

1. Provide a one page Executive Summary of your funded program, to include the following: What is the intent of the program; Who is targeted; Explain how the program impacts the I/DD community; What data has been collected to date; and Why the ADDPC should continue funding your program for another one-year period.

The Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities aimed to begin addressing the identified need for training of employment support professionals through its year one funding provided by the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. A series of three training sessions were proposed focused on knowledge gains, resource sharing, problem solving, and intensive skill development related to implementation of supported and customized employment services. As a result of COVID-19, a significant shift in training delivery was required converting content and format to a virtual platform. To date, session one trainings were conducted providing an overview of supported and customized employment for a diverse audience of participants representing provider organizations, vocational rehabilitation, and education personnel. Session two and three trainings are currently scheduled for the last quarter of the project.

Throughout the trainings several key points became evident: 1) There is a tremendous need for information regarding practical “how to” strategies on implementing employment services, 2) Training employment support professionals is only part of the need as everyone who is connected to people interested in or receiving employment services need similar information in order to support their efforts, 3) Multiple systemic issues are impacting employment practices that need demonstrations to inform and drive data-based decision-making for impactful change, and 4) There is great passion and commitment across stakeholder groups to work together and improve employment outcomes in the state. Feedback from participants indicated that the trainings were well-received and need to be continued and expanded to offer a platform for shared learning, capacity building, problem solving, and individual support.

Job coach training for all personnel involved with employment is essential to improve the outcomes that currently reflect low participation in competitive integrated employment. Arizona is heavy on group models, center-based activities, and preparation for work programs which have been demonstrated to cost more and not lead to real employment. Additionally, supported employment is underutilized in the state and opportunities for people with significant disabilities to receive the services they need for successful competitive employment are lacking. A well-trained, qualified workforce to provide these services will contribute to the solution resulting in improved employment outcomes and professionalization of the job coach role.

2. Summarize key program achievements for the current funding year. Include all key activities that have been undertaken based on the current implementation plan. Describe activities that are left to complete in the last quarter of your funded contract. Detail any barriers that were addressed and at least one success story.
 - Converted Session I Overview in-person training to a virtual format.
 - Conducted four Session I trainings for 103 participant zoom links.
 - Developing Session II Assessment/Discovery & Job Development and Session III Job Training hands-on trainings in a virtual format.
 - Four Session II and III trainings will be conducted in November and December.
 - Participants received certificates of completion.
 - Participants received information to prepare them for taking the CESP (certified employment support professional credential).
 - Data assessing participant competency gains were collected.
 - Data assessing satisfaction and impact were collected.

All trainings were converted to a virtual format in response to COVID. It was difficult creating a meaningful learning experience virtually to simulate the hands-on focus as originally proposed. Partners stepped up to assist with finding creative solutions.

A rehabilitation counselor and provider who participated in the training are using the tools and strategies to expand their employment services to include shifting group supported employment and center-based programs. They have reached out and regular meetings are being conducted with the rehabilitation counselor, employment manager, employment specialist, CEO and Sonoran Center staff.

Issues, such as reimbursement procedures, regulation guidelines, staffing, “word on the street” information, and implementation challenges, creating restrictions that interfere with supported and customized employment services began being identified through training questions and discussions. The Sonoran Center has begun work to address these issues and plans to incorporate these topics in the future trainings.

3. Describe community partners involved and their role in this project.

Provider staff including the manager and job coaches, rehabilitation counselor, teachers, people with disabilities, and employers partnered to produce live and recorded learning experiences for sessions II and III.

4. Describe how feedback from participants, family members or other stakeholders was gathered and used to support or change your project.

Feedback from satisfaction surveys and anecdotal reports indicated that participants enjoyed and benefitted from the training. Discussions brought out systemic issues and challenges job coaches are experiencing that we could address both during the training and build into the next sessions. A few participants stated they didn't see the relevance due to the fact that they weren't able to provide these kinds of services. The Sonoran UCEDD is working to impact these areas that are prohibitive for supported and customized employment implementation. Some participants said they wish it could be in person.

5. Describe efforts to work in or promote the program in underserved or unserved areas of the state or with certain populations that are often overlooked.

Recruitment efforts were statewide. In addition to the Sonoran UCEDD listserve, targeted outreach included Employment First, APSE, state agencies, provider organizations, and schools. In-person trainings were planned in four areas to make travel easier for those interested in attending. Once the trainings went virtual, the events became open to anyone who wanted to join. Challenges were noted with being able to engage on-line for the two days due to hecticness of schedules impacted by COVID. Data on race/ethnicity and disability were collected and will be reported once all trainings completed.

6. Summarize evaluation findings to date, including the number of participants served, and their level of satisfaction. Explain if the program is on track with proposed target numbers; if not, describe barriers to reaching target numbers. Include other data/performance measures you are tracking and reporting to the ADDPC.

Satisfaction Survey (N = 46)

1. The training provided information relevant to my needs.
92.24% Strongly Agree/Agree

2. The training I received improved my professional knowledge and skill about effective professional practice and strategies in this subject/topical area.
100% Strongly Agree/Agree
3. The training will increase the frequency that I implement the strategies, tools and practices presented during this training.
96.43% Strongly Agree/Agree
4. The information and resources I received with this training are useful and will be applied in my work.
98.08% Strongly Agree/Agree
5. The training is likely to result in better outcomes for persons with disabilities and/or the families that I serve.
96.29% Strongly Agree/Agree
6. I would recommend this training to a colleague or organization.
98.22% Strongly Agree/Agree

Comments

- All areas were covered with professionalism and knowledge.
- Additional comparable benefits for vocational rehabilitation clients.
- The information was very well covered and informative.
- I would like information on job fairs virtual/in person
- This was a great training and I really appreciate the knowledge that the facilitators possessed. Thank you!
- Would love to have training in person but I understand.
- I would like to see a training similar to this about job development strictly and developing relationships with employers to go more in depth.
- With the current Covid-19 situation, maybe have a section on how to job coach remotely.
- Customized Employment.
- Creative accommodations.
- Further task analysis of specific tasks maybe?
- It was perfect!
- I thought you all did great!
- Additional videos or video modeling of some of the job coaching elements reviewed.
- Explaining the difference of Job Coaching thru Vocational Rehabilitation and DDD employment services (ESA, GSE, ISE)
- I think the following sessions will be more what I am looking for! I think job coaching is rather broad role and looks so different for all of us/in all different companies (for example, I don't have a role where I reach out to possible employers, someone else does that in our company). It is hard to make this

training perfect for everyone. But, I enjoyed the thought and care in this training. You were all awesome! And I greatly appreciate the landing page of materials.

- Additional advanced training.
- Additional Job!
- This training was very thorough and exactly what I needed. Perhaps explain how vendors can use interagency collaboration to help our clients achieve their employment and independence goals in a future training. Thank you!

Pre and Post Competency Data

Preliminary results indicate knowledge gains.

7. Describe any new changes that will be implemented in Year 2, including program design, target numbers, collaborators, implementation, staffing, evaluation, and other activities.

In response to the anecdotal and data evidence, the following activities are proposed for year two.

- a. Job Coach Training: Expanding year one trainings to make available to a larger audience. Modify the trainings from three-two day sessions to include one-three day training that combines an overview with hands on training on assessment/discovery, job development, job training, and topical issues related to implementation. This will increase the number of people who receive the information in a consolidated format covering topics of greatest interest. Ideally these will include six trainings conducted in-person in Phoenix (1-2), Tucson (1-2), Yuma, and Flagstaff. If current circumstances prohibit in-person trainings then a virtual format will be used as in year one with half to full day schedules across a sequence of four to six weeks each. Estimated number of participants = 40 per session X 4 to 6 = 160 to 240 people.
- b. Topical Trainings: Conduct topical trainings and focus group discussions via webinar format that would be between a half and full day for each specific audience providing an overview of supported and customized employment with specific emphasis on their role and contributions in the service delivery process. Targeted audiences include support coordinators, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and provider organization staff (e.g., residential, direct support personnel). Two sessions will be provided for each audience using a virtual format. Estimated number of participants - 50 to 75 per session X 6 sessions = 300 to 450 people.

- c. Employment Toolkit: Develop an online employment toolkit for use by multiple audiences that highlights key components of best practice approaches leading to raised expectations and competitive employment outcomes. The toolkit will be created with input and feedback from different stakeholder groups who will share their successes, questions, concerns, and experiences during trainings above to inform the design, including content and format, and useability. Anticipated product = 1 toolkit with resources targeting direct employment support professionals and related personnel who impact services and outcomes.
- d. Technical Assistance: Provide technical assistance to two provider organizations representing an urban and rural community to assist them with transitioning from non-competitive employment activities such as center-based vocational, day programs, and group supported employment services to individual competitive employment outcomes. The focus will be on building community capacity through training staff who provide employment services as well as all staff within the organization and community partners outside the organization. One-on-one assistance will be provided to address questions, identify challenges, provide support, and connect to resources. Efforts will focus on bringing a community stakeholder team together to define roles and contributions that build on the strengths of that community and utilize those assets in a way that enhance practice and improve outcomes. Real time technical assistance will be provided using technology and if circumstances allow on-site visits and in-person individualized assistance will be available. Information will be gathered to guide the development of resources, such as FAQ and helpful tips, for use by other providers and communities. It is anticipated that this pilot technical assistance project with an emphasis on transitioning services for adults currently in day and center-based programs will contribute to initial model development that could be a foundation for future exploration and testing. Anticipated product – 2 provider organizations increase their capacity and outcomes for competitive employment,

1 technical assistance model to support provider organization employment expansion, 2 resources for community stakeholder teams.

8. Describe other sources of funds that are committed to support the project. Will this project continue without ADDPC funding?

AZ Rehabilitation Services Administration, Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities

The project as proposed will not continue without ADDPC funding. Components of training and information sharing will be shared through other UCEDD and Employment First activities.

9. **Attachment 1:** Provide an Implementation Plan that lists out sequentially the key activities to undertake in the next year. At a minimum, the implementation plan shall list the key task, the party that is responsible, when it will be completed (date) and by what method you will know completion is met (measurement).

Year 2 Timeline

January to March, 2021

Coordinate Job Coach and Topical trainings
Conduct Topical trainings X 2
Select Provider participants
Develop Provider Technical Assistance plans

April to June, 2021

Conduct Job Coach training X2
Conduct Topical trainings X 2
Provide Provider Technical Assistance

July to September, 2021

Conduct Job Coach training X 2
Conduct Topical trainings X 2
Develop Employment Toolkit
Provide Provider Technical Assistance

October to December, 2021

Conduct Job Coach training X 2
Finalize Employment Toolkit
Finalize Provider Resources

10. **Attachment 2:** Provide a 12-month Budget Request and Match. Use the Budget Summary Form and provide a detail budget narrative for both requested dollars and match.

Budget

Principle Investigator and Content Expert @ 10%
Project Director and Trainer @ 10%
Project Coordinator @ 20%
Employment Specialist @ 15%
Communication Specialist @ 15%
Salaries = \$50,338
Benefits = \$15,605

Total Personnel = \$65,943
Travel for In Person Trainings/TA = \$750
Accommodations and Translations = \$1,000
Indirects @ 10% = \$6,769
Total Funds Requested = \$74,462

11. **Attachment 3:** Provide a list of key staff and briefly summarize the job responsibilities for this grant. List any training or certification required for staff in the upcoming year. Ensure personnel costs are appropriately allocated for in the Budget. Do not attach resumes.

Wendy Parent-Johnson, PhD, Principle Investigator (10% FTE) will be responsible for administrative and fiscal oversight of the proposed project. She will provide supervision of project staff, oversee project activities, and complete progress and final reports. Dr. Parent-Johnson will lead development of training, technical assistance, and products regarding content, design, and implementation. She will deliver trainings and provide individualized technical assistance.

Susan Voirol, MSW, Project Director (10% FTE) will be responsible for management of the day-to-day activities of the project. She will oversee marketing and recruitment materials and activities to engage participants. Ms. Voirol will function as liaison with state agencies ensuring project content is addressing their identified needs and lead topical training session development. She will provide training and technical assistance and contribute to product development.

Heather Wolff, Project Coordinator (20% FTE) will be responsible for coordinating all training and technical assistance activities arranging logistics and communicating with participants. She will lead development of virtual “hands on” experiences for participants including scripting and recording “real life” experiences with community partners. Ms. Wolff will collect training satisfaction data and participant feedback and use information for on-going input and improvement.

Jeff Javier, Communication Specialist (15%) will be responsible for overseeing the technical aspects of virtual events including embedding innovations in delivery. He will assist with pre-recorded training logistics and conducting real-time activities. Mr. Javier will provide IT support for all virtual events, ensuring accessibility and language translation. He will assist with product design and creation of user-friendly and accessible toolkit and resources. Mr. Javier will lead all communication and recruitment.

Lorie Sandaine, Employment Specialist (15%) will be responsible with assisting with employment activities and community connections essential for direct service experiences for participants. She will assist with providing trainings and conducting technical assistance one-to-one support for participating provider employment staff. Ms.

Sandaine will contribute to development of handouts, products, and resources. She will function as liaison with provider agencies.

12. **Attachment 4:** Provide at least one Letter of Support from collaborators.
See attached