



Welcome to HireGround!

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities produces this bimonthly newsletter expressly for our VR professional audience. We hope that the stories, best practices and practical tips we share will be of use and value to you as we continue our relationship and work with participants to achieve quality employment, independence and disability determination outcomes through our services, partnerships and innovation. For questions, content suggestions or comments on this newsletter, please contact Elizabeth.sammons@ood.ohio.gov. Thanks in advance for sharing this information as appropriate.

Introduction

As VR professionals, we have a formidable arsenal of goods, services, and technology, which we can authorize. But there are many other entities that affect the lives of people with disabilities with which we do not have a direct or financial relationship. That is why I am calling these groups “invisible partners.” It’s easy to forget that most of what goes on in our consumers’ lives lies below the visible surface of what we experience together. This issue of HireGround is devoted to some slightly random but memorable resources all of us can think about in considering our job seekers as whole people. As we explore the variety, vigor and value of some invisible partners and their influence on consumers, let’s consider how to keep them as mental tools in facing challenges together.

Disability Community

Opportunities/Announcements

How to get free, accessible credit disclosures

(Adapted/Reprinted with permission from “The ACB Braille Forum,” vol. 52 no. 9, March 2014.)

Reliable access to credit information is now available for the non-print-reading community. The three national credit reporting agencies, Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion, are committed to providing credit report information in accessible formats. The companies have also been quick to resolve any problems that may arise, including issues with inaccessible captchas by offering an accessible captcha option for logging into the site. A free report can be ordered from any of the three credit reporting agencies, by calling, 1-877-322-8228, an automated system. After entering

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Get a Move On!.....	p. 2
Thank You for Listening.....	p. 4
Social Security & Medicare Updates..	p. 6
Invisible Partner Spotlight: Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Services Providers.....	p. 7
From Applicant to Artist.....	p. 8
Business Enterprise Program Placing New Focus on Training.....	p. 10
Steve Tribbie.....	p. 10
At Your Fingertips.....	p. 11
Calendar.....	p. 11

identifying information, including telephone number and Social Security number, callers will be given the option of receiving reports in Braille, large print or audio formats. (The selection of desired format comes toward the end of the process.) These reports will also be sent separately in print. The alternative format version should arrive within two or three days of the print copy. Be aware that while credit reports (also known as credit disclosures) are free through the toll-free number above, credit scores carry a charge. Information on how to request credit scores will be provided when ordering the initial reports. These credit scores should also be provided in Braille, large print, or audio to those who order the initial reports in these formats. Credit reports delivered on line have also been designed to be accessible. They are available only through Annualcreditreport.com – the official web site operated by the credit reporting agencies.

Charitable Pharmacies

When clients enter the Part D coverage gap, often called “the donut hole,” they may get help affording their prescriptions through Charitable Pharmacies. Below are a few such pharmacies serving our largest cities. Please note: Each organization has its own eligibility rules.

Cincinnati: St. Vincent de Paul Charitable Pharmacy, 513-562-8841 ext. 230; http://www.svdpcincinnati.org/Programs_and_Services/Charitable_Pharmacy/

Columbus: Charitable Pharmacy of Central Ohio, 614-227-0301; <http://www.charitablepharmacy.org/SitePages/home.aspx>

Charitable Pharmacy|West Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church; <http://www.westohioumc.org/conference/charitable-pharmacy>

Charitable Pharmacy of Ohio Health; 614-566-3333

Cleveland: Care Alliance Health Center; 216-781-6724; <http://www.carealliance.org/>

Youth Medicaid Resources

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has new resources explaining

the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment services (EPSDT) benefit in Medicaid. The following guides are now available at <http://www.nashp.org/epsdt/resources-improve-medicaid-children-and-adolescents>

- EPSDT – A Guide for States: Coverage in the Medicaid Benefit for Children and Adolescents - provides a comprehensive overview of the children’s benefit and summarizes CMS policy on screenings, diagnostic services, and treatment services. It also covers permissible limitations, medical necessity, and access topics.
- Keep Kids Smiling: Promoting Oral Health through the Medicaid Benefit for Children & Adolescents - explains the dental and oral health dimensions of the EPSDT benefit, plus specific ways states are improving their delivery of dental and oral health services to enrolled children.
- Paving the Road to Good Health: Strategies for Increasing Medicaid Adolescent Well-Care Visits - shares a collection of approaches states can use to better engage adolescents in staying healthy and getting regular check-ups.

Get a Move On!

By Tracey Schalk

Editor’s note: Tracey is a coordinator in Crawford and Wyandot Counties serving transition-age youth and adults with developmental disabilities. She’s also been a recipient of VR services due to her own diagnosis. She was briefly a Columbus-based consumer support advocate in 2012 before taking her current position with the Crawford County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

Many consumers I serve are afraid of discrimination in employment, doubting their own ability to work, and often unaware of the many resources they can access to make their lives easier. Even professionals like us, who serve them in schools, medical establishments and governmental agencies, may not know these resources, or we don’t think about

how they can impact employment outcomes. Yet, these “invisible partners” can make a difference in whether or not a consumer will be successful, as they aid in overall independence. They have the potential to help consumers get a move on as they overcome limitations to employment.

The reality is our world is designed for people without disabilities; that’s the mold most consumers have to try to fit into. I can attest from personal experience that attempting to fit into that mold when your body or mind do not work like the vast majority of people’s is tiring, frustrating and often lonely. I cannot stress enough how important it is for consumers to



Tracey Schalk

make a connection and regularly communicate with other people who are also living this life with a disability, especially their own specific diagnosis. This can easily become a “comparable benefit.” Disability-specific support groups can create an avenue to communication, providing many things that direct VR services cannot, as consumers network with similarly-abled people and learn about new devices, techniques, treatment or reasonable accommodations that have worked for other people.

One example, in the support group for my diagnosis of Arthrogryposis, is how we routinely teach each other how we do activities of daily living, using our smart phones and YouTube when we can’t get together. One of the few activities of daily living my occupational therapists and I struggled with as an adult was tying my hair back into a ponytail, since I lack the strength, dexterity or range of motion to do this. After watching a YouTube video of someone else with a less impairing

upper extremity difference, I got my move on by experimenting and creating my own hair tie in about an hour. All I needed was a draw string from a coat and a cord stop. There! I had out-thought my occupational therapist. Here is the video I now share with my support group and with OT’s and doctors who treat my diagnosis frequently: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Leg8IR4RVAU>

For those of us serving consumers with developmental disabilities, encourage them to access self-advocacy/ social groups, which are often facilitated by the local County Boards of DD. Many boards also have people first groups, Aktion clubs and parental support groups useful for parents of transition youth. Some also facilitate the operating of Special Olympics.

I frequently hear from parents that their child needs social opportunities that they cannot get at school. Members of similar-ability groups can assist with psychosocial aspects of living in a world not designed for different abilities. Being able to talk to someone else who struggles with the same barriers can reduce stress and isolation. This in turn can boost the self- esteem and confidence in teen years crucial to develop along the road to becoming a successful adult.

Another invisible partner of great value can be the media. As silly as it may sound, encouraging consumers and their families to watch programs depicting the lives of people with disabilities can show them that they, too, can lead a fairly typical life, including working. Positive media images may also give consumers ideas for what career they may thrive in.

Some examples: “The Little Couple,” “Little People Big World” and “Little Women LA” all depict the lives of people with various types of skeletal dysplasia and short stature. Jen from “The Little Couple,” who stands at 3 foot 2 Inches, is a Physician. We see some of her reasonable accommodations in her work environment like a power chair to go long distances across the hospitals massive campus, and step-stools to access her patients. “Switched at Birth” depicts a main character

who is deaf and uses ASL. "Parenthood's" child character, Max, has a diagnosis of Asperger's, and the show routinely chronicles the struggles and triumphs of raising a child on the spectrum.

Simply "liking" celebrities with disabilities and other disability related pages on Facebook can also be an avenue to seeing daily messages of support. Just googling the condition and "support group" or "conference" will give diagnosis-specific resources, as well as YouTube, with its many "how to" videos.

Sidebar: some networking resources

The number of resources for individuals with disabilities is growing by leaps and bounds. Browse this A to Z listing of over 500 e-communities of people facing similar life challenges, medical conditions, and mental health issues with the goal of information sharing and support at <http://www.dailystrength.org/support-groups>.

DODD's "Family Chat," facilitating online conversations among families served by Ohio's DD service system, now has a Facebook page. Family Chat is at: <https://doddportal.dodd.ohio.gov/INF/gethelp/joinfamilychat/Pages/default.aspx>

Click here (families only) to join Family Chat on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/FamilyAdvisory/>

Abilities Expos: <http://www.abilitiesexpo.com/> is a yearly convention held in five major U.S. cities. The expo features all kinds of adaptive equipment, modified vehicles, alternative therapies like animal therapy, disability related celebrities from the Sundance Channel's "Push Girls," and adaptive sports demo's such as power soccer.

Thank You for Listening

By Hermine Willey

Editor's note: Hermine Willey graduated from OSU with a Bachelor of Science and started working in 1959 as a laboratory technician for the Ohio Department of Agriculture, Consumer Analytical Laboratories. After 34 years, she retired as microbiology laboratory supervisor.

"I knew once I was hired I would be successful," she states. "I believe that people need to keep educating themselves while on the job." Her story reflects the experience of someone raised long before disability was openly discussed, someone with an invisible disability.



Hermine Willey helped staff the booth at a Health and Wellness Fair.

As a child, I remember playing contentedly under the kitchen table, giving no mind to the conversation flowing over my head, past my ears. That's because I was among the 90% of children born deaf in the United States with parents who can hear. So though I was diagnosed with a hearing loss when I was 6, my family fought hard, and I was mainstreamed in the public school system, learning lip reading. This was the 40's, when the only available help was to attend the League for the Hard of Hearing in New York City. But my mother told the school system I was always to sit in the front row, and I did. Hearing aids made every sound loud, but not always comprehensible. I recall many years of speech lessons and lip reading (now called speech reading.) There was a stigma growing up, but I had family support.

Sadly, even today some people think those of us with hearing loss are either not paying attention, or else not too smart. It can be tough when you have an invisible disability. Many of the 98% of people with hearing loss who do not use sign language are not considered to have a disability simply because they speak fairly normally and try to listen. But hearing loss ranks with arthritis, high blood pressure

and heart disease as one of the most common physical disabilities. By age 65, one out of three people has a hearing loss.

It saddens me that many people with hearing loss are not aware of accommodations, and with their invisible disability, this can cost them their job. I was fortunate to be able to hear on the phone my boss provided me, thanks to its special volume and tone control. (At that time there were no Captioned Telephones.)

I was not anxious to admit I had a hearing loss. Instead, I always made sure I sat close to the people talking. I found that since I was always looking at my conversation partners' faces (lip reading,) they usually directed their conversation towards me. I also sat in front of the speaker with a note pad ready to jot down important comments. People would not be bothered to write things down for me, because after all, they couldn't see my invisible hearing loss.

I did not know about disability associations like the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) until 1988, when I saw their "Hearing Loss" magazine in my audiologist's office. Two weeks after I retired I went to my first meeting; I finally had time! Given HLAA's wealth of information, education, support and advocacy, I wish I had joined earlier. Becoming a member of HLAA gave me the courage to speak up for myself using knowledgeable information to do so. I learned of many new openings to the world of communication to people with hearing loss. One example is Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), similar to a court transcription of conversation on a laptop or as projected onto a screen. By requesting CART, I have been able to participate actively in groups since retirement like the Ohio Governor's Council on People with Disabilities, where I served for six years. Thanks to HLAA, I saw how hearing aids, CART, reliable interpreters and alternative listening devices may mitigate difficult personal and social adjustments that attend hearing loss. After joining the local HLAA chapter at last, I also got to know many people in my situation, either with hearing loss since childhood like myself, or who lost hearing in later life.

Coming from my hearing family, I never had any contact with the signing Deaf community until after I retired and worked part-time for Deaf Hope. This is an agency for members of the Deafness community who have alcohol and substance abuse problems. I learned the necessity of having professional interpreters for many clients, with needs different from my own.

I believe that counselors communicating with consumers who have a hearing loss should have a personal assistive listening device available. Just one out of 5 adults who could benefit from a hearing aid wears one, so your consumer may not even know such devices are available or that they work, and it's your chance to show them. I also recommend that counselors visit the HLAA website www.hearingloss.org for the latest updates and more information on hearing loss.



*Daisy in a Knothole by Shari L. Veleba
(see 'From Applicant to Artist' for
more information)*

Sidebar: a few additional hearing loss fast facts

Non-signing deaf (late deafened) or hard-of-hearing people need hearing aids with telecoils, manual volume controls, and directional microphones that should be fitted by a licensed audiologist.

A hearing aid only helps when the speech is less than 6 feet away. If hearing aids have telecoils, these can bring the sound of the presenter directly into their hearing aids from anywhere in a large auditorium. This is called an Induction Loop, a way of transmitting sound through a wire loop to the telecoil in a hearing aid.

Closed Captioning has been available on all TV programs since 1993.

Hearing aids can easily and affordably become wireless receivers for use with telephones and hearing assistive listening systems – hearing loops and neck loops – by including a telecoil option to each hearing aid.

Sixty-nine percent of all hearing aids dispensed in the USA today have telecoils. Yet far too few consumers know about telecoils, and not enough hearing professionals recommend them.

For many people with hearing loss, phone calls can pose a nightmare. The CapTel phone (Captioned Telephone) allows you to read the captions of everything your caller says. <http://www.captel.com/>

Sprint Relay helps address the communication challenges facing people with speech and/or hearing disabilities when they dial 711, using many innovative products and services. Services include Spanish and French as well as English. Learn more at <http://www.ohiorelay.com/>

This link is specific to one company, but even as a stand-alone, it provides an excellent jump start for those dealing with hearing loss as they inventory their needs, services and thoughts.

<http://www.harriscomm.com/beyond-hearing-aids>

Social Security and Medicare Updates

Changes in Social Security services and reporting, plus Section 504 Compliance

Need to report an issue? Want to make a suggestion regarding meaningful access to Social Security documents? Contact the new

center for Section 504 Compliance at 1-844-881-9061. Business hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (except federal holidays). The Center will provide guidance to Social Security offices to ensure that customers with disabilities have meaningful access when conducting business.

Reminder! Beginning in August 2014, Social Security field offices will no longer issue Social Security number printouts. Anyone who needs Social Security number proof and cannot find the card must apply for a replacement card.

Medicare updates

Medicare Interactive helps answer questions about Medicare benefits, rights, and options. To assist all of us with this mission, the Center has just released a new website, with answers about specific client issues. <http://www.medicareinteractive.org/>

Learn More on Part D & Medicare Advantage for 2015, comparison of current and 2015 benefits. This chart from the National Commission on Aging is a quick look at basic out-of-pocket costs. Most notably, consumers will see an increase in gap coverage and discounts next year, but also a slight increase in most out-of-pocket costs such as deductibles. <http://www.ncoa.org/assets/files/pdf/center-for-benefits/part-d-standard-benefit-2014-vs-2015.pdf>

If the Part D plan offers no coverage or covers only generics in the gap, Ohio's Best Rx card can be used, and any money spent should count toward the maximum out-of-pocket. The Ohio's Best Rx card can be used at more than 2,300 participating pharmacies in Ohio and bordering counties. Individuals are encouraged to weigh the merits of using the card for discounts vs. getting catastrophic coverage sooner through Part D.

For questions, Contact Ohio's Best Rx:
www.OhioBestRx.com

1-866-923-7879 (or 711 for TTY relay service)

For more information about Medicare rights, visit Medicare.gov/appeals or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.



Beaded necklace by Kathy Gallant, co-owner of Partners In Charms (see 'From Applicant to Artist' for more information)

Additionally, consumers and counselors are always welcome to call the Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program (OSHIIP) with such questions. OSHIIP's volunteer hotline can help in several ways. Dial 888-686-8657 and:

- Press '3' to speak with one of our Level 2 Complaint Analysts for help with a difficult client issue. (Or press '1' to order publications; press '2' for training registration and to reach OSHIIP's volunteer ombudsman.)
- Or call the consumer hotline (800-686-1578) to speak with any of our analysts.

Invisible Partner Spotlight: Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Services Providers

By Lori Criss

Editor's note: Lori Criss is Associate Director of the Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Services Providers, (usually simply referred to as "the Ohio Council.") Here are her thoughts on Ohio's changing behavioral health scene, and on working with consumers manifesting symptoms.



To give some orientation, the Ohio Council is a nonprofit trade and advocacy organization representing more than 150 mental health, addiction prevention treatment and family services providers statewide. The Ohio Council is similar in function to a counterpart you may know better, CSAVR (Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation,) but it is at the state level, not federal.

Lori perks up with the latest triumph of OOD's elimination of the wait list. "This will make it happen more in real time. It will give us a better launching point," she says. "For a person with addiction particularly, when they're motivated to pursue something, *that's the right time to engage them in that work. Next week (...)*

we may lose that opportunity. They may no longer be focused if they don't have the support to get there."

The confidence in Lori's assessment rides a wave of refreshing behavioral health changes coming to Ohio. "Health care is starting to focus more on wellness and prevention and keeping people well, rather than repairing illness. The opiate crisis in Ohio for the past few years has really turned the attention of the general public and the legislature to understanding addiction as a disease that happens to anyone. Right now, everybody's very interested in better understanding addiction and how to recover from it long-term," Lori adds.

Just in the last year, 15 pieces of legislation have been introduced specific to alcohol and drug addiction, bills laying out a full continuum of services needed to combat the current crisis. To note, an opioid taskforce sponsored by the House has come up with numerous reform ideas related to over-prescribing medications and prescription abuse. Parental and school resources for dialogue with children are included in the new recommendations.

The governor's signing in late June of new housing options is also part of this care continuum. Such steps, along with policies to create awareness, and implementing "safe and sober living environments" for those in early recovery to have peer support and practice new skills while recovering are "pretty groundbreaking," Lori said, not just in Ohio, but in the nation.

The Recovery to Work program initiated in 2011 has brought a more focused emphasis on VR services for people with behavioral disorders. Lori is mindful of similarities in treating consumers with behavioral health issues and those with physical disabilities. "First and foremost is really understanding that they are



Lori Criss, Associate Director, Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Services Providers

diseases and they are disabilities. It may feel a little different than a physical disability, or a developmental disability, some of the broader populations that the agency works with, but functionally it has the same kind of concerns and opportunities for support.”

But Lori also points out some important differences that can affect the perceived ability of consumers to partner, differences that are important to recognize. *“People with addiction and mental illness have often alienated all of those natural support people in their lives that would help remind or get them to appointments and do all of those supportive things to make sure they’re successful.”*

The timing of VR is often also an element of difference. *“When people with addiction are coming into contact with the VR services world, they’re typically coming at it early in their recovery process, unlike someone who may be coming in after extended medical stays and intervention. VR is part of their recovery process from the beginning, so recognizing that having a place of employment to go to, the accountability that work creates, is really something that spurs on their long-term recovery, not something that happens at the end of a recovery process. I think it’s very different for VR staff to deal with someone who may be a little more raw in their recovery process,”* she explains. In other words, someone who is missing appointments or otherwise not fulfilling traditional participation rules may be manifesting the disability and recovery process. *“People with the disease of addiction have gotten accustomed to stigma, so they really need an environment that’s sensitive to that, and welcoming, and nonjudgmental, and open to their experience,”* Lori advises.

Even when a consumer is dealing primarily with physical disabilities, sometimes the option of counseling is not fully explored. This also holds true for families and other caregivers. *“Feelings of loss and anger get wrapped into it. The entire family needs the opportunity to have better understanding and support. Behavioral health providers deliver the counseling and support services that may help people better understand and manage*

negative thoughts and feelings associated with their disability;”

Sidebar

Who are Ohio Council Members: https://obc.memberclicks.net/assets/OCMemberLists/memberlist_website%2011-1-13.pdf

Substance Use Disorders and VR: http://www.med.wright.edu/sites/default/files/citar/sardi/files/vr_desk_reference.pdf

EPP Kit for Supported Employment for People with Severe Mental Illness: <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Supported-Employment-Evidence-Based-Practices-EBP-KIT/SMA08-4365>

From Applicant to Artist

By Shari L. Veleba

Editor’s note: Writer Shari L. Veleba is based in Columbus and earned her B.S. in Journalism degree from Bowling Green State University while a BVR consumer. Shari is an artist specializing in photography and acrylic painting. She has had epilepsy since her early teens. Her story shows the power of common-interest groups in developing a vocation.



Flowers by Shari L. Veleba in acrylic paint

When I entered VSA Art’s Ohio (VSAO) “Accessible Expressions Ohio” juried art exhibit in 2009, I thought it would simply be a nice way to use my creativity. In no way, shape or form did I realize just how much more I would delve into my art. One of the most important things VSAO has taught me is to think of myself as an artist. Once I embraced that confidence, doors began to open.

Through VSAO, I have shown my digital photography throughout the state in subsequent traveling exhibits, given art talks at major institutions, received arts grants from the Ohio Arts Council, and served as an Artist-in-Residence at the 2011 OCALI conference in Columbus. I've attended professional development workshops hosted by VSAO and progressed to accepting commissions. I have been honored, as my work has become public art, with purchases by The Ohio State University's Nisonger Center, and the Central Ohio Transit Authority.



Cincinnati Summer by Ricci Michaels, awarded Best in Show at Accessible Expressions 2011.

Through partnering with VSAO, many Ohio artists with disabilities of all ages have similar stories of success that VR counselors should note. Ricci Michaels, of Cincinnati is a Navy veteran and visual artist specializing in acrylic paintings with an urban theme. In 2011, her work was awarded Best in Show at VSAO's Day of Art for All launch of the Accessible Expressions Ohio exhibit. Michaels, who had helped paint a VSAO-sponsored mural a year earlier to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the ADA, said VR counselors should consider proposing VSA Ohio activities to their creative consumers. "Encourage them to learn that a person can earn money as an artist," she said. "Many don't think arts careers are

possible because they are not aware of all the possibilities."

Kathy Gallant, of Worthington, who has congenital disabilities that affect her inner organs, is co-owner of Partners In Charms, a jewelry design business that she has run with her daughter-in-law for the past five years. Through participation in VSAO educational workshops, she learned how to market her creations, available at several retail businesses in central Ohio. She also sells her art with VSAO support at regularly scheduled outdoor markets such as the popular Pearl Alley Market in Downtown Columbus. "VSA events provide me with the community spirit of other artists with disabilities," she said. "The events and VSA itself give me the encouragement to move forward. It tells me that it's okay to do my art. I also get the energy from that encouragement to try new things."

Sarah Bellish, 17, of Worthington, has spinal muscular atrophy and will be a senior at Thomas Worthington High School. Bellish was selected as the 2014 VSA Ohio Young Soloist. She writes songs, sings, and plays guitar and banjo, a cross between a banjo and ukulele. "It was very important for me to see other people like me doing what they love and being able to express themselves like I do," she reflected on her VSAO experiences. Her networking has also led her to upcoming appearances at the Ohio State Fair.

Such stories are every day for Erin Hoppe, VSA Ohio executive director. "VSA Ohio is committed to advancing the professional artistic practice of individuals with disabilities. The cultural sector's diversity is essential to building vibrant communities, which is why VSAO weaves access and inclusion into all our efforts to help artists."

Hoppe added that VR counselors and their consumers can benefit from VSAO's long experience in breaking down barriers. "We can provide counseling, ideas and resources for a range of creative individuals." Counselors can visit the organization's website and download the free **Careers in the Arts** workbook, and consult with VSAO as it assists artists in

applying for the Ohio Arts Council's Artists with Disabilities Access Grant program. VSAO can also provide technical assistance with specific disability-related questions. Hoppe said that while VSAO programs are geared toward adults, many programs have also been designed with youth in mind. VSA Ohio's newsletter features Calls for Art. Hoppe encourages counselors to "think outside the box, because the possibilities are endless."

For these and additional resources, please visit www.vsaohio.org and share with interested consumers.

Sidebar

The Artists with Disabilities Access Program provides support to individual artists with disabilities, as well as organizations that serve artists with disabilities to help them advance their artistic practice, develop their career, or move to a higher level. To read more on both individual and organizational grants, see: <http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?ca=92baa6bd-eb98-483f-bdbd-161035b41695&c=9397bfc0-434f-11e3-b2a9-d4ae528eaba9&ch=94ff3f00-434f-11e3-b2b3-d4ae528eaba9>

Business Enterprise Program Placing New Focus on Training

Have you wanted some answers about the Business Enterprise Program (BE) or a personal contact on training needs and consumer progress? Well meet Cynthia Lee, who joined the BE Program in May as the new Training Manager. She'll be responsible for evaluating all program elements around training or information sharing, designing and deploying tools for stakeholders, as well as monitoring training effectiveness. BE is currently reviewing the existing Operator Licensee Training and



*Cynthia Lee, BE Program
Training Manager*

different ways stakeholders can learn about the BE Program.

Cynthia comes to the BE Program with 20 years of experience from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT,) where her most recent position was as Program Manager of the Highway Technician Academy. Feel free to contact her any time at 614-438-1279 or by email Cynthia.lee@ood.ohio.gov.

Insights from the desk of Ohio Fiscal Professional Steve Tribbie: Equipment and Inventory

Many OOD contracts include a budget for the purchase of equipment to be used in support of project goals and deliverables. For the purposes of an OOD contract, an item is considered "equipment" if it has a unit cost of \$300 or more. OOD's contracts fall under



Steve Tribbie

a set of guidelines from the U.S. Department of Education called the Education Department General Administrative Regulations, or EDGAR. EDGAR requires that equipment purchased with federal funds be tracked to ensure for proper use and security. In that light, OOD audit reports often include comments regarding the failure to properly tag and report equipment purchased with contract funds, and the failure to maintain a current and complete inventory listing. The reports also often include a comment regarding the lack of a written policy describing the inventory process. If partners intend to purchase equipment under an OOD contract, they are strongly encouraged to implement an inventory tracking procedure and to document that procedure in their written policies. This is likely to ensure compliance with federal requirements surrounding the management of equipment and inventory.

At your Fingertips: (A Few Additional Resources and Features)

Supportive initiatives for disability community

This interfaith guide helps to transform any congregation into a place that values, includes, and enjoys children and adults with all types of disabilities. <http://www.aapd.com/what-we-do/interfaith/that-all-may-worship/that-all-may-worship-cover.html>

AMC Theaters now presents monthly Sensory Friendly-Films, in collaboration with the Autism Society. The program provides a special opportunity for families to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment. Auditoriums have their lights up, the sound turned down, and audience members are invited to get up and dance, walk, shout or sing. Learn more at <https://www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films>

National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability offers an extensive website on health and fitness for people of many types of disabilities, including hundreds of program initiatives. <http://www.ncpad.org/Aboutus>

To list or locate accessible playgrounds, already over 1,500 noted, go to this site and also download the app available: www.npr.org/playgrounds

Keep handy this list of Disability Tech Support Hotlines from companies committed to providing some special services: <http://www.blindbargains.com/redirect.php?redirect=10693>

Alternative learning

Find free online courses from institutions such as Yale, MIT, Stanford, and Harvard. The site is optimized for mobile devices, which will allow users to take courses anywhere. Students can explore the courses, create unique programs and track their progress. For more information, visit www.onlinecourses.com or send an e-mail message to admin@onlinecourses.com.

Check out the Spectronics Blog, inclusive learning and Advancing Independent

Achievement through Technology, at <http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/blog/>

The Center for BrainHealth - Strategic Memory Advanced Reasoning Training (SMART) is designed to improve performance, mood and strategic thinking in people with traumatic brain injury. It can teach people to focus on "big picture" creative thinking. http://www.brainhealth.utdallas.edu/research/research_topic/strategic-memory-advanced-reasoning-training-smart

Calendar of Disability Community Events

Aug. 11-12: **Aging and Disability Resource Network Summit: How to Build Effective Aging and Disability Networks**; Crowne Plaza Columbus North, Worthington, OH. Learn more details via <http://www.ohioaging.org/default.aspx>

September 30-October 2: **The Arc's 2014 National Convention**, New Orleans, LA <http://convention.thearc.org/home>

October 15-17: **National Federation of the Blind Access Technology Train the Trainer**, Baltimore, MD <http://nfb.org/sites/all/modules/civicrm/extern/url.php?u=3358&qid=456577>

October 18-19: **Disabled and Proud Conference 2014**, Syracuse, NY <http://taishoffcenter.syr.edu/disabledandproud/>

October 24-25: **2014 American Council of the Blind Statewide Ohio Convention**, Cincinnati, OH <http://www.acbohio.org/convention/index.html>

October 31-November 2, **National Federation of the Blind Statewide Convention**, Worthington, OH <http://www.nfbohio.org/>

November 6-8: **Division on Career Development and Transition 2014 International Conference "Transition Rocks!"**, Renaissance Cleveland, Cleveland, OH www.dcdt.org

November 20-21: **Helen A. Kellar Institute 2014 Conference on Postsecondary Education and Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities**, Hyatt Fairfax at Fair Lakes, Fairfax, VA <http://kihd.gmu.edu/policy/conference/2014-conference/strands2014>

Thanks, so long, and what's coming up?

I want to thank each person interviewed for these articles, all of whom voluntarily gave of their time and wisdom. Our next HireGround issue is slated to address the "integration" involved in employment.

If you have suggestions, a success story or best practice from your work in this sphere, please contact me by email at Elizabeth.sammons@ood.ohio.gov.

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