



Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor



Courtney Burke, Commissioner

NYS Office For People With Developmental Disabilities

Putting People First

Becoming a Productive
Community Member
through Employment

Kristine Snyder, OPWDD Region



OPWDD Mission is...

To help individuals with
developmental disabilities
to live richer lives



OPWDD Vision Statement

We believe that people with developmental disabilities have a right to...

- Live in the home of their choice
- Experience good personal health and growth
- Enjoy meaningful relationships with others
- Fully participate in their communities



How does that relate to employment?

For most of us, employment...

- Helps define who we are
- Helps us to live richer lives
- Provides us with opportunity to:
 - Establish relationships with others
 - Fully participate in our communities



Employment First!



- A national movement that promotes employment for all people with disabilities
- A belief that all people are capable of contributing to their communities through employment



Why Employment First?

- Philosophically: It's the right thing to do
(Is in line with our mission and vision)
- Fiscally: Less costly than traditional day hab and prevocational services



OPWDD Employment Goal

Double the number of people
with developmental
disabilities who are working
in their communities



Overcoming Barriers

Two areas of focus:

1. Add more supports to our services to enable success for individuals not previously considered for employment
1. Better prepare students 18-21 transitioning from school to adult life



Adult Employment Services

- Traditional Supported Employment (1985)
(Commonly referred to as SEMP)
- Employment Training Program (2007)
(Commonly referred to as ETP or Internships)
- Enhanced Supported Employment (2009)
(Commonly referred to as E-SEMP)



Student 18-21 Options

- Employment:
 - Supported Employment for 18-21 after school hours
- Services that prepare for employment:
 - College options
 - Project SEARCH



School to Work Transition

- Partnering with students, families, school personnel, BOCES, others to start planning earlier
- Training and outreach: Ensuring all students who are eligible for OPWDD services are knowledgeable about post-secondary options



SEMP

- Begins with referral to ACCES-VR (previously VESID) in last year of high school
- VR provides intensive job development, job placement, and stabilization
- For those who are OPWDD-eligible, funding transfers to OPWDD for extended follow-along supports



Larry

- Works for Wegmans - gathers carts from parking lot, sweeps, empties trash, organizes displays
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ years; 8-20 hours/week
- Increased self-esteem and independence
- Is making plans to one day live in own apartment
- "His greatest joy is running into former teachers and being able to proudly tell them he works for Wegmans!"



Mary

- Works for Panera Bread as dining room attendant
- 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ years; 20 hours/week
- Mary "used to be somewhat shy when meeting new people, but her constant interactions with customers has allowed her to come out of her shell. Her communication skills have greatly improved and she has gained considerable self-confidence through friendships she has developed with several co-workers."



Ted

- Food service worker on a local college campus
- 15 years; 32.5 hours/week
- Ted "lights up when he speaks about his job. He loves his work and his employer challenges him to go above and beyond. His independence has greatly increased and he has become involved in the local Boys and Girls Club and other community activities through contacts he has made."



Mike

- Works as a Car Detailer/Shuttler (helps clean returned rental cars and get them ready for next rental)
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ years; 37 hours/week
- Likes being able to contribute to family's household income buy gifts for his family
- Has developed a whole new social network, frequently meeting with coworkers after work to watch sporting events and engage in other recreational pastimes



ETP/Internships

- For individuals needing longer period of transition
- Training for up to 18 months within a community business for a specific job
- SEMP agency provides supports needed
- OPWDD pays the salary initially, with employer agreeing to hire once training is complete
- Extended job coaching continues after hire



Abe

- Works as a cleaner in a church
- 1 year, 8 months; 12-20 hours/week
- "Through connections at work, ...began attending the Sunday services, then joined the church's men's group and does volunteer work with them. He is now a full member of the church and takes pride in being a contributing member of his church and community."



E-SEMP

- Enables individuals with higher level of support needs to benefit from employment (ex. personal care, behavior support)
- Like ETP, allows longer period of time for transition
- Individual must work a minimum of 32 hours monthly



Annie

- Bus Monitor for a school bus service
- 3 years; 32 hours/week
- Previously had trouble making friends; felt no one liked her because of her disability
- Has gained self-esteem and confidence
- Annie "no longer sees herself as someone with a disability. Instead she sees herself as someone who can do whatever she puts her mind to and who has a lot to offer to others"



Carol

- HR Associate at Target - assembles new hire packets and decorates the store for holidays
- 3 years; 25 hours/week
- Previously in a Sheltered Workshop program for 27 years; always said "I just want to work at a real job"
- Was turned down by ACCES-VR twice as not appropriate for SEMP due to her multiple barriers and perception that she would not succeed



Sam

- Works for a lumber/hardware store - unloads supply truck, prices items, & stocks shelves
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ years; part-time
- Sam "came into the program with an extensive risk support plan. His negative behaviors are nearly non-existent in the workplace. He learned to use the forklift, earning him a sense of accomplishment and pride, and he's treated as a valued team member."



SEMP Services for 18-21

Program Description	Participants	Adult Option?	Partners	Funding/Supports	Expected Outcome
<p>Afterschool, weekend, and summer employment with job coaching supports to gain employment experience</p> <p>Focus is on-the-job training and support rather than extensive job development for a “career job”</p>	<p>High school students 18-21</p>	<p>Upon graduation would pursue adult employment options</p>	<p>Employer, School district, OPWDD, Adult SEMP agency, Individual, Family</p>	<p>OPWDD Supported Employment</p>	<p>High School experiences will improve likelihood of community employment upon graduation</p> <p>Supported Employment continues after graduation with VR or OPWDD employment supports as needed</p>



Jim

- Shadowed 3 jobs: video game store, hardware store, and janitorial - chose janitorial
- Started 1 day/week and increased to 2, then 3 (9 hrs)
- Work skills not a problem but social skills were: recited movie lines when stressed, interacted only w/ staff, avoided coworkers
- Learned to socialize with others & make eye contact
- Transferred skills to school setting and went to both his prom and graduation (which teachers indicated he would not have done without his work experiences)
- Has been working at this job for 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ years



College Transition Options

Keuka, U of R, Roberts Wesleyan, Hobart & William Smith,
FLCC, MCC, Nazareth, SUNY Geneseo

Program Description	Participants	Adult Option?	Partners	Funding Supports	Expected Outcome
3-5 year program on a college campus involving one or all of the following: access to college courses for sitting-in, auditing, or for credit; participation in clubs or activities; service learning or internships.	High school students 18-21	Yes, at some of the colleges but not all; working towards developing adult components at all	College, School district, OPWDD, Adult DH agency, Individual, Family	Vary depending on the college but include: School teachers and paraprofessionals, OPWDD DH/PV staff, college student mentors, in-kind support from college	Community employment upon graduation from program with VR or OPWDD employment supports as needed



Hannah

- Childcare aide in a school – provides 1:1 support to one student and reads to others
- 8 months, part-time
- College program helped her identify interests beyond “being a cleaner” which is where school was directing her
- College program mentors became a strong support system for her which continues
- Working allowed her to purchase a car, pay for driving lessons, & get her license



Project SEARCH

URMC, Wegmans, City of Rochester
(w/ Ontario Arc in development)

Program Description	Participants	Adult Option?	Partners	Funding Supports	Expected Outcome
A one-year, high school transition program that provides training and education leading to competitive employment.	High school students 18-21	Not yet, but potential for adult backfills if students leave before completion of program (Ontario Arc will be an adult-only program)	Host business, school district, ACCES-VR, OPWDD/DDSO, Adult SEMP agency, Individual, Family	Vary depending on the site: School teachers and paraprofessionals, ACCES-VR , OPWDD, Adult agency	Employment in host business or other community employment upon completion of training program, with VR or OPWDD employment supports as needed



Joe

- Data Control Clerk at URMC - scans documents into the Electronic System
- 2 years; 40 hours/week
- Prior to PS, had a 1:1 aide in school and would likely have graduated into a day hab setting
- Greatest gain for him has been development of his interpersonal skills—no longer as shy and introverted as he once was
- He reports working makes him feel he is “just like everyone else and can do all they can do”



Questions?

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More information can be found at:

www.opwdd.ny.gov