

President’s Committee

for People with Intellectual Disabilities (PCPID)

Committee Meeting

March 21-22, 2019

# ~Minutes~

## Citizen Members

Chris G. Neeley, Chair

VijayaLakshmi Appareddy

Olegario D. Cantos

Emily Colson

Claudia B. Horn

Stephanie Opdahl Hubach

Annette Liike

Karen Moderow

Kayla McKeon (Nominee)

## Ex Officio Members and Representatives

Ms. Clarette H. Yen and Ms. Alice Fast

Representing the Honorable Jeff Sessions, Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice

Ms. Jennifer Sheehy,

Representing the Honorable Alexander Acosta, Secretary U.S. Department of Labor

Ms. Carol Dobak,

Representing the Honorable Betsy DeVos

Secretary, U.S. Department of Education

Ms. Leola Brooke,

Social Security Administration

Mr. Brian S. Parsons, Representing the

Honorable Kirstjen Nielson, Department of

Homeland Security

Ms. Lisa Grubb and Ms. Neal Romano,

National Council on Disability

Ms. Monique Dismuke,

Representing the Honorable Wilbur Ross,

U.S. Department of Commerce

## The Administration for Community Living

Ms. Mary Lazare

Ms. Julie Hocker, Designated Federal Official

Ms. Jennifer Johnson

Ms. Allison Cruz

Ms. Sheila Whittaker

Ms. Anastasia Lowery

Mr. Kenny Moss

## Guest Speakers

Savi Swick, Supervisory Research Analyst, Research and Evaluation. Office of Disability Employment Policy; US Department of Labor

Richard Davis, Senior Policy Advisor, Workforce Systems Policy, Office of Disability Employment Policy, US Department of Labor

Jill Houghton, President & CEO, Disability: IN

Kirk Lew, Senior Policy Advisor, Youth Policy Team, Office of Disability Employment Policy

Jonah Belchman, Founder, Potent PR

Krystyne Brown, Public Information Officer, Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

## Other Participants

Andy Arias, U.S. Department of Labor

Andrew Morris, Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services

# The PCPID Meeting Proceedings

## Welcome, Greetings, Introductions, and Statement of Occasion

Julie Hocker, Commissioner for the Administration on Disabilities, Federal Official for PCPID

Christopher Glenn Neeley, PCPID Chair

Ms. Hocker opened the proceedings, welcomed, and thanked all participants. She reiterated that providing the President with recommendations about increasing employment among those with disabilities still ranks as a top priority. She also introduces Ms. Kayla McKewen, a member of the National Downs Syndrome Society and nominee member of the Committee.

Mr. Neeley thanked Ms. Hocker. He also welcomed and thanked everyone present. He moved for the approval of the agenda and minutes from the previous meeting, which the Committee accepted. He emphasized the importance of work for all who are capable to provide character, relationship building, dignity, self-esteem, independence, confidence, health, and freedom. Seventy percent of people with disabilities of legal age are not employed and they want to work. The question is how to integrate people with disabilities into places of employment so that they fill the demand and fulfill the job requirements of the employers. The Committee needs to work on changing the perception of those with disabilities in the US.

## Review of Travel Procedures

Kenny Moss and Anastasia Lowery, ACL Travel Budget Office Representative

Mr. Moss emphasizes that there are differences between private sector and Government sector travel standards. Those who took private transportation must turn in mileage records, parking receipts, and any other required documents to Ms. Sheila Whittaker and/or Ms. Anastasia Lowery before the Travel Budget Office will pay out. He requests that everyone turn those documents in within five (5) days.

When using Uber, Lyft, and/or taxis, the Office will only pay the price for the NON-Rush Hour rates, nor will they pay for any additional costs to the minimum fees. There is also NO reimbursement for travel to and from restaurants for meals. Everyone is expected to eat within a reasonable area of their hotels or pay the transit fees themselves. Food receipts are not necessary as a per diem is already provided. Any excess will be paid by the individual, NOT the office.

Receipts for the following are required: baggage fees for airlines; airport parking garage fees; mileage from home to airport (or a Google map of the route from your home to the airport).

It is essential that everyone sign their voucher if he/she completes it.

The Government is only responsible for paying for each member’s stay 60-90 minutes after the end of the meeting.

## A Statistical Analysis by Office of Disabilities Employment Policy (ODEP)

Savi Swick, Supervisory Research Analyst

Richard Davis, Senior Policy Advisor

Mr. Swick explains the vision of ODEP as creating a world in which people with disabilities have unlimited employment opportunities. ODEP endeavors to develop and influence policies and practices that increase the number of employment opportunities for people with disabilities. They do not regulate the employment, which makes them more appealing to employers.

An example of their efforts includes the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) and Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Mr. Davis discusses various initiatives that have helped businesses grow in understand about employing people with disabilities, including: Provider Voice Initiative, Visionary Opportunities to Increase Competitive Employment; Employment for State Leadership Mentoring Programs; National Governor’s Office; National Council of State Legislators; Job Accommodations Network; EARN; and Federal Partners in Transition.

Mr. Swick is Director of Research and Evaluation in ODEP and begins discussing possible solutions found in the data and information collected. ODEP conducted a survey in 2008 and repeated it in 2018 exploring employers’ hiring efforts and concerns and changes in those efforts and concerns over time. Mr. Swick first points out that 2008 was in the midst of the Great Recession, while 2018 was during an economic boom and that certain policies have taken effect that influence employment, such as Section 503.

In the survey, ODEP examined: employment and hiring efforts; hiring concerns and benefits of hiring people with disabilities; hiring practices and policies; retention advancement practices and policies; and active veteran recruitment. Mr. Swick explains that, over the past ten (10) years, there has been a visible percentage increase in areas relating to number of employers hiring people with disabilities and/or veterans (for specific numbers, see page 36 of the transcript).

Primary areas of concern included: safety, ability to perform required job duties, and absenteeism. Other, less expressed, areas of concern included top-level management and attitudes of supervisors. Employer willingness to hire people with disabilities corresponded indirectly with the negative stereotypes, meaning that, when employers were aware of negative stereotypes, they were more willing to hire/recruit people with disabilities, regardless of costs. Interacting with people with disabilities minimized concerns about performing tasks but not the negative stereotypes themselves.

In general, most employers saw benefits of hiring people with disabilities such as an improved image or potentially improved image; increasing the pool of qualified candidates; and increasing productivity.

## The Next Frontier of the Disability Rights Movement, Employment Perspective on Customized Employment, Office of Disabilities Employment Policy (ODEP)

Richard Davis, Senior Policy Advisor

Mr. Davis highlights the advancements in the treatment of and attitudes toward people with disabilities. US DOL, ODEP, and Econsys conducted an impact study or employers who have hired people with disabilities. This study involved customized employment, as opposed to supported employment. The employers had developed jobs specifically for people with disabilities.

Once customization has occurred and the position is filled, the employer experienced increased productivity, reduced cost, lower turnover and absenteeism, improved workplace culture, increased placement of people with disabilities, opportunities for advancement. These changes came about as the result of mitigating risks of employing those with disabilities and building rapport with employers.

More information on this study will be released from the National Employment First Community of Practice.

ODEP is also working with the Veteran’s Health Administration (VHA) to develop a program called Veteran’s Rights to create sheltered workshops within the veteran system. They plan to adapt the strategies used in the disability world.

### Empowering Business to Achieve Disability Inclusion and Equality

Jill Houghton, President and CEO of Disability: IN (formerly US Business Leader’s Network)

Membership in Disability: IN is made up of large businesses including 180 of the Fortune 1,000 companies. Disability: IN was established in order to influence the attitudes of the public after the introduction of the ADA. Ms. Houghton explains that demand in business needs to be built but agencies working to help those with disabilities. Everything Disability: IN works toward is driven by what the contracting businesses request.

Disability: IN works with AAPD in order to promote inclusion of ALL people with disabilities, inspired by the efforts of the LGBTQ community. Ms. Houghton discusses the importance of the Disability Equality Index which is a questionnaire tool to help employers improve their inclusion practices. For more information, visit disabilityequalityindex.org.

### Interagency Collaboration to Improve Employment Outcomes

Kirk Lew, Senior Policy Advisor, Youth Policy Team, Office of Disability Employment Policy, US Department of Labor

Mr. Lew wants to examine the supply side of employing people with disabilities and how to build supply. The Youth Policy Team provides recommendations to other agencies in order to provide technical assistance.

Mr. Lew’s main purpose is to provide a better understanding of the Federal Partners in Transition (FPT). FPT was formed to help with these interagency policies in order to create a smoother transition for people with disabilities from school to adulthood. In order to function, FPT needs to make sure they are addressing all agencies and working from a holistic approach, using evidence-based practices. FPT is also currently looking for a universal design for learning, especially in community colleges.

One manner of this holistic approach is remaining committed to individuals with multiple levels of expertise who are interested in improving employment opportunities for youths with disabilities. To maintain that everyone is following the same standards, FPT works to ensure communication and assess resources across the different agencies while focusing on the job seeker.

Through these agencies and educational services, FPT seeks to help youth with disabilities develop self-determination skills, furthered by sharing information about people with disabilities, their capabilities, and the benefits of including people with disabilities in the workforce.

Mr. Lew emphasizes the need for better, clearer access to job placement programs and fulfilling work. He says that FPT works for leadership and advocacy among people with disabilities, especially in regard to healthcare, healthcare insurance, professional development, improved education and outreach, and promoting collaborations. FPT also seeks to align policies and regulations to encourage youth SSA disability recipients to move off those rolls when possible.

## Public Education and Awareness Campaigns, Marketing

Jonah Blechman, Founder of Potent PR

Krystyne Brown, Public Information Officer, Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Mr. Blechman led the National Publicity Campaign in the creation of the documentary “Cinemability: the Art of Inclusion” about the changes in film’s and television’s representations of disability. He describes his vast experience in the film industry, increasing awareness and education about people with disabilities.

He presented ideas that worked for him in the private sector. The means of communication are changing rapidly, from movies and TV to social media, especially among Millennials and Generation Z (Xennials), which is why these have become the target audience for advertisers. Campaigns seeking to provide information about intellectual disabilities should seek out these modern media outlets and the aforementioned generations using them.

Mr. Blechman believes that a major push toward campaigning among the entertainment industry is needed to help push education about people with disabilities into the public realm.

Ms. Brown uses short videos and social media to provide information about people in Tennessee with disabilities. She details the history of the growth of employment of people with disabilities in Tennessee, starting from Employment First Efforts to ODEP’s Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program to Implement First. She explains the benefits of Facebook and other social media outlets as a means of expanding their message beyond people in their own circle. Facebook created a means to make information accessible and a means to communicate directly and easily with the public.

## Day 2 Summary of Discussion

Each group gave a brief summary of their reports to the rest of the Committee.

Ms. Moderow presents the issue with what the law says and how reality is. She stressed that the efforts of her group, and the Committee at large, was not intent on discriminating against or threatening the services of people with disabilities who cannot work. She wants the laws they are going over to apply to those who can work, which is a much larger group.

She points out that states that have Employment First policies have had success and that her group recommends finding a way to incentivize employers in other states to adopt policies and procedures that support Employment First models. Do accomplish this, the Committee must look at the underlying issues that create barriers to employment. To do this, the Committee should target the perception of people with disabilities starting with educators, schools, vocational rehabilitation systems.

Ms. Hocker opens the discussion about Centers for Independent Living and partnering them to promote the efforts that Ms. Moderow discussed. These Centers help people with disabilities remain independent at home and in the work place, but not specifically the work place. The Center has annual data about every state and can provide this data to other agencies in order to facilitate increased inclusion of people with disabilities in the work force and the community at large.

Ms. Hubach, from the demand team, put forward the primary question for her team, which was: is the labor market for people with intellectual disabilities fundamentally driven by some additional factors that a typical labor market is not driven by? Or do things that drive a typical labor market just have certain emphases? She concurs that a lack of information leads to uncertainty, which ultimately leads to not hiring people with disabilities. She indicates a lack of facilitators for people with disabilities in agencies that help them find a job, or to fill the demands with the supply. She highlights the importance of family advocacy and job trainers. Also, businesses need to be willing to take the time to train, including training people with disabilities.

Afterward, discussion turned to brainstorming different means of increasing awareness and funding. These ideas included: grants, parent networks, nonprofits, social media, faith-based initiatives.

The meeting ended with a designation of tasks, work in small groups, reminders of notes from the Travel Budget Office, and farewell remarks.