

# Transitioning to a Community Perspective with Employment Opportunities

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# Driving Factors

- ▶ The “Program” Fit vs Individuals’ Lives and Possibilities
- ▶ New Referrals-Desire for employment
- ▶ Accepting Satisfaction vs Raising Expectations, Improving lives (fuller life, fulfilling experiences)
- ▶ Past Outcomes vs Future Interests, Needs and Outcomes
- ▶ Segregated Options vs Integrated Opportunities
- ▶ Most Important: “It is time” “It is the right thing to do”
- ▶ Not a financial decision-no more money
- ▶ Mission-Opportunity and Community (in business to improve people’s lives and opportunities)
- ▶ Sense of “well being”

# Focus on a Cultural Shift

- ▶ Person Centered-What is important?
- ▶ Informed Choice-increasing experiences and exposure
- ▶ Meaningful Life Experiences
- ▶ Balancing Support with Personal Success
- ▶ Relationship Building
- ▶ Adult Life Expectations
- ▶ Real Employment-Regular Wages- Ordinary places
- ▶ One Person at a Time
- ▶ Challenge the Status Quo...because we've always done it that way
- ▶ Principle of the "Ordinary Way"
- ▶ Facility to Community

# Strategies

- ▶ Stakeholder Awareness and Education
- ▶ Staff Capacity Building-Communication, Training Investment, Involvement, Allocation of Staff Time/Staff Resources, Job Description Revisions (Community Builders)
- ▶ **One Person at a Time**-Discovery and MAP (My Action Plan)
- ▶ 10% of individuals wanting to work
- ▶ New Referrals
- ▶ School to Employment Transition-collaboration with schools
- ▶ 2 hour shifts (prevocation/production), Tours/Informational Interviews, Learning Circles, Volunteering, Peer mentoring and Work Place Visits
- ▶ Sharing Successes
- ▶ Customized Approach to Employment - **One Person at a Time**

# Prevocation Today 222

- ▶ Business Tours/Job Shadowing/Informational Interviews
- ▶ Volunteer Opportunities
- ▶ Customer Service Class
- ▶ Small Business/Marketing Team-Healthy Snack
- ▶ Little Free Library Circulation
- ▶ Financial literacy
- ▶ Soft Skills
- ▶ Relationships-Building and Respecting
- ▶ Production-general work skills
- ▶ Occupations-Lobby Porter, Produce Gardening
- ▶ Media Class
- ▶ Discovery
- ▶ Mock Interviews-Personal Presentations

# Lessons learned

- ▶ Learning Circles-Interactive, Involvement and Hands On experience
- ▶ Volunteering is Important (Follow the DOL rules)
- ▶ Staff Need Planning/Coordination time - involve individuals
- ▶ Community-Spend time there
- ▶ Share Successes
- ▶ Apply to DVR early
- ▶ Agency space is helpful
- ▶ Staffing ratios

# Challenges Ahead

- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Employment Hours
- ▶ Friendships-Social Connections
- ▶ Meaningful Day-live, work and play
- ▶ Job loss or Reduction in Hours
- ▶ Job Changes
- ▶ Benefits Analysis- earnings vs financial benefits
- ▶ Funding Priorities
- ▶ Technology Opportunities

# Stay The Course

- ▶ “Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal.” Henry Ford
- ▶ “How strange that the nature of life is change, yet the nature of human beings is to resist change. And how ironic that the difficult times we fear might ruin us are the very ones that can break us open and help us blossom into who we were meant to be.” Elizabeth lesser, Author