

***Transforming and Improving Practices
through Customized Technical Assistance (TIP) Grants
January 2020
SUMMARY OF GRANTS
YEARS: ONE (FY2017) - TWO (FY2018) - THREE (FY2019)***

Council Goal 3: Children and adults with developmental disabilities meaningfully participate in all facets of community life, and are valued and supported by their communities.

Objective 3.5: Increase community-based employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities, including people with significant support needs.

Objective 3.6: In collaboration with people with developmental disabilities, their families, and stakeholders, increase opportunities for people with developmental disabilities living in rural areas to find and maintain employment by reducing barriers unique to rural areas.

Overview

The purpose of this initiative is to improve the employment outcomes of people with developmental disabilities by building the capacity of community service providers licensed by the Developmental Disabilities Administration. Through customized technical assistance by subject matter experts, providers are improving the way services are provided so that more people with developmental disabilities are supported to get and keep the meaningful work they want in their communities and to have meaningful days when not working. All grant recipients are participating in a learning community to share their efforts to improve employment outcomes and receive mutual peer support.

Funding for this initiative was made available through a partnership between the DD Council and Maryland Works. In year one, a total \$128,312 (\$70,571 from the Council) funded 13 jointly selected grant proposals, 5 of which focus on Objective 3.6 and increase opportunities for people with developmental disabilities living in rural areas. In year two, a total \$96,405 (\$73,702 from the Council) funded 10 jointly selected grant proposals, 3 of which focus on Objective 3.6 and increase opportunities for people with developmental disabilities living in rural areas. In year three, a total of \$116,335 (\$80,000 from the Council) funded 12 jointly selected grant proposals, 3 of which focus on Objective 3.6 and increase opportunities for people with developmental disabilities living in rural areas.

YEAR ONE (FY2017): Summary of Grants and Final Report

1. Appalachian Parent Association: Technical assistance to help develop a strategic plan that addresses the following areas: staff resistance/cultural environment; subminimum wage/closure of sheltered workshops; organizational structure; enclave crews and activity crews; employment data and process; and financial stability. (\$10,000; rural)

Final Report: Contracted with their subject matter expert and developed a strategic plan and vision for the Day Program Vocational Services to convert from a facility-based/mobile crew model to an Employment First model. As a result, they met these additional goals: (1) As of 7/1/2017, 14 of 46 people now participate in either customized employment, competitive employment, self-employment or community-based services instead of sheltered workshop

activities; and (2) The percent of stakeholders that have increased their willingness for change is 68%.

2. Bay Community Support Services: Technical assistance to help with a cultural change in all programs so that the entire agency understands and values what it means for people to have meaningful days. Technical assistance will also help the agency learn how to support people to have meaningful days through the development of plans and processes; and then how to monitor and measure outcomes. (\$10,000; rural)

Final Report: Developed a more open environment regarding employment and what a person's day should look like – worked with all staff and all families to increase knowledge and understanding about employment and meaningful days. They created a manual for staff about the process of discovery to assist people in achieving their goal of gaining employment or a more meaningful day and IP meetings now include a more in-depth discussion to ensure people are having meaningful days. In addition, 2 vocational managers have received training and credentialing in the Discovery Process and are working with other vocational staff to ensure those practices are implemented in daily activities.

3. CHANGE: Technical assistance to help ensure employment specialists have the support and coaching needed to focus on customized employment approaches for individuals and their families who are seeking independent employment options. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The agency employment team was increased and restructured so that they can help more people get work and have more opportunities outside the Day Center. In addition, CHANGE implemented a new organizational strategy focused on utilizing Discovery as part of person centered planning for each individual served. Under the grant, 9 people went through the customized employment process and are now working in the community and there is an agency – wide commitment to customized employment as evidenced by new training for all staff on how to build discovery into all active supports; changing conversations with people with developmental disabilities and families so that no tours of the building are given and people are meeting at their homes and/or in the community; and moving toward not using center based services.

4. CHI Centers: Technical assistance to help the agency to continue its transformation from a sheltered workshop day model to a community supported employment model through the development of agency wide strategies and goals. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The employment and day services were restructured to better support people as they work outside of the building and engage in more community activities. CHI let its 14c subminimum wage certificate expire in August 2017. In addition, since June, 7 people are not employed in paid jobs in the community. About 3/4 of the people supported in the Day Program go out in the community at least once per week and each coordinator is starting to pilot a group of people going out 5 days each week.

5. Head Injury Rehabilitation & Referral Services: Technical assistance to help develop a strategic action plan and develop a culture within the agency that strives for continual improvement and reflection. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert helped develop a strategic plan. As a result, the agency identified how to improve communication to be more effective and improve services. In addition, 5 people were identified to begin the Discovery process and additional staff were trained and certified to do Discovery. 3 of those people now have jobs in the community and the other 2 have completed the Discovery process and are looking for jobs.

6. Humanim & Compass: Technical assistance to help build capacity to work with students and create Pre-Employment Transition Services that have employment as the outcome for students. Ultimately, the agencies will work with students in the year before exit from the school system in order to create a more seamless transition to adult services. (\$11,250)

Final Report: The Pre-Employment Transition Services program structure, curriculum, and outcomes were developed. The program is pending approval from DORS (voc. rehab) and will be implemented in 2018 for students 18-21 years old.

7. Itineris: Technical assistance to help with developing better protocols for the Discovery Process so that it is more extensive and individualized with informational interviews and job trial sites in preferred employment areas. In addition, assistance will help in developing strategies for talking to potential employers about the benefits of working with people with disabilities. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert helped develop a strategic plan, met with staff, families, and Board of Directors to discuss the Employment First model and the process of Discovery, and helped the agency establish a strategic plan and new partnerships. The following goals were met: (1) professional development about Employment First initiatives; (2) reorganized and reassigned staff to support employment outcomes; and (3) increased partnerships by 10%.

8. Providence Center: Technical assistance to focus on improving their staffing model (how to create the necessary positions to support employment outcomes), closing their sheltered workshops, and building their discovery and customization process. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The agency developed a transformation plan for one program location based on the focused work with the subject matter expert that includes evaluation components for the individuals and for the organization; and the use of a person centered planning process, and the Community Participation and Presence map as tools to direct our transformation. As a result, people are spending more time engaged in community activities and 12 people got jobs. In addition, the agency established more partnerships with local agencies; increased communication with stakeholders about the importance of employment; developed a grant proposal to support people leaving sheltered work; discontinued the use of subminimum wage on 8/31/2017; and increased community participation for 90% of the people previously supported in the most segregated center. When the TIP Grant ended, Providence Center continued the steering committee which is now focusing on employment and community-based opportunities for the rest of its centers.

9. Spring Dell Center: Technical assistance to help change the perspective of staff about individuals with complex disabilities in integrated employment through a real demonstration model. Technical assistance to also provide demonstration on how to effectively implement the customized employment process to include discovery, job development, and job coaching with an adult with complex developmental disabilities. (\$7,062; rural)

Final Report: A subject matter expert provided guidance and demonstration of a customized employment process for people with significant support needs. By receiving technical assistance through the process for 2 people with significant support needs, the agency developed a process and lessons-learned to be implemented with more people.

10. The Arc of Howard County: Technical support to help with the development of a short term strategic plan for the Employment Services Program. The plan is to increase customized employment and increase meaningful days when not working. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert assisted the agency to align their infrastructure and create a plan for implementation of best practices in employment. In addition, meetings with families and individuals were held to discuss upcoming changes and address concerns about supports in the community. 18 people are currently job searching and/or attending the discovery classroom working on job skills and hands-on training through volunteer opportunities in the community.

11. The Arc Prince George's County: Technical assistance to help the agency develop new ways of serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities by integrating them into the community via employment as well as recreational and social opportunities. Innovative approaches will lead to the closure of the Largo Day Center. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert helped implement sustainable practices to build the capacity of the agency that led to more people with developmental disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, working in integrated settings and participating in more community activities of their choice; and to develop personal profiles for all individuals to assist in the development of employment as well as activities in the community. In addition: (1) the first Day Center (with 88 people) closed in June 2017; the second Day Center (with 53 people) is closing March 2018; and the largest (with 100 people) is scheduled to close in 2019 ; (2) 149 individuals are now engaged in person-centered activities in the community that were previously receiving services the facility based day centers; (3) 15 individuals that were previously served in day centers are now employed; and, (4) The Arc has made 15 additional business partnerships.

12. The Arc Southern Maryland: Technical assistance to help to develop a pilot strategy to move the people they support in segregated day programs to integrated competitive employment and/or other inclusive community programs. In addition, the technical assistance consultant was to help design and implement an enhanced program evaluation system. (\$10,000; rural)

Final Report: A subject matter expert helped develop measures for employment outcomes. A Steering Team comprised of people with developmental disabilities, family members, staff, and the consultant was created to review outcomes and develop action items. In addition, a pilot program was developed for 5 people and staff were trained. One of the team members is implementing strategies from the project with other individuals in the day program to expand the supports beyond the 5 targeted individuals.

13. The Arc of Washington County: Technical assistance to help the agency to understand how to increase the number of people supported in competitive jobs and community settings, with a special emphasis on people with more significant support needs, both strategically and operationally. (\$10,000; rural)

Final Report: The subject matter expert worked to transform and improve practices in supporting people in community based settings with a special focus on employment, and within the overall organization. In addition, the expert worked closely with employment specialists to guide them in the Customized Employment process, and away from the old traditional job development model. He has also provided them with TA with specific people on their caseloads who have barriers to employment. As a result, 8 additional people have jobs in the community.

YEAR TWO (FY2018): Summary of Grants and Final Report

1. Bayside Community Network: Technical assistance to help review current strategies, develop a strategic plan, meet with stakeholders, and help develop new ways to support people with developmental disabilities so that the agency transforms from a sheltered work/day program model to a community employment model. (\$10,000; Rural)

Final Report: The subject matter expert helped the agency develop a strategic plan which included objectives for all staff to support discovery, job development, and increase partnerships; and close the facility-based workshop by 06/2019. As a result, 49 more people are employed part-time and 2 more people are employed full-time and 23% more people are being supported to have meaningful days when not working.

2. Community Living, Inc.: Technical assistance to help transform the agency from facility-based to community-based with person-centered supports. A strategic plan to be developed to help implement continual strategic, programmatic, and organizational changes to increase the number of people supported in competitive jobs and meaningful activities, with an emphasis on people with more significant health/support needs. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The agency established a steering committee to provide guidance on agency transformation activities. The subject matter expert helped the agency increase the community presence for the people they support through the use of community mapping and person-centered planning meetings. While the focus was the transition of 8 individuals from sheltered work and day program activities to competitive, integrated employment and community activities, as a result of the organizational changes, an additional 8 people are now working.

3. Gallagher Services: Technical assistance to help with a cultural change and assist with using person centered thinking and planning so that people with complex support needs have measurable improvements in employment and meaningful days when not working. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert helped the agency continue the process of organizational transformation with a focus on person-centered thinking. 10 people and staff, families, and service coordinators participated in in-depth person-centered planning. As a result, people who previously were not believed to be able to access the community, began to. Specifically, 4 people are now supported in the community without ever coming to the “building;” 1 person is now self-employed; and everyone (68 people) in one center participated in the beginning stages of person-centered planning. In addition, organizational changes are begin made to support direct support professionals to be more involved in person-centered planning, increase training for employment professionals, and make changes to the management structure so that less silos between day/residential/support services exist.

4. Melwood: Technical assistance to help develop a strategic plan and a staffing/scheduling model that supports people to engage in meaningful employment in their communities. Consultation to also help identify agency strengths, available resources, and how to create and expand resources. In Charles County, technical assistance will support efforts to partner with the school system and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) to increase employment outcomes for transitioning youth. (\$10,000; Rural)

Final Report: Melwood developed a transition plan to include both employment opportunities and meaningful activities within people's communities. Currently, 4 people completed that transition and 15 people are in the process of transitioning to employment and/or meaningful day activities in their communities. In addition, the agency has trained staff and families on how to create weekly calendars with people supported for the purpose of creating meaning employment and activities.

5. Opportunity Builders: Technical assistance to help develop a business plan to phase out subminimum wage contract work; support people to get community jobs, include coaching and support for staff; and enhance procedures and policies that ensure meaningful days when people aren't working. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert helped the agency develop a business plan, worked with the Board of Directors, and provided onsite assistance with transitioning from sheltered work to community employment and meaningful day activities. As a result, the current model of services has become more individualized and community-based; staff is being supported and trained; families are engaged more in the change process; and, all facility-based work will end in November 2019.

6. Rehabilitation Opportunities: Technical assistance to help improve the agency's strategic plan and develop a clear and concise work flow chart so that everyone is working together to increase employment outcomes. In addition, an effective, seamless process will be developed to move people from sheltered workshops to community employment. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert helped the agency expand employment services by establishing a fully customized employment team at each location (2); establishing policies and procedures; and implementing better job discovery practices. As a result 11 more people with developmental disabilities obtained competitive, integrated employment within the grant period.

7. The Arc Baltimore: Technical assistance to address and improve staff culture, accountability through data tracking, skill building and capacity, organizational infrastructure, and efforts to implement customized employment, including discovery, job development, and job coaching. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert provided intensive onsite technical assistance that resulted in action steps and employment goals for 6 day program facilities. As a result, staff was restructured to support community participation, job development, and person-centered planning; staff supported 6 people to create video resumes; and 10 people are now employed in competitive, integrated employment and 28 more people are in the process of getting jobs.

8. The Arc Central Chesapeake Region: Technical assistance to target people supported on the Eastern

Shore by developing a cohesive plan specific to achieving outcomes in rural settings that includes better use of resources, identifies needed changes, improves staffing models, and includes a program evaluation system. (\$8,905; Rural)

Final Report: The agency restructured their management team and created a specific position to oversee activities on the Eastern Shore and hired additional staff with “deep roots in the Eastern Shore community.” In addition, focus groups were used to create a new strategic plan that focuses on workforce development so that all staff can support people to work. Next steps will focus on transition age youth.

9. The Arc Montgomery County: Technical assistance to help employment staff develop a process that includes tools, timeframes, and assignments designed to streamline the discovery and customization process that can be replicated; and, provide on-site technical assistance as staff go through the discovery process with an identified pilot group. In addition, technical assistance will help establish and/or identify opportunities for trainings and workshops for staff, board members, people supported, and families to increase understanding. (\$7,500)

Final Report: The subject matter expert helped create an agency-wide process that supports competitive, integrated employment. In addition, the consultant worked with job seekers and their families as well as front-line supervisors to explain and support discovery and customized employment. As a result, 1 person got a job and 100 people gained knowledge about customized employment.

10. Ardmore Enterprises: Ongoing technical assistance to provide strategy and advice to close the day center, utilize person-centered planning and thinking to create meaningful days and successful employment matches for people, and measure data-driven outcomes with better tracking of employment and meaningful day initiatives. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert helped Ardmore completely change the employment department by restructuring and requiring ACRE training and supporting person centered thinking and supports. As a result, there was a 15% increase in people employed; 80% of people are now volunteering 2-3 days a week; and 60% of people are starting and ending their day in the community, never coming to a facility.

YEAR THREE (FY2019): Summary of Grants and Final Report

1. Delmarva Community Services: Technical assistance to help improve the overall culture of the agency, focusing on transforming from facility-based to community-based with person-centered supports. The subject matter expert will analyze, evaluate, and make recommendations to change the way day and employment supports are currently provided. (\$10,000; Rural)

Final Report: The subject matter expert recommended improvements to transform organizational culture and help the agency adapt Employment First policies across all programs. As a result, agency staff increased their knowledge of Employment First practices, and 6 people with developmental disabilities obtained competitive integrated employment.

2. Gallagher Services: Technical assistance to help review and change current organizational structure and roles and redefine the agency’s employment services to support job development and

customization, increase partnerships with employers, and support people to get jobs. This is the agency's second step in transformation and will result in increased employment outcomes. Their previous TIP grant focused on creating a cultural change and implementing the use of person centered thinking and planning to raise expectations, change attitudes, and improve the way people with complex support needs are supported to work and have meaningful days. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The agency modernized its definition of employment and distinguished its employment services program as separate from day services. Improvements made to the employment services program included: 1) employment staff no longer report to the senior manager of day services; 2) the roles of employment specialist and job coaches are now more clearly defined; 3) job developer position responsible for establishing new employer relationships and conducting job skills inventories was piloted; 4) implementation of "job match model" to better support people with developmental disabilities seeking employment. As a result, 30 new employer relationships were established, 25 people with developmental disabilities completed job skill inventories, and 4 people with developmental disabilities obtained competitive integrated employment matched to their skills and interests.

3. New Horizons Supported Services/Compass, Inc.: Technical assistance to help develop and implement a peer mentoring service so people with developmental disabilities are supporting, mentoring, and assisting each other to increase community inclusion and participation, and independence. This pilot program will include 12 peer mentors (6 from each agency) who will support at least one person each. 25% of the peer mentors will be located in the Southern MD counties of Charles and/or St. Mary's. (\$10,000; Rural)

Final Report: The subject matter expert supported a collaborative effort between each agency to establish a peer mentoring group. 12 people with developmental disabilities participated in the peer mentoring group (6 mentors and 6 mentees) to support, mentor, and assist each other to increase community inclusion, participation and independence. As a result, 6 mentees are actively participating in monthly meetings with 6 mentors to increase their knowledge of meaningful community inclusion and competitive integrated employment.

4. NCIA: Technical assistance to help address agency-wide barriers to supporting people to work and have meaningful days by creating a skills and interest assessment tool, developing a training curriculum for staff, and developing new policies and procedures. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The agency implemented new practices to better support people with developmental disabilities seeking employment. This included creation and implementation of a profile assessment tool for job seekers. Employment staff will use this tool to help job seekers identify their employment interests. As a result, employment staff increased their knowledge of career exploration tools to better support job seekers, and 5 people with developmental disabilities obtained competitive integrated employment.

5. Penn-Mar Human Services: Technical assistance to focus on implementing a successful program to support people to be self-employed. The subject matter expert will help with the following program components so that people with developmental disabilities can start their own businesses: program development and implementation; business planning, launching, testing, and

feasibility; marketing and sales; work incentives related to self-employment; and identification of needed supports. (\$7,425)

Final Report: The agency created a self-employment council, comprised of 11 professionals, to serve as subject matter experts on various fields of business. The self-employment council recommended new policies, procedures, and practices to strengthen the agency's self-employment program. As a result, employment staff increased their knowledge to support more individuals with developmental disabilities seeking to start a business, and 1 individual with a developmental disability started a business

6. Spectrum Supports: Technical assistance to help guide and support the leadership/management team to develop and implement a plan that will result in employment programs/supports as part of the agency structure in both Baltimore and Cumberland for people who are currently supported or will be supported in those day programs. (\$10,000; Rural)

Final Report: The agency developed and implemented a plan to offer supported employment services at both Baltimore and Cumberland locations. Agency staff now utilize exploration and discovery tools to support people with developmental disabilities seeking employment. As a result, the agency now offers employment services at both locations, and 5 people with developmental disabilities have obtained competitive integrated employment.

7. The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region: Technical assistance to help create an inclusive training center where people with and without developmental disabilities can learn about hospitality. The workforce training center will be in a training hotel, both of which will be connected to an existing meeting and conference center in Harford County. The program will offer training and educational experiences to people with and without developmental disabilities and will also provide housing through the partnering hotel for all students at the training center. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert helped the agency create a business plan to develop an inclusive training center where people with and without developmental disabilities can be trained for employment in the hospitality industry. The inclusive training center will launch once partnerships with Water's Edge Event Center and Harford Community College are final. Once the training center launches, 30 students (15 with I/DD) in year 1 and 60 students (30 with I/DD) in year 2 will train for employment positions in the hospitality industry. The long term goal of the inclusive training center is to train 200 students annually (100 people with I/DD) for employment positions in the hospitality industry.

8. Jewish Community Services: Technical assistance to support efforts to develop and implement a comprehensive employment model, including processes, plans, and changing the roles of staff; identifying resources and opportunities to increase the knowledge and skill of staff; and develop strategies about communicating with potential employers and increasing partnerships in the community. The result will be an increase in the number of people employed. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The agency implemented a discovery and customization model (DCM) within their employment support services (ESS) program. 4 staff members received ACRE certification and a new agency position (lead job coach/discovery specialist position) was created to assist with the transition of the DCM in the ESS program. As a result of these changes/improvements, 18 new

employer relationships were established, community partnerships increased from 22 to 36, and 4 people with developmental disabilities obtained competitive integrated employment.

9. The Arc Carroll County: Technical assistance to help infuse a consistent person-centered thinking and planning process throughout the entire agency. Specifically, the subject matter expert will help develop a strategic framework; restructure the organization; and develop an accountability process to include certain measures. (\$10,000)

Final Report: Person-centered planning (PCP) practices were implemented throughout the agency. A Meaningful Day Coordinator Position was created to assist individuals in planning their meaningful day activities. Agency staff now complete a one-page personal description with individuals served. Staff utilize this PCP tool to help individuals served identify their dreams, preferences, and goals. The meaningful day coordinator uses this PCP tool to create a weekly schedule for the individual guiding meaningful day activities. As a result, 124 people with developmental disabilities increased meaningful day activities and 8 people with developmental disabilities obtained competitive integrated employment.

10. The League for People with Disabilities: Technical assistance to help the agency learn about best practices in employment supports, develop a strategic plan, and assist in using accountability measures, practices, processes, and strategies to increase employment outcomes. (\$10,000)

Final Report: Technical assistance helped the agency transform practices and make improvements to employment services. 28 staff increased their knowledge of Employment First best practices. 24 individuals with I/DD and 44 family members attended the agency's first DDA Family Night. As a result, attendees increased their knowledge of Employment First and community-based employment supports and services. The SME evaluated the organization's ability to provide employment supports and made recommendations for improvements. This resulted in creation of a Person-Centered Planning Department, 3 new employment positions, and a new data management system to document employment services. The goal of these changes is to streamline employment supports, create more employer partnerships, and improve employment practices to support more people with developmental disabilities seeking employment. As a result, 8 people with developmental disabilities obtained competitive integrated employment.

11. SEEC: Ongoing technical assistance to help streamline and expand supports in ways that maximize efficiencies so that more people are supported to work; expand the agency's Business Advisory Council; and help identify other financial and non-financial resources to build the capacity of the agency. The subject matter expert will evaluate current practices with input from people with developmental disabilities and then make recommendations. (\$8,910)

Final Report: The subject matter expert (SME) administered a quality control assessment to 49 staff to determine their competency related to employer engagement and customized employment. Assessment results helped the SME target support to key staff in the agency. The SME also helped the agency to improve 6 policies/procedures to align meaningful day and employment services around the mission of customized employment. Additionally, the SME helped the agency improve the structure of the Business Advisory Council to take a primary leadership role in driving employment outcomes throughout the agency. As a result, 20 new employer

relationships were established, 100 individuals with developmental disabilities completed exploration and discovery activities, and 31 individuals with developmental disabilities obtained competitive integrated employment.

12. Community Options: Technical assistance to help improve employment outcomes by strengthening the resiliency of the board, staff, and people with developmental disabilities and deepening their commitment to support people to work and have meaningful days when not working. This will help address barriers and increase capacity and resiliency and will be integrated into the agency's operations and strategic plan. (\$10,000)

Final Report: The subject matter expert (SME) helped the agency increase capacity to support more people with developmental disabilities to work and have meaningful days. 4 agency staff were ACRE trained, and 3 new employment staff were hired so more people with I/DD are supported. The agency implemented an Interest Inventory to streamline meaningful day and employment supports to people with I/DD. Additionally, increased community networking among agency staff and the Advisory Committee has addressed barriers to employer relationships. As a result, 10 people with developmental disabilities obtained competitive integrated employment and are participating in meaningful day activities when not working.