

ANCOR Links

September/October 2015

Columns

CEO Perspective: A Day in the Life - DSP Week in Motion

by Barbara Merrill, Esq.

ANCOR's CEO experiences a day in the life of a DSP and intimately learns that the mission of ANCOR's National Advocacy Campaign is important, relevant and appropriate for the times in which we work and live.



This year Gabrielle Sedor, ANCOR's COO, and I decided that the best way to honor Direct Support Professionals during DSP Recognition Week would be to spend real time with DSPs doing their jobs.

Between Gab's 16 and my 23 years representing IDD providers, we've both spent many hours visiting homes and work sites, talking to DSPs, celebrating the work they do during DSP Week, advocating for them throughout the year, and personally coaching them on how to best advocate for themselves and the people they support. But I'd never spent an entire shift with direct support staff on the job, and that's what we both set out to do during DSP Week. Although I set out to "walk a day" in the shoes of a DSP — admittedly fully expecting to be touched by the dedication I'd witness — I saw much more. I personally witnessed how a skillful DSP can truly support a person to live with dignity.

I hung out with Quanisha. She works for St John's Community Services and she was a perfect match for me — and as I quickly saw — for the people she supports. We met up at Washington, DC's Union Station at the height of the morning rush hour, but she picked me out from the sea of faces immediately. With a big smile and warm hand shake, she swept me into her morning flock — introducing me to several other DSPs and a man in his forties that looked vaguely familiar. Exuding warmth, confidence and competence, I liked her immediately.

As Quanisha began to explain to me our agenda for the day, I gradually realized she was operating on multiple levels — as she was talking to me, she was watching for another individual with disabilities traveling unassisted to come up from the Metro station and another to be dropped off by Metro Access, she was listening to the banter between her colleagues, and she was paying close attention to the man standing by himself. The woman gave new meaning to the concept of having eyes in the back of your head. But what was truly remarkable was that she never missed a beat in our conversation or appeared in any way to be giving me anything but her undivided attention. (If she wasn't so good at her job, I'd recommend her to the CIA. But I'm giving away the point of my story.)

I wandered over to talk to the man to try to figure out why he looked familiar. I was delighted to discover he was the artist of a very cool picture I bought for my young adult son a few years ago. Once our small group was present and accounted for, we headed down to the Metro. Just as I was beginning to wonder if we would be moving as a segregated little group all day, we boarded our train and the group seemed to completely dissipate across the car. It was another aha moment — I realized that if I hadn't known we were traveling as a group, as a passenger I wouldn't have had a clue.

First up was a trip to an art studio where we would spend the morning. En route I found myself being led through a trendy "transitional" DC neighborhood. As I was longingly eying the latest outpost of a very popular DC bookstore and restaurant, we suddenly ducked into a CVS where we were greeted by an elegant and graciously welcoming woman. Here again the group completely fanned out, some picking up food for lunch, others visiting with the woman that I was introduced to as the store manager, others seeming to just disappear completely. One of our group nodded to the woman, but split immediately. It seemed a little chaotic, but again, I was a bit slow on the uptake.

This stop was important. Just as I look forward to getting my noon time salad from the same deli almost every day because as a relative newcomer to Alexandria I'm building my new community, and pride myself whenever I manage to successfully navigate a self-service checkout without holding up the people behind me, this stop was a small, but obviously integral part of the community experience for the people I was hanging out with that day. I watched my new artist friend use the self-service check out without assistance. I watched a woman light up when she was greeted by name by the manager. As I watched Quanisha, it was crystal clear she knew exactly what she was doing. She was intentionally building community for the people she supports, not hovering but supporting, all the while quietly watchful.

We spent the morning painting in a studio in a building full of individual studios and other "creative economy" enterprises. We

were part of a busy hive of activity. It was fabulous energy. But again, what struck me repeatedly was the extraordinary situational awareness and respect Quanisha and her colleagues exhibited: Intuiting when one person wanted a new color, translating another's words for me, discretely slipping out to the rest room with another, all the while singing, joking, and patiently answering my barrage of questions. After lunch our group got even smaller — a few headed off to do other things, five of us walked over to a beautiful neighborhood library. Again, same story — the librarians were cheerfully welcoming, everyone split up, and we hung out doing what everyone does in libraries — one person grabbed a magazine, one person logged onto a computer, another pulled out a work project.

She was intentionally building community for the people she supports, not hovering but supporting, all the while quietly watchful.

After spending a few hours in the library, we headed back to the art studio to wait for one woman's third party transportation provider to pick her up, while everyone else headed home on the Metro. After a busy day, it was a relief to have the place just to the three of us. But the coziness soon gave way to Quanisha managing the apparently all too frequent circumstance of the bus not showing up when expected. It gave me an opportunity to observe how she handled a challenging situation. She never exhibited any impatience, never made the woman feel like she was a burden, but persistently called the company until someone finally showed up (well over an hour late — without apology). Quanisha just shrugged it off.

As we headed down a long hallway to the exit with Quanisha in the lead and me bringing up the rear, the woman, maneuvering her own wheelchair, suddenly, without making any sound, veered into the wall and seemed to really need help. I didn't know what to do, and I looked to Quanisha for guidance. She silently signaled that I wasn't to help, and told the woman that she knew she was having a muscle spasm, we weren't in any hurry, and we'd wait until it passed. And it did. The woman was able to exit the building by herself, with her dignity intact.

It was just another day in the life of a DSP, but it wasn't just another day for me. It was a day that provided me with an incredibly vivid description of the importance of the job ANCOR members have entrusted us with, and why the HCBS integration imperative makes the mission of ANCOR's National Advocacy Campaign as relevant, if not more so, today than ever. The CIA would be smart to snap Quanisha up. I'd trust her to have my back in a complex environment requiring constant vigilance, but thank goodness she chooses to make supporting people with disabilities her life's work. Now it's our job, and the job of federal and state legislators, CMS and state Medicaid agencies to ensure that her chosen profession is recognized for the skill it demands, and that providers are funded at a level to be able to recruit and retain Direct Support Professionals like Quanisha all over this country.

Author LINK: **Barbara Merrill** is CEO of ANCOR. She can be reached at bmerrill@ancor.org.

Scioto
Housing for people with disabilities

Population Health is Your Next Business Opportunity!
CALL NOW 518.441.4549
AIP
Advocates for Human Potential, Inc.

caredirector
the flexible social care system

Caredirector for Providers
Saves you Time
Increases Revenue

LEARN MORE ▶

Therap

Electronic Documentation for I/DD Service Providers

quantum solutions corporation

Quantum is Your Software Solution.

Learn More

CapGrow Partners

A PARTNER YOU CAN RELY ON

Learn More

medisked

Person-Centered Software

President's Corner: In Pursuit of the Goals of the National Advocacy Campaign

by Chris Sparks

In the midst of celebrating a successful DSP Recognition Week, there is still much to be done and we must continue to pursue the goals of ANCOR's National Advocacy Campaign.



"We're in the people helping business, aren't we?" This is the phrase I often hear from EPI's Transportation Services Manager when I thank him for some exceptional effort that has helped a person we serve or an agency staff member. We are in the people helping business, but never has it been more difficult to put a simple unifying principle into proper action.

As I write this article for ANCOR *LINKS*, we have just celebrated **Direct Support Professional (DSP) Recognition Week**, where we honor and thank those who work in DSP positions. By nearly every measure, we count the week a success: in gubernatorial proclamations, the Senate Resolution recognizing the work of DSPs, and in the stories of the scores of ANCOR member organizations that shared many unique and meaningful ways they honored their DSPs. I enjoyed following the ANCOR tweets from many such organizations and I celebrated each one. I add my voice to the many others and say thank you to those in DSP jobs, and all who fill other critical positions in organizations that make community services for people with disabilities possible.

In the midst of celebrating, we realize that services for people with disabilities are in a period of disruptive change. The fundamentals of service delivery are changing, including customer expectations, regulatory requirements, and funding mechanisms. These changes are coming at a time when we are facing unprecedented challenges in recruiting good staff. I concede that staff recruitment has always been difficult for organizations serving people with disabilities, but it has gotten exponentially worse as our population ages, our workforce shrinks, and there are more demands in general for "caregiving" jobs.

As those of us who work in agencies or businesses that support people with disabilities are working feverishly to manage the obstacles that are ours, it is important to acknowledge that even disruptive change brings opportunity and the possibility for better services for our customers. Our customers expect high quality, the opportunity to exercise real choice over life decisions and directions, and real access to their communities. Innovative and creative organizations will keep their eye on the prize of high quality services that produce valued outcomes and help our customers build the lives they want.

As we view DSP Recognition Week in the rear view, we again count our successes. The response to DSP Recognition Week represents progress, but there is still so much to be done. Turnover in DSP positions remains untenable, agency vacancy rates are climbing, and quality of life for our persons served is too often the casualty of hastily prepared or fill-in staff because of turnover and recruitment challenges.

We must continue to aggressively pursue the goals of ANCOR's National Advocacy Campaign and achieve public policy initiatives that assure enough staff who are well trained, fairly and competitively compensated, and receive critical employment benefits. This should be our base expectation on behalf of those who perform this important work. We can count on ANCOR to be the champion of workforce issues and provide public policy advocacy and education that helps us all be more successful.

Author LINK: Chris Sparks is Executive Director of Exceptional Persons Inc. (EPI). He can be reached at chris.sparks@episervice.org.

Population Health is Your Next Business Opportunity!

CALL NOW 518.441.4549

AIP Advocates for Human Potential, Inc.

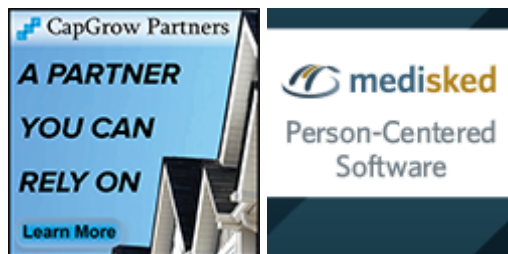
Caredirector for Providers Saves you Time Increases Revenue

LEARN MORE ►

Electronic Documentation for I/DD Service Providers

Quantum is Your Software Solution.

Learn More



State Association View: DSP Week & Gubernatorial DSP Proclamations - What's the Point?

by Diane McComb

Direct Support Professionals make a difference. Shouldn't they also make a living?



State associations traditionally have made the "ASK" for state DSP Recognition Gubernatorial proclamations. In 2015, we received 45 (with another 4 or 5 promised). Almost every governor removed the suggested language about how DSPs are underpaid, but all of them retained the parts about DSP loyalty and dedication. Additionally, ANCOR navigated Senate Resolution 245 being passed, recognizing Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) for their commitment to supporting individuals and promoting community-inclusion for individuals of all ages with disabilities.

Led by U.S. Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Susan Collins (R-ME), SB 245 unanimously approved a resolution designating the week beginning September 13 as **National Direct Support Professional Recognition Week**. The resolution was also co-sponsored by Senators Rob Portman (R-OH), Angus King (I-ME), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Edward Markey (D-MA), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), Patty Murray (D-WA), Al Franken (D-MN), Robert Casey (D-PA) and Elizabeth Warren (D-

MA). This year's resolution marks the eighth consecutive year of recognition by the U.S. Senate for this essential workforce. Disability services providers across the country will mark the week by hosting celebrations to honor their Direct Support Professionals.

Well done, ANCOR!

Many SAEs ask me, "*What's the Point?*" Proclamations neither increase available funding nor directly benefit DSPs or the people with disabilities they support every day. Most governors are glad to issue a proclamation, appeasing constituents with a no cost, feel good political action. Don't we just facilitate a way for states to dodge the real issue regarding the crisis in funding? This year was particularly challenging. A handful of states actually reduced funding for community services (CT, OK) and at least two haven't paid providers since July 1, pending state budget negotiations (read *standoffs*).

ANCOR's role at the national level in this campaign is compelling and strategic. Beginning over a decade ago the National Advocacy Campaign began with the introduction of federal legislation to increase the rate of reimbursement from Medicaid to better the wages paid to DSPs. I was then the CEO of Maryland's state association and recall the impact of this effort mirrored in Maryland's own initiative — **Direct Support Professionals Make a Difference. Shouldn't they also make a living?** We discovered our DSP workforce was much larger than anyone had known, nearly half that of the state government workforce. These dedicated men and women were doing work critical to the lives of people with disabilities and their families everyday, yet a majority worked two and sometimes three jobs to make ends meet.

The sad reality is wages remain woefully inadequate for a workforce so key in the quality of life for millions of Americans with disabilities. Many qualify for government safety net programs, such as food stamps and other public assistance programs.

So what's the point of putting effort into securing a gubernatorial proclamation honoring DSPs when neither our federal government nor our states generally acknowledge the worth of this incredible workforce by paying a decent, living wage?

Throughout ANCOR's effort, awareness has broadened on this important issue. While we all know a resolution doesn't by itself increase rates, the collective actions ANCOR has taken over the years have improved the understanding of the issues facing DSPs and the agencies for which they work. Our annual national recognition program honoring DSPs from each state elevates their stature with local, state, and national elected officials sparking curiosity and acknowledgement of the difficult work at hand.

Gathering state proclamations each year is one small part of a larger strategic plan. This seemingly small gesture exponentially increases the public's awareness of the DSP workforce and its value. As we honor the individual efforts of DSPs who are exceptional, we reinforce their value as a vibrant part of America's workforce. As we move toward credentialing and encourage the adoption of the NADSP's Code of Ethics across the field, we play a part in professionalizing the field.

All of these efforts are critical, and yes, strategic. To skip the baby steps — the ones like procuring DSP recognition proclamations and honoring DSPs in each state — misses the point. We will never be successful if no one knows who we are. We will never reach the ultimate goal of a better wage if our messaging is inconsistent. With persistence, however, we CAN make certain each governor in each state knows who ANCOR's workforce is. With persistence, we have a shot at increasing the value our states place on DSPs, and with persistence, we might just pull this off — one state at a time.

Author LINK: **Diane McComb** is ANCOR's Liaison to State Associations and can be reached at dmccomb@ancor.org.



Public Policy: Reports from the Policy Front

by 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.

Debt Ceiling Fight is Renewed as CBO Warns of Potential Default

(October 16) On October 14, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) warned that if Congress fails to increase the debt ceiling within 30 days, the Treasury Department will no longer be able to stave off default, and the United States will be unable to pay its obligations. Treasury Secretary Jack Lew has given a date of November 5th as when lawmakers must lift the cap on government borrowing. Although the government hit the debt ceiling back in March, the Treasury has been able to use various accounting maneuvers to prevent default. Read more [here](#).

McConnell Puts Entitlements on the Table in Budget Talks

(October 16) This week, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) hinted that he may push for significant changes to Social Security and Medicare in exchange for raising the debt ceiling and funding the federal government. Just a couple of weeks ago, Congress passed a short-term continuing resolution to keep the government funded, but that measure will expire in mid-December. Unless action is taken to raise the debt ceiling, the United States will be unable to borrow funds past November 5, which could result in a default. Read more [here](#).

CMS Seeks Comments on New Payment System

(October 9) On October 5, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) put out a Request for Information (RFI) requesting input on implementing a Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS). This new system was enacted as part of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA). As part of the MIPS, CMS is considering offering additional reimbursement to providers for improving quality, accessibility, and health care outcomes for people with disabilities or chronic conditions, dual eligible (people who have Medicare and Medicaid), as well as other groups which face barriers to care. Other proposed changes promote partnerships with community-based organizations. Sections of this proposal of

particular interest are entitled "Clinical Practice Improvement Activities Performance Category" and "Information Regarding Physician-Focused Payment Models." Read more [here](#).

National Organizations Issue Advocacy Guides for Consumer-Directed Program Participants in Wake of Home Care Rule Ruling

(October 5) Recently, a group of national disability advocacy organizations - The Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, the American Association of People with Disabilities, the Association of University Centers on Disability, Justice in Aging, the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities, the National Council on Independent Living, and the National Disability Rights Network - issued Action Steps and a Fact Sheet to help consumers and advocates understand and react to the ruling on the Department of Labor Home Care Rule. As ANCOR has reported, the rule was reinstated in August and will go into effect in October, unless the Supreme Court grants an emergency stay, which many legal insiders believe is unlikely. Read more [here](#).

NACDD Releases Resources for National Disability Employment Awareness Month

(October 5) October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) has developed resources to help DD Councils raise awareness during NDEAM. In August, NACDD conducted a webinar that included actions DD Councils can take to highlight NDEAM and educate people about the importance of employing people with developmental disabilities. The webinar featured materials provided by the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), social media tools, and a collaborative statewide campaign that is working to spread awareness. Though directed at the DD Councils, the resources and information are helpful for anyone looking to spread awareness about employment for people with developmental disabilities. Read more [here](#).

FCC Disability Advisory Committee to Host Summit on I/DD Communication Needs on Oct. 28

(October 5) On Wednesday, October 28, 2015 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)'s Disability Advisory Committee will host a Summit on the communication needs of people with cognitive and intellectual disabilities. The Summit will include panels of subject matter experts that include: (1) Communication Technologies for Independent Living; (2) Emergency Preparedness/Living in the Community; and (3) Ensuring and Funding Access to Equipment, Training and Broadband. An Exhibition of assistive technologies will be held during the Summit. The meeting is open to the public. The Summit will be streamed live with open captioning over the Internet. Read more [here](#).

Senate Moves Towards Stopgap Measure to Avoid Shutdown

(September 28) With the clock ticking before funding runs out to keep the federal government running past next week, the Senate is poised to adopt a continuing resolution this week. Last week, Democrats filibustered a measure that included a provision to defund Planned Parenthood. Last Friday, House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) announced he would step down at the end of October. Passing a stopgap measure free of any funding changes to Planned Parenthood will require bipartisan support. It is expected that with Boehner stepping down, a "clean" continuing resolution will have an easier time passing through the House. Read more [here](#).

HHS Releases Final Health IT Strategic Plan

(September 28) On September 21, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced the release of the updated Federal Health IT Strategic Plan 2015-2020. The plan represents the collective strategy of federal offices that use or influence the use of health information technology (health IT). The plan aims to improve the health IT infrastructure, help transform health care delivery, and improve individual and community health. The Plan sets a blueprint for the federal partners to implement strategies that will support the nation's continued development of a responsive and secure health IT and information use infrastructure. The final Plan reflects the input from more than 400 public comments, collaboration between federal contributors, and recommendations from the Health IT Policy Committee. ONC leadership also heard from individuals, providers, community organizations, and entrepreneurs from across the United States during listening sessions held in 2014. ANCOR submitted comments and was involved in the work. Read more [here](#).

Speaker Boehner Announces Resignation

(September 25) John Boehner, who currently leads Republicans in the House of Representatives as Speaker of the House, has announced his resignation from his office at the end of October. Speaker Boehner has represented the 8th District of Ohio since 1990 and rose to leadership, taking the speakership role in 2011. With Congressman Boehner leaving, major news outlets report that House Republicans have now agreed to support a clean spending bill, avoiding an immediate government shutdown. The House intends to vote next week on that clean spending bill and then move on to budget reconciliation, attempting to both repeal the Affordable Care Act and stripping Planned Parenthood of funding. Read more [here](#).

ANCOR Submits Comments on ABLE Act Proposed Rules

(September 25) On September 18, ANCOR submitted comments on the IRS proposed rule regarding new ABLE Act accounts. The ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) Act permits individuals with disabilities that were acquired prior to age 26 to set up tax-advantaged savings accounts to assist with paying for needed services related to their disability. The comments ANCOR submitted followed closely those developed in coalition with the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, led by the National Disability Institute. Read more [here](#).

DOJ Announces Oregon Olmstead Settlement

(September 18) On September 8, the Department of Justice (DOJ) announced a proposed settlement agreement with the state of Oregon over alleged Olmstead violations. The case, formerly known as Lane v. Kitzhaber but now titled Lane v. Brown (12-cv-00138), centered around allegations that the state's employment service system over-relied on segregated sheltered workshops to the exclusion of integrated alternatives, such as supported employment services. The proposed settlement agreement will impact more than 7,000 Oregon residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Over the next seven years, many adult individuals with IDD currently in segregated settings will have opportunities to work in integrated settings for competitive wages. Read more [here](#).

Senate Passes Special Needs Trust Fairness Act

(September 14) On September 10, the Senate passed the Special Needs Trust Fairness Act of 2015 (S. 349), which will enable individuals with disabilities to create their own special needs trusts (SNTs). Senators Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and Bill Nelson (D-FL) sponsored the legislation, which corrects a drafting error in an earlier law (the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993) that has prevented competent individuals from establishing their own SNTs. Federal law currently requires that first party SNTs, created with assets owned by the beneficiary, be established on their behalf by a parent, grandparent, guardian or court. A companion bill in the House (H.R. 670) was introduced in February by Representative Glenn Thompson (R-PA). Read more [here](#).

DOL Urges Governors to Implement Home Care Rule

(September 4) On September 2, Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez sent a letter to each of the 50 state governors, urging them to ensure that the Department of Labor Home Care rule is implemented quickly. The rule, which was recently reinstated by a federal appeals court, extends minimum wage and overtime protections to some workers who were previously excluded from coverage under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). (See WICs article, "Appeals Court Reinstates DOL Home Care Rule," August 21, 2015.) The rule will go into effect on October 13, unless there is further court action which delays it. The original effective date of the rule was January 1, 2015, which will be the effective date of the rule, again unless the court orders a different effective date. The DOL has said that it will begin enforcement activities on November 13, 2015. Read more [here](#).

CMS Issues First Heightened Scrutiny Response to North Dakota

(September 4) Earlier this week, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a letter to North Dakota referring to its statewide transition plan, which included a request for heightened scrutiny on two settings. The request included housing units in which a total of 10 individuals reside. The housing is on the grounds of the Life Skills Transition Center, which is an ICF/IID in Grafton, North Dakota. The request also included a facility-based day program located on the campus, which serves 12 HCBS waiver participants who live in the community. Initial review by CMS determined that the residence settings complied with the CMS HCBS rule. Read more [here](#).

Author LINK: **Katherine Berland** is ANCOR's Director of Government Relations. She can be reached at kberland@ancor.org.

Scioto
Housing for people with disabilities

Population Health is Your Next Business Opportunity!
CALL NOW 518.441.4549
AIP
Advocates for Human Potential, Inc.

caredirector
the flexible social care system
Caredirector for Providers
Saves you Time
Increases Revenue
LEARN MORE ▶

Therap
Electronic Documentation
for I/DD
Service Providers

quantum solutions
corporation
Quantum is Your Software Solution.
Learn More

CapGrow Partners
A PARTNER
YOU CAN
RELY ON
Learn More

medisked
Person-Centered
Software

Articles

Recapping The ANCOR Leadership Summit

by Gabrielle Sedor, CAE

Scrolling through the activity feed of the 2015 Leadership Summit's mobile app instantly reminds me of the energy in the air at the Capitol Hill Liaison during the last days of September. It was electric!



THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME
ANCOR LEADERSHIP SUMMIT
SEPTEMBER 29-30, 2015

Scrolling through the Activity Feed of the 2015 Leadership Summit's mobile app instantly reminds me of the energy in the air at the Capitol Hill Liaison during the last days of September. It was electric!

Over a hundred Summit participants were logged on and sharing immediate reactions to speakers and, more importantly, what was being said at the Summit. So it was easy to see that expert panels on housing as it relates to the HCBS Rule and managed care, as well as speakers like keynote Andrew Imperato; Melissa Harris, Acting Deputy Director, Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group, CMS; and Tammy McCutchen of Littler Mendelson P.C. were giving the audience the content they were hoping for.



Click here to see more photos taken at the 2015 ANCOR Leadership Summit.

Many thanks to **Scioto** for sponsoring the event. [Check out these photos!](#)

Here's what some attendees have been saying about the **2015 ANCOR Leadership Summit**:

"Jennifer [Ho] is smart and worked in the trenches in MN. She knows her stuff and has a heart for people on the margins."

"Fantastic session on wage and hour issues."

"I'm fighting the urge to give Tammy McCutchen a standing ovation!"

And others were raising questions that we continue to work through together:

"There are many barriers to acquiring affordable housing....Retaining housing is also an issue for some people who go into rehab or hospital or psychiatric facilities for lengthy periods."

"Homelessness is the result of every broken part of every system."

"It's frustrating that there are resources out there that people aren't able to access [in response to data on housing vouchers]. We have to work on making sure people have access to resources."

"Big concerns in Minnesota about providers left holding the bag so providers are going to have to lead the charge on implementing the Community Rule."

As someone who used to organize grassroots advocacy at the state level, I get a special thrill seeing the photos and comments our members posted after visits with their Congressmen and women:

"Great day on the Hill! Met with 75% of our delegation - senior Sen. Jack Reed, Se. Whitehouse and Congressman Langevin."

"CT went 7 for 7 on our Hill day visit!"

"GREAT meeting with Congressman Tom Emmer, MN ANCOR members Norm Munk, Lynne Megan and future member Tom Weaver."

And the **Congressional Briefing!** Community service providers were well-represented by ANCOR members Judith Goodwin and Linda Plourde, who ably shared the stage with Senate Finance Committee Staff Anne Dwyer and Rodney Whitlock and Director of Legislative Affairs for America's Essential Hospitals Shawn Gremminger in front of a standing-room only crowd.

While it was fun to see what ANCOR members were up to on the Hill and during their down time, the app provides a vital tool to ANCOR staff as we assess our current educational offerings and

plan towards the future, like the [2016 ANCOR Annual Conference](#), scheduled for May 1-3, 2016 at the Chicago Marriott Downtown.

Check your inboxes for our [call for session proposals](#), and please disseminate it widely to your networks and especially to colleagues and peers you think could help folks **Get Smart! Get Inspired! Get It Done!** (our theme for 2016).



The Results of ANCOR Elections

The results are in! Congratulations to our newly elected and re-elected leaders.

NEWS from the ANCOR Board of Directors:

The ANCOR Board of Directors re-elected the following officers for a second one-year term:

- **Chris Sparks**, Exceptional Persons Inc. (EPI), Waterloo, IA (President)
- **Angela King**, Volunteers of America, Arlington, TX (Vice President)
- **Julie Manworren**, Living Well Disability Services, Eagan, MN (Secretary/Treasurer)
- **Arthur Ginsberg**, Community Residences, Inc., Chantilly, VA and **Stan Soby**, Oak Hill, Hartford, CT, were re-elected to the Leadership Development Committee.

NEWS from the ANCOR Board of Representatives:

The following ANCOR Members recently completed their terms and we thank them for their service:

- **Lori Feldkamp**, Big Lakes Developmental Center, Manhattan, KS
- **Judi Goodwin**, Oklahoma Community Based Providers, Inc., Oklahoma City

We welcome these newly-elected and re-elected Reps, whose terms begin October 1, 2015:

- **Craig Boone**, Volunteers of America of Oklahoma, Inc., Tulsa
- **Gail Brown**, New England Village, Inc., Pembroke, MA
- **Pamela Fields**, Arc of Meriden-Wallingford, Inc., Meriden, CT
- **Gina Judy**, Portable Practical Educational Preparation, Inc., Tucson, AZ
- **Scott Livengood**, Community Residential Services Association, Bothell, WA
- **Tony Thomas**, Welcome House, Inc., Westlake, OH
- **Chad VonAhnen**, Johnson County Developmental Supports, Lenexa, KS

NEWS about the ANCOR Membership General Election:

- **Heidi Mansir**, Uplift, Inc., Gardiner, ME, was elected to the Leadership Development Committee.

Congratulations to all!



A History of ANCOR: Networking with Other Organizations

by Joni Fritz

Former CEO and longtime friend of ANCOR Joni Fritz chronicles the history of our association in the second installment of a three part series.

This article is the second installment of a three-part series that documents the history of the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR).

Support from & Involvement with Outside Organizations

In the first article about the founding of ANCOR we mentioned that funding support was received from the Department of Health and Human Services in the form of a grant to identify all out-of-home living arrangements in the U.S. for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. No such survey was performed previously. This was a daunting task. CEO Manny Hall began by enlisting the aid of a professional in each state, called the State Project Director, who identified lists of providers serving this population in their states, including specialized foster care homes. (These lists were later used as a foundation for research conducted by both the University of Minnesota and the University of Illinois at Chicago when those entities sought to identify all out-of-home placements.)

A questionnaire was developed with the aid of an advisory body and it was sent to every home or institution identified. Extensive follow-up was conducted by mail and the State Project Directors made personal contacts as well. Visiting the states gave Manny an opportunity to speak to providers, identify their concerns and share information about the new National Association of Private Residential Facilities for the Mentally Retarded (NAPRFMR, now ANCOR) which was addressing provider concerns at the federal level.

Manny's first assistant was Patricia Garza. When she left in late 1972, she was replaced by Joni Fritz. Joni had no prior experience in association management, public policy or the field of intellectual disabilities, but Manny had a hunch she would be a quick learner. He introduced her to people in Washington who could help their development of what is now ANCOR.

U.S. Department of Labor

In March 1973, Manny and Joni met with the Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division to learn first-hand about laws and regulations that affected the staffing of community living arrangements. We were told after the fact that a brief article written for the "NAPRFMR Newsletter" about our findings from the meeting were used successfully in a court hearing regarding a member agency's labor dispute. As they say, the rest is history; and labor law and regulations continue to be a major focus for ANCOR.

Over the following years the Association obtained more than a dozen formal letters of interpretation and influenced the development of enforcement policies that would facilitate the expansion of small group living arrangements. ANCOR eventually conducted wage and hour seminars in all of the 48 contiguous United States. At the time of Joni's retirement in 2000 she was speaking almost daily to members around the country who had questions about the enforcement of federal labor law, and she continues providing such guidance to this day.

Consortium Concerned with Developmental Disabilities

Manny received a letter in May 1973 inviting the Association to participate with 18 other national organizations with headquarters in the Washington, DC, area in a newly forming consortium that would develop consensus regarding federal public policy affecting people with developmental disabilities. The organizations would then work together to assure that federal laws and regulations had a positive impact upon the lives of people with developmental disabilities. Since Manny was often working in the states and Joni had no experience in developmental disabilities, Board member Terry Allen Perl drove down from his agency in the Baltimore area to accompany Joni to the monthly CCDD meetings and to promote the position of private providers on public policy. He continued to do this until the end of 1974. By this time, Joni was secretary of the CCDD, enmeshed in public policy and familiar with provider concerns. Terry remained available for her to consult with when questions arose about positions the Association should take relative to federal policy.

The importance of ANCOR Involvement with what is now the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) cannot be underestimated. In the early years it greatly enhanced the education and involvement of our Association staff and members at the federal level, and gave us a forum for influencing the positions taken by other national associations whose focus was developmental disabilities. The leadership of the Consortium, particularly Chair Paul Marchand, who was Director of Governmental Affairs for what was then the National Association for Retarded Citizens (now The Arc); Robert Gettings, CEO of the then National Association of Coordinators of State Programs for the Mentally Retarded (now the National Association of Directors of Developmental Disability Services); and E. Clarke Ross, who was at that time with the United Cerebral Palsy Associations, were highly influential in the progress of ANCOR's growth and influence. Paul and Bob are now retired and Clarke is Public Policy Director of the American Association for Health and Disabilities. ANCOR continues its relationship with the CCD. When the CCD became incorporated in 1999, Joni was elected its first Treasurer.

For more than four decades ANCOR members have testified before Congressional committees, first in behalf of the CCD and eventually presenting testimony in behalf of ANCOR itself.

National Fire-Safety Requirements

In the 1970s, ANCOR also played an instrumental role in the development of new, flexible life-safety requirements specifically targeted at small homes for people with intellectual disabilities. What was then the National Bureau of Standards (NBS — now the National Institute of Standards and Technology, or NIST) undertook a project that would, six years later, address the specific needs of a broader range of housing for not only people with intellectual disabilities but also for those with mental illness and those who were aging. Those populations were also increasingly moving to smaller community residences.

ANCOR's second president, Don A. Boyer, from Iowa, and Joni Fritz served on the Joint Consulting Panel on Board and Care Homes for the life of the NBS project. Member Bob Murray from Texas later joined the Consulting Panel. Project staff from NIST visited member agencies in Iowa and Minnesota near the beginning of the project to personally see for themselves the ability of well-trained people with intellectual disabilities to take action for self-preservation in times of emergency.

The result of the project was "A Fire Safety Evaluation System for Board and Care Homes" that was presented to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to modify for inclusion as a new chapter in its Life Safety Code 101. A later ANCOR President Peter "Skip" Sajevec (who had coordinated the Minnesota visits) became a member of the NFPA Technical Committee on Board and Care Homes as a representative of ANCOR, and Joni Fritz served as an alternate, attending most of the meetings. Several years later David Ray Kiely (at the time an ANCOR Board member from New York) became ANCOR's representative, and later Cindy Mahan from Arkansas represented the Association on the NFPA Technical Committee. Twice at the final meeting held to adopt a new Code, ANCOR has successfully spearheaded a vote to overturn proposed changes in the Code adopted an earlier level of approval which would add onerous and unnecessary hardware requirements. The most recent of these was in 2009. As Cindy will tell you, this type of intervention is difficult and unusual in the history of NFPA.

Outside Resources Working on the Inside

Some outside resources really worked on the inside. Perhaps the most valuable to ANCOR was the service provided for several years by The Chimes' CEO Terry Allen Perl and his assistant Cecil Fox. When Terry became Treasurer of the association he and Cecil decided after one look at the recordkeeping system that something far more formal had to be instituted immediately. Not only was a bookkeeping system installed right away, but for several years all ANCOR bills were paid by Cecil. This continued until an accounting firm with offices next to the ANCOR headquarters in Falls Church, Virginia, was hired to perform these duties. Eventually Marge Griggs joined the staff and executed these functions in-house, with oversight from the accounting firm. Today Cindy Allen de Ramos is the ANCOR Director of Finance.

Influence of ANCOR Members in Other National Organizations

Many ANCOR members were CEOs of local units of other national organizations like The Arc, UCP, Easter Seals, etc. One ANCOR President, Gary Mattson, CEO of Exceptional Persons, Inc. in Waterloo, IA, was CEO not only of EPI but also of the local Arc and UCP chapters, which had their own boards but were staffed by EPI.

ANCOR members also took leadership roles in other national associations, sometimes serving on their boards and other times becoming members of key committees, urging the adoption of positions that were consistent with ANCOR's. Once the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) established a Division on Private Residential Facilities (PRF), ANCOR members usually served on the AAIDD Board as chairpersons of that division. Riley Nelson, an ANCOR Vice President from Iowa was one of the first of these. Other members of the ANCOR leadership who served on the AAIDD Board included former ANCOR President Bonnie-Jean Brooks from Maine, Daniel Rosen, Ph.D., from New York, and Amy Gerowitz from Ohio, both of whom were on the ANCOR Board. Bonnie also served as Self-Advocacy Liaison on the AAIDD Board.

Largely through the leadership of ANCOR members Derrick Dufresne and Bob Laux from Wisconsin, the AAIDD Division on PRF eventually became the Division on Community and Residential Services. Derrick and Bob later co-authored a handbook published by ANCOR to help people obtain funding for the construction of small community living arrangements.

Others in the ANCOR leadership chaired state or regional divisions of AAIDD. For example, Bonnie Brooks was a Chairperson of Region X, and Helen FitzSimmons Chaired the Texas State Chapter.

People like former ANCOR Vice President Gary Mrosko from Oregon, who was later CEO of an agency in Iowa, served on the Governmental Affairs Committee of The Arc US for a number of years, bringing the real-life perspective of providers to advocacy organizations in our Nation's Capital. Another former President of ANCOR, Stephen Bennett, at the time CEO of UCP of Los Angeles, is today President and CEO of UCP's national headquarters in Washington, DC.

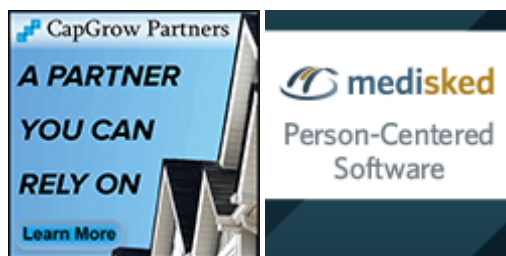
In a reversal of this process, Dennis Popp, the CEO of an ANCOR member agency in North Dakota, who was once a Vice President of NASDDDS as a State Director of Mental Retardation Services in Kansas, later became a Vice President of ANCOR.

Current ANCOR Board members and past members maintain their involvement with many other national organizations at the local, state and federal levels. We have undoubtedly missed mentioning many of these.

Next, we will continue our discussion of ANCOR's involvement in national programs and resources that aid ANCOR members and influence supports for people with disabilities.

This is the second installment of a three-part series. Look for Part Three in the November/December 2015 edition of LINKS.

The image displays five promotional banners arranged in two rows. The top row consists of two banners: on the left, the Scioto logo with the tagline 'Housing for people with disabilities'; on the right, a blue banner for AIP (Advocates for Human Potential, Inc.) with the text 'Population Health is Your Next Business Opportunity!' and 'CALL NOW 518.441.4549'. The bottom row consists of three banners: on the left, the CareDirector logo with the tagline 'the flexible social care system' and the text 'Caredirector for Providers Saves you Time Increases Revenue' and a 'LEARN MORE' button; in the middle, the Therap logo with the text 'Electronic Documentation for I/DD Service Providers'; on the right, the Quantum Solutions Corporation logo with the text 'Quantum is Your Software Solution.' and a 'Learn More' button.



Blast from The Past: Name Change

To commemorate ANCOR's 45th anniversary, this year we're publishing news from the past. The following is text from a memorandum that was sent from the organization's President to Members.

To commemorate ANCOR's 45th anniversary, this year we're publishing news from the past. The following is the complete text of a Memorandum, dated March 5, 1993, that was sent from President Peter "Skip" Sajevic to Members of the National Association of Private Residential Resources (NAPRR), the name by which ANCOR was known at the time.

Significant changes have occurred in the field of developmental disabilities and more are expected in both the near and extended future. NAPRR Directors engaged in a visioning process in December 1992 to examine these changes. This led to creative planning designed to enable this organization to better meet its primary mission of assisting private providers to improve their services and enhance the lives of people who require supports. The vision includes a new name (approved unanimously by the Board of Representatives and formally adopted by the Board of Directors on February 18). Effective October 1, 1993, NAPRR will become the **American Network of Community Options and Resources**, using the acronym ANCOR. This name will better describe the role NAPRR intends in shaping the future of services and supports.

American recognizes that the world in which we live is shrinking. As Robert B. Reich, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor, has written in [The Work of Nations](#), we must all begin to think more globally. What strengthens the weakest nation has the potential of enriching us all. This is not unlike what happens to society when people with disabilities become more productive and self-dependent. Additionally, in lists of national organizations — such as those in joint letters sent to Members of Congress — it will move our organization's placement from the middle toward the top of such lists, increasing our visibility.

Network is more contemporary than "Association." It also emphasizes more authority and strength for each of its individual members. Further, it invites a variety on interrelationships: from member to member, member to state association, state association to state association and for each with the national organization, in all combinations and directions; an expanding potential of relationships that can enhance the development of each entity within the Network.

Community represents the best that we are trying to achieve — as Webster says, it is: "The state of being held in common; common possession, enjoyment, liability; . . . agreement, identity, social intercourse; . . . life in association with others; the social state." In other words, the state of being that we hope to enable people with disabilities to attain within our society.

Options affirms and advances the tremendous variety of expanding community alternatives created by NAPRR members to support people with developmental disabilities where they live, work and spend their leisure time - as well as new options that will present themselves in future years.

Resources remains in the new name. Resources bring vital attention to the talent and creativity of each NAPRR member agency rather than a limited focus on a specific facility. NAPRR, in the words of our Mission Statement, promotes and assists private providers who offer services and supports to people with mental retardation and/or developmental disabilities wherever they live. Many people supported by NAPRR members live in their own homes or in the homes of their families of host families, and this trend is expected to grow substantially in the coming years.

ANCOR is a particularly strong acronym. Every boat of any size moves freely on its own, but each needs an anchor for stabilization and security. As the [New Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary](#) suggests, an anchor is: "that on which we place dependence for safety." ANCOR will provide stability and safety for the providing organizations it represents, which in turn will be the anchors in the community for the people they support..

ANCOR's primary goal will remain as already articulated in the Mission Statement which is enclosed with this letter. It is totally consistent with our motto: **"Interdependence Fosters Independence"** and will take our organization and its members into an exciting future of greater opportunity for people with developmental disabilities.

We invite you to attend sessions planned for Washington, DC on June 5, immediately following the AAMR conference, where we will be brainstorming about ways to implement the board's vision. In the meantime, if you have comments or questions, don't hesitate to contact your state representative on our Board of Representatives (see listing on inside back cover of each issue of *LINKS*) or staff in the National Capital Office in Annandale, Virginia.



Call for Nominations: 2016 Moving Mountains Awards

NADSP and RTC now seek unique and creative initiatives that contribute to improving workforce outcomes for DSPs and their employers.

The National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) and the Research and Training Center (RTC) at the University of Minnesota's Institute on Community Integration are seeking nominations for the **2016 Moving Mountains Award**. The purpose of this award is to recognize organizations using leading practices in direct support staff workforce development that result in improved outcomes for the people being supported. Organizations applying are required to illustrate how their direct support workforce practices and philosophy align with the principles of NADSP.

The award is usually presented at the national **Reinventing Quality Conference**, which is sponsored by National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS), Research and Training Center on Community Living at the University of Minnesota, Human Services Research Institute (HSRI), University of Delaware National Leadership Consortium, American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), and American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). Each of these organizations, along with several national workforce development champions, participate on the selection committee for the award.

The **Moving Mountains Award** recognizes organizations using leading practices in direct support staff workforce development that result in improved outcomes for the people being supported. Organizations applying are required to illustrate how their direct support workforce practices and philosophy align with the principles of the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP). These principles are:

- All direct support professionals benefit from access to well-constructed educational experiences (e.g., in-service training, continuing and higher education) and lifelong learning;
- Certifying highly qualified workers incentivizes continuing education, increased compensation, and access to career pathways for direct support professionals thereby improving retention;
- Values and ethical decision making can be learned and infused into daily practice; and
- Strengthening relationships and partnerships between direct support professionals, self-advocates, and other consumer groups and families improves the quality of support.

Nominated programs and initiatives can be small (a single program) or large (statewide) in scope and can involve just a few or many DSPs. Organizations that have applied previously but were not selected are invited and encouraged to re-submit a nomination for this year's competition. The RTC and the NADSP are looking for unique and creative initiatives that contribute to improving workforce outcomes for direct support professionals and their employers. We welcome applications from statewide/regional initiatives, local organizations, and individuals. Up to two awards will be given each year. This year's award winners will be honored at [Reinventing Quality 2016](#).

[Click here](#) to download an application and [visit this page](#) for more information about the Moving Mountains Award. **All nominations must be submitted by November 30, 2015.**



Agency Growth & Sustainability: Life Quality Planning & Coaching

by Dr. Krysti DeZonia, TERI, Inc., an ANCOR Member

An agency shares how it navigates the financial minefields, while sustaining its services and remaining relevant.

Organizations serving children and adults with developmental disabilities currently face two primary challenges: sustainability of current services and finding the financial resources for expansion to meet the increasing needs of their states and communities.

According to the National Center for Charitable Statistics, donations to nonprofits are slowly on the rise but still well below the levels seen in 2007 prior to the economic recession. At the same time, there is a growing demand for community services for persons with developmental disabilities which is influenced by the following factors:

- Youth aging out of special education programs;
- The increased longevity of this population;
- The impact of a growing number of aging caregivers;
- Relocation of residents with developmental disabilities from larger public and private institutions to smaller community settings.

This lack of availability of services requires families to assume the primary responsibility for caring for their children across the lifespan.

One solution to these problems is for agencies to develop new, for-profit enterprises capable of providing the income needed for service sustainability and expansion. What add-on supports will families pay for that are not currently funded by state or federal organizations?

Life Quality Planning and Coaching

To answer this question, TERI, Inc. conducted research on family perspectives of unmet needs for their children with developmental disabilities as well as for the family as a whole. The top five areas in which families indicate a need include:

- Improving their child's quality of life (77%);
- Assistance in securing living arrangements for their child outside of the family home (68%);
- Helping their child access activities that focus on their special interests (63%);
- Behavioral training and support (54%);
- Assistance with friendship and social development for their child (54%).

Over half of the respondents indicated a belief that there are no life quality supports available to them and 71% state they would privately pay for assistance in meeting this need, including a willingness to travel any distance to obtain this support.

Based on the results of this research, and a 35 year history of serving the community, TERI developed Special Needs Life Quality Planning services and related Life Quality Coach training, both new ideas in the continuum of services to this population.

A "good life" happens day by day, hour by hour. While many families are familiar with special needs trusts, and futures planning has been around for decades, neither of these tools result in a roadmap for structuring each day to promote life quality for the individual with disabilities. Special Needs Life Quality Plans fill this gap.

We know that handing families a form to complete rarely results in a response, and asking them what they want for their child's future often yields more questions about what is possible than it does answers. Given this, TERI designed an extensive questionnaire that is conducted in person or by phone, covering seven major life domains and helping families craft a life plan that can be shared with others and modified as the individual grows or changes. This Life Quality Plan is the basis for all other educational, transition, and support goal setting.

Families responded enthusiastically to this planning when TERI launched it in 2004. Many indicated that it made a significant difference in calming one of their greatest fears: "How can I make sure my child is happy when I can no longer advocate for him/her?" They began adding the plan to their special needs trust and sharing it with other family members, teachers, and agencies involved in their child's life.

Soon afterward, TERI started receiving calls related to these plans: "Who will help us make sure that what we want actually happens?" The agency reached out to the life coaching community only to find that none of the coach training programs offered instruction that would allow a coach to serve individuals with special needs and their families. This resulted in the development of TERI's Special Needs Life Quality Coach training.

This 16 week, online course is specifically targeted toward people who already have background or experience working with individuals with developmental disabilities. Over the past 8 years that the course has been offered, the majority of those who enroll are family members, special educators, and professionals in a related field who want to expand their service options. Agencies have also paid for coach training in order to extend this support to their community. Experience has revealed that most families hire these coaches to meet their child or adult's social, educational, or vocational needs or to serve as an extension of the family in terms of information gathering, long-term advocacy, and monitoring existing services.

Response to this training has been international, and TERI has prepared Special Needs Life Quality Coaches not only in the U.S. but also in Canada, Mexico, South Africa, Great Britain, and selected countries in Europe. Most importantly, families now have access to much needed support that was previously unavailable to them, and their life quality as well as that of their family member has been enhanced.

Successful technology and health businesses were featured during the 2015 Conference, where content focused on such topics as robotics, 3D printing, intellectual property rights, financing advice and entrepreneurial assistance.

TERI is currently developing a Campus of Life that will serve as an international model for this and the many other pilot programs they have developed since their inception in 1980. If you would like to learn more about Life Quality Planning and Coaching, or about TERI's other growth and sustainability initiatives, you can contact them at info@teriinc.org or visit their website at

www.teriinc.org

Author LINK: Dr. Krysti DeZonia is co-founder of Training, Education, Research, and Innovation (TERI) and currently directs their Learning Academy and Country School, as well as the Research and Life Planning Departments. She can be reached at krystid@teriinc.org.



Members in The News

YAI Appoints New CEO

ANCOR Member gets a new Chief Executive Officer.



YAI recently announced that **George Contos** has been appointed its new Chief Executive Officer. Along with other goals, the new CEO will focus on enhancing self-directed services.

"I'm excited to assume this new role and look forward to working with our staff to enhance the lives of individuals with IDD through a person-centered approach," said Contos. "YAI has a 60-year legacy of providing services of the highest caliber to the people we support. By remaining true to our mission, we will continue building an organization that offers state-of-the-art programs and top-quality care that benefit thousands of lives daily."

Contos served as chairman of the YAI Board, which he joined in 2012. He also worked previously as a wealth manager and registered investment advisor. As a Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy, Contos specialized in structuring charitable gifting and legacy strategies for individuals, families and private foundations. Earlier in his career, as an attorney with Covey, Roberts, Corliss & Carmody-Roberts, LLP, he focused on elder law, trust-based asset protection and Medicaid planning.

George Contos has a J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center and a B.A. from Tufts University.

About YAI

YAI offers a comprehensive range of services to people of all ages with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Its 5,000 dedicated staff support nearly 20,000 individuals with IDD each day. The organization's mission is to help others achieve the fullest life possible by creating new opportunities for living, loving, working and learning. More information is available at www.yai.org.

CAU Opens Cutting-Edge Mixed-Use Property

ANCOR Member opens a new property where people with developmental disabilities will co-reside with residents without disabilities.

Community Access Unlimited (CAU) recently held a grand opening of its newest property, located on Terrill Road in Fanwood, NJ. The cutting-edge mixed-use property will be home to both people with developmental disabilities and people without disabilities, including low-income units, and two commercial businesses..

This is the latest property built by CAU, which is a statewide Elizabeth-based nonprofit providing support programs and services to adults with disabilities as well as youth served under the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to enable them to live independently in the community, in areas including housing, vocational and life-skills training, education, advocacy and recreation.

The property is cutting edge in that it: extends CAU's mission of enabling people with developmental disabilities to fully integrate into the community rather than living in segregated housing; mixes barrier-free affordable housing units for people with developmental disabilities with those available to residents of all incomes; it is an energy-efficient building, featuring ENERGY STAR appliances and heating units, Anderson double-hung windows and sensory thermostats; and improves the aesthetics and property values of the immediate neighborhood, replacing two older homes and an rundown tavern.

"This building has been constructed through a partnership of nonprofit, government and private banking," said Sid Blanchard, CAU's executive director. "It is a model we have used in other towns through Union County, which helps the county. You have a mixture of incomes, uses and types of people. That solidifies a community and adds to its diversity and strength."

Blanchard also noted how supportive the government of Fanwood was throughout the project.

"This is one of the proudest moments as my tenure as mayor, and I'm in my third term," Mahr said. "I believe so deeply in the mission of Community Access Unlimited. No matter where you are, we need integrated housing. This is a wonderful example of a public-private partnership with no public dollars involved."

TD Foundation provided CAU with a \$100,000 Housing for Everyone grant for the building. The bank has been a repeat partner with CAU on several of its properties.

"We look for community partners," said Mimi McDonough, vice president, senior commercial lender at TD Bank. "We look for organizations that are doing great things, operating efficiently and filling the needs of the community and CAU meets all those requirements. CAU is a conduit for us. We want to make a difference in the community and CAU is making a difference in the community."



Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr (center); Geraldine Smith, the scheduler for Assemblyman Gerald Green; and Sid Blanchard, CAU executive director, tour the interior of the new facility.

Valley National Bank provided a \$50,000 grant for the project. Like TD, Valley National is an ongoing partner with CAU, having recently increased the agency's line of credit from \$2.5 million to \$7.5 million.

"We have a depth of experience with the nonprofit sector so we have a lot of best practices that were portable to CAU," said Steven Vitale, first vice president, team leader commercial loans at the bank. "These best practices help CAU to grow, both now and in the future. When you combine our best practices with our philanthropic approach, it's a win-win. Plus, CAU is a phenomenal organization. The fact we can help them grow is a banker's dream."

The three-story, 12-unit mixed-use facility comprises 10 housing units, two commercial units and a 29-space parking lot. There is 10,140 square feet in total space, 1,526 square feet of office space and 8,614 square feet of residential space. A portion of the housing units are reserved for low-income individuals with disabilities and the remainder are available to individuals in the general public. All housing units are fitted with universal, barrier-free designs. The property is in a residential neighborhood, blocks from bus lines, a train station, shopping and medical facilities.

CAU owns more than 250 units of affordable housing throughout Union County, comprising apartments, condos, single-family homes, duplexes and townhouses. Housing is strategically located near major transportation routes, places of employment, shopping and medical offices.

"CAU housing is based on the belief of integrating people with and without disabilities so they may develop a system of natural supports, such as neighbors," Blanchard said. "We also believe in income integration, which is why we offer units to the wider public. This helps the community realize the positive impact of living with people with disabilities and lessens the discrimination CAU members face."

From Our Partners

Production & Supported Employment: Added Challenge & Scrutiny in the Age of WIOA

by Dermot Styles, CareDirector, an ANCOR Gold Partner

A case study of how ANCOR member, Opportunity Partners, manages supports with software solutions.

Today's facility-based employment programs are a far cry from the workshops of the past. They are competitive businesses, providing meaningful employment and valuable goods and services to the community, the military and Federal and state governments. And there are new challenges and increased scrutiny as service providers face the daily challenge of offering high-quality services, while meeting complex funding requirements, tighter budgets and new labor laws

Providers with facility-based or supported employment programs must now meet the intricate demands of labor and job

tracking, calculating complex hourly and piece rates, and correctly billing for services. In short, the days of manually reconciling spreadsheets against service logs and handwritten notes are over.

Providers now require comprehensive software solutions that integrate a person's employment activities, relationships, case management and financial complexities. Effective organizations need a user-friendly tool that can easily link case management, classes and the shop floor to provide a 360 degree view of persons served.

Opportunity Partners

One organization that has successfully met these new challenges is Opportunity Partners (OP). OP is a non-profit organization serving over 1,700 people with disabilities each year in the Minnesota Twin Cities area. More specifically, OP manages production, supported employment, and independent job placement programs in over 200 sites. It is a complex management task as OP tracks assessments, plans, service time, attendance and case notes for hundreds of funding sources, each with their own billing and reporting requirements.

With the implementation of CareDirector, a comprehensive case management, billing and production management application, OP has realized significant benefits:

- Manual processes and calculations are now automated, increasing accuracy and saving countless hours of staff time.
- Data is instantly accessible across the organization.
- The information collected about a person including their activities, form completion, and managing their risks is available and referenced throughout the day.
- Staff can track activities and actions within the production environment using a mobile app for tablets or mobile devices.
- Reports are accessible to examine trends in outcomes, enrollments and demographics.
- There are significantly fewer billing rejections, resulting in increased revenue.

We are becoming more efficient with data mining. We are constantly asked from agencies and funders for data requests that traditionally took many days or weeks to answer with many staff involved. Now we are becoming much faster and using less staff time to produce the results. – Ross Pringle, Opportunity Partners

Why Traditional Organizational Data Silos Don't Meet the Current Challenges

Traditional Case Management systems view clients as people who receive services which generate revenue through claims and reimbursement, while staff are the people who are paid. This model falls apart in programs where the participants are paid, especially when:

- Pay rate calculations may be hourly or piece rate, or both.
- Rates may differ based on the job or production phase.
- Participant efficiency can vary widely.
- Workers come and go throughout the day.
- Hours spent working, in classes and other activities must also be tracked against authorizations and billed.

Learn more and read a case study on Opportunity Partners [here](#).

*Author LINK: **Dermot Styles** handles marketing for CareDirector, a global social vendor providing human services solutions that enable the public to fully participate in and direct their own support. Dermot can be contacted at dstyles@careworks.ie.*



The Value of Sprint Relay

from Sprint, an ANCOR SRPN Partner

Sprint offers relay services to support individuals who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, deafblind or have a speech disability.

Sprint Relay Service is a system that allows users who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, deafblind or have a speech disability to use a TTY/computer device to type his/her conversation to a Relay Operator. The Relay Operator then reads the typed conversation to a hearing person. The Relay Operator relays the hearing person's spoken words by typing them back to the TTY user.

Sprint Relay launched a redesigned Relay website that includes a Java app, so deaf blind users, using a braille reader, can have access to the site.

Additionally, a number of video clips have been created, which are available on YouTube, to provide information in American Sign Language (ASL) on how to use Sprint services, as well as to answer frequently asked questions related to wireless services and devices.

Sprint Relay is the nation's largest Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) provider.

Sprint is the largest and most technologically advanced Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) provider in the nation, with more than 25 year experience in providing relay services to those who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or deafblind, or have a speech disability. Sprint's experience in this field assures Sprint Relay users receive quality services regardless of the preferred relay service.

"The products and services offered through Sprint Relay have a profound impact on the lives of individuals in the Deaf, hard of hearing and speech disabled communities," said Mike Ellis, National Director for Sprint Relay. "Everyday tasks that so many take for granted, like answering a phone call, have been made possible because of the communication barriers removed through Sprint Relay services."

Sprint currently provides relay services in 35 states and exclusively for the federal government, Puerto Rico, New Zealand and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Sprint Relay Services

Sprint provides a wide-range of relay services for both wireline and wireless communications options including the following:

- **Sprint IP Relay Service:** With access to the Internet and a computer, Sprint IP Relay allows individuals to communicate with anyone nationwide, free of charge to the end user. Registration is required.
- **Sprint Mobile IP Relay:** A free downloadable application that enables users to make and receive relay calls on an Android or iOS wireless device and includes features such as Spanish, changeable font size and access to Sprint Relay Customer representatives. Registration is required.

- **Sprint CapTel Services and Products:** Users are automatically connected to captioning services.
- **Relay Conference Captioning:** Combines real-time captioning and voice relay services, allowing individuals to follow a meeting comment-by-comment.
- **Sprint National Traditional Relay Services:** Allows users to communicate comfortably using TTY to type their conversation to a Sprint Relay Operator.
- **CapTel Phones** (840, 840i, 880i, 2400i Models): Using advanced technology, these phones display captions of telephone conversation in real-time (much like closed captions on TV) allowing the individual with a hearing loss to speak/listen to and read what their caller is saying.
- **Sprint Wireline Speech-to-Speech** and **"My Wireless Speech-to-Speech"**: Enables individuals with speech disabilities to access state and national Speech to Speech (STS) services via wireline or wireless device; users can also dial *787 on any Sprint wireless device to place a STS operator-assisted STS call.

To learn more about Sprint products and services go to www.sprintrelay.com.



A Focus on Person Centered Services

from Therap Services, LLC, an ANCOR Gold Partner

Therap is a wise choice in electronic documentation for any agency that is fully committed to person-centered services.

A documentation system cannot, by itself, transform lives from being system centered to being person centered. But record keeping often serves as a major hindrance to building supports that are based on what is important to the person. Record keeping systems can be cumbersome and time-consuming deterrent to ongoing use, and may not be up to date or complete. A system can be designed so that compliance with requirements of oversight agency and auditability take precedence over keeping track of the real lives of real people who use supports and services.

Therap was designed with this in mind. It is always up to date, convenient, portable and accessible to everyone involved with a person's well-being. This allows the person and anyone who is important them to be part of planning and articulating preferences in a meaningful and relevant way. Decision making can occur at a time and place that makes the most sense.

Therap's modules includes workflows that make it easy for a person, a case manager and/or other circle of support members to explore and record a person's "dreams, interests, preferences, and strengths" (NY OPWDD) in advance of a planning meeting (Personal focus worksheet), and to expand on these ideas during the meeting itself (ISP Agenda and ISP Plan) into actionable items and outcomes (ISP Programs). Record keeping and reporting can occur anywhere there is internet access

so reporting on progress does not have to be restricted to clinical or agency based settings. The workflow is extremely flexible and does not limit activities, services and supports to any prescribed type or locations, or emphasize any type of circle of support (family, friend, employer, staff, etc.) over others. This highly individualized approach prevents 'cookie cutter' goals or decisions made about the person based on system capacity rather than what is important to the individual. This format for person-centered planning strengthens the development and use of individualized supports.

Traditional planning and record keeping systems have many logistical requirements that serve as barriers to flexibility. Therap's models support the idea of experimenting with program choices and making program decisions based on experiences. If an idea proves unrealistic, revising the plan is easy, as is keeping track of the rationale for revisions and information that might be required by funding and oversight entities. This flexibility gives an individual more experience with choice and decisions made based on multiple options.

Therap is used by people receiving services and supports and their circle of support. There is a growing and well-organized network of self-advocates who can help individuals, agencies, and systems take advantage of the tremendous potential this offers. People who are active participants in the ongoing documentation of their lives or the lives of their loved ones learn how systems work, how to make them work better, and how to respect the efforts of everyone involved in maintaining supports and promoting growth and independence.

Therap is a wise choice in electronic documentation for any agency that is fully committed to person-centered services.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

The collage consists of seven distinct promotional banners:

- Scioto:** Housing for people with disabilities. Includes a house icon and the Scioto logo.
- Population Health is Your Next Business Opportunity!** CALL NOW 518.441.4549. AIP Advocates for Human Potential, Inc.
- caredirector:** the flexible social care system. Caredirector for Providers Saves you Time Increases Revenue. LEARN MORE ►
- Therap:** Electronic Documentation for I/DD Service Providers.
- quantum solutions corporation:** Quantum is Your Software Solution. Learn More
- CapGrow Partners:** A PARTNER YOU CAN RELY ON. Learn More
- medisked:** Person-Centered Software.

DSP Focused Learning

from Relias Learning, an ANCOR Gold Partner

Considering the challenges DSPs face, it's important that the training they receive helps them retain as much of what they learn as possible.

Why do we forget so much? Because adults today live increasingly busy lives. Anyone who works in the field of I/DD will tell you that the life of an average Direct Support Professional is particularly hectic. Considering the challenges DSPs face, it's important that the training they receive helps them retain as much of what they learn as possible.

What if someone forced you to spend a week back in your grade-school classroom? How much of what you learned do you think you'd forget? No matter what you thought of school the first time around, listening to a teacher lecture in front of a whiteboard for hours probably isn't usually the most rewarding experience as an adult. The classroom approach to learning works well while we're children but often isn't practical or engaging enough for a busy adult. Adults need a reason to learn, and they learn better the more involved they are with what they're learning.

When designing training for DSPs it's important to embrace the way adults learn by taking an approach called Focused Learning. As agencies begin to tie training to outcomes, providers must develop strategies to ensure the training they offer does more than just off a box. Training needs to be engaging enough to help staff provide consistent, quality care. Focused

Learning is an approach to designing front-line staff training that when guided by the following strategies helps to maximize learner retention and engagement by making training not just instructive, but interactive.

Behavioral Change-Focused Content

DSPs are practical people and learn best when they know how their training will benefit them. Setting specific goals and objectives in a course helps learners identify exactly what skills they'll be expected to learn and how they'll need to perform afterwards, increasing their ability to practice those same skills while on the job or in the field.

Scenario-Based Training

Training should be anything but forgettable and the things we learn make a bigger impact the more we can relate them to our day-to-day lives. Through the use of scenarios that present DSPs with situations they might face in the field, learners are able to build on prior experiences and practice making informed real world decisions. Instead of presenting a list of rules or facts, enhanced interactions help promote and retain educated decision making strategies by demonstrating how to best approach familiar choices.

Feedback

When adults answer questions they expect more than simple "correct" or "incorrect" responses to their answers. Providing in depth feedback serves as an additional learning moment that can help learners better retain information. DSPs often know what works for them on the job in their day-to-day, but by being asked questions and given specific, targeted feedback, training can help D make mistakes in a safe environment while building a better understanding of the thinking behind best practices.

Emotional & Visual Impact

When what we learn resonates with us emotionally or visually it sticks with us. Training shouldn't be boring, and through the use of stories that provide relatable scenarios, it should feel relevant and relatable. Focused Learning uses purposefully selected images to ensure training is relatable to on-the-job experience and takes advantage of graphics and design principles to communicate information clearly and meaningfully.

Enhanced Interactions through Gamification

DSPs, like most adults, are doers who learn most effectively when they're actively involved with what they're doing. Compared to passively listening to a lecture, or reading words off a page, Focused Learning promotes active engagement through the use of scenarios and feedback but also through incorporating elements of gamification that keep learners involved with their training and reward them for making good choices and practicing smart decision making.

If you want to learn more about Focused Learning and how you can take advantage of these strategies to offer DSP training that is effective and impactful, please visit the [Relias Learning website](#).

The image displays seven promotional banners arranged in three rows:

- Top Row:**
 - Scioto:** Housing for people with disabilities.
 - Population Health is Your Next Business Opportunity!** CALL NOW 518.441.4549. AIP Advocates for Human Potential, Inc.
- Middle Row:**
 - caredirector:** the flexible social care system. Caredirector for Providers Saves you Time Increases Revenue. LEARN MORE ►
 - Therap:** Electronic Documentation for I/DD Service Providers.
 - quantum solutions corporation:** Quantum is Your Software Solution. Learn More
- Bottom Row:**
 - CapGrow Partners:** A PARTNER YOU CAN RELY ON. Learn More
 - medisked:** Person-Centered Software.

Member Benefits

Welcome to the ANCOR Marketplace - Our Newest Member Benefit

The ANCOR Marketplace gives ANCOR members special insight into new products and services as they appear in the I/DD marketplace — products and services that will help grow providers' businesses.

On September 1, ANCOR launched the **ANCOR Marketplace** on its own website (www.ancormarketplace.org). The ANCOR Marketplace was created to give ANCOR members a special insight into new products and services as they appear in the I/DD marketplace — products and services that will help grow the provider's business. Existing vendor/partner companies will also be featured.

The ANCOR Marketplace is an easy to navigate site. The various products and services are categorized for everyone's convenience and it makes shopping for I/DD products, such as software systems, housing solutions, merger and acquisitions prospects, insurance services and more, a smooth browsing experience. The ANCOR Marketplace also provides customer reviews and testimonials by other I/DD executives, thereby helping providers make choices.

The site is also good for companies who are seeking to identify the I/DD market through the ANCOR Marketplace. It offers direct access to executives and decision makers who provide services to over half a million individuals.

To obtain more information about the **ANCOR Marketplace**, contact ANCOR's Development Director, Marsha Patrick (mpatrick@ancor.org).

The collage features the following banners:

- Scioto:** Housing for people with disabilities. Logo includes a house icon and the text "Scioto".
- Population Health is Your Next Business Opportunity!** CALL NOW 518.441.4549. AIP Advocates for Human Potential, Inc.
- caredirector:** the flexible social care system. Caredirector for Providers Saves you Time Increases Revenue. LEARN MORE ►
- Therap:** Electronic Documentation for I/DD Service Providers.
- quantum solutions corporation:** Quantum is Your Software Solution. Learn More
- CapGrow Partners:** A PARTNER YOU CAN RELY ON. Learn More
- medisked:** Person-Centered Software.

Did You Know: Dell and Furniture Concepts!

Check out these special offers for ANCOR members!

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

Did You know that [Dell](#) offers special discounts to ANCOR members with impressive savings on desktop computers, laptops and more? [Click here](#) for details...



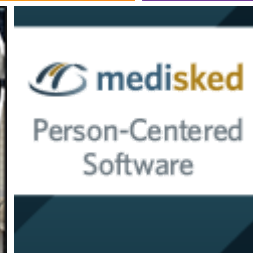
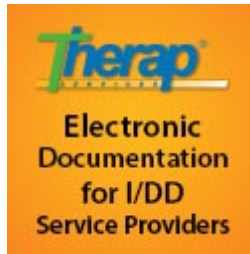
Did You know that [Furniture Concepts](#) offers sofas, loveseats, chairs and recliners in hundreds of soft and supple fabrics designed to resist bodily fluids, bacteria, microbes, stain and soiling? [Click here](#) for details...



Population Health is
Your Next Business
Opportunity!

CALL NOW
518.441.4549

AIP
Advocates for
Human Potential, Inc.



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.

"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

"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

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




Population Health is Your Next Business Opportunity!

CALL NOW
518.441.4549



Caredirector for Providers
Saves you Time
Increases Revenue

LEARN MORE ►



Electronic Documentation for I/DD Service Providers




Quantum is Your Software Solution.

Learn More



A PARTNER YOU CAN RELY ON

Learn More



Person-Centered Software

ANCOR | 1101 King Street Suite 380 | Alexandria, VA 22314 | Phone: 703.535.7850 | www.ancor.org

□