

# Employment First

## 2015 Oregon Senate Committee on Workforce March 16, 2015

Mike Maley, DHS Statewide Employment First Coordinator

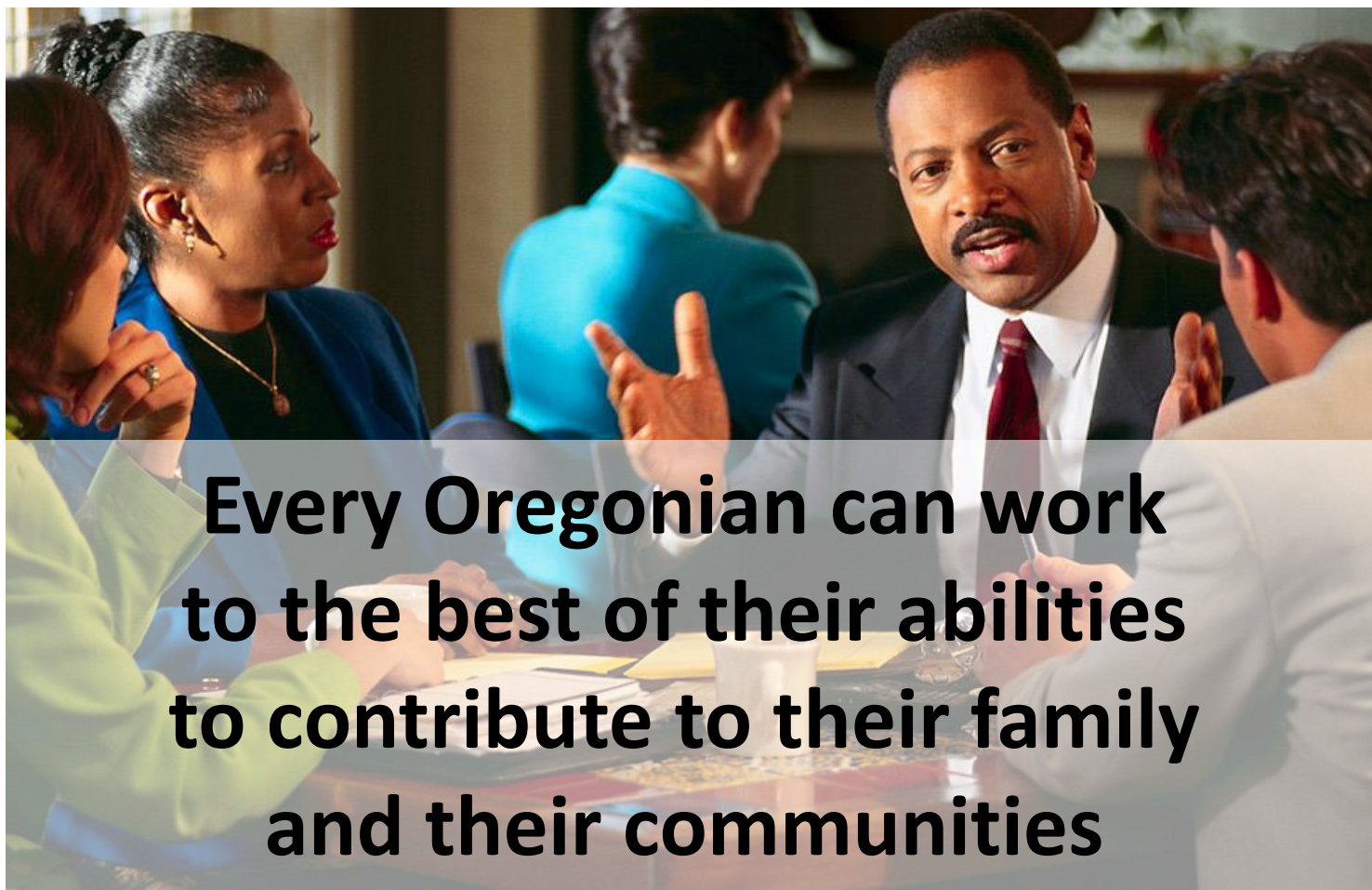
Lilia Teninty, Director, DHS Office of Developmental Disability Services (ODDS)

Trina M. Lee, Interim Director, DHS Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Mitch Kruska, Director of Education Programs, Secondary Transition and Assessment,  
Oregon Department of Education (ODE)



# Employment First



**Every Oregonian can work  
to the best of their abilities  
to contribute to their family  
and their communities**

# Employment First Background

- The DHS Employment First policy: work in integrated jobs is the first and priority option in planning employment services for working-age adults and youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD)
- Governor's Executive Order 15-01 calls for DHS and the Department of Education to improve employment outcomes for individuals with I/DD.
- National initiative: most states are engaged in Employment First activities.
- State and federal policies:
  - ORS 427.007: integrated jobs are the priority in planning employment services for working-age adults and youth who experience I/DD.
  - Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

# Employment First

- Planning and providing services that assist a person with I/DD to choose, get, learn and keep work in an integrated job.
- Employment First is about opportunity. Opportunity to:
  - Explore career paths;
  - Fully use their talents and skills;
  - Work and advance in jobs/careers of their choice;
  - Participate in and contribute to their community like everyone else;
  - Increase social connections;
  - Increase control and choices in one's life;
  - Improve quality of life.

# Benefits

## Employment First: Good for the Person

- Increases financial independence
- Greater social status
- Builds relationships
- Improves self-esteem
- Learn new skills

*“There has been a lot of discrimination against me and people like me out there. But I like it at this job. They are nice and let me do my job.”*

*– Vickie, employee at Eugene Water & Electric Board.*

*“If I can help a customer, show them the product they need, that’s a great day.” — Jeff, employee at Ray’s Food Place, Roseburg*





# Benefits

## Employment First: Good for Business

In a national study, businesses reported such benefits as:

- Inclusive, diverse workforce;
- Good talent matches for jobs;
- Motivated, dependable employees;
- Increased customer loyalty;
- Overall increased engagement.

*“Hiring Matt, Ian, and Brad has united the team in ways I didn’t think was possible.” -- Curtis, service parts manager, Butler Hyundai of Medford.*



*“I cannot tell you, as a manager, how hard it is to find someone who want to work, cares about their work, and takes pride in their work. It has made all the difference in our business.” -- Christy, manager, Desert Lanes Family Fun Center.*

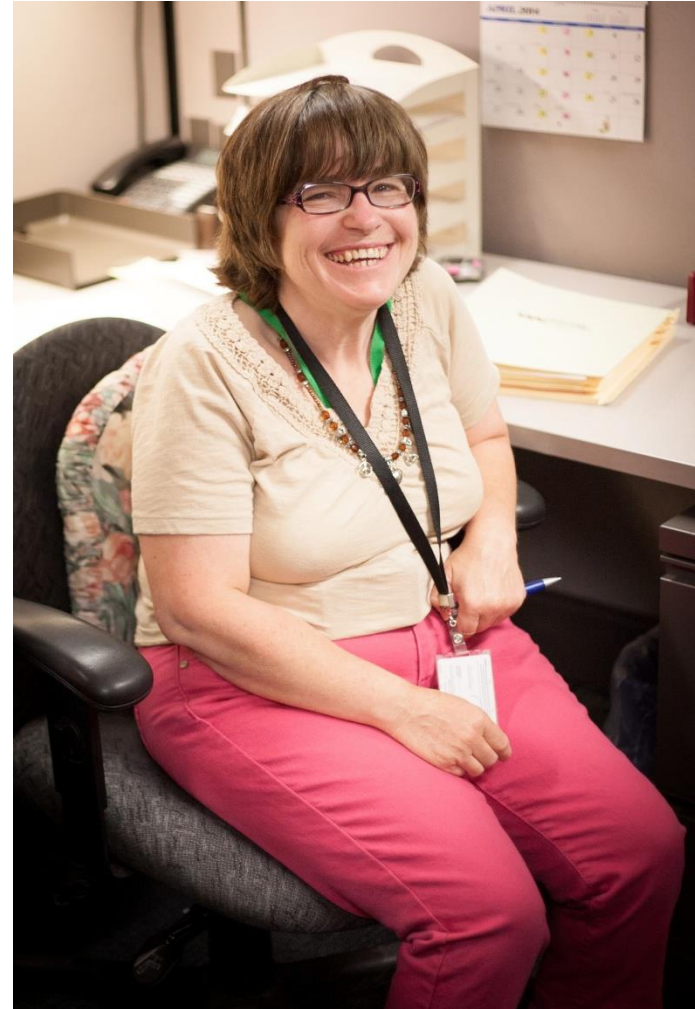


# Employment First Implementation

- Major system change effort.
- Focus both on youth and working age adults with I/DD, including those in Sheltered Workshops and other facility-based service settings.
- Increasing capacity to deliver needed employment services.
- Establishing collaborative and complementary working arrangements among partners.
- Conducting outreach, awareness and education activities.

# What Success Looks Like

- 8% increase in people with I/DD working in integrated jobs.
- 1,042 new employment services given to target population (transition-age and sheltered workers).
- 29% increase in applicants with I/DD to Vocational Rehabilitation.





# Youth – School Transition

Bonnie, 21, graduated from the Lake Oswego Transition Program in June 2014 with a job that she loves at LexiDog.

“I’ve started getting more responsibility, the longer I’ve been here. Last time I bathed a dog really well, I got a tip from a customer!”



Bonnie, holding her favorite “doggie customer” at LexiDog in Lake Oswego, often shows up early for work because she loves her job so much.

# Working Age Adults

Jerry, second from left, left his sheltered workshop in July 2014 and now works 30 hours per week at the Wildhorse Resort & Casino in Pendleton.

“What I really like is getting to talk to and meet so many different types of people”



Jerry, second from left, works with four coworkers in the laundry area of Wildhorse Resort & Casino.

# Challenges

- History
  - Lack of belief by some that people with significant disabilities can work in the community.
- Pace of change
  - Many of the system change efforts are happening rapidly, and at once.
- Federal issues/drivers
  - There are new federal laws and policies that effect implementation.
  - There is Federal court litigation.

# Challenges - continued

- Service provider capacity
  - Additional providers are needed.
  - New skill sets are required.
  - Current providers may need to transform business models and practices.
- Prioritization of work
  - Additional initiatives and system change efforts compete for time, attention, and resources.

# Partnerships

The DHS Office of Developmental Disability Services and Vocational Rehabilitation, plus the Department of Education, are the primary state agencies charged with meeting the Employment First goals. Many other state and local partners are needed to achieve success.

Continue efforts to:

- Align with the Workforce Systems
- Work with local workforce boards and providers to expand employer (sectors) and community work opportunities



# Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Services Overview

**Lilia Teninty, Director  
Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS)**



# Our Commitment to Those We Serve

## Core Values

Choice and self-determination

Integration in community settings

Services are consistent with choice

Individuals, families and advocates play a major role in their services

Integration, independence and productivity

# Who We Serve

We serve **over 22,000** people who experience Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD).

This includes down syndrome, cerebral palsy, autism spectrum disorders, acquired brain injury (children), drug and alcohol affected children.



# ODDS Services

- The following services support people with I/DD in integrated employment settings:
  - Case Management Services
  - Residential Supports such as Foster and Group Homes
  - In-Home Services
  - Family Supports
  - Ancillary Supports such as Transportation
  - Employment Related Services

# Employment Related Services

- The following services support people with I/DD in integrated employment settings:
  - Individual Supported Employment
  - Discovery
  - Job Development
  - Small Group Supported
  - Employment Path Services





# Priorities and Challenges - Employment First

- Implementing new federal regulations
  - Integrated services settings
- Need to increase service provider capacity
  - Case management services
  - Direct service providers
- Need to address increasing number of referrals
  - Children and adults

# Vocational Rehabilitation Overview

**Trina M. Lee, Interim Director, Vocational Rehabilitation**



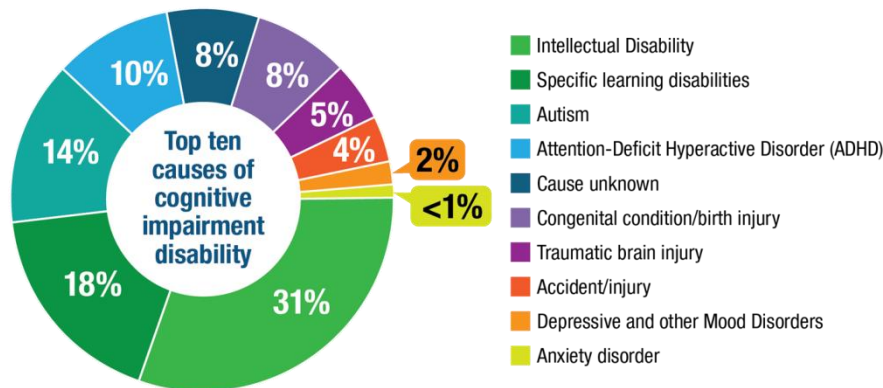
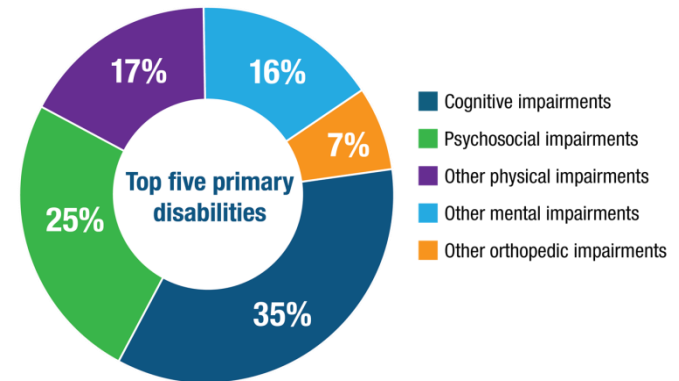
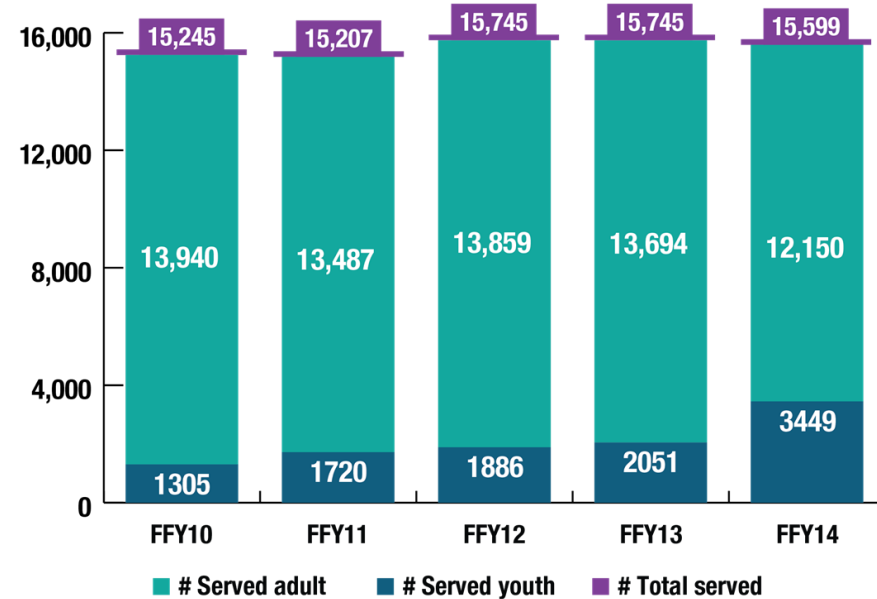
# Mission statement

Assist  
Oregonians  
with disabilities  
to achieve and maintain  
employment and  
independence

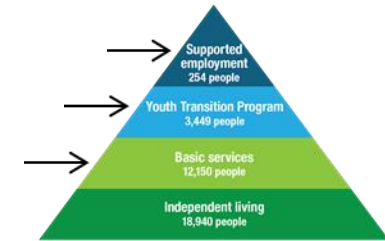


# Oregonians served

- In FFY 2014 served:
  - 15,599 individuals
    - 12,150 Adults
    - 3,449 Youth
- In SFY 2014:
  - 2,394 ODDS clients also accessed VR services



# VR Services



- **“Basic Services”**
  - Helps individuals with disabilities to find, enter and maintain employment
- **Youth Transition Program**
  - Helps high school youth with disabilities prepare for employment or career-related post-secondary education
- **Supported employment**
  - Individuals with the most significant disabilities who can obtain competitive employment in the community with intensive training and job coaching



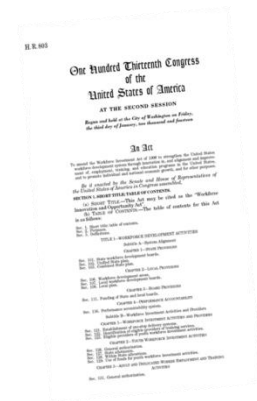
# VR Service Array – cont.

- **VR Services for Providers**
  - Training, sharing information and support
- **VR Services for Employers**
  - Employer engagement activities
  - Workforce training and supports
  - Diversity and inclusion consultation and support



# Priorities and Challenges – Employment First

- Implementation of WIOA
- Need to expand youth transition services
- Need to increase VR staff and direct service provider capacity
- Address increasing referrals of Individuals with I/DD
  - Increased number of referrals
  - Increasing severity of disabilities of those referred



# Department of Education Overview

**Mitch Kruska, Director**

**Education Programs, Secondary Transition and Assessment**

**Office of Learning, Student Services Unit**

# Background

- The Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) requires that students found eligible in one of 12 categories receive individualized education services.
- Each eligible student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
  - Transition services become a part of the IEP no later than the year when a student turns 16.
- Transition services are based on a student's post-secondary goals, whether employment or further post-secondary education.

# Background - continued

- There are over 86,000 children, age 6 through age 21, who are identified and receive special education services.
- There are 197 public school districts, but more importantly as it relates to transition services, there are 375 public high schools.

# • ODE and Employment First Initiative

- ODE is required under the IDEA to provide transition services to all youth with disabilities.
- Additionally, under Executive Order 15-01 ODE has specific provisions to serve students with I/DD including collaborating with VR and ODDS to support the delivery of transition services to students with I/DD.



# ODE and Employment First Initiative - continued

- Creation of a Transition Technical Assistance Network (TTAN) which includes the Transition Network Facilitators who act as liaisons between local education, vocational rehabilitation, and developmental disability services.
- Provide education and awareness activities to students with I/DD and their families about employment first goals and employment in integrated community settings.

# ODE and Employment First Initiative - continued

- We anticipate that during the 8 – year course of the Executive Order approximately 15,000 transition age students will be eligible for ODDS services.

# Priorities and Challenges – Employment First

- Implementation of WIOA and WIOA related activities.
- Work to expand community-based job experience opportunities for students in collaboration with VR and ODDS.
- Continue collaborative efforts at the local level among all key partners.
  - Including promoting early engagement by students and families with the ODDS and VR systems.

# Department of Human Services

[www.oregon.gov/dhs](http://www.oregon.gov/dhs)

## DHS Employment First Initiative

<http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/employment/employment-first>

## Oregon Department of Education

<http://www.ode.state.or.us>