participate in inclusive communities and enjoy a quality of life similar to that available to all citizens.

TASH accomplishes this through:

- Creating opportunities for collaboration among families, self-advocates, professionals, policymakers and other advocates;
- Advocating for equity, opportunities, social justice, and rights;
- Disseminating knowledge and information;
- Supporting excellence in research that translates to excellence in practice;
- Promoting individualized, quality supports;
- Working toward the elimination of institutions, other congregate living settings, segregated schools/classrooms, sheltered work environments, and other segregated services, and toward replacing these with quality, individualized, inclusive supports;
- Supporting legislation, litigation and public policy consistent with TASH's mission; and
- Promoting communities in which no one is segregated and everyone belongs.

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