



## MEANINGFUL CAREERS COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

November 3, 2022

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council  
3839 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 306, Phoenix, Arizona 85012

A committee meeting of the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC) was convened virtually June 28, 2022. Notice having been duly given. Present were the following members of the Meaningful Careers Committee, guests, and staff.

<b>Committee Members Present</b>
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Melissa Van Hook, Chair, Telephone  
Erik Jensen, Telephone  
Nathan Pullen, Telephone  
J.J. Rico, Telephone  
James Rivera, Telephone

<b>Guest and Staff</b>	<b>Committee Members Absent</b>
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Andrea Benkendorf, Vocational Rehabilitation  
Allison Cohen Hall, UMASS Boston  
Oliver Lyons, UMASS Boston  
John Shepard, UMASS Boston  
Jean Winsor, UMASS Boston  
Steve Freeman, Director of Communications  
Michael Leyva, Contracts/Grants Coordinator  
Jon Meyers, Executive Director

Monica Cooper  
Kristen Mackey  
Wendy Parent Johnson

### A. Welcome & Introductions

Chairperson Melissa Van Hook welcomed everyone to the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC or Council) Meaningful Careers Committee meeting. The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. Roll call and participant introductions were completed.

### B. Review of June 28, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Melissa Van Hook asked members if they reviewed meeting minutes and if there were any corrections. Michael Leyva indicated the letter order of the agenda items was incorrect.

Motion to approve the minutes with the correction was made by J, J. Rico; seconded by James Rivers. The Motion carried.

### **C. Vocational Rehabilitation Study Overview & Next Steps**

Michael Leyva shared the Council issued a Request for Grant Application for an Intensive Study of Arizona's VR Programs and Policies earlier in the year and awarded a contract to the Institute for Community (ICI) at the University of Massachusetts Boston. ICI had previously conducted *The Power of Disability Employment: The Impact to Arizona's Economy* study which has been recognized for its in-depth analysis and recommendations. The ICI team led by Jean Winsor joined the meeting to provide an overview of the VR Study. In addition to Jean Winsor, Allison Cohen Hall, Oliver Lyons and John Shepard introduced themselves. ICI will use a mixed methods approach including secondary data analysis, policy and practice document review, and data collection from stakeholders to conduct the study.

Research questions will focus on:

- How well is Arizona's VR program performing in helping transition-aged youth (ages 14 – 24) with I/DD obtain their employment goals?
- The key strengths and barriers to achieving successful outcomes for Arizona's VR program.
- Do disparities exist in employment outcome by disability type, spoken language, and race/ethnicity? If so, what is the nature of the disparities and why do they exist?
- Are there specific services that move youth toward a path that led to successful outcomes?
- Are certain services more impactful than others? Are service trends emerging? Are there true success markers?
- What does not currently work well within Arizona's VR system? Are there services that are not producing positive impacts?
- Recommended measures to capture/demonstrate successful outcomes for transition-aged youth with disabilities.

ICI team shared how Research Activity 1 will be conducted, reviewed identification of comparison states, and selection criteria for states. The criteria were based on:

- Medicaid managed care for health care and long-term services and supports (LTSS)
- A decentralized public K-12 system with strong local control
- A similar race/ethnicity profile
- A PROMISE model demonstration program
- A relatively high proportion of LTSS participants with I/DD living in their family's home
- A statewide right to work law

The selection criteria are identical to those used for *The Power of Disability of Employment: The Impact to Arizona's Economy* study. Committee members agreed the criteria should be used for the VR Study.

Committee members commented that Arizona has lots of charter schools; lots of Empowerment Scholarship Accounts (ESAs) and it's only growing in popularity; the top three bullets still apply – top 3 especially; no other state like Arizona in terms of rural vs. urban; and the impact COVID-19 has had on Arizona, been very slow regarding complaints about VR services.

ICI team shared how Research Activity 2 will be conducted, will examine national best practices of VR policies and programs to compare with Arizona's current VR system. Best practices include:

- Pre-Employment Transition Services
- Collaboration between VR, local schools, workforce development systems, and Division of Developmental Disabilities, and
- Implementation of Section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Committee members commented on collaboration between school systems; state policy vs. federal policy; collaboration between VR and schools; differentiate between schools that have an agreement and those schools that do not; and does Pre-ETS have an impact if it starts earlier.

ICI team shared how Research Activity 3 will be conducted, interviews to determine experiences with VR.

- Current/former (within 3 years) VR clients and their families
- VR staff
- VR contracted provider staff
- School staff, and
- Staff from state agencies/programs including Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), and the Arizona Department of Education (ADE).

ICI asked if there were specific individuals within the groups the Committee recommended for interviews. Committee members will forward names to Michael Leyva.

Next steps.

- Complete analysis of Arizona outcomes
- Develop product 1: Summary of Arizona outcomes
- Examine and analyze Arizona practices and compare to national best practices
- Begin conducting outreach to interviewees

**D. Call to the Public**

Chairperson Melissa Van Hook issued a Call to the Public. No public members were in attendance.

**E. Adjourn**

Chairperson Melissa Van Hook adjourned the Meaningful Careers Committee Meeting at 10:52 a.m.

Dated this 8<sup>th</sup> day of November 2022  
Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council