

## ANCOR Links

November/December 2014

### Columns

## CEO Perspective: We're Gonna Need a Bigger Boat

*Barbara Merrill, Esq.*

I am enormously excited about the future of supports and services for people with disabilities, but "we're gonna need a bigger boat" if we are to achieve the brighter future that is possible.



I have much to be thankful for this holiday season. My family is well, I have my health, and I have the wonderful fortune to work with a great staff and talented Board of Directors. Twenty fourteen was one of ANCOR's best years ever, and I'm thrilled to have been entrusted by ANCOR's Board to build upon the rich legacies of my predecessors and take ANCOR to the next level.

As we prepare to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and ANCOR's 45th birthday, I am enormously excited about the future of supports and services for people with disabilities. But I also believe that a brighter future will not happen on its own – borrowing from my favorite quote from *Jaws*, I strongly believe that "we're gonna need a bigger boat."

By that I mean providers and people with disabilities will be casting an even wider net to build community partnerships and opportunities. Parents, siblings, friends, neighbors and communities of faith will be called upon to augment more traditional supports to fulfill the promise of the ADA and achieve compliance with the new HCBS rule.

We're also going to need a bigger boat in Washington and in state capitals across the country to help us educate policy makers. ANCOR has earned a reputation of trustworthiness and responsibility – we have never stood for the status quo nor cried wolf. Through our National Advocacy Campaign, we have long advocated for the resources to recruit and retain a stable direct support workforce. But in many ways, we are having to bail even faster, while navigating rougher seas. Unfunded mandates, unacceptably high rates of DSP turnover, large waiting lists, fragmented services – if we don't communicate these challenges, no one else will.

**45/25.** Those anniversaries track the development of the private provider community. The Disability Community – and our family of private providers – has reached maturity. Look at how much things have changed over the past 45 years. It used to be that if a provider offered a reasonably good quality, reliable service, they grew. Much more is now required of providers – strong business acumen, creativity and the ability to adapt to a rapidly changing regulatory and fiscal environment and the expectations of people with disabilities and their families. Yup, we've grown up and that's why it is imperative that we, *collectively*, take ANCOR to the next step.

Building a sustainable future will require a cultural shift – one that will not be for the faint of heart or for those who believe that more regulation and documentation equals quality. We must be prepared to trust more and take greater risk, and be ready to adapt to the changing environment. To continue the nautical analogy, we should be redesigning the boat if we are serious about a sustainable future. And that's where we are going to need all of you.

Over the next months, I will share some of our new plans and introduce you to the team that will be taking over day to day responsibility for government relations. But this is my number one priority: we are going to double our efforts to improve the links between ANCOR and our members. We need you to know how you can help, and we need to know that we are effectively reaching you. For example, we send out myriad emails and make numerous Tweets and FaceBook postings to keep you up to date on current developments. Our Connected Community witnessed an explosion of activity over the Villages discussion. How can we continue that level of engagement? Was it useful or overwhelming? How can we make sure you don't tune us out precisely when we need you the most?

We currently organize one annual conference a year and two shorter summits. Are there ways we can make them more useful? Would it be a valuable use of your time if we dedicated more time at our gatherings for you to share with your peers what is going on in your individual states?

These are but a few examples of the sinew that hold together our network, and they must be constantly evaluated for effectiveness. Our communication needs to be both ways and our obligation to advance our interests depends on mobilizing all of our resources. And the most important resource is you, our informed and engaged members.

We are going to be looking for more ways for members to serve ANCOR. We need more of you assuming leadership roles. I know there are differences in the time you can bring to this activity and, with that in mind, we will offer different opportunities.

For my part, I plan to get out of Washington as often as possible to learn firsthand how policies are working on the ground. There's never a real substitute for face-to-face communication and I look forward to meeting new friends and renewing acquaintances with the old. In the meantime, please take a moment and [drop me a line](#) right now. Tell me what you think is working, and what you'd like to see us improve. After all, we are here for one reason only – to help you get ahead of the curve by providing you with the best information possible, sharing best practices and amplifying your voices in the halls of power. The more perfect our union, the better we'll meet those responsibilities.

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## President's Corner: What Does Our Money Really Buy?

*Chris Sparks*

A message from our new Board President

When I was six years old I made a bargain with my dad. If he would give me the money to order a “real, submersible submarine” that I saw for sale in the back of a comic book, he could stop paying me my weekly allowance. He agreed. It would probably come as no surprise that it was a poor bargain and the “real, submersible submarine” turned out to be made of cardboard. To add insult to injury, my dad actually did stop paying me my weekly allowance! This was my first experience learning about the purchasing power of money, and that you don't always get what you think you are buying.

As providers of services for people with disabilities, the revenue that comes to us is meant to provide for a variety of needs, but it comes overwhelmingly from a single funding source: Medicaid! When the community-based services movement began in earnest in the 1960s and ultimately Medicaid monies became broadly available for a variety of community-based services in 1981, our quality target was simply to be better than state institutions. And with the best of intentions we often created service delivery systems that were physically in, but not always a part of, the community; they frequently existed in a parallel fashion.

We knew we could do better, and market pressures in the form of evolving customer expectations, pressure from funders and regulators, and strong advocacy voices from outside our systems motivated us. We have changed the form and structure of community services, worked in cooperation with persons served as they exercised self-direction, and worked to create



supports that encouraged inclusion and true participation. Genuine customer satisfaction became a critical measure for us as service providers, even though we have a number of important customers with competing and even conflicting desires.

Our system of funding and services continues to change. We have grown used to hearing that the array of federal, means-tested benefits — Medicaid, SSI, and Medicare — that so many people in our system rely upon is fundamentally unsustainable. Even if we accept this conclusion, it is frightfully difficult for the most learned policy or economic expert to generate alternatives. This is the only system we have and we need to work effectively within it.

Systemically, one of the ways scarcity is dealt with is through the creation of methods to manage limited resources. During our last recession, we saw states cut service rates, often substantially and for subsequent years. Before, during and after the recession we have seen the proliferation of states turning to managed care structures or even contracting with managed care companies to allocate resources differently. Naturally, the states have substantial sway here as they are paying the Medicaid match, always an appreciable amount of money and percentage of state budgets. Many states have created auditing processes — the “detecting waste, fraud, and abuse” aspect of the “Deficit Reduction Act of 2005” — that measure compliance and recoup service units that are found “deficient.” (My home state of Iowa is one such state.) In a very real way, money has gotten harder to get, and more difficult to hang on to.

It is a disrespectful cliché to tell ID/DD service providers they have to “do more with less” — we have been doing so for a very long time. We must continue to develop service delivery structures that are based on the needs and preferences of customers. People with disabilities and their families will be increasingly in the position of determining which services they will purchase, and often they will be choosing from a number of competing providers. Or, managed care companies will contract with a small number of preferred providers who are able to work within narrowly established parameters. Services that historically focused on providing “supervision and oversight” will come increasingly under pressure to accomplish shared and valued outcomes. These are evolving, but clearly trend toward individualized supports that are also cost effective in a resource strapped system.

Admittedly there will continue to be a need for intensive services for people with complex and ongoing needs. We are fortunate to have organizations that are accomplished at providing these services with consistency and compassion. Our need for well-trained and effective staff is ongoing. With 80% of people with ID/DD living with their families and with over 500,000 people on waiting lists for services, we know change is upon us.

At ANCOR's recent “[Leadership Summit: Shaping Policy](#),” Allen Bergman stated that service providers must “change our narrative to outcomes, performance, and return on investment.” We have always been innovators, so I am confident this is within our grasp.

What does our money really buy? Is it a safe place to live, with meals and staff supervision, or is it a life where preferences are honored, dreams realized, and life is lived in the community with friends? We know it requires a melding of both on some level, but I know I would not choose the former at the exclusion of the latter.

As providers, we are involved in a delicate dance of supporting people as they create real lives, and operating within restrictive rules and rate systems. This has never been easy, but anything worth accomplishing seldom is. By working together, focusing on innovation and listening to our customers, we will be successful. And ANCOR continues to be a powerful advocate at the federal level on behalf of member agencies and in the provision of training and information that supports members in a rapidly changing environment.

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## Public Policy: Reports from the Policy Front

*Katherine Berland, Esq.*

Highlights from ANCOR's "Washington Insiders Club," a weekly round-up of top stories and headlines of the week distributed to ANCOR Members only.

### **Highlights from ANCOR's Washington Insiders Club (WICS)**

ANCOR distributes WICS, a round-up of top stories and headlines of the week, to ANCOR Members only to keep them up to date on significant policy and political developments of note to the disability community. The following entries highlight the most significant reports of the last several months.

#### **CMS Issues Non-Residential Settings Guidance**

In response to the urging of ANCOR and the Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has finally issued what they say is the "final guidance" on the HCBS rule. The guidance consists of "[Exploratory Questions to Assist States in Assessment of Non-Residential Home and Community-Based Service \(HCBS\) Settings](#)" and an updated section in its Q&A's titled "[HCB Settings – Non-Residential](#)" (starting on page 9). The non-residential settings guidance has been long-awaited among states, people served, disability-rights advocates, and service providers. ANCOR is scheduling a webinar in January that will feature an overview of the guidance and our analysis.

#### **DOJ, HHS Send Strong Message on Olmstead Implications of FLSA**

On 12/15/14, the Department of Justice (DOJ) Civil Rights Division and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Civil Rights sent a "Dear Colleague" letter emphasizing the responsibility of states to implement the Department of Labor's (DOL's) new Home Care rule in a way that meets obligations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), specifically the *Olmstead* mandate. Because of the additional cost to state Medicaid programs created by the rule, several states have looked at options including cutting back on or restricting overtime or travel time permitted by workers.

The letter urges states to thoroughly analyze their home care programs to determine what changes will need to be made to comply with the rule. As part of this process, DOJ and HHS urge that states "consider whether reasonable modifications are necessary to avoid placing individuals who receive home care services at serious risk of institutionalization or segregation." It goes on to say, "A state's obligation to make reasonable modifications to its policies, procedures, and practices applies even when a home care program is delivered through non-public entities."

The letter notes that the implementation of across-the-board caps risks violating the ADA if they do not adequately account for the needs of individuals with disabilities and place them at serious risk of institutionalization or segregation. DOJ and HHS urge that states plan for circumstances where home care workers are scarce, people served have extraordinary needs that necessitate a single worker, and/or emergency situations where a scheduled second worker is not available and the person's support needs will only be met with the immediate authorization of overtime hours and pay. The letter strongly urges states to include an exceptions policy to any caps it considers imposing to ensure that people receiving services are served in a way

that complies with the *Olmstead* mandate.

### **Allocated Money Will Finally Fund The National Housing Trust Fund**

The National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF), which was created in 2008 as a means of funding affordable housing for low-income individuals, has been unfunded since its inception. That changed in December when the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) issued a [statement](#) directing Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to begin allocating funding to the NHTF. The NHTF is administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which also issued a [statement](#) regarding the action.

The FHFA separately issued an [interim final rule](#) which addresses the statutory requirement that the allocations may not result in transferring their expense to originators or other Enterprise counterparties.

### **ANCOR Promotes ODEP's Expanded Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program**

ANCOR is excited about the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) expansion of assistance to 15 core states as part of the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP). The fifteen FY2015 EFSLMP core states are Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Maine, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Utah.

Since its inception in FY2012, the EFSLMP has provided intensive onsite and virtual technical assistance to state governments in the areas of capacity building in the dissemination of customized employment and other effective practices that lead to integrated employment as the priority outcome of services to individuals with significant disabilities; provider transformation strategies; approaches to successful employer engagement; and school-to-work transition models. In addition to the EFSLMP technical assistance offerings to its core states, ODEP will continue to host its virtual National Employment First Community of Practice. Webinars are held monthly, and membership is open to disability policy stakeholders in all 50 states. Any individual interested in participating in the Community of Practice can [register for ODEP's EFSLMP mailing list](#) to receive updates on upcoming training events, technical assistance offerings, and policy resources.

### **New Congress Votes on Leadership, Most Key Roles Unchanged**

Following the mid-term elections in November, both parties in both houses of Congress voted on their leadership for the upcoming term. There were no major upsets, with top incumbents holding their positions. [Click here](#) to review the complete list.

### **House Passes TBI Reauthorization Act**

The U.S. House of Representatives recently passed S. 2539, the [Traumatic Brain Injury \[TBI\] Reauthorization Act of 2014](#). The bill had already passed the Senate, and is expected to be signed into law by the President soon. The bipartisan bill authorizes funding through FY 2019 to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for grants to improve access to rehabilitation and community services. It also includes funding to gather data and conduct prevention and public education programs. The bill calls for the Secretary of the HHS to develop a TBI Coordination Plan and directs the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to conduct a scientific review of the management of children with TBI.

### **NCD Issues Annual Progress Report on National Disability Policy**

On October 31, the National Council on Disability (NCD) issued the "[National Disability Policy: A Progress Report](#)," which fulfills its statutory mandate to report on and issue recommendations concerning the state of disability policy in the United States. This year marks NCD's 30th anniversary as an independent federal agency.

The report details the status of people with disabilities from across the nation, providing policymakers, advocates, and other stakeholders with an overview of the progress the United States has made promoting and protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities. Specifically, the report focuses on seven key areas: the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD), employment access and inclusion, subminimum wage, education outcomes, Medicaid managed care, mental health care, and data trends in disability policy. The report identifies opportunities to promote public policies that contribute to a more inclusive environment.

### **CMS Previews Possible Medicaid Managed Care Regs**

At a recent Medicaid Health Plans of America conference, CMS Director of the Division of Managed Care Plans James Golden described principles behind revisions that are likely to be proposed to Medicaid managed care regulations next year. The principles behind the changes include aligning Medicaid managed care with other public programs, protecting patients, clarifying rate expectations, and incorporating laws that have been passed since the regulations were originally written. CMS has reached out to various stakeholder groups recently, soliciting input on managed care reforms involving pharmacy and medication management, value-based insurance design, telehealth, hospice care, long-term services and support, network design, behavioral health, and provider incentives.

The intent of the new regulations is to align Medicaid managed care regulations with other public programs because many beneficiaries move through various programs as their income and needs change over time. Golden said the agency is also taking a close look at pay and accountability, as well as program integrity.

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## State Association View: Election's Over; Now Get to Work!

*Diane McComb*

The election is now over, and it is apparent that ANCOR and State Associations have their work cut out for them. What can we expect in the next 2 years?



With the elections now over, ANCOR and State Associations have their work cut out for them. What can we expect in the next two years?

First and foremost, control of both houses of Congress by one party changes things dramatically. If we think we've experienced gridlock in the past, get ready for more. People with disabilities and providers supporting them have much at stake with a host of issues dealing with health care, Medicaid funding, employment, housing, transportation, and more.

In the statehouses across the country massive changes have taken place. Newly elected Governors and legislators will be hungry for information to assist them in governing. We all know the complexities of the Medicaid system and the reliance our services have on its funding. Where new governors are elected, count on the real potential of existing leadership in Health Departments — including Medicaid, IDD and Behavioral Health divisions — being replaced. All gubernatorial appointees will be up for grabs. Relationships you've built over the last several years may go away.

Regardless of affiliation, now is the time to educate. We cannot spare a minute to provide information helpful to understanding the needs of people with disabilities and providers supporting them. Here is a list of what we need to be doing to infuse newly-elected officials with knowledge concerning our issues.

1. Immediately write letters to all the winners in the election. Yes, all of them in your respective districts – governors, senators, congressional reps, and state legislators. Tell them about your organization and who you represent.
2. Offer your assistance in helping them resolve constituent issues going forward. Provide them with a resource. Connect them to your members. All of them.
3. Provide them with a briefing packet of the issues most critical to people with disabilities. Use ANCOR's materials on federal issues, such as the new HCBS rule, DOL ruling, and more. Our landscape is complicated and will affect their constituency. Keep your message brief — highlight you will be happy to meet with them to provide greater detail should they want it, but emphasize the packet should be used as a reference.
4. Connect people with disabilities to your elected representatives now. Pull out your personal stories used during the last legislative session to introduce new officials to our constituency. Don't wait for the state session to start.

New officials can bring both hope for a better future, as well as angst and concern. As policy advocates, our call is to stay focused, persistent, and present. In many ways, it's business as usual. We must do what we do best, building relationships and building coalitions. Get to work!

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## Articles

### ANCOR Applauds Passage of the ABLÉ Act

ANCOR applauds the U.S. Congress for passing the ABLÉ Act.

ANCOR applauds the U.S. Congress for demonstrating overwhelming bi-partisan commitment to people with disabilities with passage of the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act. The vote in the House was 404 to 17, and it was passed by the Senate 76-14 as part of Tax Extenders legislation on Tuesday evening, December 15.

Championed by Representative Ander Crenshaw (R-FL) and Senator Robert Casey (D-PA) and originally introduced in 2006, the bill will permit people with disabilities to set aside personal funds in tax-advantaged savings accounts which could be used for expenses including medical costs, services and supports related to their disabilities.

"The ABLÉ Act had an extraordinary number of co-sponsors — 380 in the House and 74 in the Senate," noted Chris Sparks, ANCOR President. "We're gratified to see this level of consensus around action that will have a positive effect on many, many people with disabilities. Passage of this bill brings us a step closer toward a better economic future for persons with disabilities, encouraging employment, savings, and decreasing reliance on public benefits."

"We are extremely pleased with this bipartisan action to help people with disabilities and their families," said Barbara Merrill, ANCOR CEO. "The ABLÉ Act will allow families to plan responsibly for the future, and lessen their financial hardship, while maintaining access to the important supports and services their family member relies on. It is noteworthy that passage of the ABLÉ Act by Congress marks the second major bill enacted by this Congress that will improve the lives of people with disabilities — the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which seeks to improve employment opportunities and outcomes, passed earlier this year."

The ABLÉ Act will create an additional subsection to the Internal Revenue Code Section 529, which currently permits the creation of similar accounts to be used for educational purposes. The new subsection will allow individuals who acquired their disability prior to age 26 and meet other criteria to save money to be used for qualified expenses and certain assistive equipment.



## Model Shared Living Contract and Memorandum Released

ANCOR, NASDDDS, NASUAD Release Model Shared Living Contract

ANCOR has released, in collaboration with the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS) and National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD), a model shared living contract designed to be used as a template by providers entering into certain shared living arrangements, often called adult foster care or host homes.

"This model contract will help providers and people receiving services to navigate the new Department of Labor home care rule and shared living guidance," **Barbara Merrill**, CEO of ANCOR said. "We are thrilled to offer the template for free to the public, as our contribution to this important sustainable service delivery model." The model contract was developed with the assistance of attorneys at Petruccelli Martin & Hadow, LLP, a Maine law firm, utilizing general principles of contract law without regard to the specific requirements of local law in different state jurisdictions.

The model contract should not be used without consulting local attorneys familiar with all applicable laws and regulations in the location where the contract will be performed.

Additionally, the model contract was developed in large part from contracts that ANCOR member providers generously shared. These same providers, Chimes Family of Services, The MENTOR Network, Keystone Human Services and Dunganarvin, were also instrumental in working with the Department of Labor in its development of shared living guidance.

"We want to again thank the Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division for working with our organizations since the final rule was announced," said **Nancy Thaler**, Executive Director of NASDDDS. "We appreciate the DOL's commitment to preserving innovative service delivery models that will permit more people with disabilities to live in the community."

**Martha Roherty**, Executive Director of NASUAD, added, "As the demand for services provided in home and community based settings rises as the aging population increases, the use of shared living models will need to increase as well. This model contract will help more providers and people served explore innovative options to help ensure that the right solutions are in place based on needs."

[Click here](#) for more information about the Model Shared Living Contract.





## Hammer Residences, Inc. Wins Community Partner of the Year Award

eQuality: Pathways to Potential recognizes Hammer's innovation and commitment to disability services at "Growing Dreams" gala.



Emily Miller, Hammer's Community Life Coordinator, and David Gray, eQuality's Director of Entrepreneurial Activities and Business Services.

**Hammer Residences, Inc.**, an ANCOR member nonprofit serving Twin Cities' adults and children with developmental disabilities, now in its 91st year, was recently named eQuality: Pathways to Potential's 2014 Community Partner of the Year and presented the award at a "Growing Dreams" gala. eQuality honored Hammer for their valuable support of the eQuality mission to challenge individuals with developmental disabilities to maximize their potential and actively participate in life's opportunities by delivering community based, individualized programs that encourage personal growth.

eQuality: Pathways to Potential is a community based program that assists developmentally disabled adults to find and maintain competitive and contracted employment. For the past four years, Hammer has partnered with Buffalo-based eQuality Farms. In 2011, as part of Hammer's healthy living initiative, five homes signed up for weekly Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) deliveries of fresh, organic produce. Hammer has since created a Community Life department dedicated to establishing a culture of wellness and continuing the development of programs like the CSA. This season, 36 of 46 Hammer homes and apartments signed up to participate. With common goals of community involvement and the promotion of healthy living, a great partnership has continued to thrive between the two organizations.

According to **David Gray**, eQuality's Director of Entrepreneurial Activities and Business Services: "Working with Hammer has been both easy and productive. The work they have done on their health and wellness initiatives is impressive! The partnership has allowed both of our organizations to learn a lot from each other."

Hammer Program Director **Sue Walker** agrees. "We are so grateful to have such a mutually beneficial relationship with eQuality. Their commitment to employment, health and community partnership has spurred our initiatives for a healthier, more community-integrated culture at Hammer. We look forward to advancing this partnership."



## Buckeye Industries Vocational Services Program

Providing jobs and training for people with disabilities.

**New Avenues to Independence's** vocational services program, marketed under the name **Buckeye Industries**, a business enterprise of New Avenues to Independence, Inc., partners with area employers and individuals with disabilities. In addition to linking the unique needs of individuals with meaningful employment opportunities, the overall goals of the program are to generate revenue to be reinvested into other critical programs provided by New Avenues compromised due to continual funding cuts at the Federal, State and local levels and positively impact the community and environment.

Buckeye Industries creates much-needed jobs in Northeast Ohio. Individuals with disabilities receive a paycheck, enabling them to purchase items to meet their basic needs. It also increases their level of independence and participation in their community by affording them purchasing power to shop locally. Establishing additional tax paying citizens also positively impacts the economy. Much of the wages earned through Buckeye Industries is spent within the local communities where the individuals live and work. This helps to increase sales and revenue for local businesses.

Since the opening of its first facility in 2008, Buckeye Industries has grown to four facilities located in Cleveland West, Cleveland East, Eastlake and Madison. Each facility has one primary service and offers "value-added" services. The facilities also serve as a triage point for each other so that materials can be transported to the appropriate facility for recycling. Currently, the Buckeye Industries program provides structured vocational training and employment to over 130 people. Buckeye Industries also employs 23 staff to assist with job coaching and support as well as management of the program.

**Buckeye Industries, Eastlake** offers the primary service of Styrofoam recycling and the value-added service of cardboard recycling to current suppliers such as Lowes, Huron Road Hospital, Coca-Cola, Cleveland MetroParks Zoo, NASA, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland Clinic Main and Beachwood Hospitals, and John Carroll University.

**Buckeye Industries, Madison** provides document destruction services, as well as value-added outsourced production services to companies throughout Northeast Ohio. Customers include companies such as Classic Auto Group of Madison, Everstaff, Achievement Centers, the City of Eastlake, Ledgemont Local Schools, and Midwest Materials in Perry.

**Buckeye Industries, Cleveland West** opened in October 2012 offering plastic recycling to local hospitals and area businesses, including NASA, Embassy Suites, Lowes and Bloom Brothers.

**Buckeye Industries, Cleveland East** was developed to provide local businesses with janitorial services which, because of the growth in our primary and value-added services precipitated by market demand, have been postponed indefinitely. This facility currently has the capacity for small volume document destruction and outsourced production services and serves as a Day Services Program providing comprehensive and coordinated programs to individuals with disabilities.

In addition to pre-vocational and paid work experiences, activities and programs are designed to enhance personal, social, and community integration capabilities and interests, such as socialization and communication, volunteer and community service, and educational and in-service presentations.



## Members in View

News and updates about ANCOR Members

*Featured news and updates about ANCOR Members...*

### **DSP Wage Bill Proposed**

A DSP wage bill, part of a high school legislative club project, has been selected for consideration by the Kentucky General Assembly. The bill was crafted by Carter Squires, son of ANCOR member Jason Squires of Cedar Lake, and two fellow students.

The recent legislative session, during which about 90 bills were introduced, was attended by several hundred student participants from around the state. Squires' bill is part of a packet of eight bills that will be considered during the upcoming session. Stay tuned for more information to come.

### **AEDD Volunteer Auxiliary Award**

Congratulations go out to the Volunteer Auxiliary of the Arkansas Enterprise for the Developmentally Disabled. AEDD was recently chosen to receive the "2014 Outstanding Volunteer Organization" award, which is granted by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP).

### **Technology Transitioning**

The Larrabee Center in Iowa is excited about transitioning the individuals that serve in their thrift store work program to using iPads for transactions. They are leading the charge in using new technology in their community of about 9,000 — no other vendors in the area are currently using this technology.

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### ***What's Your Story? Tell Us Your News!***

*ANCOR knows that success stories are happening all the time in our community and that your story has the power to help and/or influence others. We'd like to celebrate and honor those accomplishments by sharing your news in **LINKS**.*

*Make your voice heard and improve your social currency by sharing your story with the ANCOR community today!*

*Please send your story or acknowledgement of your interest in sharing your story to Melanie Byas at [mbyas@ancor.org](mailto:mbyas@ancor.org).*

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## Improve Care and Reduce Turnover through Better Staff Scheduling

*Doug Nafziger, CEO, Solana*

Proper staff scheduling can bring benefits to the challenges created by scheduling hundreds of staff members at dozens of locations. How can we improve this?

Of the industries I've served, the Intellectual and Developmental Disability segment is one of the most challenging and dynamic. Agencies that perform human services depend on volatile (as in shrinking) government payments for most of their revenues, face increasing requirements at a pace that makes them difficult to deploy, and manage staff – which is 70% or more of an agency's budget – under high turnover rates. High turnover rates lead to added recruiting expenses, excess training costs, staff and client dissatisfaction and lower quality of care scores.

So, how can we improve this? A growing body of evidence suggests that proper staff scheduling can bring formerly unseen benefits to the challenges created by scheduling hundreds of staff members at dozens of locations that serve thousands of individuals with specific needs – on a 24/7 basis. It's not as difficult as you might think.

**Reduce the administrative complexity of scheduling staff.** First, assess your scheduling mode: are you centralized or decentralized? If you are an agency that performs this function on a centralized basis, what is the ratio of schedulers to those who are scheduled? In our role as professional and technology advisers to agencies throughout the country, we hear of ratios, such as one full-time scheduler for every 90 to 125 DSPs. For an agency with 425 DSPs, that's *five* full-time employees whose sole function is scheduling other employees. That's a lot of unbillable administrative time!

If your agency takes a decentralized approach, calculate how many hours per week your supervisors and managers work to make schedules, handle adjustments, manage time off requests and ensure all training requirements are met. We've polled on this as well and managers spend up to 10 to 15 hours per week assigning work, adjusting schedules and approving time. Could this administrative effort be better spent working with staff and clients to provide better levels of quality care? If the answer is yes, then industry-designed staff scheduling software and related technologies can be a part of the answer to reducing expenses and improving care.

**Focus on increasing your DSP retention rate rather than managing turnover.** To some degree it seems like one is simply the inverse of the other, but really it's more a choice of mind-set. We see a lot of agencies focusing on automating training, negotiating recruiting contracts and minimizing employee benefits that are effective on day one. This is one way to handle high turnover rates more efficiently. However, why not adjust your focus to what can improve retention? Perhaps it's time to consider more of what matters to really good DSPs and allow room for their needs to be better met.

The research is very clear: job satisfaction increases when a manager has quality time to develop their staff. DSPs also report that they are more engaged and satisfied when they are able to work the days of the week that best fit their lives, serve the clients with whom they have special relationships and work with people they enjoy. Powerful staff scheduling software programs and a staff-oriented approach to strategy can help you improve staff retention.

**Make it easier for managers to adjust and make changes.** As you probably already know, paperwork is one of the least favorite parts of being a staff supervisor. At one time, you required lengthy written procedures and binders full of documents to manage your organization. In today's mobile world, life can be much easier. Technologies give you the power to manage staff, schedule employees as well as document care and time *all online*. With alerts, notifications and push technologies, staff can glance at incoming data and respond in seconds, which creates more time for care and making it easier for everyone to interact, request time off or fill open shifts quickly.

With a mix of mobile technologies, enterprise software and a staff-oriented vision, you *can* lower costs, improve DSP retention rates and – most importantly – increase quality care scores. The future really is here!

*Author LINK: **Doug Nafziger** is CEO of Solana, an enterprise technology and business services firm that serves agencies in the intellectual and developmental disability segment throughout the United States. Comments can be sent to Doug at [doug@solanapro.com](mailto:doug@solanapro.com).*

The collage consists of six distinct promotional graphics:

- Top Left:** A graphic with a photo of two women smiling, an 'ebook' icon, and the text 'Best Practices for Training DSPs'.
- Top Middle:** The Scioto logo, featuring a house icon and the text 'Scioto Housing for people with disabilities'.
- Top Right:** A purple graphic for Quantum Solutions Corporation with the text 'Quantum is Your Software Solution.' and a 'Learn More' button.
- Middle Left:** An orange graphic for Therap with the text 'Electronic Documentation for I/DD Service Providers'.
- Middle Right:** A green graphic for the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) with the text 'Staff Scheduling It just doesn't have to be complicated.' and the AAIDD logo.
- Bottom Center:** A vertical graphic for Solana showing a tablet displaying a software interface, with the Solana logo at the bottom.

## Survey Results: The State of the ABA Provider

Download a free report on survey results of ABA and Autism providers

**Relias Learning** conducted an anonymous survey of 265 professionals to uncover the predominant issues and opportunities facing the field of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and the results are in!

Survey topics included:

- Top challenges facing providers
- Most lucrative funding sources
- Insurance obstacles



- Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) credential

Want to know how ABA and autism agencies are handling the challenges and opportunities in funding, billing, staffing, supervision, legislation and more? Visit the [Relias website](#) to download their free report and and join the online forum to discuss solutions that will improve operations and client outcomes.

 <p>Best Practices for Training DSPs</p>	 <p>Scioto Housing for people with disabilities</p>	 <p>quantum solutions corporation Quantum is Your Software Solution. Learn More</p>
 <p>Therap Electronic Documentation for I/DD Service Providers</p>	 <p>Staff Scheduling It just doesn't have to be complicated.</p> <p>Solana</p>	 <p>American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities aaidd Knowledge   Support   Empowerment</p>

## Happy Holidays!

Holiday best wishes to everyone, from the ANCOR staff.



***From the Staff at ANCOR,  
we extend to you the warmest Holiday Greetings and  
best wishes for a Happy New Year filled with health, happiness, and spectacular  
success!***

## Member Benefits

## Did You Know: Relias Learning and Office Depot!

Check out these special offers for ANCOR members!

"Did You Knows" feature vendors in the ANCOR Services Corp.'s **Shared Resources Purchasing Network!**

RELIAS | LEARNING

**Did You know** that Relias Learning's user-friendly learning management system improves quality of care, increases compliance, boosts productivity and saves money? [Click here](#) for details...

**Office  
DEPOT.**

**Did You know** that Office Depot offers ANCOR members significantly discounted pricing on more than 1,200 consumable office supplies, office furniture, technology and print document services? [Click here](#) for details...



## SRPN: What Members Are Saying...

The Shared Resources Purchasing Network (SRPN) partners with national companies to provide significant savings to ANCOR Members.

The **Shared Resources Purchasing Network (SRPN)**, administered by the *ANCOR Services Corporation*, partners with national companies to provide significant savings to ANCOR Members and supports ANCOR programs. Members who use the SRPN enjoy savings and leading purchasing practices, and can rededicate their savings to needed programs. The SRPN discounts with selected vendors also apply to Members' employees, persons served by the organization and their families. Here's what some ANCOR Members are saying about SRPN.

*"Office Depot has provided us with the best value, pricing and selection for our office supplies. This is especially important because now we don't have to negotiate every time we purchase. We also appreciate their genuine customer service. Thanks to ASC's Shared Resources Purchasing Network we look forward to the discounts on Office Depot's supplies and services!"*

**National Children's Center**

*"ANCOR Services Corp's Shared Resources Purchasing Network has not only saved us money but, because our staff can also participate, it allows us to extend this discount opportunity to our employees."*

**Charlie Hooker, Keystone Human Services**

For more information, including a list of SRPN vendor partners, visit [ANCOR Services Corporation](http://www.ancor.org) or contact Marsha Patrick at [mpatrick@ancor.org](mailto:mpatrick@ancor.org).

The collage consists of six distinct promotional banners:

- Top Left:** An "ebook" icon above a photo of two women. Text: "Best Practices for Training DSPs".
- Top Middle:** Scioto logo with a house icon. Text: "Housing for people with disabilities".
- Top Right:** Quantum Solutions Corporation logo. Text: "Quantum is Your Software Solution." with a "Learn More" button.
- Middle Left:** Therap logo. Text: "Electronic Documentation for I/DD Service Providers".
- Middle Center:** Text: "Staff Scheduling It just doesn't have to be complicated." with an image of a tablet displaying a scheduling interface.
- Middle Right:** American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (aaidd) logo. Text: "Knowledge | Support | Empowerment".
- Bottom Center:** Solana logo.

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