



**NCCDD Executive Director
Chris Egan**

A Message from the Executive Director

Celebrated every October, National Disability Employment Awareness Month brings to attention the need for competitive, inclusive employment for people with disabilities. This year the theme is #InclusionWorks to showcase that including people with

disabilities in the workforce leads to the achievement of very important outcomes for the employee and the employer. When the employee is contributing, the employer benefits from those contributions. In fact, data shows us that production can increase, as does the morale in the workplace, when diversity in the workplace increases. Additionally, innovative solutions may be explored and put into place which may benefit the employee with a disability and other employees.

Here at the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCCDD), we've been celebrating the month by sharing the stories of people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD) who are employed around the State. We are learning about incredible contributions in the workforce and the businesses involved. You may have met Jaimie Yahnker, diagnosed with cerebral palsy, who is a hospitality associate at Vidant Medical Center; or Gregg Hamm, executive chef and founder of P.G. Werth's, whose staff is 30% people with disabilities and more. Check out their stories on our website at <http://bit.ly/NCCDDInclusionWorks>

One of NCCDD's goals under the new Five Year Plan is Financial Asset Development. Current initiatives supporting this important goal include:

- **Project SEARCH through Cincinnati Children's Hospital** is a business-led, one-year, school-to-work program that combines classroom instruction, career exploration, and relevant job-skills training through strategically designed internships for students with I/DD. And, now NC Department of Health and Human Services will serve as Project SEARCH's newest site!



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Public Policy Update

NCCDD's public policy team continues to deliver local, state and federal updates on public policy that affects people with I/DD. Highlights of these updates include:

INNOVATIONS WAIVER:

The NC Innovations Waiver amendments will go into effect on November 1, 2016. The State has conducted readiness reviews and provided trainings to the LME/MCOs. The LME/MCOs were responsible for informing individuals and families about the upcoming changes and the date for implementation.

There are several positive changes in relationship to service definitions that move the system forward in promoting choice and independence. The biggest change in the new waiver is the addition of the resource allocation model. Individuals with November birthdays will be the first to experience this new process. We are hearing from members and other families raising questions and some concerns about the communication and transparency of the process, as many individuals and families received letters describing new levels of funding based on the resource allocation. The Council has reached out to the NC Division of Medical Assistance (DMA) and is gathering more information about the resource allocation formula and process. Plans are being finalized for a panel discussion during the November meeting of the Council, focusing on the Innovations Waiver.

During the legislative session this past year, 250 new Innovations Waiver slots were appropriated. These slots will go into effect in January 2016. The allocation of these to LME/MCOs has not been determined.

LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE:

At the recent legislative oversight committee, there was focus on the issue of Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization (LME/MCO) fund balances and the cuts to single stream funding that occurred over the past two years. More direction will be given to the LME/MCOs about the appropriate amounts for fund balances going forward. There continues to be an effort to monitor the effect of the cuts to single stream

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Highlights & Hot Topics

#InclusionWorks: Stories of Employees with Disabilities



CELEBRATE OCTOBER 2016

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

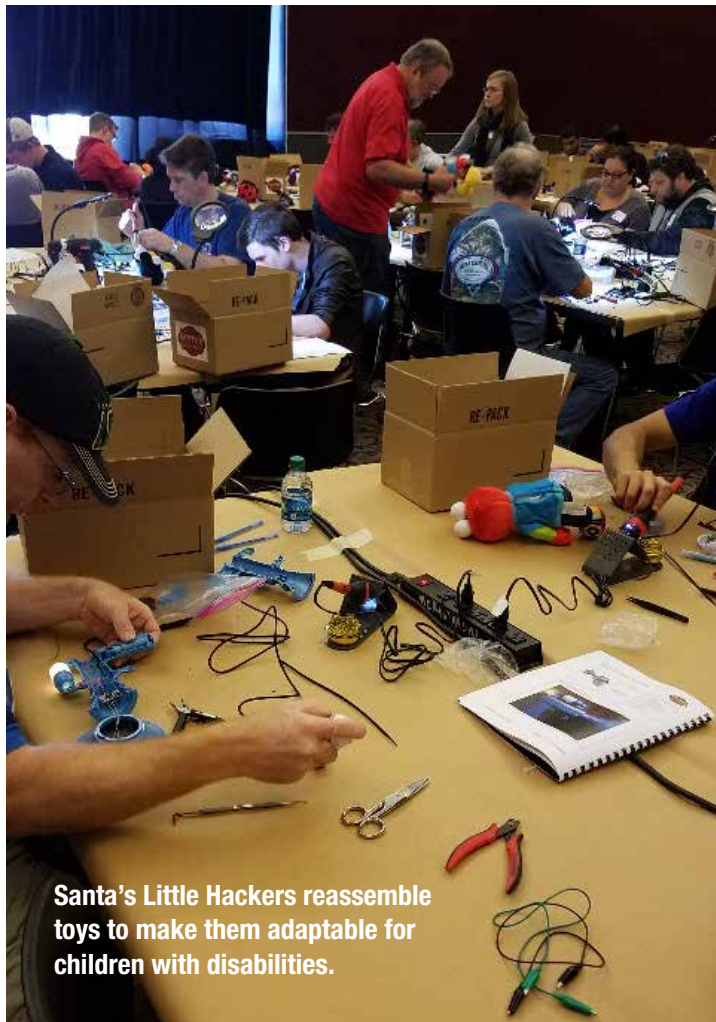
#InclusionWorks



OFFICE OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
dol.gov/odep



Inclusion Works
for Innovation



Santa's Little Hackers reassemble toys to make them adaptable for children with disabilities.

North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCCDD) recognizes October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). Reflecting the important role disability plays in workforce diversity, this year's NDEAM theme is #InclusionWorks. Observed each October, NDEAM celebrates the contributions of workers with disabilities and educates employers about the value of a diverse workforce inclusive of their skills and talents.

NCCDD collected stories about employees with disabilities and employers who hire people with disabilities to learn more why #InclusionWorks. Check out the stories here: <http://bit.ly/NCCDDInclusionWorks>

Community Living: NCCDD Assists Santa's Hackers to Make Adaptable Toys

Volunteers reassembled about 350 toys after making them adaptable for children with disabilities on Saturday, Oct. 22 at the McKimmon Center in Raleigh through the Santa's Little Hackers event. The adaptable toys allow the kids to play, interact, find joy and learn. NC Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Rick Brajer addressed the volunteers at the event and NCCDD Executive Director Chris Egan volunteered at the event.



Project SEARCH, Apprenticeships Make Employment a Reality for Young Adults with I/DD

“We make a difference everyday.” That is the slogan of both Project SEARCH and 22-year-old Connor Bilhardt. Project SEARCH is a high school transition initiative which is a business-led, one-year, school-to-work program that

combines classroom instruction, career exploration and relevant job-skills training through strategically designed internships for students with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD). Bilhardt is a young man who has achieved employment success because of the initiative.

He works at the Groomtowne Road Food Lion in Greensboro, North Carolina. A recent graduate of Western Guilford High School and a June graduate of Project SEARCH, Bilhardt, who is on the autism spectrum, works three days a week in the produce department.

“My favorite part of my job is that I like to help people find items,” he says. He has been saving his paychecks for things such as going to the movies and camp at Rockbridge in Virginia.

The Project SEARCH initiative, contracted through Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, is funded by the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCCDD). Project SEARCH helps students develop employable and functional skills, providing them with three internship rotations that prepare them for obtaining jobs after graduation.



Project SEARCH interns at Harris Regional Hospital.

Within a few months of graduating, Lucas McIntyre has received the highest level of employee recognition – 100% Guest Delight – as a server assistant/busser at the Olive Garden Italian restaurant in Burlington. Meanwhile, Richard Henderson became a dishwashing assistant at the Village Grill in Burlington and saw his hours increase from 20 to approximately 30 as his pace, confidence and social skills also improved. Other Project SEARCH



Lisa Nickerson works with at Sharon Towers in Charlotte.

graduates have landed jobs at places such as NC A&T University, High Point Regional Health System and positions in respite care, nursing homes and animal shelters.

In addition to supporting the sustainable expansion of Project SEARCH in our state, NCCDD recognizes the value of paid internships for individuals with I/DD and is supporting their development through a new employment initiative that started on October 1. The Business Apprenticeship Career Training Service (Business ACTS[®]) has previously established a successful partnership training individuals with I/DD to become feeding assistants for residents with dementia at Sharon Towers in Charlotte. The feeding assistants help senior residents manage the tasks of eating and drinking while permitting the nurses and certified nursing assistants to focus their attention on providing clinical care.

Feeding assistants, such as Lisa Nickerson, are earning income and the opportunity to save money for items such as a car and an apartment, while gaining skills that build their confidence and allow them to start realizing future goals. Because the program is a registered pre-apprenticeship with NCWorks, the feeding assistants will also earn a registered Feeding Assistant Certificate.

NCCDD is also planning to form a coalition/partnership designed to increase competitive, integrated employment for people with I/DD through engaging traditional and non-traditional partners, including businesses that may have an interest in becoming a Project SEARCH host site or offering apprenticeships for people with I/DD.



Public Policy Update *(continued from front page)*

funding as the intent was that services should not be affected as they could be covered through the existing LME/MCO fund balance resources.

Discussions also occurred regarding the strategic plan study of the Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities/Substance Abuse Services (MH/DD/SAS) system that was part of legislation last session. A subcommittee will be appointed to work with the department and division of MH/DD/SAS to develop this strategic plan.

VOTING: INFORMATION YOU CAN USE!

Many people have questions about voting requirements. Disability Rights North Carolina has created a great resource - www.accesssthevotenc.org. Learn more about voter registration and voting, candidate information, reporting a violation, and an email listserv to be kept up-to-date on any further changes. Remember: Voter ID is not required.

IMPORTANT DATES:

10/20 -11/5/16: Early voting period – contact your local County Board of Elections for times and locations. Same day voter registration is allowed during early voting.

11/8/16: Election day

Executive Director *(continued from front page)*

- **Learning and Earning after High School through Western Carolina University**, along with NCCDD, has created a sustainable approach to providing transition resources for students with intellectual disabilities, even for those with the most complex of these disabilities. Successful transitions should be considered very early, certainly ahead of and during middle school and should continue through high school and beyond.
- **Upward to Financial Stability** is contracted through the National Disability Institute. This initiative provides education and training to spread financial awareness and conducts financial literacy training to individuals and families to raise expectations for people to develop and better manage their financial assets.



Join us in celebrating October's National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)! We hope you enjoy our stories of employers and employees who are telling everyone that #InclusionWorks!



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