

## WELCOME SUMMER

### FUNDING THE MISSION

Seven years ago, a small group of board members and leadership huddled in an office talking about the need to create an annual fundraising event that would assist in sustaining the work of I-REACH 2.

At that time, 10% of persons served were on the waiting list for the HCBS Medicaid waiver, our group homes were at capacity, and our ability to sustain, enhance and expand our therapeutic supports and services was being compromised. The writing was on the wall that funding outside of the waiver was going to become a necessity for us to remain a viable organization.

In November of 2012, in the lower meeting room of the Petroleum Club we hosted less than 100 people at our very first I-REACH for Art.

On August 11<sup>th</sup>, we are thrilled to be returning to The Hangar in Bar Nunn to celebrate the accomplishments, gifts, and talents of the people we serve and to raise funds to support activities in our community living, employment, and community integration programs.

Our organization has undergone so many changes in the last several years, we are almost unrecognizable from that inaugural I-REACH for Art. But what is still deeply recognizable is our commitment to our mission of providing high quality, individualized, innovative, and therapeutic services to adults with developmental disabilities and brain injury.

This year's annual event will feature John Bramblitt, who is an artist living in Denton, Texas. His art has been sold in over one hundred and twenty countries and he has appeared internationally in print, TV and radio. He has appeared on CBS Evening News with Katie Couric, ABC, NBC, FOX, Discovery Channel, and BBC Radio and TV, to name a few outlets. He's been featured in The New York Times and Psychology Today, as well as designed the artwork for numerous magazine covers and even the artwork for major film productions. He's the subject of the award-winning documentary shorts "Line of Sight" and "Bramblitt." His work has received much recognition including the 'Most Inspirational Video of 2008' from YouTube and three Presidential Service Awards for his innovative art workshops. And John is blind. John will deliver a keynote address and create a live piece of art that will be up for sale during the live auction.

John will also do a painting workshop at the Ralph Ballard Academy on August 10<sup>th</sup>.

Please join I-REACH at the Beach for I-REACH for Art on August 11<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm. Tickets are available at [www.ireach2.com/upcomingfundraisers](http://www.ireach2.com/upcomingfundraisers), by phone at 265-8086 or emailing [tina@ireach2.com](mailto:tina@ireach2.com).



# WHAT IS COMMUNITY LIFE ENGAGEMENT?

There has been a huge emphasis on community life engagement in the last several years within the disability community. Public policy in various sectors of society are shaping new opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities to lead the life of their choosing.

The notion that people with developmental disabilities need a special place created for them to do special things is being replaced with innovative practices that support an individual's ability live, love, work and play as part of greater society. I-REACH 2 is proud to practice this philosophy in all areas of service delivery throughout our programs.

Community Life Engagement is:

- more than being physically located in the community.
- more than a schedule of activities to fill someone's day.
- more than simply fun or recreational activities.

Community Life Engagement involves:

- active participation and membership.
- connection with other people.
- having a valued role.
- making a contribution.

Community Life Engagement emphasis:

- people who are empowered to decide and control their future.
- stresses what people can do rather than can't do.
- places emphasis on experiences.
- all people can learn and contribute to their community.
- supports people to follow their own interest.
- success looks different for everyone.

Every day our organization strives to implement practices and service delivery that makes an impact for everyone to engage with their community at a higher level.



**"Different but not less".  
Temple Grandin**

SUBSCRIBE

# FORWARD MOMENTUM

National Trends In Disability Employment:  
Comparison of People With and Without Disabilities  
(May 2017 and May 2018)



MAY 2018	Labor Force Participation Rate		Employment-Population Ratio	
	May '17	May '18	May '17	May '18
	 P.W.D.	32.6	32.2	29.2
	% change ↓ -1.2		% change ↑ 1.7	
 P.W.O.D.	76.6	76.8	73.6	74.2
	% change ↑ 0.3		% change ↑ 0.8	

\* PWD – People with disabilities; P.W.O.D. – People without disabilities

Source: Kessler Foundation/University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability

Job gains continued for Americans with disabilities in May, although fewer were looking for work, according to today's National Trends in Disability Employment – Monthly Update (nTIDE), issued by Kessler Foundation and the University of New Hampshire's Institute on Disability (UNH-IOD). While greater numbers of people with disabilities have entered the workforce over the past two years, Americans with disabilities are still striving for jobs that support their independence. Employment First is a national initiative that has identified competitive, integrated employment as the cornerstone of full community participation by all people with disabilities. Employment First, which provides a framework for systems changes that prioritize employment, has been adopted in some form in 49 states and the District of Columbia.

In the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Jobs Report released Friday, June 1, the employment-to-population ratio for working-age people with disabilities increased from 29.2 percent in May 2017 to 29.7 percent in May 2018 (up 1.7 percent; 0.5 percentage points). For working-age people without disabilities, the employment-to-population ratio also increased from 73.6 percent in May 2017 to 74.2 percent in May 2018 (up 0.8 percent; 0.6 percentage points). The employment-to-population ratio, a key indicator, reflects the percentage of people who are working relative to the total population (the number of people working divided by the number of people in the total population multiplied by 100).

"This is the 26th consecutive month that we are seeing improvement in the employment-to-population ratio," according to John O'Neill, PhD, director of employment and disability research at Kessler Foundation. "It is

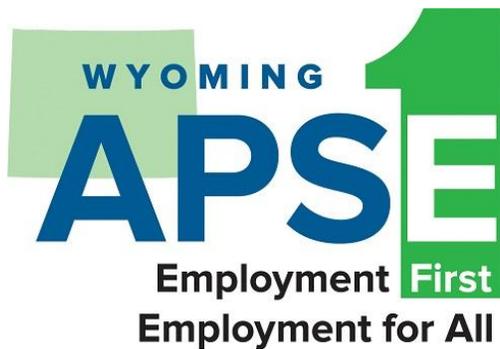
indeed good news that we are seeing more people with disabilities finding jobs."

The labor force participation rate for working-age people with disabilities decreased from 32.6 percent in May 2017 to 32.2 percent in May 2018 (down -1.2 percent; -0.4 percentage points). For working-age people without disabilities, the labor force participation rate also increased from 76.6 percent in May 2017 to 76.8 percent in May 2018 (up 0.3 percent; 0.2 percentage points). The labor force participation rate is the percentage of the population that is working or actively looking for work.

"March 2016 was the last time we saw a decline in the labor force participation rate of people with disabilities when compared the same month in the prior year. This could be signaling a softening in the degree to which people with disabilities are engaging in this expanding economy. We will have to see how things go in June," said Andrew Houtenville, PhD, associate professor of economics at UNH and research director of the Institute on Disability.

Employment First has gained momentum, with nearly every state acknowledging the goal of competitive, integrated employment for people with disabilities through legislation, executive order, policies or directives. "The growing acceptance of Employment First is encouraging, but to ensure its success, we must build a compelling case for its success," said Kelly Nye-Lengerman, MSW, PhD, research associate at the University of Minnesota's Institute on Community Integration, Research and Training Center on Community Living. "We need to establish outcome measures in order to document how systems are changing on the federal, state and local levels. We anticipate that these data will show that participation in the workforce benefits employers and taxpayers," she remarked, "as well as individuals with disability."

In May 2018, among workers ages 16-64, the 4,587,000 workers with disabilities represented 3.1 percent of the total 146,199,000 workers in the U.S.



## Do you believe that individuals with disabilities deserve meaningful work and full membership in their communities?

### So do we.

The Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) is devoted to meaningful employment and career advancement for people with disabilities. Our movement is the Employment First movement, and we've been working for decades to secure fully-integrated roles in the workplace for people with disabilities.

APSE is the **only** national organization devoted to Employment First. Wyoming is a proud state chapter affiliate. By joining APSE you are automatically a member of WY APSE. Being an APSE member means access to the best of all worlds – a national-level advocacy organization offering best practices and world-class resources – and a local-level community, with thirty-nine (and counting!) state chapters and regional institutes to complement our renowned national conference.

Whether you're an employer interested in accessing the large and talented labor pool of people with disabilities, a support professional transitioning with disabilities to integrated employment, an educator, an individual with disabilities, or a family member, you have a place in the WY APSE community.

## Top Five Reasons to Join WY APSE...

1. **Take a Stand:** Join an exciting and growing national movement advancing equitable employment for individuals with disabilities.
2. **Make a Difference:** Self advocate for the rights of individuals with disabilities to meaningful employment and competitive salaries.
3. **Effect Change:** Play your part in creating change in public policy to ensure equitable employment for individuals with disabilities.
4. **Learn from Others:** Join a growing network of like-minded, forward thinking people concerned about equitable employment for individuals with disabilities.
5. **Stay on the Cutting Edge:** Access state-of-the-art concepts and practices in expanding equitable employment for individuals with disabilities.

Join APSE now and become an integral part of a national organization connecting the disability and business communities. A registration form is attached.

**Are you a student?** APSE offer's a [special membership rate](#) for transition-aged students.

For membership info please contact:

Tina Conley  
WY APSE President  
[tina@ireach2.com](mailto:tina@ireach2.com)

Festi Edwards  
WY APSE Vice President  
[purposefulpeople@outlook.com](mailto:purposefulpeople@outlook.com)

Jaime Cureton  
WY APSE Secretary/Treasurer  
[jaime@ireach2.com](mailto:jaime@ireach2.com)

*We are pleased to recognize the following employee anniversaries! Thank you for all you do to support the Mission of IR2!*

- Jaime Cureton 15 years
- Durk Brown 9 years
- Derek Soltis 8 years
- Tina Conley 7 years
- Leonard Bordeaux 5 years
- Connie Davis 5 years
- Lisa Dennis 4 years
- Travis Johnston 3 years
- Michelle Gaines 2 years
- Jeff McCormack 2 years

## COMING SOON

A survey team from CARF International will be visiting  
I-REACH 2 Inc on  
August 20-21

We invited the surveyors to evaluate how well we meet international standards for quality. The survey will tell us what we are doing well and ways we might improve. As a result of this survey, we may earn or continue accreditation.

As part of the survey, the surveyors will interview people who receive services, their families, our staff, and others. Some questions the survey team members might ask people are:

- Do we provide a clean and safe setting?
- Do you receive the services you need and want?
- Are you treated with respect?
- Do you take part in planning your services?
- Are you told what you need to know about your services?
- Are your questions answered in a way you understand?
- Do you know where to go with questions or concerns?

If you would like to talk with one of the survey team members or want to learn more about CARF International, please let one of our staff members know. You may also contact CARF International directly.

- Internet: [www.carf.org/contact-us](http://www.carf.org/contact-us)
- E-mail: [feedback@carf.org](mailto:feedback@carf.org)
- Mail: CARF International, 6951 East Southpoint Road, Tucson, AZ 85756, USA
- Telephone: (520) 495-7001
- Fax: (520) 318-1129

**carf** INTERNATIONAL



### **What is WYABLE?**

- A WYABLE Account is an investment account that allows qualified individuals with disabilities to save and invest money without losing eligibility for certain public benefit programs, like Medicaid or SSI.
- WYABLE Accounts are made possible by the federal Achieving a Better Life Experience "ABLE" Act passed by Congress in 2014. WYABLE Accounts launched March 2, 2018.
- WYABLE Accounts are similar to a 529 college savings account or 401(k) retirement plan and can work alongside Special Needs Trusts. They can also function like a regular checking account.

### **What are the Benefits?**

- WYABLE Accounts provide financial independence and empowerment for individuals with disabilities by dramatically increasing the ability to save and invest.
- Before, individuals with disabilities could only save \$2,000 before losing needs-based benefits.
- Now, WYABLE Accounts allows individuals with disabilities to save and invest up to \$15,000 annually without affecting eligibility for certain public benefits programs.
- WYABLE Account funds can be used on Qualified Disability Expenses including: education, housing, transportation, healthcare, assistive technology, employment needs and basic living expenses.
- Earnings on a WYABLE Account grow tax-free and are not subject to federal income tax, so long as they are spent on Qualified Disability Expenses.

### **Who is Eligible?**

- An "Eligible Individual" is someone whose disability began before the age of 26, has been living with their disability for at least one year, or expects their disability to last for at least a year.
- An individual must also do one of the following: 1. Be eligible for SSI or SSDI; 2. Have a condition listed on the Social Security Administration's List of Compassionate Allowances Conditions; or 3. Self-Certify their diagnosis.
- Visit [wyable.com/eligibility/](http://wyable.com/eligibility/) to take the quick and easy eligibility quiz to learn more.

### **What is the STABLE Card?**

- The STABLE Card is a debit card participants can use to easily spend money from a WYABLE Account. It is available at no cost to all Wyoming STABLE Account holders!
- The STABLE Card is a loadable prepaid debit card. It does not pull money directly from a WYABLE Account to better protect spending. The card is accepted anywhere MasterCard is used.

### **How do I Enroll?**

- A WYABLE Account can be opened by a qualifying person with a disability, the parent or legal guardian of an eligible individual, or by a designated Power of Attorney.
- Online enrollment is free. Participants will need to deposit a minimum of \$50 to open an account.
- Account set up and enrollment is done online at [wyable.com](http://wyable.com). No bank trips necessary!

WYABLE Account- Administered by the Wyoming Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities  
1-800-439-1653 | [team@stableaccount.com](mailto:team@stableaccount.com) | [www.wyable.com](http://www.wyable.com)

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