

Director's Report

10/6/16

Reallotment Update: The funding situation is as was announced.

Outcomes: We are about 350 employment outcomes below last year's number. We are not surprised because we took 14 VR counselors off the production line to work in schools with students on IEPs and 504 plans. When you take that into consideration we are on target.

Work Based Learning Grant: It is with great pleasure I announce that our proposal for the US DOE WBL grant has been funded. It is \$1.8 million per year for five years. It is a randomized control study including a treatment and control group. The model adds career consultants, AT coaches, and transportation funding to our existing infrastructure. It is a close partnership with CCV and the AT Program.

Making the State a Model in Hiring People with Disabilities: We are making great progress in rolling out this initiative. Hugh and I had a meeting this morning with DHR and GCEPD members to present our plan to DHR Commissioner Spellman. She is on board and we hope to launch at the cabinet level prior to the election. Once launched we can move on with our pilot in central Vermont for six months and then go statewide. We have traction on getting more people with disabilities into state government. I will bring copies of the project charter and the progressive employment menu to share.

AWARE: We continue to meet our monthly deliverables and move this project toward "go live". It is putting a tremendous workload on key staff including Alice Porter and Lisa Young. I will bring copies of the timeline for share. We are less than a year from going live and every month is chocked full of work to be done. The implementation of WIOA final regulations and the RSA 911 data collection requirements will be incorporated into AWARE; however, we go live three months after we are required to begin data collection. This presents some issues for us.

EAP: Invest EAP is doing some important work with first responders, police and firefighters. They held a two-day training and the response was extremely positive. Through our contract with the VT League of Cities and Towns we are proposing to expand that work. Given the national spotlight on first responders this is very important work.

Jobs for Independence: We continue to work with the key partners to implement the JFI grant project. Overall EAP clinicians are seeing referrals and moving people on to a JFI VR counselor. Enrollments are on schedule and the national evaluator has moved our project into the third stage. We are the second project nationally to be moved into stage three. There have been some bumps in the road in Rutland with out of control referrals and not enough staff capacity. Participants are getting jobs and we are seeing terrific success stories.

AHS Workforce Development Group: Hugh is chairing the group with the Reach Up Director. We are resurrecting the AHS Employment Policy that we developed 2 to 3 years ago. This group is composed of AHS, VDOL and ACCD staff. We are looking at rethinking the purpose of the group, what our mandate it and how to structure our meetings.