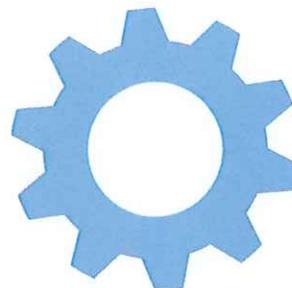
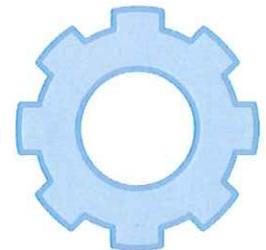
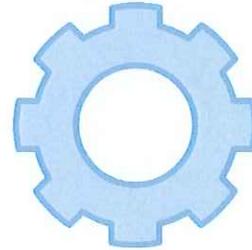
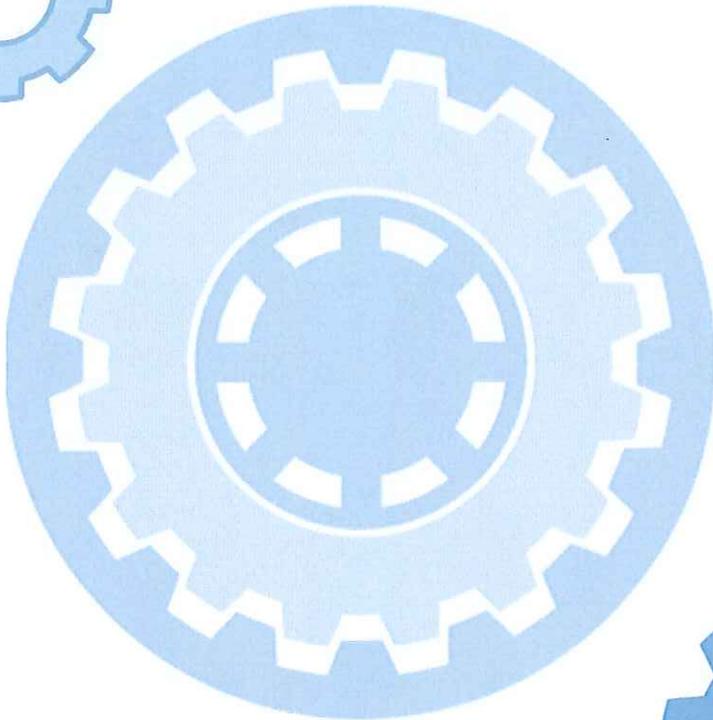
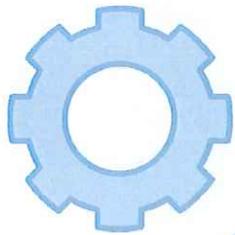


ARIZONA EMPLOYMENT FIRST
J★BS

Job Opportunities Build Success

Strategic Plan



Arizona Employment First Core Team Members

Co-Chairs

Margaret Corcoran, Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

Susan Voirol, University of Arizona, Sonoran University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (Sonoran UCEDD)

Members

Jennifer Baier, VALLEYLIFE

Amy Boyer, Parent, Advocate

Larry Clausen, Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC)

Leslie Cohen, University of Arizona, Sonoran University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (Sonoran UCEDD)

Gina Griffiths, Scottsdale Training & Rehabilitation Services (STARS)

Janet Holt, Cave Creek Unified School District

Mark Jacoby, Gompers Habilitation Center

Dara Johnson, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)

Jeri Kendle, Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center (SARRC)

Steve King, Beacon Group

Lynda Kosnik, Arizona Department of Economic Security, Rehabilitation Services Administration/Vocational Rehabilitation (DES/RSA)

Michael Leyva, Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC)

Nicholas Love, ABILITY360

John Robert McDermott, Northern Arizona University, Institute for Human Development, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (NAU-IHD/UCEDD)

John Muir, Cave Creek Unified School District

Ana Nunez, Arizona Department of Education, Exceptional Student Services (ADE/ESS)

Adam Robson, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) - Division Behavioral Health Services

Laura Schweers, University of Arizona, Sonoran University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (Sonoran UCEDD)

Sara Sembiante, Arizona Department of Economic Security, Rehabilitation Services Administration/Vocational Rehabilitation (DES/RSA)

Ralph Serpico, Untapped Arizona

Linda Tasco, Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

Jennifer Thorson, Disability Employment Advocate, Trainer & Consultant

Chuck Tiller, Beacon Group

Tom Uno, Northern Arizona University, Institute for Human Development, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, (NAU-IHD/UCEDD)

Leslie Williams, Raising Special Kids (RSK)

Melita Winnick, The Centers for Habilitation (TCH)

Vision

Competitive employment is the preferred daily activity for all working age Arizonans who have disabilities.



Guiding Principles

- ★ The current low participation rate of people who have disabilities in the workforce is unacceptable. Access to “real jobs with real wages” is essential if people who have disabilities are to avoid lives of poverty, dependence, and isolation.
- ★ All working age people who have disabilities can participate in jobs that provide for meaningful work, with pay at or above minimum wage, benefits, and opportunities for integration with other workers.
- ★ As with all other individuals, employees with disabilities require assistance and support to ensure success on the job and should have access to supports needed to succeed in the workplace.
- ★ All people, regardless of disability, have the right to pursue the full range of available employment opportunities and to earn a living wage in a job of their choosing, based on their talents, skills, and interests.
- ★ Outreach efforts should include diverse populations statewide.
- ★ Policies and practices should be conducive to the employment of people who have disabilities in general and Employment First principles in particular.
- ★ Benefits counseling should be available to all people who have disabilities who want to work so that they understand the options available to them.

What is Employment First?

Employment First encompasses the belief that community-based, integrated employment should be the primary day activity for working age youth and adults with disabilities.

It supports an overarching goal that eligible persons with disabilities will have access to integrated work settings most appropriate for them, including the supports necessary to help them succeed in the workplace.

Employment First does not mean employment only and does not deny individual choice.

Employment First does not eliminate service options currently available but is intended to increase employment opportunities.

Why Employment First in Arizona?

In 2012, only 20% of people in the DDD system receiving day services were in integrated employment.

In 2012, only 14% of DDD funding spent on day and employment services went to integrated employment.

People who work have a higher quality of life, greater community participation, and are more likely to make their own choices in life.

New regulations from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, Department of Justice and the Department of Labor are requiring states to prioritize integrated services for everyone who has a disability.

Who is Involved in Arizona Employment First?

- Advocates
- Educators
- Employers
- Employment Service Provider Agencies
- Family Members
- State Agencies:
 - Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System
 - Arizona Department of Economic Security/
Division of Developmental Disabilities &
Rehabilitation Services Administration/
Vocational Rehabilitation
 - Arizona Department of Education/
Exceptional Student Services
 - Arizona Department of Health Services/
Division of Behavioral Health Services
 - Arizona Developmental Disabilities
Planning Council
- University Centers for Excellence in
Developmental Disabilities
- Youth and Young Adults

Key Directions

- 1** Foster and maintain **COLLABORATION** in order to increase the competitive employment of people who have disabilities

Strategy:

 - #1: State level collaboration
 - #2: Local level collaboration
- 2** Increase **AWARENESS** of the potential of people who have disabilities and **ADVOCATE** for their competitive employment

Strategy:

 - #1: Education for people who have disabilities
 - #2: Education for families
 - #3: Education for employers
 - #4: Education for those who provide support
 - #5: Public awareness
- 3** Prepare **YOUTH** for competitive employment, especially in high potential employment sectors and including self-employment

Strategy:

 - #1: Education/support for youth, starting early and continuing through adulthood
 - #2: Education/support for families
 - #3: Education/support for those who prepare youth for employment
- 4** Foster **JOB** creation, hiring, retention, promotion, and self-employment

Strategy:

 - #1: Technical assistance and other supports for employers
 - #2: Incentives for employers and those who contribute to job development, retention, and promotion
- 5** Create and promote **POLICIES** that lead to the successful employment of people who have disabilities

Strategy:

 - #1: Identify and communicate Employment First policy benefits
 - #2: Identify and address policy barriers; build on policies that have worked
 - #3: Research, propose, and implement new policies that support the successful employment of people who have disabilities
 - #4: Incorporate Employment First into state plans and protocols
 - #5: Establish a service delivery model that facilitates transition to competitive employment
- 6** Foster the development of employment-focused **SUPPORTS**

Strategy:

 - #1: Provide education and ongoing professional development

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

1

2

3

KEY DIRECTION	STRATEGY	MAJOR ACTION
COLLABORATION	1.1 State level collaboration	Create a statewide alliance with shared goals and measures of success
		Explore creation of an infrastructure to support Arizona Employment First
		Continue the Arizona community of practice on transition
		Collaborate with those working on Employment First nationally and in other states
		Provide regular updates on what is going on nationally and in Arizona
	1.2 Local level collaboration	Create local alliances with shared goals and measures of success
AWARENESS & ADVOCATE	2.1 Education for people who have disabilities	Develop and provide audience-specific advocacy education using a peer approach
		Identify champions
		Reach out to under-represented groups and areas
	2.2 Education for families	Develop and provide audience-specific advocacy education using a peer approach
		Identify champions
		Reach out to under-represented groups and areas
	2.3 Education for employers	Develop and provide audience-specific advocacy education using a peer approach
		Identify champions
		Reach out to under-represented groups and areas
	2.4 Education for those who provide support	Develop and provide audience-specific advocacy education using a peer approach
		Identify champions
		Reach out to under-represented groups and areas
		Include a wide variety of professionals who support people who have disabilities
	2.5 Public awareness	Identify champions
		Reach out to under-represented groups and areas
Include a wide variety of professionals who support people who have disabilities		
YOUTH	3.1 Education/support for youth, starting early and continuing through adulthood	Create a pathway to employment, including post-secondary education
		Engage self-advocacy organizations in education and support
		Promote use of planning tools and other promising practices for all ages
		Provide opportunities for work experience, promote career exploration
		Promote use of benefits counseling

KEY DIRECTION	STRATEGY	MAJOR ACTION	
3 YOUTH	3.2	Education/support for families	Engage family support organizations in education and support
			Promote use of planning tools and other promising practices for all ages
			Provide opportunities for work experience, promote career exploration
			Promote use of benefits counseling
	3.3	Education/support for those who prepare youth for employment	Promote use of planning tools and other promising practices for all ages
			Provide opportunities for work experience, promote career exploration
4 JOBS	4.1	Technical assistance and other supports for employers	Make presentations on hiring opportunities, benefits of hiring, available incentives, and untapped resources for employers
			Identify champions in high potential employment sectors
			Utilize a peer approach
			Provide diversity training for co-workers
	4.2	Incentives for employers and those who contribute to job development, retention and promotion	Create incentives for employers and those who contribute to job development, retention, and promotion
5 POLICIES	5.1	Identify and communicate Employment First policy benefits	Identify current Federal and State policies that can support hiring, retention, and promotion of people who have disabilities
			Communicate with employers about how hiring, retention, and promotion of people who have disabilities contribute to compliance with policy mandates
	5.2	Identify and address policy barriers; build on policies that have worked	Identify policies that represent a barrier, policy gaps, promising approaches to addressing these, and policy partners who can help
	5.3	Research, propose, and implement new policies that support the successful employment of people who have disabilities	Identify current Federal and State policies that can support hiring, retention, and promotion of people who have disabilities
	5.4	Incorporate Employment First into state plans and protocols	Identify State plans and protocols that can support hiring, retention, and promotion of people who have disabilities
	5.5	Establish a service delivery model that facilitates transition to competitive employment	Establish the State of Arizona as a model employer, promote among other governmental jurisdictions
6 SUPPORTS	6.1	Provide education and ongoing professional development	Create a cadre of qualified employment support professionals, identify or develop curricula and implement certification and ongoing professional development for job coaches and job developers, link credentials to rates
			Using a peer approach, provide training and technical assistance to service providers re: transition of business practices, share promising practices
			Identify and share models for supporting transition from school to employment for/with youth, families, schools, State agencies, and employers

What Success Looks Like

There are measurable increases in employment of people who have disabilities within the general workforce, earning minimum wage or higher with benefits.

Youth who have disabilities have the independent living skills required to pursue employment and the work experiences that are typical for their age group.

Greater opportunities exist for people who have disabilities to pursue self-employment and the development of microenterprises.

Employers universally value people who have disabilities as an integral part of their workforce and include them within general recruitment and hiring efforts as standard practice.

Employment is the first and preferred option when youth who have disabilities are exploring and setting their life goals.

People who have disabilities have increased incomes, financial assets, and economic wealth.

People who have disabilities are employed within the general workforce, regardless of the severity of disability and assistance required.

People who have disabilities have greater opportunities to advance their careers by taking full advantage of their individual strengths and talents.



Funding is sufficient so that quality services and supports are available as needed for long-term employment success.

People who have disabilities have a regular opportunity to revisit their employment choice.

Next Steps

Implementation of the Arizona Employment First Plan will require the active and ongoing involvement of a variety of stakeholder groups, including youth and adults with disabilities, advocates, educators, employers, employment service provider agencies, family members, State agencies, University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, policymakers, and potential funders. Many of the partners who helped to develop the plan have been providing and will continue to provide support for staff time and various administrative functions required to develop and implement the plan. It is likely that changes in State policies and procedures will be needed. It is anticipated that some level of additional funding will be needed to support the collaborative work and that there may be opportunities for partner organizations to jointly fund some functions. Resources needed to support implementation will be further explored by stakeholders who become involved in the statewide and/or local alliances that are expected to emerge.

Evaluation Measures

There will be progress reports posted online throughout the implementation process. Process measures corresponding to the various Key Directions, Strategies, and Major Actions in the plan will be identified and tracked, e.g., collaborative partners involved in implementation of the plan, educational events for various audiences, technical assistance provided to employers, policies changed/developed, professional development activities designed for employment support professionals.

Additionally, there are some overarching outcome measures that will be monitored, if and when reliable and valid data become available.

These include:

- Percentage of working age adults with disabilities who are competitively employed;
- Percentage of competitively employed working age adults with disabilities retained for a specified period of time; and
- Percentage of competitively employed working age adults with disabilities who are promoted.

If possible, the data will be reported by age, gender, and disability. Baselines will be established.

Currently there are some sources that provide partial data, including the Arizona Department of Education's Statewide Post School Outcomes (PSO) Survey, which tracks the status of a sample of youths one year after they leave school. Additionally, outcomes are tracked by both the Division of Developmental Disabilities and the Rehabilitation Services Administration for persons whom they serve. These sources do not capture the total population of working age adults with disabilities but will serve as a starting point.

A work group will be convened to identify and/or plan for the development of data sources for these measures. The data plan will address where and how the data will be captured and who will collect, analyze, and report the data. The group may also be charged with identifying additional Employment First process and outcome measures.

Generally Accepted Definitions

Competitive Employment — Employment in the community, full-time or part-time, paid at minimum wage or higher, with wages and benefits equal to those without disabilities performing the same work.

Customized Employment — Competitive integrated employment for an individual with a disability, including someone with a significant disability, that is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs, and interests of the individual and meets the business needs of the employer, carried out through flexible strategies.

Group Supported Employment — A group service for individuals with disabilities providing continuous paid supports in a supervised community integrated employment. Participants are paid sub-minimum, minimum and/or prevailing wages in accordance with State and Federal labor laws by the employment service agency contracted to provide the on-site supervision.

Integrated Employment — Work in a community setting where individuals with disabilities interact with others without disabilities to the same extent as anyone working in that setting.

Job Coaching — A time-limited service that provides regular contacts with a competitively employed individual with disabilities and/or with their employer to help the employee develop the specific on-the-job skills necessary for successful employment including: positive work-related habits, attitudes, skills, and work etiquette directly related to their specific employment, as well as

assisting the member to become a part of the informal culture of the workplace.

Micro-Enterprises — Small businesses owned by individuals with disabilities who have control and responsibility for decision-making and overseeing the business, with accompanying business licenses, taxpayer ID, other than Social Security numbers, and separate business bank accounts. They may be considered integrated competitive employment.

Self-Employment — An employment setting in which an individual works in a chosen occupation, for profit or fee, in his or her own small business, with control and responsibility for decisions affecting the conduct of the business.

Sheltered/Center-Based Employment — This is a service provided in a non-community integrated, supervised work environment where participants with disabilities engage in work and work-related activities. Participants are to be involved in gainful work and supported in developing skills, abilities, and behaviors that will enable them to transition into more integrated employment settings. Participants are paid sub-minimum, minimum and/or prevailing wages for all compensatory work in accordance with State and Federal labor laws.

Supported Employment — Community integrated employment that includes the provision of ongoing supports, both formal (employment provider, technology, etc.) and natural (co-workers, friends, family) based on the person's needs to ensure on the job success.

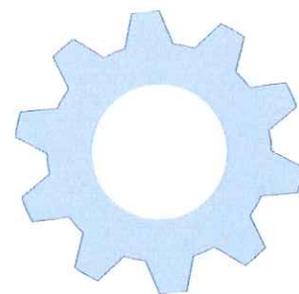
*The only place success comes before work
is in the dictionary.*

- Vince Lombardi

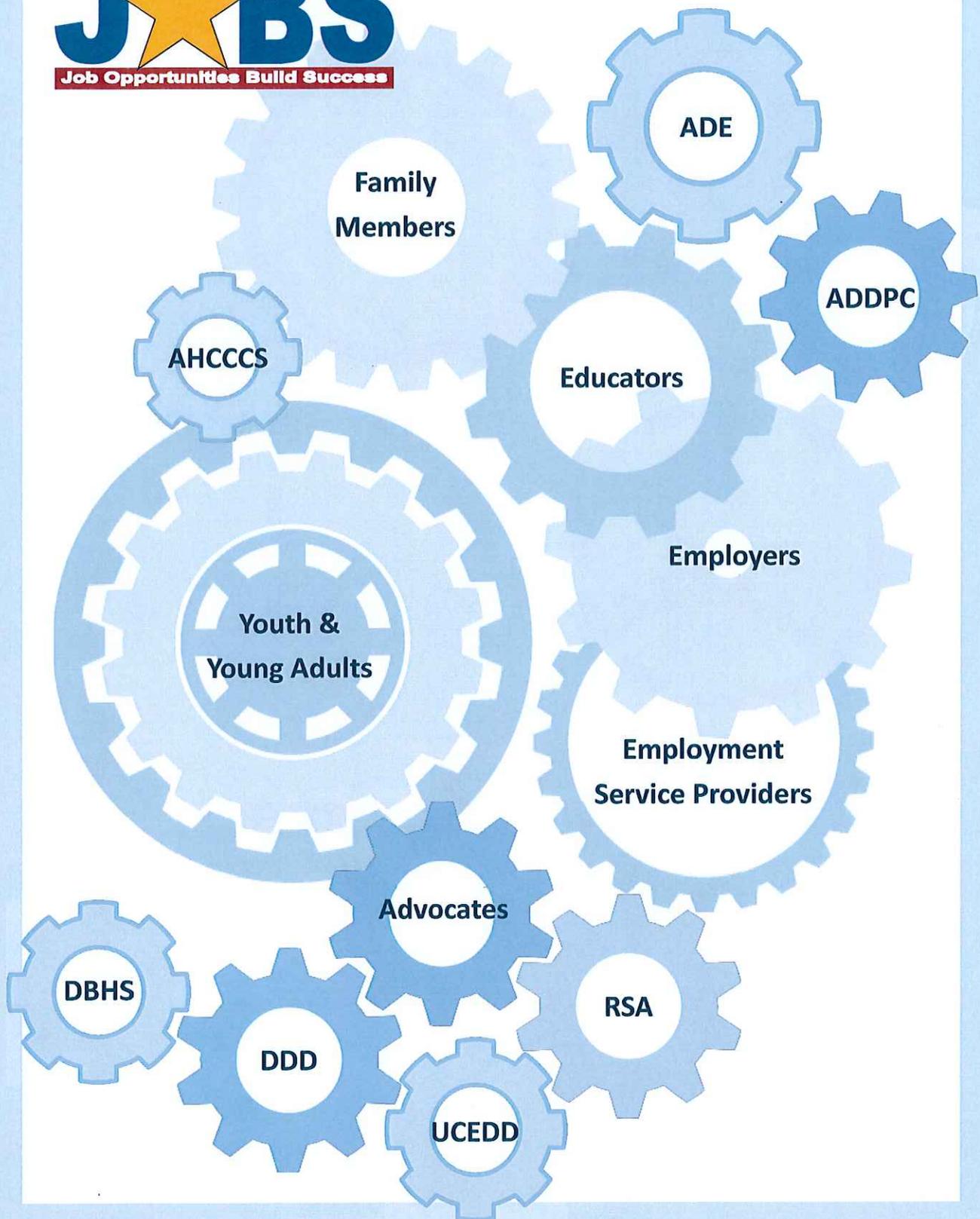


How to Join Arizona Employment First

If you wish to assist with implementation of Arizona Employment First, please provide your contact information - name, title, organization, email, and telephone number to Susan Voirol, Phoenix Program Manager, Sonoran UCEDD, svoirol@email.arizona.edu.



ARIZONA EMPLOYMENT FIRST
J★BS
Job Opportunities Build Success



ARIZONA EMPLOYMENT FIRST PARTNERSHIP

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

I. PARTIES

The Parties to this Memorandum of Understanding are Sonoran UCEDD, Institute for Human Development – Northern Arizona University, Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, Arizona Department of Economic Security/Division of Developmental Disabilities and Division of Employment and Rehabilitative Services, Arizona Department of Education/Exceptional Student Services, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System, Arizona Behavioral Health Services, Cave Creek Unified Schools, Scottsdale Training and Rehabilitation Services (STARS), Valleylife, The Centers for Habilitation (TCH), Gompers Habilitation Center, Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center (SARRC), Beacon Group, Ability 360, Untapped Arizona, and Raising Special Kids.

II. BACKGROUND

In October 2013, the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council convened a group of stakeholders to discuss an Arizona Employment First initiative. *Employment First: A Review of Successful State Strategies for Improving Employment Outcomes among People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, prepared by the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS), provided attendees with an overview of lessons learned from existing Employment First states efforts. Consensus was reached to support an Arizona Employment First initiative and a Core Team of the attending stakeholders was identified to begin the process. Through a planning process that included monthly meetings of the Core Team, webinars, an on-line survey, and six Community/Regional Forums to gather information, a state Strategic Plan was drafted. After further stakeholder review and comment, revisions were made and the comprehensive Arizona Employment First Strategic Plan was finalized and published in July 2015.

III. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to establish a cooperative agreement among the involved Parties to implement the Key Directions set forth in the Arizona Employment First Strategic Plan which supports the belief that community-based, integrated employment should be the primary day activity for working age youth and adults who have disabilities. The MOU further supports an overarching goal that eligible persons who have disabilities will have access to integrated work settings most appropriate for them, including the supports necessary to help them succeed in their workplace.

The Key Directions the Parties agree to collaborate on are:

1. Foster and maintain COLLABORATION in order to increase the competitive employment of people who have disabilities;
2. Increase AWARENESS of the potential of people who have disabilities and ADVOCATE for their competitive employment;
3. Prepare YOUTH for competitive employment, especially in high potential employment sectors, including self-employment;
4. Foster JOB creation, hiring, retention, promotion and self-employment;
5. Create and promote POLICIES that lead to the successful employment of people who have disabilities;
6. Foster the development of employment-focused SUPPORTS.

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work in this Memorandum of Understanding is statewide.

V. SPECIFIC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES

Implementing the major actions set forth in the Strategic Plan will require the ongoing involvement of the Arizona Employment First Core Team members, in conjunction with a variety of stakeholder groups including youth and adults who have disabilities, advocates, educators, employers, employment service provider agencies, state agencies, University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, policy makers and potential funders.

The Core Team will continue to meet on a regular basis, as agreed to by the majority, to coordinate and implement activities needed to achieve the desired outcomes and ensure ongoing implementation and assessment related to carrying out Plan strategies and activities.

The Parties agree to continue their commitment to implementing the Key Directions set forth in the Strategic Plan. Additionally, they will take an active role in representing the work of the Core Team with their individual agencies and constituencies. They further agree to support, use and promote, in a consistent manner the message of the Strategic Plan that people who have disabilities can meaningfully contribute in the workforce and in the community, and that employment in an integrated setting is the preferred outcome for people who have disabilities.

Employment First does not mean employment only and does not deny individual choice, but is intended to increase employment opportunities available for individuals who have disabilities.

VI. TERMS OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The term of this Memorandum of Understanding shall begin on April 1, 2016 and end on June 30, 2021, at which time the Parties shall evaluate implementation of the Key Directions, Strategies and Major Actions to determine the degree of success achieved and whether the Memorandum should be extended.

Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding shall be construed to give the Parties any authority, express or implied, over the programmatic and/or budgetary decision making operations of the organizations involved.

Any Party may terminate its participation as a member at any time by giving thirty (30) days written notice to all Parties of such termination and specifying the effective date thereof.

BY SIGNING THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING, EACH PARTY IS ACCEPTING AND AGREEING TO ABIDE BY AND COMPLETE THE RESPONSIBILITIES DELINEATED IN THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.

ADVOCACY AGENCIES:

LARRY CLAUSEN, Executive Director

Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council

PHIL PANGRAZIO, President and Chief Executive Officer

Ability 360

JOYCE MILLARD HOIE, Executive Director

Raising Special Kids

RALPH SERPICO, President and Chief Executive Officer

Untapped Arizona

PROVIDERS:

STEVE KING, President and Chief Executive Officer
Beacon Group

MARK JACOBY, Executive Director
Gompers Habilitation Center

DAVID HENDERSON, President and Chief Executive Officer
Scottsdale Training and Rehabilitation Services

Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center

SHANA ELLIS, President and Chief Executive Officer
The Centers for Habilitation

CLETUS THIEBEAU, President and Chief Executive Officer
Valleylife

STATE AGENCIES:

VIRGINIA ROUNTREE

Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System/Behavioral Health Services

KAROL BASEL

Arizona Department of Education/Exceptional Student Services

DR. LAURA LOVE, Assistant Director

Arizona Department of Economic Security/Division of Developmental Disabilities

LETICIA LEEBRECQUE

Arizona Department of Economic Security/Division of Employment and Rehabilitative Services

SCHOOL DISTRICT AND UNIVERSITIES:

DR. DEBBI BURDOCK, Superintendent
Cave Creek Unified School District

LESLIE COHEN, Director
UA/Sonoran University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

TOM UNO, Associate Director
NAU/Institute for Human Development University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

AZ EMPLOYMENT FIRST
J  **B** **S**
Job Opportunities Build Success